

**Fifth Session - Fortieth Legislature**

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

**DEBATES**

and

**PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report**  
**(Hansard)**

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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Fortieth Legislature**

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

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Tuesday, November 24, 2015**

*The House met at 1:30 p.m.*

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

Good afternoon, everyone. Please be seated.

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Bill 6—The Francophone Community  
Enhancement and Support Act**

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier):** Je propose, appuyé par le ministre des Finances, que

**Translation**

*I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Dewar), that*

**English**

The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act; Loi sur l'appui à l'essor de la francophonie manitobaine, be now read a first time.

**Motion presented.**

Nous avons une francophonie manitobaine dynamique qui contribue à la richesse et la diversité de notre province. Le projet de loi 6 s'inscrit dans une approche pratique que nous avons adoptée dans l'offre de services en français aux Manitobains et Manitobaines, peu importe leur langue maternelle.

Le projet de loi établit le cadre nécessaire en vue de favoriser l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobaine. Il sanctionne les mandats du ministre responsable des Affaires francophones, du Secrétariat aux affaires francophones et du Conseil consultatif des affaires francophones.

**Translation**

*We have a dynamic francophone community that contributes to the wealth and diversity of our*

*province. Bill 6 is part of the practical approach that we have taken to provide French-language services to Manitobans, regardless of their first language.*

*This bill provides the necessary framework to enhance the vitality of Manitoba's francophone community. It establishes the role of the Minister responsible for Francophone Affairs, the Francophone Affairs Secretariat and the Francophone Affairs Advisory Council.*

**English**

Mr. Speaker, this law will bring into force many things that we've been practising in Manitoba for several years. The Francophone Affairs Secretariat will be now ensured in law. A consultative committee of members of the francophone community will be available to advise the minister on francophone services that can be offered and improved on in Manitoba. It will have a definition of francophone which allows people that use and live and work in French as their language—their preferred language in Manitoba to be considered a part of the francophone community, and it's the result of many years of efforts on the part of the leaders of the Francophonie to make continuous progress, and I will be seeking leave from you to read into the record members of the audience that are here today to support this important initiative.

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

And it's—also, is there leave of the House to allow the First Minister to introduce the folks that he mentioned? *[Agreed]*

**Mr. Selinger:** Nous avons ici avec nous aujourd'hui Jacqueline Blay de la Société franco-manitobaine, Daniel Boucher, aussi de la Société franco-manitobaine, d'autres membres de la communauté: Natalie Gagné, Emmet Collins, Blandine Ngo Tona, Ibrahima Diallo, Léo Robert, Roger Turenne et Guy Jourdain.

Merci, Monsieur le Président.

**Translation**

*With us here today are Jacqueline Blay from the Société franco-manitobaine, Daniel Boucher, also from the Société franco-manitobaine, as well as*

*other members of the community: Natalie Gagné, Emmet Collins, Blandine Ngo Tona, Ibrahima Diallo, Léo Robert, Roger Turenne and Guy Jourdain.*

*Thank you, Mr. Speaker.*

**Mr. Speaker:** Further introduction of bills?

**Bill 5—The Surface Water Management Act  
(Amendments to Various Acts to  
Protect Lakes and Wetlands)**

**Hon. Thomas Nevakshonoff (Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Attorney General (Mr. Mackintosh), that Bill 5, The Surface Water Management Act (Amendments to Various Acts to Protect Lakes and Wetlands), be now read a first time.

*Motion presented.*

**Mr. Nevakshonoff:** Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce The Surface Water Management Act. This bill proposes to make amendments to five acts: The Conservation Districts Act; The Water Rights Act; The Water Protection Act; The Manitoba Habitat Heritage Act and The Planning Act.

This legislation strengthens the protection of wetlands, sets nutrient target levels to improve water quality and enhances inspection and enforcement. Part of our surface water management strategy, this bill supports the action our government has already taken to protect Lake Winnipeg and the many hundreds of lakes across Manitoba for our children and grandchildren.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Any further introduction of bills?

Seeing none, we'll move on to committee reports. Tabling of reports?

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

**Manmeet Bhullar**

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, today I rise with great sadness—

**Mr. Speaker:** You have a ministerial statement? One moment, please, 'til we distribute.

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, it was with great sadness that I rise today on behalf of our government and my colleagues in the Legislature to express our deepest condolences to the family and friends of Alberta member of the Legislature, Manmeet Bhullar, who was tragically killed in a highway accident yesterday afternoon after he had pulled over his own vehicle to help a fellow motorist who had rolled off into the median.

It is truly touching to see the incredible outpouring of love and support from Mr. Bhullar's colleagues, friends and family. He was a deeply caring man who devoted his life to helping others. I think his own family said it best: Manmeet left us doing what he loved more than anything, helping someone else.

From Mr. Bhullar's efforts in the community, it is clear that this same caring spirit guided his work each day. As members of the Legislature, we're all trying to bring this kind of compassion to the work that we all do here. Mr. Bhullar made tremendous contributions to his community and to the province of Alberta. He was taken from us far too soon and will be deeply missed.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask upon conclusion of other statements in the House today that we take a moment of silence in honour of Mr. Bhullar.

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Premier (Mr. Selinger) for his comments on the tragic passing of Manmeet Bhullar.

\* (13:40)

We know he was only 35 years old, but he lived an extraordinary life even within those short amount of years, being the youngest member of the Legislature in his particular election year, at age 28, to be elected.

Last night I saw on social media many of the tributes that were flowing in from his colleagues in Alberta and from his constituents, and you got a sense of a man who truly had a servant's heart and someone who truly believed in supporting and serving his constituents first among—above everything else.

We know that this Legislature, just like Alberta's, is in many ways a fraternity, but at a time of a loss—and we've experienced that here in Manitoba—it feels more like a family, Mr. Speaker, and I know that they'll be suffering some of the same emotions in the Alberta Legislature.

We want to extend our condolences to his family and to each of his colleagues. At times like this, people look for reasons and they look for solace, and we hope that they'll find solace in the tremendous legacy that he has left both in Alberta and for his family.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you, under your signature, provide the comments that are made this afternoon to the Speaker of the Alberta Legislature and extend our condolences to each of the MLAs in Alberta and to the family. We hope that his legacy lives on for many, many years, and he'll always be fondly remembered.

Thank you very much.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I think you need to ask for leave.

**Mr. Gerrard:** I ask for leave to speak to the Premier's (Mr. Selinger) statement.

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

**Mr. Gerrard:** It is with great sadness and sorrow that I rise to speak to the passing of Manmeet Bhullar, who was an MLA in Alberta.

It is sad whenever an MLA or MP dies in office, and particularly so when it is in a traffic-driving traffic accident. We all, as MLAs, travel a great deal, and there is no doubt that this could happen to any one of us. I remember Gaston Péloquin, who was a Member of Parliament in Ottawa when I was there. He died in a traffic accident as well.

It is particularly tragic with Manmeet Bhullar because he was young and had done so much for others, indeed, had stopped along the road to help another individual. Manmeet Bhullar had founded a youth organization called Inspire. He co-ordinated a Walking Hunger Away campaign in Calgary. He helped connect Albertans to high-speed Internet. He led changes in child and family services to help families in Alberta. He was an individual who contributed a lot to his province, and we remember that as we mourn his passing with great sadness and extend sympathies and condolences to his family and to his friends and, indeed, to all Albertans.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House to observe a moment of silence? *[Agreed]*

Please rise.

*A moment of silence was observed.*

**Mr. Speaker:** Any further ministerial statements?

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

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

#### Seniors' Financial Literacy

**Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to address the Assembly on a critical matter. This government insists it cares about its seniors, yet they still have paid an educational tax on their home. They can apply for a rebate, but they may not be granted it, and if they are, the government has put a cap on that rebate.

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

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

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

Mr. Speaker, they say seniors won't have to pay for the education tax in 2016, but with all the promises that they've already broken, we find it hard to believe that they would fully remove this tax from our most vulnerable citizens. The NDP have broken their word multiple times about removing education property taxes from seniors 65 plus. They raised the PST after claiming the notion was a nonsense, and they were only half committed to raising the EIA housing allowance after Progressive Conservatives' opposition fully committed to doing so.

The Progressive Conservatives are dedicated to giving seniors a better life instead of lining the Selinger government's pockets with stolen money. We're committed to ensuring an affordable way of life for people living on low and fixed incomes.

Mr. Speaker, this NDP government has shown no respect to the seniors who have already tirelessly—have worked tirelessly to make Manitoba a better place for all. As we can see on this side of the bench, this is a government who preaches support for seniors but actually likes to take from seniors—

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

#### **Winnipeg Phoenix Football Club**

**Hon. Erna Braun (Minister of Labour and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to extend my sincere congratulations to the members and coaching staff of the Phoenix soccer club. Two of their teams have ensured that Phoenix remains a provincial leader in youth soccer.

This year, the FC under-13 girls team made headlines in September. In addition to their league title, the Phoenix under-13 girls won the Cambrian Challenge Cup, the city championship, against their rivals, FC Northwest.

The under-16 boys team became provincial champions at the Manitoba Soccer Association Cup this summer, defeating their rival, Bonivital. Their victory gave them the privilege of representing our province in the nationals in October.

Hard work, commitment and dedication are all required to make a team successful. Both of these teams had motivation and enthusiasm, and when combined with a positive work ethic, this led to their success in the championships and throughout their seasons.

Behind a successful team are many hours of hard work by a dedicated coaching staff. Under-13 girls head coach John Hudohmet and under-16 boys head coach Francisco Aguirre were important supports and leaders for their teams. They both cultivated positive, encouraging environments. Even while competing, the coaches kept an emphasis on fun and sportsmanship. For instance, when Winnipeg hosted the FIFA Women's World Cup this summer, John Hudohmet helped to organize some friendly games between Phoenix under-13 and some American teams who came up to watch.

It is wonderful to see so many of our youth embracing the sport of soccer. Not only are these young people getting physical exercise but they are learning valuable life lessons like leadership, self-discipline and especially teamwork.

Congratulations to the team members, coaches and parent volunteers on a terrific season and a spectacular championship. Good luck in the next season.

#### **Municipal Amalgamation**

**Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside):** Mr. Speaker, AMM's annual general meeting is under way in Brandon.

Of course, we all know how this NDP government dropped a ball—bomb on them in 2012. The member from Dawson Trail told them mergers were mandatory, without consultation with municipal government or any other executive members, the president or staff.

This NDP government showed up and gave those municipalities with less than 1,000 permanent residents one year to merge with another municipality to reach that magic number. Again, it gets worse. They also told the municipalities which municipality they would have to merge with, whether or not they wanted to or not.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard from a number of these municipalities who are not happy with this NDP government. I listened to the municipalities and agree a number of those forced to merge were not a good fit, and they have asked this NDP government to decommission the merger.

\* (13:50)

As well, this NDP government put PST on insurance, hydro, vehicle licences, which really amounts to one government taxing another, once again, Mr. Speaker, without notice, without consultation of any type.

It's interesting to also note these hard-working mayors, reeves and councillors actually balance their budgets and they do consult with their constituents, unlike this NDP government.

As AMM awaits the NDP government to show up Wednesday, they're wondering what's coming next from this NDP Selinger government.

**Mr. Speaker:** Last week I cautioned members of this House with respect to the use of the term of a political party in along with the name of the

individual leader. And I'm going to caution all honourable members, including the member for Lakeside (Mr. Eichler). I want to be very certain that you understand that when we're talking about a particular—using a family name in this House, it's in reference to an era of this House for which the members may have been involved. And to take it that additional step, as I'm hearing today during members' statements, I think goes beyond what is required and what has been permitted in past not only by myself as Speaker but by previous Speakers.

And I get a sense here that I'm—in fact, I'm going to do this right now. I'm going to call the House leaders to my office right now, and this House is recessed until I return, and I will ring the bells to let you know that the House is back.

*The House recessed at 1:51 p.m.*

*The House resumed at 2:17 p.m.*

**Mr. Speaker:** The House will come back to order, please.

I've had an opportunity to have more discussions with the House leaders, and I thank the House leaders for their advice on this matter when I recessed the House concerning language that I had heard used during debate here in this Chamber.

It concerns me greatly, the language that I have heard with respect to—and I know that over not only my time as your Speaker but during the era of previous Speakers, they have permitted the use of the last name of the First Minister as an era of this Legislature or government. And that has been permitted by previous Speakers and has also been permitted by myself as your Speaker in part because there has been some precedent set in that.

I have noticed that there has been a change that has—is starting to occur where there are other words that are being used in between that, and it is tending to personalize the debate in this Chamber, which is something that I guard very closely against because I want to make sure that this is a respectful workplace.

And I'm asking for the co-operation of all honourable members, when they're talking and they're raising in their statements or they're asking questions or giving replies to questions, that we not personalize the debate, and that if we're going to use the term and continue in the tradition that we have already established here, that we not personalize that

debate by adding other words in and that we follow the precedent that has been set here utilizing the term of the last name of the First Minister of whatever era it would be. So I'm going to continue to allow that to occur but to ask for the co-operation of honourable members not to take it further.

Now, I say that carefully because I'm also going to continue to consult with the House leaders further on this matter to make sure that, if there's additional steps that we can take to make sure that this House operates in a respectful way, that we do that. And then so I'm going to rely on the advice and guidance that I will receive from House leaders at a future meeting.

So I'm thanking honourable members for their co-operation while we recessed the House and allowed me the opportunity to have further consultations with House leaders.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Speaker:** And we'll now return to our routine proceedings.

Now, we were on members' statements.

**Charles Johnston**

**Hon. Deanne Crothers (Minister of Healthy Living and Seniors):** You don't have to be a part of Winnipeg's arts scene to know that ours is a city deeply connected to artistic expression. In fact, you only have to walk around. Over 500 outdoor murals decorate Winnipeg, the most in any major Canadian city.

\* (14:20)

Artist Charles Johnston is responsible for a significant number of these, Mr. Speaker, and I'm pleased to have him join us in the gallery today. Charles has painted several dozen of the most recognizable Winnipeg murals, including the Hydro mural in St. James. He draws inspiration from urban street art while implementing traditional art techniques for an approach that combines conceptual, realist and expressionist styles. His work is often quirky, larger than life and with a keen sense of perspective. His murals translate the complex Winnipeg identity onto the walls of our city and, in turn, have shaped that identity.

Charles has expanded into sculpture, most recently with his bronze statue of Manitoba war hero Andrew Mynarski in Vimy Ridge Park. Mynarski was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross after

he gave his life to save a fellow pilot officer during a German attack. Charles' sculpture shows Mynarski extending a hand with the other holding his famous axe. It is an inspiring addition to the park.

One of my favourite pieces are the constantly shifting morph wolves. Charles created wolf sculptures which serve as a constantly renewing canvas for him and local artists to paint. The wolves are never the same for very long and they are quickly becoming famous in St. James.

Winnipeg artists like Charles Johnston are helping shape national and international perspectives of our city. Our government is committed to supporting the arts community and encouraging public art that expresses the unique Winnipeg experience.

Thank you, Charles, for your beautiful and thought-provoking contributions to our city.

#### **Agriculture in Manitoba**

**Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Midland):** Mr. Speaker, this NDP government continues to fail Manitobans. Recently, during the Estimates committee, the Minister of Agriculture revealed a vacancy rate in MAFRD of 25 per cent. One in four positions are currently not filled. The minister promised to provide a breakdown of the job positions not yet filled, but, alas, another broken promise.

It is no secret the best and brightest employees are increasingly frustrated with this government and are leaving MAFRD in record numbers.

Another example of NDP broken promises was contained in the government Throne Speech one year ago. The NDP promised to enhance and enable local food processors to market their food products directly to consumers. Last Monday's Throne Speech contained exactly the same promise. Another year, another broken promise.

There is an increasing demand from consumers to purchase farm-direct produce, and get all this—and yet all this government does is place more regulations, more impediments, all designed to create more red tape, more bureaucracy and more broken promises.

All across this province, producers are saying the greatest deterrent to building a successful direct-marketing operation is this NDP government. Manitoba farm families have so much potential for direct farm gate sales. This potential will only be achieved when this tired, out-of-touch NDP

government is replaced on April 19th, 2016. A change for the better is coming. It just can't come soon enough.

**Mr. Speaker:** That concludes members' statements.

#### **Introduction of Guests**

**Mr. Speaker:** I'd like to draw the attention of honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us from École secondaire Neelin High School, we have 50 grade 9 students under the direction of Kerry Malazdrewicz, William Savoy and Jamie Harrison, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Municipal Government (Mr. Caldwell).

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

#### **ORAL QUESTIONS**

##### **Tax Increases Government Spending**

**Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition):** And we know—we knew that the government had a high-spending problem, and we know, and Manitobans understand, that this means a high-tax problem for them. Certainly our seniors pay some of the highest taxes in Canada, single mothers, working families. And the C.D. Howe report released this morning verified that for small businesses, we have the most onerous tax burden of any city here in Winnipeg west of Montreal.

Now, how does the government choose to respond to these challenges? They don't. They offered a Throne Speech a week ago Monday which promised Christmas in mid-November and brought on the weather to suit Christmas.

Mr. Speaker, \$6.6 billion of new spending was promised, which means \$6.6 billion of new taxes have to be paid. By the Premier, by his colleagues? No, of course not, except just as citizens of Manitoba. But the real burden will be borne by all the citizens of Manitoba when they have to pay higher taxes to this Premier.

Let me ask the Premier: Since he'll be raising the taxes to buy these gifts he promised last week, would he outline which taxes he plans to raise?

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, last week we saw the biggest flip-flop in the history of the Conservative Party of Manitoba by the Leader of the Opposition. He now wants to run deficits to provide tax cuts to the wealthy in Manitoba. That's



not really a policy that's very progressive, to say the least.

Let's compare our tax policy in Manitoba, compared to the tax policy when the member—Leader of the Opposition served in office. The small-business tax rate was 9 per cent. What is it today, Mr. Speaker? Zero, the lowest tax rate in the country for small business.

What was the tax on corporations when we came into office? Seventeen per cent. What is it now? Twelve per cent, significantly reduced.

There was a capital tax—there was a capital tax—on business when we came into government. Where is that capital tax today? Completely eliminated for businesses in Manitoba.

That is progress. That is the kind of progress that allows Manitoba to have the lowest unemployment rate in the country and the highest job creation rate in the country, Mr. Speaker.

I challenge the member: What is his policy to create jobs and to have the lowest unemployment rate in the country?

**Mr. Pallister:** I challenge the Premier to keep his word this time by at least making a commitment instead of dodging his responsibilities.

He has promised—he's making irresponsible promises to the tune of almost \$7 billion in his speech, and now he won't tell people where the money's going to come from. Manitobans know where the money's going to come from: the same place it came last time he promised a bunch of things.

Before the last election, Mr. Speaker, he promised he wouldn't raise the taxes, then weeks later he did: haircuts, home insurance, benefits, beer, cars, cottages, you name it and a thousand other items. Broken promise after broken promise, the biggest tax hike in Canada, the biggest tax hike since Howard Pawley's days, and this is a guy who said he wasn't going to raise taxes.

And he still doesn't get it. He still can't cut his reckless, wasteful habits, and his out-of-control spending guarantees that Manitobans will pay higher taxes. It's a giant burden on Manitoba's young people.

Does he still claim that he will balance the books by 2018-19, or will he simply admit that he has totally given up?

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, the member of the—Leader of the Opposition last week committed the biggest flip-flop we've seen in modern history of the Conservative Party of Manitoba.

This was an individual that stood up every day in the House and said, you should balance the budget, should balance the budget, even if it meant the cuts to education and health service. You should balance the budget even if it meant that there'd be job losses. Now he's saying, I'm going to run deficits, but I'm going to use it to funnel tax cuts to the wealthy Manitobans. That is not a progressive policy. That doesn't grow the economy.

We have a program in Manitoba to create 60,000 jobs through infrastructure investments. Last year alone we created 9,500 jobs in Manitoba, good jobs, good jobs for young Manitobans to have opportunities, and I'm seeing a record number of people now working in the engineering field, working in the construction field.

I was at an event the other night, Mr. Speaker, with the Heavy Construction Association. When we came into office they had about 200 members; now they have 700 members. A few weeks ago, I spoke with a group of electricians. They used to have 400 members; now they have over 1,300 members.

More people are working in Manitoba, more people are—

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

**Mr. Pallister:** I won't bother refuting erroneous statements by the Premier. Half his caucus doesn't believe him anyway, Mr. Speaker, why believe him now?

Another broken promise: He promised he'd balance the books by last year. He was \$1 billion off. He said he was ahead of schedule in the last election debate. When he was asked how it was going, he said ahead of schedule to balance by last year, Mr. Speaker.

Now, he follows this promise of balancing the books up with the biggest tax grab in Manitoba history, the biggest tax grab since Howard Pawley's day, and he missed his targets and he failed to keep his promise in every respect. Now he's going to fix things up by being Santa Claus in November and promising another \$6.7 billion of new spending in addition to the debt-ridden situation he's created today.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the result of all of this is, of course, higher taxes on Manitoba families who are already struggling to make ends meet.

\* (14:30)

According to C.D. Howe, according to the poverty report out today, this is a serious problem the Premier refuses to address. He simply makes up things about our record when he should be responsible for answering questions about his own.

Now, will he admit that his spending addiction means that Manitobans will pay higher taxes should he be re-elected?

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, we will keep Manitoba among the top three in the country for affordability when it comes to the cost of living. And how will we do that?

First of all, we won't privatize Hydro like he privatized the telephone system. We used to have the third lowest telephone bills in the country, Mr. Speaker. Now we have among the highest because of his broken promise to privatize the telephone system.

Our bundle of home heating, electricity and auto insurance rates is the lowest in the country. It's been verified by an independent accounting firm, Mr. Speaker, the lowest in the country because the Crown corporations are owned by the people of Manitoba, they serve the people of Manitoba and they provide good jobs to Manitobans.

What did the member opposite do? He says he will bring in tax cuts for the wealthy by running deficits, the biggest flip-flop we've seen by any leader of the Conservative Party in the history of Manitoba, certainly in modern times, Mr. Speaker. That's his policy, a policy of recklessness.

We said we'd create 12,000 daycare spots in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, after we doubled them since our time in office. Those daycare spots allow families to have secure, quality daycare while they get jobs because we have the lowest unemployment rate in the country.

### **Throne Speech 2015 Government Spending**

**Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler):** Mr. Speaker, it's totally false. He knows it. As a matter of fact, it's ridiculous.

Mr. Speaker, an advertisement appeared in the paper recently. It's for the Manitoba government's

Consumer Protection Office. And it cautions consumers. It says when you're making a purchase, make sure you ask the right questions, and it's good advice.

The ad lists a number of questions that consumers should ask. The first question is: Is this the full price?

My question for the Finance Minister is: Will he tell Manitobans, when it comes to his Throne Speech pull-out-the-stops, go-for-broke spending spree, what is the full price?

**Hon. Greg Dewar (Minister of Finance):** Recently this government brought in a Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker, a plan that is not for the naysayers or skeptics who believe that failed policy of deep cuts and privatization. This is—it's a smart and a strategic plan that's grounded in the values and priorities of Manitoba families, will build in—will make strategies, economic investments at record low interest rates for long periods of time.

Right now we're spending about 5.6 cents on the dollar to service our debt. As the Premier (Mr. Selinger) has mentioned, we have the lowest unemployment rate in Canada. We're one of the leaders when it comes to creating jobs and opportunities for Manitobans. We have an infrastructure plan that's the envy of the nation. Other provinces are looking at us to see, to build on what we're doing here.

We have a government in Canada that believes in investing in infrastructure, Mr. Speaker. We're prepared to partner with them to continue to grow our economy.

**Mr. Friesen:** Well, Mr. Speaker, the minister didn't disclose a full price, so I'll help him out.

The Consumer Protection ad goes on to say, it's sometimes easy to get carried away with the excitement of buying something new.

Now, this Finance Minister promised and failed to address his government's disastrous overspending record that's resulted in Manitoba's first credit downgrade in 30 years.

And just as this ad warns, the NDP has gotten carried away with spending. And the article says, when you get carried away, sometimes you forget to ask the right questions.

My question for the Finance Minister: Is this the full price? Will he admit that his double-down

spending spree in the Throne Speech is \$6.6 billion in new debt that Manitobans just can't afford?

**Mr. Dewar:** Mr. Speaker, the member's analysis is utter nonsense. Every single day—[*interjection*] It's utter nonsense.

Every single day—every single day—every MLA across the way, every Conservative MLA, including the independent member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), every single day they stand up and demand more spending from this government. They are the largest and strongest drain on the Treasury, are members opposite.

We have a plan—well, they're clapping for the fact, Mr. Speaker, we have a plan to invest in the economy. We're doing so.

There's 642,000 Manitobans working. That is a record. We've got the lowest unemployment rate in Canada. We've got some of the strongest job growth, and we're going to continue that.

**Mr. Friesen:** Mr. Speaker, I would remind this member for Selkirk it was exactly one year ago today when he stood in this place and said the goal of his government was to return to surplus by controlling expenditures. This Throne Speech contains well over \$1 billion every year in new spending commitments, and I would assert that is the biggest flip-flop in this place in years and years.

Mr. Speaker, as this consumer ad makes clear, consumers should take precautions to protect themselves from misleading offers that are just too good to be true.

Will the Finance Minister admit that the full price of his spending spree will be paid by Manitoba families in the form of higher income tax, higher sales tax or both?

**Mr. Dewar:** I reject the member's question, Mr. Speaker.

We have the lowest unemployment rate here in Canada. We have some of the strongest job growth, strongest economy, confirmed by the Conference Board of Canada, as well, confirmed by several of the banks in this country.

Again, members opposite might be rather envious of our position, Mr. Speaker. Again, every day they stand up in the House every day and demand that we spend more money.

We have a program that's believed—that we're investing in infrastructure. We've made a

commitment to spend over \$1 billion this year. We had a great season. We had a great construction season. We did more than that. You can see that everywhere you drive across this province. We're going to increase that to make sure that our plan includes more projects for Manitobans. We might even pave a road in his riding.

### **Winnipeg Businesses Tax Environment**

**Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo):** Mr. Speaker, the latest C.D. Howe Institute report released this morning ranks Winnipeg as the highest taxed city for businesses west of Montreal. In fact, the report found that, and I quote: The largest retail sales tax cost is in Manitoba, which now has the highest such tax in the country after increasing the rate from 7 to 8 per cent in 2013. End quote.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister just admit that the Selinger government's broken promise to raise the PST has had a negative impact on Winnipeg businesses?

**Hon. Greg Dewar (Minister of Finance):** The city of Winnipeg—the Conference Board of Canada's predicted the city of Winnipeg will grow the fastest, have the fastest economic growth outside of Vancouver in western Canada, Mr. Speaker, because of the commitments that this government's making. We're partnering with the City of Winnipeg on strategic investment throughout the city.

For example, we spent—partnered with them in rebuilding the city infrastructure, Mr. Speaker. The 1 cent increase in the PST has allowed us to invest over \$1 billion, both in terms of infrastructure, partnering with our municipalities, not only the City of Winnipeg, but all of our municipal partners across the city.

We make—we're not disappointed. We're not, Mr. Speaker—we make no apologies for that.

**Mrs. Stefanson:** Mr. Speaker, the study went on to state, and I quote, that heavy tax burdens can drive away investment to other localities, with it, the associated economic benefits, end quote.

Will the minister explain how businesses in Manitoba are expected to compete with businesses in other western provinces, Mr. Speaker, when the Selinger government's high-tax agenda has clearly put them at a disadvantage?

**Hon. Kevin Chief (Minister of Jobs and the Economy):** Mr. Speaker, this government continues

to stand with small business and businesses not only throughout the province but, of course, in Winnipeg as well. That's why we're the only the province in the nation that has completely eliminated the small-business tax.

But I don't expect the member from Tuxedo to listen to me on this, Mr. Speaker. What does the Financial Times have to say about Winnipeg? That it's one of the best places to do business in Canada because of affordable cost of living, vibrant art scene and steady economic growth.

It goes on. What does PROFITguide.com just recently said in October, Mr. Speaker? Winnipeg has the lowest business costs in western Canada and lower than every US city examined.

Mr. Speaker, she doesn't have to take our word for it. She—all she has to do is get a copy of National Geographic and see what they have to say about the city of Winnipeg.

**Mrs. Stefanson:** Well, I know I certainly won't take their word for it, Mr. Speaker, I'll take the word of the C.D. Howe report that came out.

\* (14:40)

Mr. Speaker, the report stated that the Selinger government's high-tax agenda is hurting Winnipeg businesses. In fact, Winnipeg was the only city to receive an F—an F—for the simplicity of its property tax regime. The report stated, and I quote: Manitoba and Ontario are lowest performers on both the simplicity and transparency criteria. End quote.

Will the minister just admit that the Selinger government's high-tax regime has put Winnipeg in last place for business investment in western Canada, Mr. Speaker?

**Mr. Chief:** Well, let's continue, Mr. Speaker.

What does Mike Moore have to say about business, president of Home Builders' Association? There's never been a better time to start your own business.

What does Michael Legary have to say? And, by the way, Mr. Speaker, I've offered her to come down to Innovation Alley any time that she wants to come down to see. It's a lot different on Innovation Alley now than it used to be when her Leader of the Opposition was in government, sat around the Cabinet table, when businesses were leaving. It's one of the most exciting places to do business. Michael

Legary: There's no better place to start your business than to come on down to Innovation Alley.

But don't take my word for it. What are other people saying? Lowest unemployment rate in Canada right here in Manitoba. PROFITguide.com: Canada, best place to do business. The economy's still strong. Manitoba, an economic elite. Job numbers up nationally, strongest growth in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I know why the Leader of the Opposition decided to leave, because he's running. He's running from his record.

At the end of the day, on this side of the House—

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

I've just cautioned the House a few moments ago with respect to personalizing the debate here. And I'm going to ask for the minister's co-operation. When we're answering questions here, make sure we don't personalize the debate. I'm trying to keep this as a respectful place. So I'm asking for the minister's co-operation.

**Mr. Chief:** I apologize for that, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** I thank the honourable minister for the apology.

Now we'll move on to the next question.

### **Hydro Rate Increases Export Market Concerns**

**Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside):** The Public Utilities Board said in its last rate decision the board is concerned that successive hydro rate export price forecasts consistently overestimate actual results.

The evidence is clear, Mr. Speaker. The NDP is forcing Hydro to inflate export forecasts to justify their plan to double the rates of all Manitoba Hydro customers.

Will the minister just admit that this is his plan all along? Manitobans are paying more and getting less.

**Hon. James Allum (Acting Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro):** Mr. Speaker, it never fails to amaze me when the member gets up and talks about hydro, he doesn't say that Manitoba has among the lowest hydro rates in the country. And when you put those hydro rates—and you put the hydro rates together with home heating and automobile insurance, you have the lowest bundle of utility rates in the country.

Mr. Speaker, this is what we call Manitoba's affordability advantage. If these guys were ever in government, it would soon become Manitoba's unaffordability disadvantage.

**Mr. Eichler:** Mr. Speaker, it's just not the PUB that's concerned about the future prospects of export markets.

Even Hydro itself, in its last submission to the Public Utilities Board, noted, saying Manitoba Hydro expects a further price decline which will negatively impact business case for Manitoba's new investment in generation and transmission. Even the professionals at Hydro are saying it, Mr. Speaker.

Will the minister admit that he's prepared to double hydro rates of all Manitobans no matter whether there's a viable business case for new investment or not?

**Mr. Allum:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't know if the member was looking at the news last night, but the Premier (Mr. Selinger) was together with other premiers and the Prime Minister of this country to get together to talk about climate change. And in—when we talk about climate change, one of the most important things we need is clean, renewable energy, which is what we have here in spades in Manitoba through hydroelectric generation.

Now, the member opposite has made it clear that he wants to kill export deals, he wants to kill investments in hydro and he really, frankly, quite literally wants to privatize a Crown corporation that benefits all of Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House we govern for all the people of Manitoba all the time.

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable member for Lakeside.

**Mr. Eichler:**—ratepayers of Manitoba, the real owners of Manitoba Hydro, each and every day, not like this government, Mr. Speaker.

The NDP might not want to admit the electrical market is changing. The last rate decision of the PUB noted that new export contracts will likely not achieve prices, meet Hydro estimates.

Everyone is concerned, Mr. Speaker. The PUB is concerned over estimates in export revenues. Hydro is concerned it won't be able to sell its power for the price that it wants. The only people not concerned are the NDP members opposite.

Will the minister today commit to stopping doubling of rates of all Manitobans?

**Mr. Allum:** Mr. Speaker, the member opposite keeps putting conjecture on the floor of the House instead of being honest about the fact that Manitoba has among the lowest hydro rates in the country.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it's pretty clear to me that the members opposite want to cancel export deals. They want to cancel and fire hydro workers. They want to cut off partnerships with indigenous Manitobans that actually benefit not only the indigenous community but all of northern Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House we believe in Crown corporations, and on this side of the House we believe in Manitoba Hydro. If the member opposite has a different version of events, he should take it to the people of Manitoba, but on this side of the House we'll go for low rates and investment in hydro and partnerships with indigenous Manitobans every single day.

### **Manitoba Housing Bedbug Treatment**

**Mr. Ian Wishart (Portage la Prairie):** Mr. Speaker, Manitoba Housing has several multi-family housing facilities in my constituency, and every one of them is reporting increased problems with bedbug infestations. For some it is a repeat problem, but for several it is first time with extreme problems.

Mr. Speaker, what has changed in the treatment and prevention programs to lead to such a severe outbreak? Are the protocols for treating bedbugs not being followed?

**Hon. Mohinder Saran (Minister of Housing and Community Development):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. Manitoba Housing has a comprehensive strategy to eradicate bedbugs, including prevention, education and the most advanced pest control treatment.

At present, 97 per cent of direct-managed properties are bedbug-free. Since 2008, when the Integrated Pest Management Group was formed, Manitoba Housing had developed in-house quality control and new treatment methods to address bedbug concerns. In many buildings, bedbugs have been significantly reduced or eradicated.

We have a province-wide strategy consisting of five parts: education campaign targeted at prevention, identification and treatment of bedbugs in homes and businesses; grant program, more than 200 grants to help non-profits with treatment costs—

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

**Mr. Wishart:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I can guarantee you that their program is not working up to snuff.

Many of the people living in Manitoba Housing are elderly or living with disabilities. When staff turns up to treat buildings, they provide little notice and ask for help to move heavy items from the residents, who are not able. Residents suffer the consequences of a poorly done job.

Is this the proper treatment protocol, or are so many corners being cut that this has led to the outbreaks? Is the job being done right?

**Mr. Saran:** Well, let me further educate the opposite member.

Low-cost materials, over 9,800 prevention materials—mattress covers, garbage bags, laundry bags, bedbug identification tools and stickers to identify infested furniture while it is being disposed—have been distributed.

Bug N Scrub teams, groups of youth hired by the province, have assisted over 700 people with mental and physical disabilities in readying their suite for treatment, cleaning up after treatment and returning the suite back to its original state.

A coalition, Social Planning Council, property management association of Manitoba, private sector—

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

**Mr. Wishart:** Mr. Speaker, well, may—that may be what the minister's plan is, but the reality seems to be quite a little bit different.

Manitoba Housing is one of the largest housing managers in the province. We have received many complaints on bedbugs, particularly bad this year, on cockroaches and on rodents from across the province.

\*(14:50)

Can't this government look after the housing responsibilities they have?

**Mr. Saran:** I have to agree at one point of the opposition member, like, if you don't build any house, there won't be any bugs at all. So their strategy really will work. Whenever they're in power, they won't build any houses and there won't be any bugs, and so they will say they have 100 per cent bug-free houses.

### Violent Crime Rates Provincial Comparison

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach):** Mr. Speaker, once again Statistics Canada has identified Manitoba as the leader in violent crime victimization. While there were significant declines in many other provinces in Canada, Manitoba's violent crime victimization rate remained very high and the highest in Canada.

We do have great people in this province of Manitoba, but they are very concerned. They're very concerned about the high amount of violent crime in the province and what that means to themselves and to their families.

Can this government indicate why, after so many years, they haven't been able to bring Manitoba's violent crime rate into line with other Canadian provinces?

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** A justice question: 2015, I've got to write that down. Mr. Speaker, 2015 AD, I get a justice question.

Mr. Speaker, I was at a dinner with the—*[interjection]* Well, you know, I got a question from the local Stephen Harper franchise here. I was at a dinner with Stephen Harper, and he proclaimed himself Canada's crime fighter, and I guess the member for Steinbach is going to just ring him up and say, hey, you weren't telling the truth. But we have our plan in Manitoba, and I can tell you it's not going to be following the philosophy of the Conservatives.

I just want to assure the member, and I'll send him the report from the federal government, released by the Harper government, actually, that says that the seriousness of crime in Manitoba has plummeted 41 per cent over the decade. If he wants to say that every province in Canada has had reductions, that's true, but Manitoba had the biggest reduction.

**Mr. Goertzen:** I will with sadness send that answer to the many people who've been victims of crime in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, so they can see the reaction of their Attorney General, their Minister of Justice.

Statistics Canada said again that the highest rate of violent crime is in Manitoba. That was the report that was released yesterday.

And one of the problems, Mr. Speaker, is that the recidivism rate, the reoffence rate, hasn't gone down. In fact, it's only gone up since 2007.

Now, I know that this minister wants to make light and he wants to make jokes and perhaps he doesn't really have a concern for those who are victims of crime, but can he at least try to bring some seriousness to his office?

If he doesn't take himself seriously, could he at least take his position seriously and answer whether or not the reason why we still have the highest rate of violent crime in Canada is because the reoffence rate only gets worse under their watch, Mr. Speaker?

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Mr. Speaker, the seriousness of a government in dealing with victimization is certainly not to cut all the benefits that they did when it came to criminal injuries compensation. We've enhanced victim support, victim compensation.

One crime is too many for this government. That's why there's been a reduction of 41 per cent in the seriousness of crime in Manitoba over the decade.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's not the government alone that could ever take credit. There are people on the front lines, officers putting their lives on the line every day. There are parole officers, probation officers and intervention officials that make all the difference.

We've got to continue in that direction. Yes, Mr. Speaker, there's much more work to do, but the severity of crime is down 41 per cent over the decade.

I'll just leave this with the member opposite. If you follow a Conservative philosophy, and, indeed, when they were in control in this province, Mr. Speaker, violent crime skyrocketed 52 per cent.

**Mr. Goertzen:** Mr. Speaker, once again Manitoba is the worst—the worst—in all of Canada when it comes to violent crime.

The Minister of Justice doesn't want to take the issue seriously. He seems to think making jokes on the floor of the Assembly is the way that an Attorney General should act, the way that a Minister of Justice should act, even though today, if you were to look on the crime stats on the Winnipeg website, he'd say that—see that shootings are up 12 per cent from last year. He'd see that robberies in the commercial division are up 44 per cent since last year. He'd see that break and enters are up 18 per cent; in residences they're also up 18 per cent.

Crime is up compared to last year in Winnipeg. This is the minister that wants to joke and make fun of that.

Can he bring some seriousness to himself or to his office and explain how he's going to improve this instead of trying to be the class clown of the Legislature, Mr. Speaker?

**Mr. Speaker:** I understand that members from time to time have strongly held views, and I can appreciate that. But I have said many times in past and again several times today, I don't want to personalize the debate.

So I'm going to ask for the honourable member for Steinbach to please withdraw his comments where it personalized the debate.

**Mr. Goertzen:** Mr. Speaker, I withdraw the comment.

**Mr. Speaker:** I thank the honourable member for Steinbach.

Now, the honourable Minister of Justice, to respond to the question.

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I've been in office long enough, I think I'm starting to develop a thicker skin.

But, Mr. Speaker, the complaints of the member really are reflecting on the hard work of people. You know, every time there's a siren that can be heard, that's someone putting their life on the line for others. And that member is denigrating the hard work of law enforcement, in particular, who—and they've had some really hard weeks in this province.

It's time, Mr. Speaker, that the Assembly got behind them and supported them right across all sides of this Legislature. But they've been fighting crime. The government's been fighting crime. All the officials that have been given this task are doing a tremendous job.

And that is why we're asking the opposition in this Chamber and in this session alone: Will they support laws to protect victims of domestic violence in the workplace? Will they support stronger support—or protection orders, Mr. Speaker, for women? Are they going to support—

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

### **Legalization of Marijuana Distribution and Marketing**

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, last week the Premier was mulling over the possibility that marijuana would be sold through a Crown corporation so that he as Premier might become the chief salesperson for marijuana in Manitoba.

The Premier said his reason for controlling the market is that marijuana is highly addictive. This claim sounds very familiar.

Is the Premier of the same view as former Prime Minister Harper, that marijuana is infinitely worse than tobacco?

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from the member. This is the member that a few years ago wanted to protect people from alcohol by putting special labels on the bottles. And now he's advocating for slashing prices on alcohol and making it more available to Manitobans at a lower cost and also is musing, along with the leader of his political party, about privatizing the liquor and lotteries commission of Manitoba. That is not a responsible approach to making drugs which can be potentially addictive available to any Manitoban, whether it's marijuana or whether it's alcohol or whether it's participating in gaming, which can have addictive qualities for some members as well.

Mr. Speaker, the approach we take on all of these matters is to manage them in such a way that we reduce the risk for people that are vulnerable to addictions while regulating them in such a way that Manitobans who wish to participate in using any of these products do it as safely as possible and are educated to be fully aware of the risks of that participation so that they can do it with the least amount of risk to themselves and their families.

**Mr. Gerrard:** The Premier is promoting doing this without risk. I'm not sure if he knows what he's doing, but he is.

The Premier has said that he believes the training program for employees already within Liquor & Lotteries will help them advise consumers on the risks of marijuana use. I've been in liquor stores on occasion and I've found employees very well trained to advise me on different brands, but it's never been apparent that their training is to advise customers on the risks of alcohol use.

I ask the Premier: Is this to be a new approach for employees now to be advising customers about the risks of alcohol and marijuana?

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, the member might have seen some of the advertisements that have been sponsored by the liquor and lotteries commission with respect to social responsibility, ads on fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and the risks to young mothers for the consumption of alcohol at that time of their life. That's important messaging and education we need to provide the public.

Mr. Speaker, under our laws, we have obligations on behalf of people that serve alcoholic beverages in hotels and other venues. They have to do it in a socially responsible way. They have some obligation to ensure that people don't overconsume these products.

\* (15:00)

These are part of what we do by having a Crown corporation provide these services and these products to the public, Mr. Speaker. It allows us to do a job on protecting the public from the risks of consuming various forms of alcohol and/or other drugs such as marijuana and/or participating in gaming activities which can be addictive.

We have an obligation to let the public know the risks. They—it's not a question of a prohibition. That has been tried in the past; it didn't work. But it is—it is—a commitment towards social responsibility by making sure that the public properly regulates these things through the Crown corporations.

That's a very different vision than the member for River Heights is now putting forward where he wants to—

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

**Mr. Gerrard:** Mr. Speaker, it's the Premier's own government who separated the regulator and the seller, and so, I mean, having the regulator there can actually manage things quite well.

The CEO of Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries has said that marijuana could be sold in independently run stores or through Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries.

Now, Mr. Speaker, does the Premier want marijuana to be sold like cigarettes in bland packages with warning labels and kept locked up behind counters, or will he market it widely with public ads as Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries is doing with liquor



and with their holiday scratch cards and, indeed, as the Premier has been doing recently, promoting liquor on Twitter, as I will 'tabre'?

**Mr. Selinger:** I appreciate the question from the member opposite.

We did recently have a product in Manitoba called whisky that was ranked No. 1 in the world, Mr. Speaker, and that was just after the week that Manitoba was—and Winnipeg was considered one of the top 20 destinations for anybody wishing to take a trip.

In all of these cases, Mr. Speaker, when any product is available through the liquor and lotteries commission, we expect them to make that available to the public in a responsible manner, and that's what we will do as we go forward.

The federal government indicated they were going to legalize marijuana. That makes sense for a bunch of reasons, Mr. Speaker. First of all, it takes control of the product out of the hands of organized crime. That is a big benefit to the public. It reduces crime and criminal activity in our communities.

The second thing the federal government said was is they would not make it available to minors, Mr. Speaker. That totally makes sense as well. There is research that indicates that the consumption of these products by minors can lead to very serious issues for them for the rest of their lives.

So as this product becomes legalized, we will use our liquor and lotteries—gaming authority and our Liquor & Lotteries Crown corporation to ensure that these products are made available to Manitoba in a responsible way.

And our Minister of Justice (Mr. Mackintosh) recently visited jurisdictions in the United States and they said, you're very fortunate to have these controls in place, we wish we had those tools available to us—

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

#### **Changes to Surface Water Management Lake, River and Wetlands Protection**

**Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley):** Oh, my fan club. They're here as always. I know they've been pining for another question.

I'm just glad the independent member is bringing important issues like Twitter to, you know, the Chamber of the Legislature. In all honesty, Mr. Speaker, you can't write this stuff. It's a good

thing Stephen Colbert's already taken a shot at Canada this week.

Meanwhile, our government's commitment to multiple real issues that Manitobans do care about and depend upon us every single day continues. We've had some fantastic environmental announcements recently, David Suzuki and the blue bot—the Blue Dot declaration and the new environmental rights legislation that we'll be bringing forward among them.

I'm wondering if our Conservation Minister could tell us about a piece of legislation that's on everyone's desk today, just to make sure that you read it, because there's some good stuff in there that your constituents might want to know—

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

**Hon. Thomas Nevakshonoff (Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship):** I want to thank the member for the question. It gives me an opportunity to talk about The Surface Water Management Act, the most comprehensive water management legislation, I would think, in history.

And when you want to think about history, Mr. Speaker, think back to 1999 when we first took office in this province, what the situation was, and you recall there was a case called the Hildebrandt case where The Water Rights Act—The Water Rights Act—was actually thrown out of this Legislature. In effect, there was no law. There was a state of anarchy when members opposite were in charge of water management in this province.

This legislation is the direct opposite of that, Mr. Speaker, as I said, the most comprehensive water management legislation in the province, and I await the debate from members—

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

Time for oral questions has expired.

#### **PETITIONS**

**Mr. Speaker:** It is now time for petitions.

#### **Manitoba Interlake—Request to Repair and Reopen Provincial Roads 415 and 416**

**Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

(1) The Interlake region is an important transportation corridor for Manitoba but, unfortunately, is still dealing with serious underinvestment in infrastructure under this provincial government.

(2) Provincial roads 415 and 416 are vital to the region but have still not been repaired or reopened since sustaining damages during the 2010 flood.

(3) Residents and businesses in the Manitoba Interlake are seriously impacted and inconvenienced by having no adequate east-west travel routes over an area of 525 square miles.

(4) This lack of east-west travel routes are also a major public safety concern, as emergency response vehicles are impeded from arriving in a timely manner.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government repair or reopen provincial roads 415 and 416 to allow adequate east-west travel in the Interlake.

And this petition is submitted on behalf of H. Zotter, Y. Broton and D. Green.

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

#### **Community-Based Brain Injury Services and Supports**

**Mr. Reg Helwer (Brandon West):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Brain Injury Canada, cited at <http://braininjurycanada.ca/acquired-brain-injury/>, estimates that 50,000 Canadians sustain brain injuries each year, over 1 million Canadians live with the effects of an acquired brain injury, 30 per cent of all traumatic brain injuries are sustained by children and youth, and approximately 50 per cent of brain injuries come from falls and motor vehicle collisions.

(2) Studies conducted by Manitoba Health in 2003 and 2006 and the Brandon Regional Health Authority in 2008 identified the need for community-based brain injury services.

(3) These studies recommended that Manitoba adopt the Saskatchewan model of brain injury services.

(4) The treatment and coverage for Manitobans who suffer brain injuries varies greatly, resulting in huge inadequacies depending upon whether a person suffers the injury at work, in a motor vehicle accident, through assault or from medical issues such as a stroke, aneurysm or anoxia due to cardiac arrest or other medical reasons.

(4) Although in-patient services including acute care, short- and longer term rehabilitation are available throughout the province, brain injury patients who are discharged from hospital often experience discontinuation or great reduction of services which results in significant financial and emotional burdens being placed on family and friends.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to develop and evolve community-based brain injury services that include but are not limited to: case management services, known also as service navigation; safe and accessible housing in the community; proctor or coach-type assistance for community reintegration programs; improved access to community-based rehabilitation services; and improved transportation services, especially for people living in rural Manitoba.

(2) To urge the provincial government to encompass financial and emotional supports for families and other caregivers in the model that is developed.

Signed by T. Stobbs, E. Rybuch, C. Dickey and many other Manitobans.

#### **Provincial Trunk Highway 206 and Cedar Avenue in Oakbank—Pedestrian Safety**

**Mr. Ron Schuler (St. Paul):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Every day, hundreds of Manitoba children walk to school in Oakbank and must cross PTH 206 at the intersection with Cedar Avenue.

There have been many dangerous incidents where drivers use the right shoulder to pass vehicles that have stopped at the traffic light waiting to turn left at this intersection.

\* (15:10)

Law enforcement officials have identified this intersection as a hot spot of concern for the safety of schoolchildren, drivers and emergency responders.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba—to urge that the provincial government improve the safety at the pedestrian corridor at the intersection of PTH 206 and Cedar Avenue in Oakbank by considering such steps as highlighting pavement markings to better indicate the location of the shoulders and crosswalk, as well as installing a lighted crosswalk structure.

This is signed by M. Monchka, J. Boissoneault, B. Haney and many other fine Manitobans.

#### **Manitoba Interlake—Request to Repair and Reopen Provincial Roads 415 and 416**

**Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Midland):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

These are the reasons for this petition:

The Interlake region is an important transportation corridor for Manitoba but, unfortunately, is still dealing with serious underinvestment in infrastructure under this provincial government.

Provincial roads 415 and 416 are vital to the region but have still not been repaired or reopened since sustaining damages during the 2010 flood.

Residents and businesses in the Manitoba Interlake are seriously impacted and inconvenienced by having no adequate east-west travel routes over an area of 525 square miles.

This lack of east-west travel routes is also a major public safety concern, as emergency response vehicles are impeded from arriving in a timely manner.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge that the provincial government repair and reopen the provincial roads 415 and 416 to allow adequate east-west travel in the Interlake.

And this petition is signed by W. Davis, T. Rediger, M. Gratton and many more fine Manitobans.

#### **Manitoba Interlake—Health Care**

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

There is a severe shortage of emergency and regular medical care in the Interlake region of Manitoba.

The staffing levels within such units such as hemodialysis, chemotherapy and emergency-outpatient services at the Johnson Memorial Hospital in Gimli are below operational levels.

This lack of essential front-line services is causing patients to travel 45 minutes away for regular and emergency life-saving treatments, often at their own expense.

This highway medicine approach places the welfare of residents and visitors to this community at further risk.

This shortage causes additional strain to the limited rural ambulance services and results in all Manitobans paying more and getting less.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to consider implementing a plan to cover the immediate shortfall in staffing levels and to develop a long-term solution to provide timely and quality health care to the residents of the Interlake.

And this is signed by I. Condie, K. Campbell, G. Edwardsen and many others.

**Mr. Speaker:** That concludes petitions.

#### **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

#### **GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

**Mr. Speaker:** We'll now move on to orders of the day, government business.

#### **House Business**

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to announce that the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs will meet tomorrow, Wednesday, November 25th, 2015, at 11:30 a.m. to consider the process for hiring a new Conflict of Interest Commissioner and Information and Privacy Adjudicator.

I understand the committee might also be discussing the Lobbyist Registrar position; however, the committee does not have the authority to make a recommendation regarding the hiring of that position.

**Mr. Speaker:** It has been announced that the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs will meet tomorrow, Wednesday, November 25th, 2015, at 11:30 a.m., to consider the process for hiring a new Conflict of Interest Commissioner and Information and Privacy Adjudicator.

It is also understood that the committee might also be discussing the Lobbyist Registrar position; however, the committee does not have the authority to make a recommendation regarding the hiring of that position.

That's for information of the House.

The honourable Government House Leader (Mr. Chomiak), on further House business.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Would you please canvass the House to seek leave for the House to recess on the afternoon on November 26th for the arrival of the Grey Cup, with the understanding that Wednesday will count—Mr. Speaker, I erred; November 25th is the date—to return, for the arrival of the Grey Cup, with the understanding that Wednesday will count as a day of debate for the Throne Speech in spite of this interruption, the recess will only last as long as the Grey Cup visit to the Legislature, and then the House will resume by call of the Speaker?

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there leave of the House for the House to recess on the afternoon of November 26th for the arrival—or 25th, pardon me, for the arrival of the Grey Cup, with the understanding that Wednesday will count as a day of debate for the Throne Speech in spite of this interruption and that the recess will only last as long as the Grey Cup visit to the Legislature and then the House will resume by the call of the Speaker? Is that agreed? *[Agreed]*

The honourable Government House Leader, on further House business.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, would you also please see if there's leave for visitors to enter the Chamber and be on the floor of the Chamber during the recess?

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there leave of the House to permit certain visitors to be—enter the Chamber and be on the floor of the Chamber during the recess? *[Agreed]*

The honourable Government House Leader, on further House business.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Yes, on further House business, Mr. Speaker, by way of an audible, I believe I asked for leave of the House for no vote, no quorum for Wednesday, November 25th, did I not? *[interjection]* There's acknowledgement of the House.

Further, I would like to canvass the House to see if there's leave for the member for Radisson to speak in the Throne Speech debate immediately, with the understanding that the next speaker in the debate will be an opposition member, to be followed by the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway).

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader):** Just quickly, I understand these are exceptional circumstances which will become apparent, and we'll agree to it under these exceptional circumstances.

**Mr. Speaker:** So is there leave of the House, then, to permit the honourable member for Radisson to speak to debate on the Throne Speech, to be followed by a member of the opposition, and then to be followed by the honourable member for Elmwood? Is there leave? *[Agreed]*

Any further House business?

### THRONE SPEECH (Sixth Day of Debate)

**Mr. Speaker:** Seeing none, we'll now proceed to call—to resume adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the honourable member for The Pas (Ms. Lathlin) and the amendment thereto.

**Mr. Bidhu Jha (Radisson):** Thank you. Thank you. I'm overwhelmed with the response and love and affection of all of you and thank you very much.

It's a very challenging day for me, but let me begin with two very sad condolences I'd like to share with you. The MLA Manmeet Bhullar, who passed away, was very well known to me, and a young man, I met him a few months back, and he was saying he was going to enjoy life, he will be a father, and all that's very sad, so I send condolences to his family.

And, secondly, I really think all of us here, we feel very sad about the episodes in Paris and Mali about the terrorists, and I—sincere sympathies to the families and condolences of those victims who have been terrified and killed their families.

So talking about the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, I have a tremendous amount of

excitement to share. One of the things that the member from Kildonan would perhaps understand, that my passion to build Manitoba in a better way has come to—so many things have come here that it's very difficult to say—express me here in a limited time, but the Manitoba researched, designed and tested and finally built electric bus, which is respected in the whole world, is a very ideal example of how we can solve the climate-change issue right here in Manitoba. This is a great, great thing that has happened, and I'm proud to say that we did it right here in Manitoba. Another thing is New Flyer Industries. New Flyer Industries has demonstrated to be one of the best bus manufacturers. Where? In Manitoba. So I'm again very, very proud.

There is—today is a significant day in my life when I'm, you know, declaring that I will not be seeking re-election in 2016. It's a very difficult decision, Mr. Speaker.

I must say I loved my work and loved to be here at this great institution called the Manitoba Legislative Assembly. For the 12 years I have enjoyed being MLA representing wonderful people of Radisson, and with all the members in the Chamber debating, agreeing, disagreeing, laughing, at times crying together on issues for service of our people.

\* (15:20)

Mr. Speaker, I know there are times that people will share. We have long hours; we work in times very long hours in the evenings, in committees, and still feel so proud to be part of the system that is to work and build our better society.

I joined politics with heartfelt emotions that many of you have and all of you, I would definitely say with pride, are dedicated people to serve your own constituents.

I'd like to share again that my little background that you, perhaps, some of you may know; some of may have heard before. I was born in a small village in Bihar, India, and my father Pundit Chhedi Jha Shastri was a scholar of literature and was a professor of Sanskrit in a famous college in Lahore which is now in Pakistan.

In 1947 India was divided and my father, along with my mother, Sharda Devi, came—who came from a very affluent family, landlord family, returned to India. My mother was so strong-minded a woman she did not want to depend on her rich father and she raised us with her own resources, my father's limited

income, in a small, small, little house we started back in India.

So I would say those are the rough times of my childhood, Mr. Speaker, when I saw and witnessed sadness about poverty, a child walking—I think I've shared in the previous speeches here—was beaten by his frustrated mother because he was hungry. And I was a little boy crossing and I saw this boy being beaten, and she said I fed him yesterday only.

So you understand that pain got into my chest and still I feel that the world is far from being perfect, but we are on the process of recovering and doing that, Mr. Speaker.

I'm very, very sad to say that the whole episode of child poverty brings back the memory of my late brother, Professor Dr. Shashi Shekhar Jha, who left his position. He was a scholar in sociology, University of Winnipeg, and he left his professorship to start a centre for child development in his native town, Bihar, taking all his income—retirement income. He passed away during this process of trying to build a child development centre.

So I'm very happy he brought me to Manitoba. I was on my way to Columbia University to do my master's in engineering, but he asked me to stay in Winnipeg, and I'm here since last 45 years, and I'm so thankful to him for bringing me to the city that I love and the province of Manitoba that is so dear to me, Mr. Speaker, that I cannot express enough.

Ed Schreyer was the premier at that time, and I got a job within a week, and I think immigration was that they will tease you to say, come to Canada. Within a week I got immigration, I got a job, so it was absolutely a fantastic experience, Mr. Speaker.

I started my own business in 1979. Perhaps I had the entrepreneurial spirit and I thank that to my design of ergonomic work stations, which I see right here in this building after so many years. The people say, oh, you have still using the same desk I manufactured a long time back. So this is something that I take great pride.

I worked very hard, brought a good family, but I have to say this: The person who is so, so dear to me that is my life partner and has helped me is my wife, Rajeshwari Jha, sitting right there at the gallery. And Raj, you have been more than a life partner. She has been such a great help to me, and she also, Mr. Speaker, she was born in a very, very rich family. I was in a poor family. She came from a very rich family, but her humbleness, her character has

displayed how she has brought up my three children. And I'm so proud again to say my late brother's eldest son, Raj Shekhar, who's in Toronto, was really like my son to me, and he has really mentored and been a guardian for my three others, three children that Raj has brought up.

So one of the things that I would say that Raj—contribution in my life, not only to bring these three children up, but make them better citizens. Piyooch Jha, who is sitting also there, is an Ivey MBA and Harvard-trained executive who had worked very, very hard to build his own career, and he did not join my business because he says, Dad, I want to be independent of you and I will build my own career.

I kind of adored him. He helped me a lot. He got me ISO certification but he says not going to work for you, that this was wonderful experience, and I'm proud of you, Piyooch. I love you and I respect you for what you have done to me and what you have done to your businesses that you have made them to go to tremendous heights. So I'm very proud that he has done it.

My second son, Prabhat, who is a renowned world scientist, medical doctor, right from the University of Manitoba, and he became the Officer of Order of Canada because he is passionate about the cause of death. He has the largest study in the world he's doing. Even today when we talked he is in UK; hardly whenever I call my daughter-in-law, she says, no, he's not here; he's travelling. His passion is to find why people die premature and to stop it, prevent it.

So I'm again proud that he is the son that—Raj, thank you for bringing up the kids.

He's married to Varsha Malhotra, an economist, and have two children, and Shreya Jha is a music fan. She writes and she composes music. She was in orchestra symphony last week; I think she performed there.

Piyooch's wife, Harmeet Jha, right from Winnipeg, also is a very good teacher in the school. She shares me the story of the children—immigrant children that she raises, at times heart-breaking stories. Harmeet, I am proud of you, and they have a youngest, my sweetheart, Ria Darshana Jha. She's a 10-year-old child that is so cute and so wonderful, Mr. Speaker, I cannot tell you how she and I fight but she is my darling. She is the best child that you can think of to have fun. So, Piyooch, thank you for raising that little kid so well.

And I think the person that you, Mr. Speaker, know and the Premier (Mr. Selinger) knows well is my daughter Reena Jha, MD, FRCP. She was trained here in the University of Manitoba in medical school. She is now professor in full, director of MRI at the Georgetown University.

She has two daughters. She's married to Dr. Prakash Jha, who is also MD, FRCP, works in food development, FDA in Washington, DC. Two daughters—Chandini Jha is an activist in Georgetown University and she calls herself a senator—student senator. She is democrat. She has called Bill Clinton and met everyone, and has activism in her own university campus, fighting the cause of women protection and minorities.

So I'm very proud of Chandini. Reena tells me that don't make her a politician, but she is working very hard to go to Georgetown in the law school, and I'm very, very proud.

The youngest one, her younger one, Anjali, has tremendous amount of talent again, all around music player, and she is again dedicated to her grandmother, very, very dear. She came to my office the other night. Written on the board, Anjali is the 'bestest'; don't erase this board—I have not erased it yet. It's very dear to me, Mr. Speaker, to see how wonderful my children have done, and thank you, Raj, for bringing them up so much.

So what can I talk about my own constituency of Radisson people? That is amazing experience, very, very emotional.

When I door-knocked and peopled hugged me, they brought me inside, shared their stories. This is a tremendous amount of pride, Mr. Speaker. It makes me very emotional to see how I could do, how I could lift, and I remember the Plessis resource centre housing that I have seen kids, that have immigrants and refugees scared; when you go and try to touch, they get scared.

I was so motivated when Raj and I went and visited them and tried to say, you have in this country, Canada, the best on the planet; rise up, come and work together.

So I feel very, very fortunate that I have been able to help these children who are immigrants, but one of them could be perhaps prime minister of this country. This is how this beautiful country called Canada has developed with our own culture and ideals.

\* (15:30)

So I get very, very much carried away but I must again share with you that, as much emotional I am, I am also at times a little bit tough about decision making. So it was 2006 or so when the hog plant issue came in—to be located in St. Boniface Industrial Park. And I'm a businessman; I love business. But I did not agree, because 80 per cent of my constituents and of Transcona said, no hog plant in my backyard.

And I fought, stood up right here for my people, and I think all of you understand that we are all elected by people. And within the party ideals, within your own party ideals, if you agree, stand firm and fight for your people. I did, with the MLA from Transcona and myself and the councillors; we stopped the hog plant. And it was not located, and I am very happy that the people loved that to say because we don't want to create an atmosphere in your own backyard that people don't like.

So I'm proud to say that I did what I could do for my constituents. And I am also saying I have worked very hard for my constituency. There's a whole list of things, and I would like to thank the Premier (Mr. Selinger) here, when he was minister of Finance. The first thing I did when I went to Prendergast senior centre, the roof was leaking. It was rotten. I went there and see, at the Christmastime, 400 children are working there, and I came and talked to the then-minister of Finance. I said I need some funding. The school had no—I mean, there was very legal complications to what—whom to give, but thank God, the minister of Finance, our Premier, did allot that fund and I got the roof done. And I'm very proud. They have put my picture in Prendergast centre. I feel so proud. This is wonderful that I did that for the seniors and for the children.

So I am—we did—I have done a lot of other things, Mr. Speaker, which you know is for Transcona and the Plessis underpass and all that. I don't want to really brag about those things. I have—I called myself a mediocre or below mediocre in terms of doing things for my constituents. I had wished I had more time. I had 24 hours, multiplied by three, I would perhaps do more.

But I would say that this is something that I am extremely, extremely passionate about, seeing how can we do things that is good for. People say the hog plant issue costed you a Cabinet position. Mr. Speaker, I share with all of you, we have Cabinet ministers here that they work so hard. The member from Seine River would understand. When she was

minister of Health, somebody said—and I said—I have seen her passionate as if it was her own problem.

So we have very competent people. We have some very tremendously challenging people here that have worked hard to do things that is good for society. And I am saying I did not want to trade that to become a Cabinet minister. I'll part my ideologies never. If I have to do it all over again, I would repeat what I did again in the hog plant issue.

I would say that I have now decided I'm not to be continue—campaigning. I will miss this Chamber. I will miss this Chamber so much. I think the member from Kildonan would perhaps understand when I share with him at times my emotions. When I come here, I, at times feel angry and frustrated. But when I see why I am here, what is the purpose of my being here, that walks me long miles and it makes me feel so proud that, yes, my reason for being here is to help people, to make people go rise and be a little bit better than what they are.

I went in 2012 to the trade mission in, you know, India where I would like to share with you about our Premier's internal character. A lot of people may not understand, and I'd like to share this with you, Mr. Premier. When you went to India, we had a limousine that comes for premiers. He and his humble wife, Claudette, said, I will go in the bus—the bus which had all the delegates and everyone sitting. They came and sat with us, and the limousine people were saying, who was? Some other delegates went into the limousine. And I felt so, so humbled about the Premier's attitude of saying, we are a common person. We are not elite. We are not bosses. We are together. And, Mr. Premier, you demonstrated that value that particularly the country I come from, where even the kings, they go and be humbled and sit on the floor to say, yes, you are my brother, you are my sister, we are together. So that culture made me very proud of you, Mr. Premier, and I am saying when Denis Rocan came with me in the 2006 trade mission, he had similar values that we can't really—there isn't enough time for me to share those stories.

But I know that the character of people here. The member from River East yesterday spoke, and I say she was the minister of Multiculturalism when I was president of the India Association. I met you and at the time she was so humble, so giving, she said, yes, do that. And I thank you for bringing the PNP program that is so valuable to us and for the whole Canada.

So I had mentioned several times, we are—we don't have the monopoly of good ideas. We all here, we can make good ideas work. We can do it together.

Member from River Heights, I call him Ten-in-One. This gentleman here works ten times harder—and I don't know how he finds 10 times more time, but he works as if he was 10 MLAs together. He—such as he was the professor of my children, and they admire him for his hard work.

So I see that we have—and, Mr. Premier (Mr. Selinger), I'd like to share something else with you. When we went to Gujarat, there was a blind children's shelter, and he was—we were asked to deliver some sticks, and I saw tears in your eyes you wiped because you had a compassionate feeling about that child who was blind and hesitating to accept the stick. This is what makes me feel, what are we? We are all human beings. We are all trying to make our lives together but not for ourselves but for somebody else. That's what you're all here for, so I thank you and I'll miss you all and I don't know how to say I get overwhelmed at times.

I feel inside that I have not done much. I wish I could have done more. I wish I could have delivered. I'm passionate about Manitoba's image in the world. Whenever I go, I talk about Manitoba. Bigger businesses have come here; they say, wow, this is true? Yes, Manitoba has everything possible. North, beautiful North, beautiful south. We have a tremendous landscape, farmers, agricultural, the belt, you name it. We have everything we need and we have great people in Manitoba, but, Mr. Speaker, I am a small fry, a small, little element, but I feel very happy that I'm contributing building this particular wave of change in the world.

I have one sad thing to share with everybody that makes me feel also responsible. The member from Kewatinook, which was Rupertsland, when he made the statement on the residential school survivors. He cried, he let us, all of us, cry because we have in this country really not looked after Aboriginal children, Aboriginal people, and I, when I went to The Pas at the funeral of the member from The Pas, her father, I saw children there, hiding, terrified. Where? In my country, my Canada. No, not acceptable, Mr. Speaker.

I feel sad. We have not yet addressed that problem. I don't think that I will accept even if I'm gone from the planet; my soul will not rest in peace by looking at children in my country, my Canada,

hungry, sleeping without food and being, you know, no homes, with no running water; that's not something acceptable to me.

So I think that we have talked much about all. All I'd like to say, one man that I owe tremendous respect is called John Mann. John Mann was the man that brought me from Charleswood to say, go and run. Go and run for Marianne Cerilli's seat in Radisson. He is the man. When we got elected, Becky Barrett was the minister. He sent her a note: Withdraw my name from all boards and commissions because I want to now go and work. He donated a lot of money to the party. He is the man that I—my hat's off to.

\*(15:40)

And I am humbly saying to my promoters of the Indo-Canadian community that has given me so much love, Mr. Speaker, so much I cannot mention their names, but when I decided not to come there has been calls coming to me, why not? What do you want us to do? One guy said if you are going to quit because your wife is not well, I will send my wife to help cook food for her.

So this is how—I felt so, so humbled and loved by people who think nothing—that I am something, somebody that is trying to help. So I have great humbleness, Mr. Speaker, and I think that we have come a long way, but let us not forget our lives are not eternal. We have short times ahead of us and I think that when we look for personal needs and we think we want this or we want that, let's go beyond it.

I'd like to conclude by these lines by a famous Nobel Laureate poet Rabindranath Tagore, who says challenges and faith, he says: "Clouds come floating into my life / no longer to carry rain or usher storm / But to add colour to my sunset sky."

Then he says about faith: Faith is the bird that feels the light when the dawn is still dark.

So I feel, Mr. Speaker, the world is still open, the sky is still blue and we can work together to make this world so beautiful. But we have to really look at the doctrine of faith that we are all. And I think I congratulate all of you here, the member from Tuxedo, the member from Steinbach, I've talked to you personally, encourage you how much, the member from Charleswood, I used to live—be her constituent. All of you are a tremendous energy resource. Let us build together. Let us make Manitoba work.



And as I mentioned to you the other side of our Premier (Mr. Selinger), that is the humbleness, the character, that we are all human beings and let us make sure that we work together to make this. I will miss you guys, I'll miss this House and I love you all.

Thank you very much.

**Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Riding Mountain):**

Mr. Speaker, I—it is indeed a pleasure to rise today to speak in support of our leader's alternative throne speech, a speech that is setting the sail for our PC family's journey into the next provincial election, and I believe it will be an outcome that will see a PC government in place within this province in 2016, and I look forward to seeing that happen.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate or thank—I would like to thank the constituents of Riding Mountain for allowing me to represent them within the Manitoba Legislature for the last four years, and I say that because I've—I'm part of an amalgamation. I was the former MLA for Minnedosa; I'm now the member for Riding Mountain.

What was unique about Riding Mountain and continues to be is that that's where I grew up. That's where I was able to reconnect with so many people that I knew growing up in Angusville, in the community that I grew up in, which is approximately 100 people, and then also to a lot of the staff at the Major Pratt collegiate, who were classmates of mine, who now run the show, who are now the educators within that facility. And it's been a great opportunity for me to reconnect with a lot of people that I knew growing up.

And it also gave me the opportunity to continue to represent Minnedosa constituents who have become very near and dear to me. They were my first group. I was elected in 2003 and—in a big margin—big—a good year, the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) says. Yes, a good year; I won by 13 votes, Mr. Speaker, so I was a landslide. I was a landslide.

And it was an interesting election, and I do recall members—people that I knew that were strong Conservatives—I'd meet at the door, and it was—they were a little concerned that this mom of two small children was actually considering leaving her two small children in a community three hours away in the hands of Brad, of all people, Brad to have to be responsible for getting the kids to school. Brad, who would have to then be taking my kids to music lessons and making sure that when it was school

pictures that he had everything in line to make sure that they looked good for those pictures. And I can tell you, Mackenzie's 4th grade picture, school picture, is a riot. She did her own hair. She still loves the picture. I don't. Her ponytail was a little suspect. But it—you know what? It spoke to what our lives were like during those years when I had to leave two little ones at home with Brad and with a community, in a lot of ways. I had a lot of support from the community in Souris who helped me make this happen, make my dream happen.

*Ms. Jennifer Howard, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair*

And I worked really hard to make sure that when I was here, I was here for the people of the Minnedosa constituency, and my children knew that, Mr. Speaker. And I would go home Thursday evening, and I flew like a bat out of hell. Thank goodness there were never any cops down that road because I would not miss a band concert; I would not miss a volleyball tournament; I would not miss anything that my children were involved in. So I think I missed one band concert, and I think that was a time when I think one of them had a solo or something. You know, it was, you know, obviously the wrong one to miss.

But my kids, I think, have grown up a lot faster than a lot of other children in a lot of ways. My mother always was impressed that my kids knew how to empty a dishwasher and fill a dishwasher, and Mackenzie knew how to turn the oven on and knew how to put in a roast. And, you know, those things I'm very proud of.

My babas, my Baba Semochko and my Baba Kostuik, I know, were angels through this whole period. They watched over them and they, I'm sure, were very proud that Mackenzie was the woman of the household and, you know, Cameron and Brad were her wards, and she did a really good job, and she continues to be a very responsible young woman, and I'm just so very proud of her.

Cameron, well, you know, he's been a work in progress, and—but he's my baby. He's my baby. And he's doing very well. He's going to University of Victoria and he wants to make a lot of money, and he's a true conservative. He's a—he—there's no way—he, you know—he in debates, in the University of Victoria, he'll email me and say, you know, these lefties, you know, and I'm going, well, where did you think you were going to school in a province that really, you know, cares about these issues in ways that are different than the way you think. And

Cameron says, well, you know, this is probably the best school for me to go to because this teaches me to really debate, and I really have to think about what I'm presenting in my debates and in my discussion papers. So, you know, maybe I have raised a little politician, even though he would never admit it. He would never admit that this is a place that he would want to be.

I remember the first Throne Speech or budget, I can't remember. I'm thinking it was budget—the budget, because they were in the gallery. Somebody asked, well, aren't you going to put them on the floor? And I go, oh, not a chance in heck am I going to have my husband, who sleeps through mostly everything, no matter what, and my children down on the floor. So I put them in the gallery, and I remember looking up, and I don't know who I was sitting beside, but I tapped them, and I said, look—I think it was you, Ralph—and there was Brad and Cameron, sleeping. And Mackenzie was looking over intently.

But, you know, that's my family. You know, they—Brad was here and—involved in the whole 13 and some years for the family. He supported me; he encouraged me to do this. And you know what? I was a woman with two small kids in rural Manitoba three hours away from Winnipeg. You know, you talk about representation and the importance of having representation from different sectors and different populations of the province. Well, I'm representing something that's not that easy to do, you know? It's not that easy.

\* (15:50)

So sometimes, when I get a little passionate in my debates and I get a little angry at the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), you know, it's because, flipping goodness, I'm leaving, you know, my kids and my husband at home. And if you're not going to listen to what I have to say, then you know what? I'm going to get your attention. You know, I'm going to fight this battle and I'm going to do it as strongly and as emotionally as I can because, you know what, damn it—excuse me—but I'm leaving a lot behind.

And I didn't use my notes and I wanted to because I wrote them and I was taking so much time in putting—making sure I would thank the right people. But I think you get it. It's—this building is amazing. Members on both sides of the House, all of you are phenomenal. All 57 of us have to be so proud of what we do in this building because it's a very, very important job and every single one of you

have brought ideas forward and have shared ideas and comments that are inspiring.

So, when the member of Radisson says I wish I could have done more, man, you did a lot, you know. You showed up, you've said your piece. You know, and it's—it isn't—it's not easy because you can't always win the battle.

You know, and the member for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson) spoke about the one—you know, the opportunities where you can make a difference. Yes, isn't that amazing. You know, I remember a little boy that was suffering from epilepsy. And, you know, the family and—just said we just need help; we need to get him to Ontario, we need to get him treatment because he's at an age now where he's having fits and he's wetting his pants and we can't have that. You know, we—it's beyond his medical condition. It's now, you know, we have to do something.

And, you know—and I said you have a child, you understand. And we made it and I thank you for that, you know, because those are the moments when you feel, shucks, you know, it—this is what it's all about. This is what it's all about.

When you can have a little boy up in the gallery who's—who feels marginalized and you can work with him to put a petition together about the rights of a child and let him feel the power.

You know, I don't know how many times I read that petition, and he was in the gallery so often. And, you know, you—sometimes, you know, thinking, okay, I'm reading this again, and you look up and you go, oh, for goodness' sake, yes, you're going to read it again, because it's important for him to feel that he was part of the system and maybe even part of the change that's going to come forward. And, you know, this is opposition I'm speaking from. You know, and I feel I've made a difference.

So it—you know, when people say, oh, you know, government is where you want to be, and, you know, and I'm not going to be a part of a government. I'm part of opposition, and, you know what? I've loved it. And, you know what? Maybe my personality was better for opposition, because I am a fighter, you know. And I'm not saying government side isn't a fighter, but, you know, I think maybe my—I believe my personality fits pretty well on this side of the House. And, you know, I have no trouble going into any of my communities, and there's always a story to tell, and there's always somebody

that is thankful, and, you know, there's some that aren't thankful. But, you know, you can't please everybody.

And I had a really good teacher. Harold Gilleshammer talked me into this job. He's—we went out delivering Christmas ornaments in 2002, and I wasn't—this wasn't even on the radar. We were just—I was helping him out going to a personal-care home and we're delivering ornaments. And he encouraged me to run, and I said, are you crazy? I've got two 'smids'—small kids at home. You know, I'm not political any more. I, you know, I barely follow that stuff anymore. You know, I still did but not to that—to the extent that I felt was necessary. And he says, oh, for goodness' sake, Leanne, you're probably the most political person I know. You care about your family. You care about your community, and you can do it. So I did, and, you know, I haven't regretted it. It's been a wonderful ride. It's been an amazing experience. Health gets in the way, sometimes, but, you know, it's been a wonderful opportunity to be a part of something that only a few people get to experience. I know people who have wanted to be an MLA, have died to be an MLA and have never, ever got elected. Here I was in 2002 at Christmas thinking, I don't know, I guess, maybe, and I won. You know, and thank goodness, you know. I've loved the opportunity. I've loved the experience.

When I was asked in 2003 who my role model was, Bonnie Mitchelson, without a blink of an eye. That was easy, you know. I worked here in '88. I was a political aide in government. I was the first political aide hired in '88. I worked for Len Derkach and that's a story in itself. Len's a family friend. We've had our differences but, man, he's got a heart of gold and he's a great man, but he gave me that opportunity and then, in '88, I saw this woman, Bonnie Mitchelson, in action and I just thought, my God, you know. In '88, not a lot of women, and seeing her—

**An Honourable Member:** By constituency.

**Mrs. Rowat:** Oh, sorry. River East—the member for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson)—just deliver her lines, knew her department, knew her staff, people—she'd never walk down the hall without acknowledging you and recognizing you and made you feel important. And, again, I blew it, didn't I?

But—and to see her as a colleague and to be a part of, you know, things with Bonnie, she taught me a lot about social issues and taught me how to research and taught me how to, you know, respect

the department and know where to look. And she is an amazing woman and the longest serving woman MLA, I think, in this country. And, you know what? She deserves to be recognized for that. She deserves to be recognized for that, and I look forward to retirement with Bonnie when we can reflect and relax with a martini or whatever because we've had our few. But I'm just saying, you know, it's really neat to be able to work with Bonnie, who I've admired for a number of years.

*Mr. Speaker in the Chair*

I want to thank the table officers and the crew within the Legislative Chamber. You've been an amazing group to work with. Patricia, you've done so much for me as a Commonwealth parliamentary chair. You always made sure I was—had everything I needed when I went to meetings and felt so knowledgeable and so prepared, and I want to thank you for that and I've enjoyed that.

Mr. Speaker, we've had some good trips together, too, through my opportunity—and Brad and I really do appreciate the friendships that we've developed. And, you know, and Sheila, she's an amazing human being, and I'm so blessed to have met her, and thank you for that. Even Jay, your friend Jay, who became Brad's partner in crime on one trip, I think brings back a lot of memories and they're ones that Brad and I will continue to share, and I want to thank you for that.

Stu Briese, who's—who is on our side of the House, is—was also retiring. My goodness—he's the chick magnet, you know that? He's just hilarious. He is just—but you know what? He is so supportive. He's been to every single fundraiser. Oh, the member for Agassiz (Mr. Briese)—I'm sorry. He's been to every single—[interjection] He has no problems making jokes of himself and is so supportive. He's been to almost—I think he's been to every single one of my fundraisers in my constituency. He's a neighbouring MLA and I just—I want to wish him well in his retirement.

And my evening partners of the MLA for Tuxedo and Spruce Woods, you know, I've had so many great opportunities to grow as an individual and as a person in meeting and discussing issues with people within this building.

\* (16:00)

As the critic for Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, that was probably one of my favourite portfolios because I really enjoyed the opportunity to

meet people from another part of the province. We lived in Winnipeg for 10, 15 years, and I lived in rural Manitoba for a significant part of my life, but I've never had the opportunity to actually get to know people who live in a lot of those communities that I got to visit. And, man, they have their challenges, but they have their champions as well. There are so many—so many—powerful people that we have to be so proud of that live in those communities, and we have to continue to support them.

I just want to add we've had some really tough weeks lately in the communities that I represent. Braden Pettinger is a family friend, a classmate of my daughter's, and he's the young man who's fighting for his life in a lot of ways in the Health Sciences Centre right now. He's paralyzed from the chest down but has had some movement in his arms, so we're praying for him.

But what I want to say is I just—again, we are blessed by living in such a beautiful province. Right now, the GoFundMe account that was started just six or seven days ago has already raised \$132,000. And we're hosting a fundraiser in Souris for Braden and his family on December 26th.

So I do encourage you to go to the GoFundMe account or, you know, touch base with me if you have a gift, if you have a donation; we'll take it. This family lives in Elgin and have to travel a great amount of distance to make sure that Braden is being taken care of. So, you know, please pray for him, and if you can support him in any way, it would be greatly appreciated.

In Russell, Silverton, we lost a young woman, 18 years old, this last weekend. She was a strong 4-H member, was going to university, taking agriculture, was killed in a car accident on the weekend and, you know, devastating the family, devastating the community.

And, you know, these two incidences really put things into perspective for me professionally, as well as personally. You know, we battle here, but we really are humans, and we care about people and we—I don't know if we say enough that, you know, we appreciate what you do or we appreciate each other.

And I think that I just want to say today that I appreciate every single one of you in this room and all that you do for the—for your constituents. And Denzel Washington said once, and I'm going to quote him: At the end of the day, it's not about what you have or even about what you've done with these

accomplishments. It's about who you've lifted up and what you've made better. It's what you've given back.

And I believe that that's where I'm going to end because I think I've appreciated giving back, and I've appreciated your friendships and the discussions. And I just want to say, journey on, and I plan to come visit. But I live closer to Saskatchewan now. Tax is cheaper that way. And I'm going to leave it at that.

Thank you.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'm pleased to continue on with my response to the Throne Speech, began yesterday. And I will say at the outset that, you know, I really am sorry to see the MLAs who are retiring and leaving this place leave because they all have, you know, strong stories and they have reasons for doing what they're doing.

You know, the member for Radisson (Mr. Jha), I've known him for a number of years now, and, you know, honestly, I'm really sad to see him go because, you know, even up 'til yesterday when he phoned me to tell me that he was going to be—not running again, I firmly believed that he was going to be running in this next election.

And, Mr. Speaker, the member for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson), of course, her and I go back a long, long way. We were, in fact, elected the very same day back in 1986. And, you know, the member for River East got here in a very circuitous—I guess that's the word—way, when, in fact, she had no intention of being an MLA at all. I mean, you can imagine how many of us have had to fight nominations, signing up hundreds of members and spending a lot of money and getting them out and then sometimes not even winning. And this member, you know, this member, she—there was a big fight in her constituency and there was two candidates, I think it was, Cliff Annable being one. And they fought for the better part of a year, signed up hundreds, maybe even 1,000 members apiece, and then one of them won and then got into trouble with the law. And it was become known during the election campaign, and, just a few days before the official nomination date, the Conservative leader—I guess it was Gary Filmon at the time—you know, pulled the nomination of the other candidate and the member for River East became the candidate.

She, of course, won the election, and I think she had a very good time here. She was in government;

those were two of her probably happier years and—well, no, no, she was in opposition; I'm sorry. But I remember during the Autopac debates in 1988 where she recruited a couple of horses—I mean, we're talking about real horses here and a wagon—and she was out parading these horses down Broadway. And I always ask her, you know, whatever happened to these horses, and I think she tells me that one of them is still—I think still around at this point. But it was a great story.

So it is, you know, sad to see members leave, but, you know, I've been gone from here before too and never got a chance to make a farewell speech. So, at least, you know, on the good side, these members that are making their farewell speeches now at least have a little bit of a warning that they're not going to be here. But my time of being here was, like, I didn't get any chance to say goodbye because the prime minister called a federal election just out of the blue, didn't wait for the fixed election date legislation that he put in place. And, in fact, you know, interestingly enough, the prime minister—former prime minister, I guess it is—had three elections under his fixed election date legislation. Actually, never followed them the two times that he won, and the one and only time that he followed out of the three, you saw the results. You know, he lost.

So, you know, Mr. Speaker, I want to deal with some of the issues here directly under the Throne Speech, and, as I'd indicated yesterday, I found a very unhappy group over there when they were listening to the Throne Speech. You know, there was no smiles being cracked. There was no joy—no joy whatsoever—on that side. And I could think, you know, what was going through their head was, you know, all those past elections that they've been here, you know, and it was 1999 and 2003 and 2007 and 2011, and they're thinking, you know, we were leading all those other times too. And, you know, one of their bright lights over there told me one day—and I won't mention his name because I don't want to put him on the spot—but he said, you know, if there's a way for us to find a way to lose, we'll do it. And I think that's, you know, that was well put.

Now, you know, the—some of the highlights—and they are highlights—of the speech that put this speech kind of above all the other ones that I can remember over the last 30 years was all of the infrastructure that this government planned to put in place. And it's really put the Conservatives into a spiral, I think, a downward spiral. The leader is—I think they had a big—little caucus meeting here right after the speech

and then kind of, like, snuck out of the building to regroup because I don't think they know what hit them or they didn't expect that coming out of the Throne Speech. And now they've had to backtrack and try to figure out, well, how do we deal with this? Because, you know, if the patterns of the past repeat themselves, you know, when Sterling Lyon won in 1977, he had a program called acute protracted restraint.

\* (16:10)

And, you know, they just shut down everything. They shut down the seniors home in my constituency. It was just a big hole in the ground at that point. They shut it down. They shut down—I think it was Conawapa construction—no, Limestone construction, I believe it was. Yes, they shut down everything. And, you know, that's probably what the plan was here.

But now, you know, we've announced four interchanges on the Perimeter Highway. And, you know, the people like—the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Gaudreau) especially, they like those interchanges and they're—and the people out there are already planning for the day when those interchanges are going to be a reality.

And now we have the Grinch that's trying to steal Christmas here, the Leader of the Opposition; he's saying, oh, not so fast; you'll not going to have those interchanges, we're going to take them all away from you, right? So they're trying to kind of rebalance their approach here and say, well, you know, maybe we won't balance the budget so quick. Yes, now it's kind of out there, and maybe we won't cut back, and maybe those interchanges are not such a bad idea after all. And they're working their way around.

Now, you know, keeping things on a very positive note, Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about a project certainly that's been something I've been supporting for a long, long time. And that is the east-west power grid. And I remember making a speech one day in the House Commons, and probably this was my second or third time speaking about the east-west power grid, and Steven Fletcher was an MP and a minister at the time and came over to talk to me about that. You know, he said, it's a great speech and maybe we should start chatting about east-west power grid.

And from there we did have a few meetings and a few chats and that, you know, we were hoping

were going to produce some results but, unfortunately, the prime minister removed him from that position. But at the time he was removed he was the minister—he was a minister in charge of infrastructure for the federal government for western Canada. And he, of course, was not only in charge of this thing, but he'd helped to draw up the guidelines for it. And he had a very, very clear idea of how this east-west power grid should develop.

And I remember being in his office one day in the House of Commons and he had—on his wall, he had a big chart, you know, a big map of, you know, different transmission lines that he thought should be built. And I'm not going to get into just which, you know, which places he wanted to build a transmission line, but the man had a vision as to how the east-west power grid would contribute to the development of the country.

And the fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that, and I—you know, he's got an article in the Free Press today and he's had several other articles about the power grid and the possibilities for furthering it. But you know, the argument that I was making at the time was that in, back in 1867, to get the country to form into the country of Canada, Prime Minister John A. Macdonald promised a railway.

And, you know, Mr. Speaker, the railway didn't make any sense because the railways were largely north-south, sort of like our hydro lines at the moment. And they had to cut a railway across the country, almost an impossibility when you think about it, how many people died building the CPR trying to get through the mountains to get to the Pacific coast. It was one of—probably one of the construction marvels of the world at the time.

But it was that vision, it was that commitment to building that railway that helped forge us into an east-west country and keep us away from being part of the, you know, united—the expanded United States, which is where things were headed at that time.

And so it's often occurred to me that we should be doing the same with a power grid, that we should be selling—and I have, by the way, no problem selling power to the United States. The more power we sell them, the happier I am. So I will build even more transmission lines to the United States and sell more power down there. We've only developed half of our power capacity in Manitoba at the current time. But I've always thought that we should be looking at moving to the west and to the east.

And, you know, Mr. Speaker, back in 1990 when Bob Rae became the premier—NDP premier of Ontario, and Howard Pawley was the premier in Manitoba, we did try to get a deal with Ontario, and not only that, but when Gary Filmon was the premier, the Conservative government of Gary Filmon did work with Bob Rae to try to get a power line built to Ontario, and, for a while, it looked like it was a possibility. But for whatever reason it didn't work out.

In terms of going west, we've had NDP governments in Saskatchewan over the years; we've had Ed Schreyer government in Manitoba, and, at that time, they did look at all those possibilities. But for one reason or another it didn't work out, and it really does not have to do so much with political parties and political labels. At the end of the day, the province is trying to sell the power and the other jurisdictions are trying to buy the power.

And so what has happened in recent times, and that's why, you know, Stephen Fletcher is—thinks that we are now got a—the strongest argument we've ever had for building the east-west power grid is that he claims that the infrastructure money is still there, and it was, like, two years ago, and it's not only just Liberal—the new Liberal government that's providing infrastructure money, although that's part of it. The Liberal government is planning to pony up even more money as part of their \$10-billion deficit that they're planning to run for each of the next few years. There's also the existing money that the Harper government had, and, as long as the infrastructure project is crossing a boundary, then it qualifies or can qualify for this federal money.

So that's the criteria here. So, if we're building a transmission line, for example, if you were to build a transmission line from, say, Thompson to Fort McMurray, if you were to do that, then you would be crossing Saskatchewan border, and, as soon as you do that, you end up qualifying for this infrastructure money. And so that's part of his argument.

There's also an argument to be made for dealing with the Ring of Fire in Ontario around Thunder Bay area. There is an untold potential for development of all sorts of mines in that region, and that is going to have to—will have to provide enormous amounts of power, and, if we don't try to build our lines that way, well, we are going to be usurped and that market is going to be taken by the Ontario people building lines out from Ontario. So whoever gets their—the power agreement done first and builds the

lines is going to have a monopoly on providing power to the Ring of Fire.

And so that is a—you know, I'm just giving you some of the—two of the areas that you could look at. Another area, of course, is Saskatchewan, and we're not talking about a huge, huge, market there at the moment, but you know that the government, this government, the NDP government in this province has announced a plan to sell power to Saskatchewan. And, you know, I know the Conservatives are not too happy to hear about all of this, but the fact of the matter is that, you know, Brad Wall is a willing partner here. He is a willing buyer of power and we will be building AC lines out there to Saskatchewan over the next two or three years, I guess, and we'll be selling, as the member points out, 125 megawatts of power to Saskatchewan, and he said with the potential of 500.

\* (16:20)

And the other point here is I've got to see the look on those Conservatives' faces if and when we sign a power deal with, say, Saskatchewan or Alberta, where the Saskatchewan government, for example, actually will own a piece of our next Hydro project. Well, that would be very hard, I can see, for these people to take because I know they are so enamoured with everything in Saskatchewan these days.

But, you know something, Mr. Speaker, I will not have a problem with a Saskatchewan contribution to our next hydro project, or I would not have a problem, nor will the people of Elmwood, I don't believe, have a problem with a contribution from the Alberta government, if they were to participate with us. I mean, these are all sort of ideas that these titans of industry the member—the Minister of Finance (Mr. Dewar) calls them. I guess it's, what, titans of industry and—[interjection]—captains of commerce. You see? I'm expecting that these captains of commerce would come up with ideas like this.

You see, Mr. Speaker, this is the speech that I would be expecting members opposite to be making. I would be expecting somebody from the opposition bench, if they were indeed trying to contribute to the debate and trying to see Manitoba succeed and help Manitoba succeed, that they would be coming up with ideas like this, like Steven Fletcher, you know, has come up with. And I looked around and I even said to him, you had all those Conservative members of Parliament from Manitoba, and it was only one

who was making any sense and was making any kind of contribution to helping Manitoba further our markets as far as hydro is concerned.

And, of course, you know, the argument's there, of course, for the need for Alberta and Saskatchewan to get off of coal-fired plants. And a matter of fact, all you have to do is take a look at Fletcher's article in the Free Press today where he points out that in, I think it is in Alberta, 51 per cent of their power is generated by coal and 38 per cent by natural gas. So I would think that Alberta is probably the first place that the Finance Minister should be knocking on the door and making a suggestion that we can solve some problems here, that we can get Alberta involved and we can send power, clean power, to Fort McMurray and help the Premier of Alberta out with her coal issues.

And we could also be very helpful to the Premier of Saskatchewan. We could help out Saskatchewan if the Minister of Finance wants to go to meet Brad Wall and help him out and replace—in Saskatchewan, I believe that we are dealing with almost equal. In Alberta, it was 51 per cent coal; in Saskatchewan, I believe it's 44 per cent coal and 29 per cent natural gas. Because we have the hydro capacity; they don't. So doesn't it make sense to people out there that we have an opportunity here of having a win-win situation where we can sell clean power to Saskatchewan, clean power to Alberta, and they solve their greenhouse gas problems in—as part of the process, right?

So that's what—that's the kind of question that I would be expecting from the opposition in this province. And do we hear anything like that? Do—have we had a single member over there talk about this issue? Not a bit. It's basically just criticize, criticize, criticize and conspire to take away the member for St. Norbert's (Mr. Gaudreau) interchanges because that's what they're out to do. Four interchanges and he's going to be very popular MLA out in his constituency because to—in order to get, you know, four interchanges on the Perimeter Highway is something, you know, pretty noteworthy, I would say.

Now, you know, let's get back to the—to Winnipeg and the infrastructure program that we have here in the city. The—I don't think the Conservatives opposite, you know, counted on an announcement that we would extend the infrastructure program. We have the strongest economy in Canada in 2016, or will have, according

to the Conference Board of Canada. They don't like to hear that. They don't like to hear that at all.

I just have a great deal of difficulty, you know, understanding where they're coming from over there because, you know, they criticize, you know, take things like the population's declining, right, that's one of their fables that they make up. The fact of the matter—the population is declining, you know. And when reality is everybody knows that without immigration, where population is going up.

You know, you can't find an apartment to rent in Winnipeg. You can't find a house. People are lined up to buy new houses. Drive out to Transcona; you get lost out there in those developments. They're popping up houses quicker than the Speaker can keep track of them. There are that, that much construction—and not only Transcona. You pick every area, every new development; we have never seen development like that in our lifetime.

There was excitement around this place, Manitoba, during Duff Roblin's years, you know, construction of the floodway. There was a lot of excitement around here when Ed Schreyer was here, brought in a lot of the programs we rely on today. But nothing, nothing, nothing is quite like the big boom that we've had for the last 15 years. I mean, it's unbelievable. It would take me—I've only got four minutes left—it would take me way more than four minutes to just list some of the projects. Who would have believed that in 15 years, we would have built a new airport? Who would have believed it? I mean, it's just project after project.

The—just in a few days, the opposition will be partying, I would expect, at the new Convention Centre expansion. And on and on and on; I mean, wherever we look, there is major construction. And, you know, they say, well, the interest rates are low. Yes, the interest rates are low, and that's why we're able to do the things we're doing. When—if you take interest rates and have them at, you know, where they were in the 1980s, of course, you're not going to be able to do the construction that we're doing right now. Matter of fact, we are overheated in construction.

We have—gave the City \$60 million, I believe it was, last year, to do roads. And do you know something, Mr. Speaker? They couldn't spend it. They couldn't get enough contractors. And you know, we don't want to overheat to the point where we've got contractors coming in from Alberta and Saskatchewan, for example. We don't want to do

that. So you want to keep your workforce employed and you should—this should work in a very smooth way, and you just keep constructing things and building roads and so on. But the fact of the matter is this government provided the money to the City for two years now, and guess what? For the second year in a row—the second year in a row—the City's been unable to use up all the money we provided. And I believe that we're simply tacking it on to next year's money, but we're pretty much at capacity.

So, you know, I wanted to talk briefly about the Louise Bridge, because it's something that is a big, big issue in my constituency. And I can tell you that back in August we, a group of us, you know, printed up some T-shirts and made some signs and we printed—we ran some ads in the local Herald magazine. We run a leaflet that has been distributed throughout every house in the constituency, basically doing a survey, Mr. Speaker, surveying the voters to see if they want the Louise Bridge replaced on the same site with a new four-lane bridge, two lanes in each direction.

Well, let me tell you, it has been overwhelmingly responding in the yes. People want this bridge replaced. And do you know, Mr. Speaker, there are—can anybody tell me how many two-lane bridges there are in Winnipeg still? You know, and I've only got a minute and 27 seconds left, folks, so, but I can tell you, one is Arlington Bridge. Another one is Redwood in Elmwood, which is the oldest bridge in the city, and the Louise, which is almost in sight of it.

\* (16:30)

So I have—our Elmwood constituency is home to two out of the three two-lane bridges left. And Louise Bridge isn't even the oldest. It's a hundred and, like, six years old, and Redwood's even older than that. So it is about time when we are talking about—I think it's 25,000 cars a day—25,000 cars per day are going over this hundred-plus year old bridge, and there's bottlenecks. I mean, I'm out there in the middle of the road handing out leaflets—well, I'm out there handing out leaflets and I can walk all the way from the bridge out to the LaSalle Hotel and hand them out because the cars are all stopped. There's like hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of them standing out there. And so we have to get this job done and it's this government, Mr. Speaker, that is going to—I believe—and this Premier (Mr. Selinger), who is going to get this job done and we are going to have a nice, new bridge



that makes the traffic move in a much more reasonable way. Rather than a two-lane, we're going to have a four-lane bridge.

So thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Midland):** It's been an interesting afternoon. Question period just seemed to go on forever today. I don't know why that was, but it was certainly interesting anyway.

But, Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to start out by offering my condolences to the Alberta MLA, Manmeet Bhullar, to his family, on his sudden passing yesterday. It's something that reminds us of how fragile life is and, for many of us rural MLAs who travel the roads frequently and put a lot of miles on, it certainly brings home just somehow the life is—how fragile life really can be and how things can change just instantly. And what's even more tragic is that this particular man had stopped to help someone else on the road and then was hit by another vehicle, and giving a helping hand to someone cost his life, and that's how tragic that is.

And I was reminded of this. I've—I'm sure we've all lost friends or relatives in highway accidents. I was thinking back to a good friend of mine that was killed in a traffic accident, and it's probably getting to be close to 20 years ago now, a young fellow, and it wasn't on the highway. It was on a rural road, and, as we talk about highway accidents, we have to remember that these rural roads that we travel have their danger points, too, and I travel a lot of gravel roads, a lot of rural roads in my constituency, and I hope that I continue to. But I've always thought of hidden intersections when I come to them, because he was killed in a hidden intersection. It was—a car struck him from the side because he didn't slow down and how tragic that was, both him and his partner at the time were killed in that.

And so my condolences to their family, and it's a reminder to all of us to drive safely and to keep that in mind as we drive, and it doesn't matter whether you're driving a rural road, whether you're driving a highway across Manitoba or whether you're driving here in the city. Just think safety all the time and I hope that all of us will keep that in mind and—so that we don't have to have tributes like we did today here in—at the beginning of the session today.

And, of course, also interesting to listen to the member for Radisson (Mr. Jha), the member for Riding Mountain (Mrs. Rowat) today in their addresses to the Chamber. It's always interesting to

hear the family side of it, to hear their experiences as being a legislator and their experiences within the Legislative Assembly. Of course, yesterday we had our colleague, the member for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson), give a presentation. The member from Agassiz is retiring; also pay tribute to the members from Dauphin, Seine River, Southdale, St. Vital, Gimli. We know that there's always changes within this Chamber. There always will be changes and, with the retirements like this, there is going to be a turnover, and, of course, the optimistic side of me tells me there's going to be an even greater change in this Chamber after April 19, 2016.

So, with this being the final Throne Speech of this government before next spring's election, it's important that we both review events and look ahead.

And, first of all, I want to thank my constituents in Midland constituency for their continued support. It's an honour to serve the fine people living in our communities. I have 20-some communities within my constituency, and they all have—just—they're filled with great, terrific people.

As an MLA, it's always inspiring to attend events, and I'll use the local foundations as an example. When you attend the local foundations, they're raising money locally; they're enhancing their communities through the disbursement of the interest earned by the foundations back into their respective communities. This is community members serving their communities, and it's—not only are the evenings a lot of fun, but they're also serving such a great cause for their communities.

There is an entrepreneurial spirit throughout Midland constituency. Just a few examples of—there are a number of plants that are cooking soybeans. Soybean acreage has grown exponentially throughout Manitoba, and for those who are unaware, you can't feed a raw soybean; you have to actually cook it in order to break down the proteins in it. And we have several facilities that are cooking soybeans.

Mr. Speaker, we have a new, state-of-the-art, soon-to-be-federally-inspected meat processing plant opening. It's actually open now and operating on a provincial licence. My understanding is that federal licence is imminent, going to happen any day now. And this is—the contrast with this is—this is private enterprise building a state-of-the-art, federally inspected slaughter plant, not at all like the \$12-million failure of this NDP government from the various plants that they tried to—they squandered

ranchers' money; they lost taxpayers' money. We now have a state-of-the-art plant in Carman, and that will serve the cattle industry throughout Manitoba, and it'll enhance the cattle industry, and it'll enhance the local economy, hiring—they expect to have up to 80 employees working in that plant. And that's a terrific boon for our local communities.

We have local food initiatives with direct marketing to consumers. I was on a tour back in, I believe, it was September. We visited a number of these local food initiatives that are direct marketing their products to the consumer. They have their challenges with the rules and regulations by this government, but they continue to thrive in spite of that. We also have an operation in Midland constituency that's actually milling grains: wheat, rye, a number of other grains for sale direct to consumers. And they're actually stocking some of our local store shelves as well with this. And it was very interesting day, and it's just great to see this kind of operation happening within our—within my constituency. We have new housing developments, new retailers for goods and services throughout Midland. There are lots of great things happening.

But Midland constituency also has its share of challenges, mostly created by an old, tired, dysfunctional government, the roadblocks that they put up to, because this government really doesn't like private enterprise, and so they—it's—you have to work around governments in order to be able to build this.

There are transportation challenges in my area. Roads and bridges are falling apart and not being replaced at an alarming rate. Just one instance, there was a bridge that was burned. The insurance on this has been paid, but the—to the provincial government, but the bridge has never been replaced. And this goes back—I believe this would go back at least five to six years ago now that this happened.

\* (16:40)

Another instance is Highway 13 has not been finished through Carman in spite of the fact that the work was scheduled to be completed this year, and the Town of Carman has their share of the costs set aside, and yet this project was delayed this year. I guess it's because this government bases their infrastructure rebuilding on conspicuous construction and not return on investment.

There is a lot of traffic on that highway, on a north-south interchange, and there's a great need for this piece of highway to be rebuilt. My office in

Carman, my constituency office, is actually right-faces onto Highway 13 and, believe me, the desk rattles when the trucks go by, the road is so rough. And yet this delay this year—no explanations from the government, but just—they decided not to do it, and I guess maybe they don't think there's any votes in it for them and that's why they didn't do it.

Highway 34 is in contention for the worst road, worst highway in Manitoba, although my colleague from Arthur-Virden will probably argue with me that he's got lots of roads that may be in just as bad or worse shape, but it's not only the terrible condition of the highway, it's the safety issue that is for the local residents. Ambulances, for instance, have to slow down going down that road. It is so rough they will actually, I've been told, they will literally throw a patient out of the bed if they try to make any time at all down there, and this is a safety issue.

That highway is also under load restrictions in the spring. There is presently no north-south connection between the US border and Highway No. 1 capable of year-round truck access without travelling 150 kilometres out of the way, and this is a drain on the local economy, especially to the potato, grain, and local manufacturing industries. They either have to take reduced loads—quite often they're diverting down municipal roads which cause infrastructure failures on the municipal roads, and this highway is continuing to be just in terrible condition.

We have serious doctor shortages throughout central region. We have—now we have municipalities that have been downloaded with the cost for doctor searches. We have municipalities spending hundreds of thousands of dollars in doctor searches. This should be the provincial government and the RHA doing this, and—but they've downloaded this onto the municipality.

And then there's the inability for this government to retain or replace doctors who are either retiring, and there are a number of doctors who are reaching retirement age and wish to slow down in their practice, or, more frequently, they're leaving the province. And we have severe shortages across all of Southern Health unit RHA and we're not able to replace these doctors, and it is creating hardships for everyone, especially seniors and families. They're now faced with highway medicine, courtesy of the NDP, because they have to travel long distances in order to try and find medical help when it—when we have facilities there that are under used because

we have a lack of doctors and staff within those facilities.

And there is the frustration of parents and teachers with the NDP no-fail policy, and I have grandchildren in school and I am constantly checking on them. I'm very proud of my grandchildren because they do pick up books and read, and that's a tribute to their mother and father because they shut the TV off. They tell these kids—they help these kids to read, and that is such a great thing, but we have so many kids that are not learning to read. Manitoba's kids are last in reading, math and science scores when compared to any other jurisdiction across Canada, and we're getting worse with every passing day under this NDP administration.

This is just a couple of examples of how NDP waste and mismanagement is affecting front-line services. There's anger, confusion and chaos created within our local municipalities courtesy of the NDP's forced amalgamations. I know the AMM convention is on these days, and there is a lot of unhappiness with this government and how they've been treated by this government. There are several municipalities in my constituency which were forced to amalgamate, and they're still trying to pick up the pieces by the unilateral action of a dysfunctional NDP government.

These municipalities that have been forced to amalgamate are still trying to get the agreements in place that needed to be redone. They're facing challenges within the community because there's the rural municipalities been combined with urban municipalities, and it's a differential tax rate in there.

And it's—this forced amalgamation was probably the biggest blunder of this provincial government in—because of the way it was done. If they would have let—if they would have used a carrot approach instead of a stick approach, there were municipalities that were—had been talking about amalgamating and were willing to look at this, but instead, they forced so many municipalities that were not—nowhere near that to amalgamate. And now they're still trying to pick up the pieces from this forced amalgamation.

Manitobans have also expressed their frustration, their anxiety and disbelief created by this failed fiscal policies of this broken NDP government: their inability, this NDP government's inability to curb their spending addiction; the higher annual deficits, and deficits continuing to get higher and higher each year with no plan at all to ever balance this budget; the massive borrowing of debt, resulting in the first

credit downgrade in 30 years, which will have a huge negative impact on the province for years to come.  
*[interjection]*

And I see the Finance Minister shaking his head, says the debt hasn't grown. Our debt has grown from \$18 billion to \$36 billion in just six years. Did you know that Manitoba now has their very own Six Million Dollar Man? The member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger) is no Lee Majors, but we do have our very own Six Million Dollar Man, because this Premier, this member for St. Boniface, doubled the provincial debt from \$18 billion to \$36 billion in just six years. The Premier now has the distinction of increasing the provincial debt by \$6 million a day. That is huge. Every day this Premier has spent \$6 million more than the revenues coming in, despite the highest tax increases in a generation. Manitobans are paying more and getting less.

No amount of taxpayer-paid, feel-good advertising is going to help the NDP because they've broken the trust of Manitobans and further broken that trust by imposing a vote tax to help pay for their internal dysfunction. Too ashamed to go out and ask for support. Instead, what they do is they dip into our children and grandchildren's future to pay for their own dysfunctional party. Our children and grandchildren are now faced with paying this massive debt with the interest charges going to moneylenders in Toronto and New York, rather than front-line services which continue to be hurt.

This Throne Speech is a true indication of Manitobans paying more and getting less. This Throne Speech is a litany of broken promises and a desperate attempt to erase 16 years of NDP mismanagement, containing 50 new promises, which, if they did keep their promise, which doesn't happen these days, but if they did keep their promises, it would cost over 5 and a half billion dollars in new debts and deficits.

\* (16:50)

The only way that they can pay for these new promises will be to increase the sales tax, whether it be 9 per cent, 10 per cent, and another new round of tax hikes imposed on Manitobans. And I can see the Finance Minister saying, no, this is nonsense. This is ridiculous. We heard this last time. This was exactly what the Premier said last time when asked about a sales tax increase. When asked about a new round of taxes, he said, no, that's ridiculous; it's not going to happen. And then within weeks of getting elected, they increased taxes, and then that wasn't enough.

They broadened the sales tax. Still not enough. Then they increased the sales tax, and they will do it again because that's the only way that they can pay for their promises.

Always have to remember that this was the Premier and all of his NDP colleagues who promised not to raise taxes during the last election and then immediately proceeded to raise all taxes at a historical rate: broken trust, broken government. And Manitobans are tired of the same old NDP broken promises.

Another NDP broken promise: The Premier (Mr. Selinger) and the—if I—I hope I have it right now—it's the former, former, former Finance minister told Manitobans the west-side waste line, Bipole III, would not cost Manitobans 1 cent, not 1 cent. So I went back and looked at it, even just within my own residential hydro rates. I went back 10 years on my residential hydro rate because this government loves to look back. So I thought, well, then I'll look back too. My hydro rate, not the consumption but my hydro rate, has increased 26 per cent in the last 10 years. That's the rate that I'm paying. It's increased 26 per cent. And Manitoba Hydro has indicated that my rate will at least double or triple again to pay for the NDP Americanization of Manitoba Hydro.

Mr. Speaker, this has really severe consequences for many Manitoba Hydro customers across my constituency, including low-income earners and many communities within my constituency, communities and farms that don't have access to natural gas. This is a huge cost increase to these people, and it's hurting them financially.

The NDP push to Americanize Manitoba Hydro is the most costly mistake in Manitoba history because they're subsidizing—we, as Manitobans, are subsidizing the sale to export markets in the US. You're penalizing Manitoba customers, producing it for 14 cents and selling it into the Americans for 3 cents, the Americanization of Manitoba Hydro, just another example of how Manitobans are paying more and getting less.

And just when you think the NDP can't stoop any lower, they stoop lower. After expropriating some of the most productive farmland in Manitoba for the west-side waste line, Bipole III, now the NDP has resorted to a new tactic. They're using the contractors as a buffer to protect themselves from landowners who are understandably upset about this expropriation. They're using the contractors to buffer

themselves in order to try and push the construction timelines of this west-side waste line.

These are not Manitoba values. This is a desperate NDP government trying to hang on to power at any cost. Manitobans are tired of the same old NDP broken promises. Manitobans are honest, sincere, generous people. This Throne Speech is an insult to all Manitobans. It's been described as a Hail Mary pass and attempt to buy Manitobans with our children's and our grandchildren's money, all the while hoping Manitobans will forget about the dismal broken-promise-and-mismanagement record of the NDP for the past 16 years.

When the election campaign comes next spring, the only thing the NDP will have—there's only two things that the NDP will have: they'll have their broken promises, their false promises and distancing themselves from their own mismanagement, and the internal dissent from where two thirds of the caucus doesn't even support the Premier right now.

The other thing they will have is fear, and it's fear that they will run on because—but Manitobans know better than that. They don't believe this government. They won't believe the fear mongering of this tired NDP government because Manitobans are tired of the same old broken NDP promises by a tired, broken NDP government. Manitobans are tired of the NDP waste and mismanagement affecting front-line services. Manitobans are tired of paying more and getting less. Broken trust, broken government. *[interjection]*

The member for Point Douglas (Mr. Chief) asked me for one positive thing, and I will close—I will close—on one positive thing. A change for the better is coming. It just can't come soon enough.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Mohinder Saran (Minister of Housing and Community Development):** Mr. Speaker, I am so honoured to be a part of this progressive, forward-looking vision for Manitoba. We are presenting a clear choice for Manitoba's future, and I'm proud of our plan to drive Manitoba forward. We will continue to make living in Manitoba affordable with the supports families need.

Everyone has worked extremely hard this year, MLAs and staff alike. I'm lucky enough to have some very dedicated staff and volunteers at my constituency office, and I thank them for it.

Some of our colleagues have decided to retire from provincial politics next year. I would like to thank them for their services and wish them luck in their future endeavours.

Our government has worked hard this year to make Manitoba a great province to live in. I'm so proud of what we have accomplished. Our province is the most affordable place to live in the country. We passed legislation that ensures Manitoba families could afford their home heating, electricity and auto insurance rates. Now, we have the cheapest utility bundle in Canada.

By eliminating interest on student loans, we are making college and university education more affordable. We eliminated our small-business tax, so small-business owners can earn more income and contribute more to our economy.

Our Seniors' School Tax Rebate saves seniors up to \$470 this year because our government wants to make seniors' lives more affordable.

Our province is predicted to have one of the strongest economies in the country. According to a recent Free Press article, our booming economy means our province is protected from the threat of recession. Manitoba's in safe hands. The Conference

Board of Canada rated our Premier (Mr. Selinger) No. 1 to grow the economy. Early this month, a Winnipeg Free Press article announced that Manitoba had the lowest unemployment rate in Canada.

In yesterday's Free Press, economist Jim Stanford talked about a new era in fiscal policy in the wake of the global chronic stagnation. Economics 101, emphasis on the immediate elimination of deficits has been exchanged for a focus on expanded deficit financing to inject vitality into stagnant economies. Investments in infrastructure can inject short-term and long-term benefits like boosting employment and incomes and creating a more efficient economic infrastructure.

Our government boosted spending after the recession, which allowed our deficits to shrink more every year and, with interest rates on bonds barely above zero, actually lower our burden of debt.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable Minister of Housing and Community Development (Mr. Saran) will have 26 minutes remaining.

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

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, November 24, 2015

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