

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

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(Hansard)

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Fortieth Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALLAN, Nancy	St. Vital	NDP
ALLUM, James, Hon.	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	NDP
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
SMOOK, Dennis	La Verendrye	PC
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	PC
STRUTHERS, Stan	Dauphin	NDP
SWAN, Andrew	Minto	NDP
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WIGHT, Melanie, Hon.	Burrows	NDP
WISHART, Ian	Portage la Prairie	PC
<i>Vacant</i>	Gimli	—
<i>Vacant</i>	Southdale	—

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, November 26, 2015

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: Good afternoon, everyone. Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 9—The Court of Queen's Bench Small Claims Practices Amendment Act

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I move, seconded by the Minister of Agriculture, that Bill 9, The Court of Queen's Bench Small Claims Practices Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le recouvrement des petites créances à la Cour du Banc de la Reine, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, this bill enables greater use by Manitobans of the small claims court by raising the maximum amount that can be pursued in that court, and that is achieved by moving the amount to regulation. And we are now seeking input on what that amount should be.

Thank you.

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

Hon. Kerri Irvin-Ross (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to table the 2014-2015 annual report for the ALL Aboard Manitoba poverty reduction and social inclusion strategy.

Mr. Speaker: Any further tabling of reports?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

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

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Mineral Resources): Mr. Speaker, I have the ministerial statement. I'm desperately looking for my copies to provide to members of the House.

Mr. Speaker, I'm asking leave of the House to deliver my statement while copies are produced.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to permit the minister to proceed with his ministerial statement and then copies will be provided to the appropriate members of the House shortly? *[Agreed]*

Holodomor Awareness Week

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you and I want to thank all members of the House for providing me leave.

Mr. Speaker, from 1932 to 1933, the Stalin regime deliberately induced a famine that killed an estimated 7 million Ukrainians. This regime sentenced Ukrainians to a horrifying, slow death by starvation in an attempt to destroy their hopes for a free and independent Ukraine.

One of the difficult things about the Holodomor is the question: Why didn't people know of this outside of Ukraine? Well, how is it today? We really do not know what is happening inside Syria today. How is it we couldn't confirm Hitler's murderous acts?

My father lived in Ukraine during this period. I asked him many times. He did not know; he lived in that part of the Ukraine controlled by Poland. Stalin's regime not only murdered, but they covered up.

The horror has left a deep scar on the Ukrainian community throughout the world, including here in Manitoba, where many survivors and their descendants, some survivors here today, have made their home.

To honour the memory of those we lost, we mark the fourth Saturday of November as Holodomor Ukrainian Famine and Genocide Memorial Day. November 23rd to 29 is also National Holodomor Awareness Week.

I encourage Manitobans to take in some of the events over the next several days and tell the story of the Holodomor. Listen to a presentation at the University of Manitoba. Visit the new Canadian Museum for Human Rights and find the gallery on level 4 called Breaking the Silence. Attend a memorial service. Visit the monument, mother and child, at Winnipeg City Hall. Or visit the monument,

Bitter Memories of Childhood, on the west side of the Legislature.

Joining us in the gallery are members from the Holodomor Awareness committee of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, who have all presented members of the Legislature kindly with a book about the Holodomor. Thank you to the UCC and the League of Ukrainian Canadians for making sure that the stories of the Holodomor are told. We promise to never forget those who suffered from this tragedy.

Events in the world tragically repeat themselves. This has been the sad story of the people of Ukraine. Yet in their remembrance of this tragic event and, more important, through the spirit and unrelenting resolve of the Ukrainian people, a new Ukraine has emerged.

In modern Ukraine, where as we speak, the Ukrainian people strive to preserve democracy, we join them. We join them through our remembrance of the past and hope for a truly free, united Ukraine as we go forward.

We who are blessed to live on the banks of the Red and the Assiniboine share our remembrance, faith, hope and dreams with those on the banks of the Dnieper.

Vichnaya pamyat. [Eternal is their memory.]

Mr. Ron Schuler (St. Paul): Mr. Speaker, our hearts and prayers are with the Ukrainian community in Manitoba and throughout the world this week, Holodomor Awareness Week, as we remember a very dark chapter in the history of Ukraine and the world.

In 1932 to 1933, Joseph Stalin's communist regime committed genocide on the Ukrainian people, killing approximately 10 million Ukrainians in an effort so well suppressed that to this day, historians still don't know the exact number of lives lost. This genocide is known as the Holodomor, based on the two Ukrainian words: hunger and kill. There was hardly a home in Ukraine where someone hadn't died of starvation.

In Canada and Ukraine, Holodomor is marked for remembrance on the fourth Saturday November. In two days from now, hundreds of Manitoba families will stand in the cold at Winnipeg City Hall to hold small loaves of bread with candles in them, marking the prayer service for the 82nd anniversary of the Ukrainian Holodomor.

The people of Ukraine hold a historic place at the heart of Manitoba, with many families in our province tracing their roots to this European country. My father, Reinhold Schuler, was born in Volhynia, Ukraine.

Last September, a monument to the Holodomor was unveiled on the grounds at the Manitoba Legislature as a sombre memorial to the forced starvation of millions of Ukrainian men and women and children.

In the words of Viktor Yushchenko, president of Ukraine, and I quote: I address you on behalf of a nation that lost about 10 million people as a result of the Holodomor genocide. We insist that the world learn the truth about all crimes against humanity. This is the only way we can ensure that criminals will no longer be emboldened by indifference. Unquote.

When good men and women stay silent, those with evil intentions win. Mr. Speaker, let us never forget.

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

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave to permit the honourable member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) to speak to the ministerial statement? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, bread could have saved us then. Remembrance will save us now. These are the words on the front of the book which has been provided by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress to all of us. I think we must thank the Ukrainian Canadian Congress and all the work that they have done to make sure that there is much better awareness of the Holodomor in 1932-33.

The story of the Holodomor is one of the most tragic and saddest chapters in human history. And, clearly, we all need to be aware of this and we need to have much broader knowledge, because it is not just about learning about what the past was, it is about how we proceed now and into the future to make sure that events like this do not happen again.

Mr. Speaker, every day I receive emails from the Ukrainian Canadian Congress about the situation which exists right now in Ukraine. And the awareness of what's happened in the Holodomor makes us all the more aware and conscious of what is happening right now, and that we must, in lieu of what happened then but particularly in terms of what

is happening right now, stand up and support people in Ukraine, people who are from Ukraine in Canada.

* (13:40)

And it is a situation which should never be buried like the Holodomor was in the 1930s. It must be brought to light, and one of the best things that we can ever do is to bring these circumstances to light, because then people will react and react in a way that helps to figure out how to address them and how to prevent these in the future.

I want to close just by thanking, again, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress for the tremendous effort that they have put into this. And this book published by the League of Ukrainian Canadians, the Ucrainica Research Institute is a phenomenal book, and I just want to pay tribute to all those who were involved in producing it and helping us to better understand what happened.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Are there any further ministerial statements?

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Seeing none, before I move on to members' statements, I'd like to draw the attention of honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us today Oksana Bondarchuk, president, Ukrainian Canadian Congress, Manitoba council; we have Myroslava Pidhirnyj, president, League of Ukrainian Canadians, Manitoba branch; we have Irka Balan, Valya Noseworthy, chairs of Holodomor Awareness and Education Committee; and Mrs. Sonia Kushliak, Holodomor survivor, and her daughter, Halyna Kushliak-Sutherland, who are the guests of the honourable Minister of Mineral Resources (Mr. Chomiak).

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

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Mr. Speaker: We'll now move on to members' statements.

Cherry Karpyschin and Prairie Theatre Exchange

Ms. Nancy Allan (St. Vital): Prairie Theatre Exchange has just premiered their latest production, *Butcher*, to rave reviews. It's yet another play in the theatre's 300-some canon, further establishing it as one of Canada's most respected theatres.

PTE owes much of its success to the general manager, Cherry Karpyschin, who has decided to retire after 34 years with the company. Today she is joining us in the gallery, along with her PTE associates Tracey Loewen, Haanita Seval and Carman Johnston.

Our province, especially Winnipeg, has a vibrant theatre scene, and our government is committed to keeping it alive and flourishing. Our department of Tourism, Culture, Heritage and Sport has committed to giving PTE \$5,000 so they may continue to spotlight the work of local artists and educate young people in their theatre school.

Cherry has decided her career to Winnipeg's theatre community—has dedicated her career. She has created productive relationships with the actors and administration. Under her leadership, PTE has been very successful, with annual revenues exceeding \$2 million. She has lent her talents to the National Film Board, the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce and many others.

During her time at PTE, they also increased theatre program—pramming aimed at encouraging Winnipeg's inner-city and at-risk youth to tell their own stories through art. Cherry has always nurtured PTE's commitment to showcasing local Manitoba artists and telling stories from a prairie perspective.

Thanks in large part to Cherry's energy and her spirit, PTE has been producing critically acclaimed plays for 43 years. These stories challenge Manitobans to think about themselves and their communities differently.

Cherry, thank you so much for telling Manitoba's stories and sharing your talent with our theatre community. All the best as you tackle new projects.

Riding Mountain National Park

Mr. Reg Helwer (Brandon West): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to compliment the actions of staff at Riding Mountain National Park with respect to dealing with the threat of invasive species. They have put people and resources in place to try and keep invasive species out of the lakes of the national park. There were eight staff involved in the inspection and decontamination of watercraft this year. Contrast this to the halting and failed attempts to deal with invasive species by the Minister of Conservation.

Mr. Speaker, Riding Mountain National Park staff inspected over 2,000 watercraft, all types of watercraft: powerboats, fishing boats, sailboats, catamarans, canoes, kayaks, paddleboards. You name it, they inspected it. Invasive species can be transferred by any watercraft. Park staff also decontaminated 40 watercraft that had come into the park from contaminated waters, mostly in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, they also educated watercraft owners and operators, and that is one of the keys to preventing the spread of invasive species. People have taken ownership of this issue. Riding Mountain National Park has had to take this action because of the utter and complete failure of the NDP government and the Minister of Conservation to deal with the spread of invasive species such as zebra mussels.

There are many opportunities that have been missed by this minister. As I travelled across western Canada, I saw that every boat has to be pulled off to be inspected at weigh stations in Alberta, motors lowered to check for water. Live wells are inspected as are bilges and hulls.

Mr. Speaker, we have weigh stations in Manitoba, and that could be inspection stations, but the Conservation Minister has ignored any opportunity to control the spread of invasive species. No wonder Riding Mountain National Park had to develop a virtual dike around the park. This is due to the total failure of the NDP government and the Minister of Conservation on the issue of invasive species in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker: Sorry, the honourable member for Riel.

Mike Davidson

Ms. Christine Melnick (Riel): Mr. Speaker, Mike Davidson was first elected president of the Canadian Union of Public Employees CUPE Local 500 in 2003, and since then he has served five terms. After a long and distinguished career protecting workers' rights in Manitoba, Mike has now retired.

Mike started working for the City of Winnipeg in 1979, working on water sprinkler systems for the parks department. He first got involved with CUPE when he became a shop steward in CUPE district 5. He has now been a CUPE member for over 30 years, and Local 500 has recognized him as an honorary life member. He has also served as vice-president of CUPE Manitoba, regional vice-president for Manitoba on the CUPE National Executive Board,

and he chaired Local 500's Political Action Committee.

Mr. Speaker, CUPE Local 500 represents over 5,000 employees who work for the City of Winnipeg and a variety of other municipal organizations. They negotiate with employers for fair wages, help ensure safe and healthy workplaces and stand up for workers facing unfair discrimination.

Mike's proudest accomplishment as president was stopping the sale and privatization of City golf courses. Mike led the Positively Public campaign, which also prevented contracting out custodial services, grass mowing and a portion of library service, protecting jobs and keeping services affordable for families.

In his free time, Mike and his wife Katie started a charity drive called P.S. We Care, and with help from former Local 500 President Paul Moist and former Manitoba mayor—pardon me—and former Mayor Glen Murray, they collected clothing and sports equipment for inner-city and northern communities.

In his retirement, Mike plans on spending lots of time with family and friends, including his three children Tracy, Bryce and Brett. He looks forward to having more time for golf, working out, volunteering and reading books that he never quite had time for.

It is no surprise that Dave Sauer, the president of Winnipeg Labour Council; Kelly Moist, president, CUPE Manitoba; reps from the Amalgamated Transit Union and Unifor are here today.

As a former CUPE 500 member, I want to thank you, Mike, for making the world a better place for people whose names you will never know. Thank you for being a voice for municipal workers. Thank you for holding decision makers accountable—

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

Next member's statement.

Applied Behavioural Analysis Therapy Wait Times

Mr. Ian Wishart (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, part of our work as members is to advocate for those who can't advocate for themselves. And today I rise in the House to do that. I'm here to speak on behalf of children with a diagnosis of autism and their families.

On this side of the House, we support the choices of families in selecting an autism treatment of their choosing.

* (13:50)

One of these treatments is called applied behavioural analysis or ABA therapy. We support all children dealing with autism diagnosis but in particular the 74 children in the preschool waiting list for ABA therapy.

These are two-, three- and four-year-old children that have what can be a debilitating neurological disorder. These families describe their children as locked up and consider ABA therapy as their only hope, Mr. Speaker. These children need treatment as soon as possible, and the manager of autism programming at St. Amant Centre describes the importance of treatment as soon as possible this way: All of the evidence supports strongly that early intervention is critical.

Mr. Speaker, the results of NDP inaction are having debilitating effects on these families. By the end of 2015, the early learning wait-list will be over 78, the school-age wait-list will be approximately 18, the consultative model wait-list approximately 27 and over 125 children get no ABA support in schools until grade 12.

Wait-lists are at their highest levels ever and the families are desperate to access approved treatment. The government committed to these families in 2011 that they would eliminate these wait-lists. We now know that this is just another NDP's broken promise.

The Selinger NDP talks about evidence-based decision-making. We know this is just the government talking in platitudes and their commitment is just another broken promise.

It's time to put an end to the suffering of Manitobans with autism and their families.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Child Care in Manitoba

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Mr. Speaker, families across Manitoba count on being able to find affordable, high-quality child care. In Concordia, families with young children tell me this is a high priority for them, and as a father of two young children, I can relate.

Our government has been working steadily to add spaces, keep the cost down and ensure child-care

staff have the training that our kids—to help our kids thrive.

Since we came into government, we've created over 14,000 licensed child-care spaces, built 100 new facilities and improved wages and training for early childhood educators. We've kept child-care fees the lowest in Canada outside Quebec.

The Roots and Wings Early Learning Centre at Sherwood School is one of our success stories in Concordia. Built in a school that was at one time on the school closure list, our government invested over a half a million dollars to help Roots and Wings expand into two unused classrooms and add 10 new child-care spaces. At this centre, Concordia families now have 41 spaces in total, with 15 for school-age children and 26 for preschool children.

We know there's more work to do, especially in—to eliminate wait times for spaces, and that's why we're moving forward with an ambitious goal. By 2020 we want to make sure every family can find a good spot without waiting. We will accomplish this by creating 12,000 new spaces and we will expand Manitoba's workforce of early childhood educators by working with our partners such as Red River College and Université de Saint-Boniface.

We will also expand child-care centres into new housing developments, schools, colleges and universities, and we'll ramp up programs and provide healthy breakfasts, lunches and snacks in schools. We will invest more in community schools, early child-care hubs and after-school programs in the inner city and northern Manitoba.

By working together with parents and staff, our plan will ensure that every family can get the child care they need when they need it so our kids get the best possible start in life.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions I just want to mention to the House a very special occasion we have today. It's the very special birthday for our Deputy Clerk, and I just thought I would draw it to the attention of the honourable members of the House.

I won't mention the number but I'll leave that for him to share a bit later.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Mr. Speaker: So I have no further guests to introduce at this time, so we'll start with oral questions.

Government Spending Future Tax Increases

Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition): So the Premier was asked, in respect of his \$6-billion tax plan that he announced a week ago, what tax hikes he would invoke to pay for it, and he refused to answer.

And yesterday he gave the media this response, quote: Do you guys remember the experience I went through on that? Well, yes, I think a lot of us do. A pre-election promise not to raise the taxes followed by the raising of the taxes, we remember that because we were experienced in sharing the pain with Manitobans.

The Premier didn't seem to have that experience. He didn't experience the PST protest. He didn't go. He didn't listen to the people he was hurting. He didn't experience the PST committee that Manitobans, hundreds of Manitobans, came and testified to because he didn't go, and he didn't really experience the pain of taking away the vote of a million Manitobans because he shared the experience of taking it away with 34 colleagues in the NDP.

So given the fact that he says, do you guys remember the experience I went through, he didn't really experience anything as Manitobans did.

What experience, exactly, was he referring to?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, we had a low-key event yesterday in Brandon where we had a debate about the future of Manitoba, and it was an important debate because it spoke to how we move the province forward.

And I was pleased to report to the people at that debate that Manitoba has the lowest unemployment record in the country. I was pleased to report that we have the best job creation record in the country, and with our—I was also pleased to report that we're going to extend our infrastructure program which has created in the last year alone 9,500 additional jobs in Manitoba.

And members at that meeting also heard about the fact that when the Leader of the Opposition was in office the small-business tax rate was 9 per cent, but under this government the small-business tax rate

is zero, Mr. Speaker, zero. The members were able to hear yesterday that when the Leader of the Opposition was in office the corporate tax rate was 17 per cent and now it's 12 per cent. The member opposite was able to recall that when he was in office there was a tax on capital, buildings and technology in businesses, and now that tax has been entirely eliminated.

All of those have gone together with our infrastructure program to see what we saw yesterday from the Canadian—

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

Mr. Pallister: Six-billion-dollar-tax-hike plan, Mr. Speaker, and no answer as to where the taxes—money is going to come from. Tenth in education, worst in child poverty, worst wait times in Canada and the highest taxes west of Montreal: not a record to brag about, not even close—not even close.

And now he says, do you guys remember the experience I went through, that he went through. He doesn't care about the experience Manitobans went through, and he says, do you really think I want to do that again?

He's doing it again, Mr. Speaker. Last time he says it was nonsense and ridiculous he'd raise the taxes. He promised no tax hikes for five years. He made a solemn vow, and all his candidates did too. Then he won the election. Then he invoked the biggest tax hikes in Manitoba's modern history, and now he wants to do it again because it worked for him, because he got elected on a phony promise, and now he wants to try it again. He's doubled down on the phony promise.

Now, that deception has hurt Manitobans, and he seems oblivious to their experience; only his own is what concerns him, Mr. Speaker. The deception served the political purpose of the Premier last election time.

Why doesn't he admit that that's why he's doing it again?

Mr. Selinger: I was about to say that we've seen from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business that the optimism that the business community experiencing in Manitoba has gone up eight points to 68 per cent, Mr. Speaker, 14 points above where it was in August, one of the best increases in business confidence in Manitoba.

And the biggest threat to Manitobans' pocketbooks, Mr. Speaker, is the Leader of the Opposition wanting to examine and look at the notion of two-tier health care in Manitoba. Two-tier health care is privatization. Privatization of health care, privatization of the daycare system, privatization of social services: That's when Manitobans will see a real pinch on their pocketbooks and many, many hundreds of people left out of essential services.

* (14:00)

Mr. Speaker, the biggest threat to the future of this province is the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Pallister: Well, Mr. Speaker, half his caucus doesn't agree with that observation. They think the biggest threat is his success in the next election, frankly.

So, Mr. Speaker, last time the Premier traded away any sense of integrity he may have possessed for tax hikes he promised he wouldn't invoke. So this time he doesn't have anything left to trade. He created a broken trust with his—the people of Manitoba and his own people. He created a broken government.

And now he's doubling down with a \$6-billion promise which will involve tax hikes, because the Premier of Manitoba wants to take credit for \$6 billion he's taking from working families all over the province. He wants to get the credit for that while Manitobans will all be stuck with the bill down the road: seniors, single moms, kids in poverty.

The only reason business optimism went up is because it was 10th before. That's why.

So will the Premier stop hiding, come out of hiding and admit that this tax hike is going to be invoked on Manitobans and tell Manitobans which taxes and by how much—which taxes and by how much?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, we have a commitment to keeping Manitoba one of the most affordable places to live in this country.

And how do we do that? Every family is paying \$3,500 less in taxes now than when—they were when the member was in office. Seniors, in the last budget and the budget before that, saw a dramatic reduction in their property taxes that they're paying through the seniors' property tax credit, Mr. Speaker. Small business went to zero; the threshold against which that zero applies was raised in the last budget.

The biggest threat—the single biggest threat to the ability of Manitobans to have an affordable cost of life is the members' opposite desire to privatize our health-care system, to privatize our daycare system, to privatize our social-services system. That is the single biggest threat to the affordability of Manitobans, Mr. Speaker, a threat he never, ever admits. He now wants to go underground on that. He wants to deny what he's been promising the people of Manitoba.

We know the biggest threat: it's the Leader of the Opposition.

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

Mr. Pallister: The biggest proponent of two-tier health care in the history of Manitoba is the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger), Mr. Speaker, because his delays cause people to go down a highway somewhere else to get health care. He is the guy who shut down two dozen emergency rooms around the province. He's the biggest threat to health care we've had in our history in this province.

The Premier (Mr. Selinger) says he doesn't want the experience again. Well, then, don't have the experience again. Be honest with Manitobans for a change and tell them which taxes you'll hike. Don't deny that you're going to hike taxes when you're making \$6 billion worth of vote-buying promises just months prior to the next election. This would be hardly an act of integrity, Mr. Speaker.

Now, the Premier says not again, and his colleagues are saying the same thing. The members for St. Vital, Assiniboia, Dauphin, Gimli, Southdale, Seine River, Radisson and more to come are saying, we don't want to sacrifice our integrity this time by going to the doors and misleading people again and telling them we won't raise taxes when we know that there have to be tax hikes to keep these promises. All the NDP candidates last time went to the doors, sacrificed their integrity, damaged their reputations.

Is the Premier going to force their replacements to damage their integrity this time just because he lost his integrity last time?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite was the one who went door to door everywhere in Manitoba and said he would not privatize the telephone system. And what did he do immediately upon coming back into office?

First of all, there was a vote-rigging scandal that took four years to discover that he was involved in as a member of the previous Cabinet.

He proceeded to privatize the telephone system, took the rates from being among the lowest in the country to among the highest in the country. All of those people that worked at the telephone system, they saw their pensions evaporated and plundered, and it took them 20 years to go to the Supreme Court to get back what they had earned, their pensions.

That's the experience of the member when he was in government last time. He's promising more of the same this time, and he's trying to bury it in his hidden agenda to make a more unequal Manitoba, a less inclusive Manitoba, a less welcoming Manitoba, a Manitoba for the few, not for the many, Mr. Speaker.

We're committed to a Manitoba for everybody, that's affordable, that respects human rights and provides the services people need. And those services will allow us to prosper as a community.

Mr. Pallister: Committed to the rights of 35 NDP MLAs to take away a million Manitobans' rights to vote on a tax hike he said he wouldn't invoke. That's not a genuine commitment to anybody's rights but his own, Mr. Speaker.

And the Premier's amazing, misguided and mistaken memory of the 1990s belies the fact that he won't talk truthfully about what he's going to do to invoke \$6 billion of tax hikes on Manitobans today—today—now, and Manitobans in the future will bear that burden.

This deceit has caused a rebellion of his own caucus members, Mr. Speaker. They have said that they can no longer serve with integrity under his leadership. They have said they're no longer—that he is no longer listening. They have said that his priorities are not those of Manitobans. They have said that he simply wants to be re-elected, and he's putting it on display again today.

At what price will his re-election—Manitobans pay for his re-election? At what price the reputation to NDP candidates who go door to door again this time with a message that misleads Manitobans on the true agenda?

Will the Premier again force NDP candidates to go to their constituents with a phony plan during the election and then spring a tax trap on Manitobans right after it?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, the single biggest flip-flop we've seen in the last 16 years in this Legislature was the Leader of the Opposition, who used to jump up every day and demand that every budget be balanced. Even in the middle of a recession when jobs were disappearing, when interest rates were going through the ceiling, it was the approach of the Conservative Party. What did they want to do? They wanted to double down on \$550 million of cuts at a time when the unemployment rate was climbing.

Now he's saying that he wants to run deficits—now he's saying he wants to run deficits. Does he want to run deficits to create jobs, to build infrastructure, to have schools and health care, Mr. Speaker? No. He wants to run deficits so he can offer tax breaks to the wealthy. He wants to be able to put tax dollars in the hands, with his program, that would mostly benefit the higher income Manitobans.

That is the single biggest act of desperation; that is the single biggest flip-flop we've seen in recent times in this Legislature, brought to you by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Pallister: Well, his own people don't believe him, Mr. Speaker. They know that the PST disproportionately hurts low-income families. They understand our plan.

Our plan is to reduce the PST by 1 per cent in the first term, and our plan is made necessary by the desperate debt digging of this Premier, who has doubled our debt in just six years. We're trying to put the PST back in the hands of low-income Manitobans and all Manitobans because it's their money. It doesn't belong to the Premier, doesn't belong to his colleagues; it belongs to Manitobans. And he promised it would stay with them and we'll put it back there.

Every year about this time, there's a football game, and we are proud that it's in Manitoba, Grey Cup. And every year Lucy puts a football down in front of Charlie Brown and claims that he's going to be able to kick it, and every year she pulls it away. And this is a \$6-billion promise this Premier's making, and he won't own up to the costs of it. And that's not peanuts, Mr. Speaker.

Now, this year I want Charlie Brown to kick that ball and I want Manitobans to know what they're getting into with this government. So will the Premier stop playing Lucy, stop treating Manitobans like Charlie Brown, and just for once stop using Manitoba's future as a political football?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, I always enjoy the member when he tries to use cartoon characters to describe the behaviour that we see from the Conservative Party of Manitoba.

And one thing I've always noticed, when he gets in trouble, he punts every single time. And it's usually not a very good punt. Now he's punting on balancing the budget. He wants to run deficits for tax cuts that mostly benefit the wealthy.

And what did he oppose in this Throne Speech that we brought forward, Mr. Speaker? He opposed adding 12,000 child-care spots in Manitoba that would allow families to work, that would allow families to participate in the economy. And we know one of the biggest barriers to more people working in Manitoba was quality, reliable and affordable daycare. That's what we're proceeding on to allow us to keep the lowest unemployment rate in the country. But he's opposed to that.

He's opposed to having funding in place for infrastructure which would allow us to continue to build flood protection for communities, structural infrastructure that will allow us to have a stronger economy, Mr. Speaker. All of those things he's opposing in this budget.

He has no plan for the future of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker. He has no plan at all, except to be narrow and divisive in everything he says and does.

* (14:10)

Provincial Government Contracts Competitive Bidding Practices

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): Mr. Speaker, it seems that the Selinger government has made it more and more difficult for Manitoba businesses to bid on provincial government contracts.

Airmaster, a Manitoba highway signs manufacturer, has indicated that Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation has effectively prevented the company from securing contracts to supply highway signs in Manitoba. Keith MacCharles, owner of Airmaster, said, and I quote: What they're doing is discouraging competition. End quote.

Mr. Speaker, why is the minister discouraging a competitive process? Does he not see that it's in the best interest of the taxpayers to, in fact, encourage, not discourage, competition in the province?

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, you know, I note on the record, it was members opposite who actually privatized the system.

For many years, we've had it go to tender. The company that was successful put in the lowest tender; they met all the bid requirements, including the bond. Changes were made to reduce the bond, but I find it rather interesting members opposite want us to basically throw out the tender and not follow the tender process.

Mr. Speaker, I know they're in opposition, but, you know, when it comes to running the affairs of the province, you can't have it both ways.

Mrs. Stefanson: Yes, in the competitive process for bidding on contracts, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, one of Airmaster's competitors agreed with Mr. MacCharles. Anita Bihun of Western Safety Sign claimed that the Selinger government made the bidding process so difficult for local companies that many companies just won't submit a bid. She said, and I quote: It was just so difficult. It did sort of feel like, let's make this as hard as possible so nobody can bid. End quote.

Mr. Speaker, why is the Selinger government making it so difficult for Manitoba businesses to bid on provincial government sign contracts?

Mr. Ashton: Well, in fact, Mr. Speaker, a number of the companies referenced have been doing business with the government, so I want to put that on the record.

And I want to stress again, Mr. Speaker, that we do need a lot of highway signs. There's actually a lot happening with our highways in this province, and I find it absolutely amazing members opposite, you know— and yesterday I was at the AMM, and the elected officials, municipal officials, couldn't stop talking to me about just how much work was taking place on our highways.

Mr. Speaker, I know the Leader of the Opposition likes to quote songs: Sign, sign, everywhere a sign. It's a construction sign.

Mrs. Stefanson: Well, Mr. Speaker, in fact, these companies had been doing business with government, but since then, the unfairness that they have put into the competitive bidding process has prevented these companies from being able to bid on these contracts.

Mr. Speaker, we know that the Auditor General came forward with a report early last year where she outlined some of the serious issues involving the Selinger government with the method by which they award contracts. She stated, and I quote: Of greatest concern were contracts awarded to vendors because a department wanted to work with them or because provisions in requests for proposals or existing contracts amounted to promises of future contracts. End quote.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate for Mr. MacCharles, who is here in the gallery with us today: Why is this minister discouraging Manitoba businesses like Airmaster, like Western Safety Sign, from bidding on highway sign contracts?

Mr. Speaker, how can he honestly believe that this is in the best interest of the taxpayers of our province?

Mr. Ashton: I'm really glad that the member opposite has talked about tendering and tendering policies, because I want to put on the record that this year, we, in November 5th, put out the highway contract, the tenders, for the construction. That's the earliest ever in Manitoba history, and it's one of the reasons, Mr. Speaker, this—members opposite may want to listen to this; certainly, at AMM yesterday, people were very pleased to hear it.

We, Mr. Speaker, in the first full year of the 1 cent on the dollar, we increased construction on our highways by 44 per cent. We upped it 10 per cent the next year.

Mr. Speaker, two years ago we had the second best year in terms of paving. What was it this year? Thirty per cent higher than any other year in Manitoba history.

Why? Because we work with Manitobans; we work with the Heavy Construction Association; we tender, and also because we put the funds in. Members opposite voted against that.

Provincial Government Contracts Competitive Bidding Practices

Mr. Reg Helwer (Brandon West): Well, that's the angry man over there today, Mr. Speaker.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the NDP government requires all of Manitoba's highway signs to use a proprietary specification, a coating known as Manitoba type 11. Manitoba is the only jurisdiction in North America to require only this coating when there are many other comparable products on the

market. The requirements to use this coating are clearly limiting the pool of potential bidders for this contract.

Actually, there's only one company, Signal Industries, that won the contract, that uses that coating. They're the distributor. And you're asking Western Safety and Airmaster, buy that coating from your competitor and then bid on the contract. How is that going to work?

Why is this minister manipulating the tender so only one bidder could be selected? Why is the NDP forcing Manitobans to pay more and get less?

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, you know, this may come as a surprise to the member opposite, but when it comes to specifications, that is actually drafted by staff in the department that deal with that. They recognize the need.

I want to indicate they also have adjusted the bond requirement. That is an issue.

And one of the reasons it went to tender, Mr. Speaker, is to make sure that we did get the most competitive price. I find it absolutely ironic that here they are today asking us to basically throw out that tender process. That is not acceptable.

And I would say again on the record, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to tenders, we have a record number of tenders. I mentioned earlier about the amount of construction. We're also getting some of the most competitive tender bids in this province. Why? Because we have worked with the industry, the Heavy Construction Association.

If the member opposite wants to put forward legitimate concerns, we'll deal with that, because we are interested in one thing in this province, and that is getting our money's worth in terms of highway construction. Mr. Speaker, we're getting it.

Mr. Helwer: Mr. Speaker, it is highly suspect that there is only one company that is the authorized distributor of the coating that is—the one that the minister specified.

This minister, who has a history of awarding untendered contracts to his friends, requires this type of coating be included as a contract criteria. Manitoba is the only jurisdiction in North America to use only this coating.

Why did the minister manipulate the tender in such a way that his actions clearly kill any chance of competition?

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you what we have a history of on this side: a record investment in infrastructure. And we're proud of the fact that we have worked with the Heavy Construction Association.

I want to put on the record, by the way, in case the member opposite isn't aware of this, but when they left office their entire budget for highways was \$179 million. This year it is over \$740 million. I want to put on the record that their entire capital investment when they left office was \$90 million. This year we're well over \$550 million.

And I should say that I know the member opposite was in Brandon for the AMM. I was so pleased to talk to so many municipal leaders, and they were saying, keep it up; keep investing in infrastructure. And they look forward to further investments in our highways.

Mr. Speaker, this is the get-'er-done government, not the shut-'er-down opposition.

Mr. Helwer: Mr. Speaker, the tampering by this minister to exclude other companies by insisting on a proprietary coating distributed by only one company is clearly not in the best interests of Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, clearly, the NDP must have studied the AG's report on untendered contracts to know exactly how to continue getting away with awarding contracts to friends.

Is this why they have provided \$2.2 million in untendered contracts to Signal Industries in less than a decade?

Mr. Ashton: Again, I point out that essentially what the member opposite is asking us to do is to directly interfere in the tendering process. I want to indicate, Mr. Speaker, we're not going to do that.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate that, you know, I'm not an engineer. I am—neither is the member opposite. When it comes to the technical specifications we look at in our department, I'll take advice from our engineers and our staff any day over the member for Brandon West.

Gimli Health Centre Dialysis Unit Availability

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): In 2011, this NDP government opened a dialysis unit in

Gimli. Five years later, several patients can't get into that unit for dialysis, for life-saving dialysis treatment.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health to tell us why this \$5-million dialysis unit sits closed part of the time.

Why are Manitobans having to pay more and get less, Mr. Speaker?

* (14:20)

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

In terms of the dialysis unit in Gimli, one of the things that we did do in building that unit was build it to overcapacity—so, in other words, build it for future expansion—and staffed it to a particular level.

I know that we have been working with members of the community in this area, and I can tell you that we will continue to make investments in looking after all folks that require dialysis. It's part of the reason why we've invested in home hemodialysis as well.

It's about building and working with the community and working with professionals to make sure that we meet the needs of all members of our community and all of their health-care needs.

Mrs. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, we raised this issue with the Minister of Health five months ago. She said then, and I quote: We are bringing more dialysis service to rural Manitoba, not less, meaning that patients and families can spend more time at home with their loved ones and less time on the highway. End quote.

Mr. Speaker, five months ago she promised that she would stay in touch with a number of families who have been forced to experience this highway medicine. Instead, she has refused to respond to any of their emails in the last five months.

So I'd like to ask this Minister of Health to tell Mr. Chudd, a Manitoba senior whose son Blair is in the gallery today: Why is she saying one thing but not keeping her word?

Ms. Blady: I thank the member for the question, and I invite Mr. Chudd or any other member from the community who has a concern about this to continue to meet with me. My door is always open, and I know that my office and my staff have been in touch,

but if that communication hasn't been sufficient, I will gladly meet with him today.

Mrs. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, it didn't do them any good meeting with her last time, so why would they even want to waste their time with her?

Mr. Speaker, Blair Chudd worries about his dad who has to face Manitoba's icy winter roads to drive from Gimli to Seven Oaks hospital for dialysis three times a week. This highway medicine is two-tier health care. Blair and his family pray that there are no blinding snowstorms or that nothing happens to his elderly dad on the highway when the temperature hits -40°.

So I'd like to ask the Minister of Health today: Will she admit that her broken promises and mismanagement are threatening front-line services?

Ms. Blady: Mr. Speaker, as I said, I will meet with this family and any other family because I know how vital these services are, and we will continue to meet with them, and we continue to work with the community and with the Gimli facility to meet those needs.

I have no lessons to learn from members opposite in terms of the fact that even yesterday at the AMM debate her leader denied ever having made comments about wanting a two-tier, American-style private health care. He alleged that people had merely misunderstood him. We have nothing to learn here.

We will continue to work with members opposite and work with the community to make sure that everything gets done, but we will not let members opposite mislead folks with flip-flopping on their answers.

Applied Behavioural Analysis Therapy Wait Times for Treatment

Mr. Ian Wishart (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, earlier this month the Premier (Mr. Selinger) committed to providing Manitobans with access to health care they need. Yet, despite this commitment, the wait times for children needing applied behavioural analysis, or ABA, therapy for autism treatment continues to grow.

Will this government commit to providing ABA therapy to children on the wait-list before they age out of eligibility?

Hon. Kerri Irvin-Ross (Minister responsible for Persons with Disabilities): Mr. Speaker, we are

committed to supporting children and their families with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder.

Since 1999 we have made investments—over 800 per cent increase—and in those investments we have provided a continuum of services, from ABA program to providing services for Floortime, for Autism Outreach workers, making sure that we have parent support groups that we also are supporting, respite, but also going beyond the family and providing that in the education system. With our education partners, we've been able to provide support to young adults to the age of 21.

We are committed to supporting all Manitobans and we'll continue to do that.

Mr. Wishart: Well, Mr. Speaker, there are 74 kids in the preschool-age wait-list, and the wait times for this treatment exceeds two years. We are talking about three- and four-year-old children suffering from what can be a debilitating neurological order.

What does this government have to say to the families in the gallery today? Will they commit to providing their three- and four-year-olds the treatment they so desperately need?

Ms. Irvin-Ross: Mr. Speaker, we continue to make investments and provide a continuum of services to Manitoba families that are facing the diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. We know the supports that they need. We are working with them to provide supports from the point of diagnosis to adulthood. I have worked with many of the community activists in developing a plan that is across the lifespan.

What we are doing is working closely with St. Amant and community activists to look at a new way to deliver a program that's going to be sustainable and meet the demands of the rise in diagnosis. We are looking at developing a classroom environment where we'll be able to see up to 27 young children, and we know that the best intervention is an early intervention at the preschool, and that's why we're committed to doing that.

Mr. Wishart: I'm not sure what the minister expects these children to do, quit aging?

There are now 74 children on the preschool wait-list for ABA therapy. These children on the wait-list are three and four years old and the wait times exceed two years. Do the math, Mr. Speaker. Effectively, the Province is denying them treatment by making them wait too long.

What does a government need to say—what does a government want to say to the people—families in the gallery who are with us today? When will their children get the treatment they so desperately need?

Ms. Irvin-Ross: This government has been continuously supporting the services for ASD. We have listened to the advocates. We started with preschool intervention. The advocates came to us and said we need supports within the school system. We stepped to the plate and we provided that, and now we're listening and we're hearing from them, as well as the youth themselves, that they need extra support into adulthood, and we—again we are there walking that journey with them.

We are providing a continuum of supports from preschool interventions as well as providing supports with non-profit organizations, making sure that we're able to provide those supports in the rural and northern areas as well, by supporting the five Autism Outreach workers that we have.

We are going to continue to make those investments so we can ensure that Manitoba children have the services and the opportunities that they deserve.

PST on Municipal Purchases Request to Eliminate

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, members of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities have been calling on this government for years to end the practice of charging PST on items that municipalities purchase, like equipment, insurance, electricity.

But instead of listening to municipalities, instead of helping municipalities as much as they could, this NDP government downloads programs and ties up municipal resources with short strings.

I ask the Premier: Will the NDP government end the practice of charging PST on items purchased by municipalities?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): It was an honour to be with the Association of Manitoba Municipalities yesterday for the bear-pit session of meeting with their executives, to have that low-key debate that we had in the afternoon, Mr. Speaker, and to spend the evening with them as well when they handed out a lifetime achievement award.

Mr. Speaker, what we have said to the Association of Manitoba Municipalities—and that includes our major cities as well as our

municipalities all across the province—is that one political party is telling you that they will reduce the PST by \$25 million. And what we are saying is we're going to provide you with money to build infrastructure, to build roads, to build sewer and water, to build strategic infrastructure that will make a gigantic difference. For every dollar that the Liberals are promising in PST rebate, we are investing \$4 in roads and infrastructure which will build those communities and create jobs right in the regions where they live.

And that infrastructure program has been proven to be very successful in this province because, having implemented it, we now have the lowest unemployment rate in the country and the best job creation rate in the country.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, the Premier hasn't been listening.

Liberals will make sure that all of that extra money from rising the PST will actually go to municipal infrastructure instead of putting strings on municipalities.

Mr. Speaker, when this NDP government makes a big fanfare every time they give any money to municipalities, they follow it up by taxing back a significant proportion of the money by imposing a PST on municipal purchases, a PST this NDP government unilaterally hiked in 2013.

* (14:30)

When will the NDP government end the practice of charging PST on municipal purchases?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, we committed yesterday to a very important initiative that we started with the municipalities, and that initiative is to increase the amount of funding available to them to \$325 million over the next five years.

And that will include a recreation fund, because we've heard from many communities they want different recreation facilities, multiplexes, skating rinks. Every community has their own specific idea there.

We put in place a municipal airport program, which has been called for for many years by the members of the municipalities. That airport program will allow them to have life-saving flights land there, including the STARS service, Mr. Speaker.

We included additional money for large waste-water treatment plants to give them healthy sewage treatment, Mr. Speaker, protect their land.

Those are very concrete commitments which create higher quality of life for those people, which create good jobs for the people in that area.

And I can only remind the leader—the member from River Heights that he voted against that, Mr. Speaker. He voted against that infrastructure program which has allowed Manitoba to have the lowest unemployment rate in the country.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, the NDP are forever putting strings on the money that's given to municipalities, but municipalities have been asking the Province for a better deal on their ability to 'purchipal'—purchase municipal necessities like equipment, insurance and Internet services. The AMM has been asking the government for many years for this.

The NDP may not be listening to municipalities, but Liberals are. Liberals will phase out the PST on these items for municipalities by providing a rebate for the PST they've been charged.

Will the NDP government follow the Liberal lead and give municipalities a break by providing a rebate on the PST they pay for municipal services?

Mr. Selinger: The Liberal plan is to give \$450 million of corporate giveaways for the largest corporations in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker. That will leave them no money for infrastructure. That will leave them no money for schools. That will leave them no money for health care. That will leave them no money for emergency protection in those communities. That is not the way forward.

At this time in our economic and political history, everybody around the world is saying, invest in infrastructure, keep the economy growing, provide jobs for people. That provides jobs right now; it ensures that we have infrastructure in place that will make the economy more productive and more prosperous in the future. That's how we're going to lift out of this global recession.

And the member opposite is doing the exact opposite of what every economist around the world is saying is the preferred policy. He wants a program of aggressive tax cuts for those that least need it in the large corporations, and that will not build the jobs that we need for young people in Manitoba and the jobs that we need for the country and, quite

frankly, the jobs we need all around the planet, Mr. Speaker. It's a bad plan that leads downward, not upwards. It doesn't lift people up.

Our objective is to lift all Manitobans up with the lowest unemployment rate, the best job creation rate, good skills and good education and good health care, Mr. Speaker.

New Environmental Protection Strategy Places to Keep Program Announcement

Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas): Preserving our great lakes and wildlife is important to us on this side of the House, and to all Manitobans. Our government is committed to doing what it takes to protect wildlife, wetlands, lakes and forests by partnering with northern communities, First Nations people and organizations like Ducks Unlimited and Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society.

Can the Minister of Conservation inform the House what steps our government is taking to make Manitoba a leader in protecting our environment?

Hon. Thomas Nevakshonoff (Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship): I thank the member for The Pas for the question. And I would also extend thanks to Chris Smith of Ducks Unlimited and Ron Thiessen, who joined me this morning in announcing Places to Keep – Manitoba's Protected Areas Strategy, which is a component of TomorrowNow – Manitoba's Green Plan. It commits to the international target of achieving 17 per cent protection of our natural heritage by 2010.

Specifically, today we announced the establishment of a new wildlife management area, the Red Deer Wildlife Management Area, located just to the south of The Pas, and also an expansion of the Lake Winnipegosis Salt Flats Ecological Reserve.

So this is a—

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

Grass Fires and Road Closures Municipal Preparedness

Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Midland): In Manitoba's Interlake, the Shoal lakes region has experienced severe flooding in the last five years, and provincial roads 415 and 416 are still closed. The landowners that are left in the region are really concerned about the possibility of severe grass and marsh fires next spring.

And with these roads being closed, does the Province have any idea how they'll enable municipalities to be able to prepare for a runaway grass fire should it occur next spring?

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation): Well, I thank the member for the question and I'm really pleased that he has identified the impact of flooding in that area. We have reopened a number of the highway connections, but there's chronic flooding.

And one thing was very clear yesterday when I met with the municipalities, by the way, is that our municipal leaders throughout the province are talking very positively about the working relationship we've developed with them. Whether it's the Shoal lakes area, whether it's in southwest Manitoba—or, actually, at the ministerial forum, municipal leaders gave this government credit for working with them.

And I want to say to members opposite, we are concerned about flooding. We continue to rebuild after the 2011 and 2014 floods. One thing we won't do, we won't cut \$550 million out of the budget, Mr. Speaker, which will come at the expense of flood mitigation.

And the Liberals now are joining in. The only party committed to working to rebuild this province, to put the flood mitigation—

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

Time for oral questions has expired.

PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: It is now time for petitions.

Applied Behavioural Analysis Services

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The provincial government broke a commitment to support families of children with diagnosed autism spectrum disorder, including timely diagnostic and access to necessary treatment such as applied behavioural analysis, also known as ABS services.

(2) The provincial government did not follow its own policy statement on autism services which notes

the importance of early intervention ABA for children with autism.

(3) School learning services has its highest ever waiting list, which started with 45 children. The waiting list is projected to keep growing and to be in excess of 80 children by September of 2016. Therefore, these children will go to the biggest transition of their lives without receiving ABA services that has helped other children achieve huge gains.

(4) Provincial government has adopted a policy to eliminate ABA services in schools by grade 5 despite the fact that these children have been diagnosed with autism which still requires therapy. These children are being denied necessary ABA services that will allow them access to the same educational opportunities as many other children—Manitoba children.

(5) Provincial government policy now imposed on the ABS service provider will now decrease the scientific proven, empirically based and local proven five-year program to a consulting model that will now have over a 200-child wait-list and will allow only a small portion of children to access these new services.

(6) Waiting lists, increase in services—decrease in services, denials of treatment are unacceptable. No child should be denied access to or eliminated from eligibility for ABA services if their diagnostic treatment remains and their still need exist.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Minister of Education and Advanced Learning consider making funding available to eliminate the current waiting list for ABA school-age services, maintain the current successful program and fund true ABA services for individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder until they reach the age of 21.

This petition submitted on behalf of A. Gumbo, P. Johnson, D. Gumbo.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

* (14:40)

The background to this petition is as follows:

The provincial government broke a commitment to support families of children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, including timely diagnosis and access to necessary treatment such as applied behavioural analysis, also known as ABA services.

The provincial government did not follow its own policy statement on autism services which notes the importance of early intervention ABA for children with autism.

School learning services has its highest ever waiting list, which started with 45 children. The waiting list is projected to keep growing and to be in excess of 80 children by September 2016. Therefore, these children will go through the biggest transition of their lives without receiving ABA services that has helped other children achieve huge gains.

The provincial government has adopted a policy to eliminate ABA services in schools by grade 5 despite the fact that these children have been diagnosed with autism which still requires therapy. These children are being denied necessary ABA services that will allow them access to the same educational opportunities as many other Manitoba children.

The provincial government policy now imposed on the ABA service provider will now decrease the scientifically proven, empirically based and locally proven five-year program to a consultative model that will now have over a 200-child wait-list and allow only a small portion of children to access these new services.

Waiting lists, decrease in services and denials of treatment are unacceptable. No child should be denied access to or eliminated from eligibility of ABA services if their diagnosis still remains and their need still exists.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Minister of Education and Advanced Learning consider making funding available to eliminate the current waiting list for ABA school-age services, maintain the current successful program and fund true ABA services for individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder until they reach age 21.

This petition is signed by S. Babiuk, G. McLean, C. Krawendark and many more fine Manitobans.

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

(1) The provincial government broke a commitment to support families of children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, including timely diagnosis and access to necessary treatment such as applied behavioural analysis, also known as ABA services.

(2) The provincial government did not follow its own policy statement on autism services which notes the importance of early intervention ABA for children with autism.

(3) School learning services has its highest ever waiting list, which started with 45 children. The waiting list is projected to keep growing and to be in excess of 80 children by September 2016. Therefore, these children will go through the biggest transition of their lives without receiving ABA services that has helped other children achieve huge gains.

(4) The provincial government has adopted a policy to eliminate ABA services in schools by grade 5 despite the fact that these children have been diagnosed with autism which still requires therapy. These children are being denied necessary ABA services that will allow them access to the same educational opportunities as any other Manitoban children.

(5) The current provincial government policy now imposed on the ABA service provider will now decrease the scientifically proven, empirically based and locally proven five-year program to a consultative model that will now have over a 200-child wait-list and allow only a small portion of the children to access these new services.

(6) Waiting lists, decrease in services, and denials of treatment are unacceptable. No child should be denied access to or eliminated from eligibility for ABA services if their diagnosis still remains and their need still exists.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Minister of Education and Advanced Learning consider making funding available to eliminate the current waiting list for ABA school-age services, maintain the current successful program and fund true ABA services for individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder until they reach the age of 21.

Signed by J. Braun, J. Klassen, Y. Neustaeter and many other fine Manitobans.

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The provincial government broke a commitment to support families of children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, including timely diagnosis and access to necessary treatment such as applied behavioural analysis, also known as ABA services.

(2) The provincial government did not follow its own policy statement on autism services which notes the importance of early intervention and ABA therapy for children with autism.

(3) The preschool waiting list for ABA services has reached its highest level ever with at least 68 children waiting for services. That number is expected to exceed 148 children by September 2016 despite commitments to reduce the waiting list and provide timely access to services.

(4) The current provincial government policy now imposed on the ABA service provider will decrease the scientifically proven, empirically based and locally proven program and force children to go to school at age five before they are ready, thus not allowing them full access to ABA services promised them as they wait on their waiting list.

(5) Waiting lists, forced decrease in services and denials of treatment are unacceptable. No child should be denied access to or age out of eligibility for ABA services.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the ministers of Family Services, Education and Advanced Learning and Health consider making funding available to address the current waiting list for ABA services.

This is signed by A. Gumbo, P. Johnson, D. Gumbo and many other fine Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker: Any further petitions?

Seeing none, we'll move on—the honourable member for Steinbach.

House Business

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): On House business.

Mr. Speaker: On House business.

Mr. Goertzen: Mr. Speaker, in accordance with rule 31(9), I'd like to announce that the private member's resolution that will be considered next Thursday is the resolution on Transparency Lacking in Routing of Manitoba-Minnesota Transmission Line, brought forward by the honourable member for La Verendrye (Mr. Smook).

Mr. Speaker: It has been announced that the private member's resolution that will be considered next Thursday is the resolution on Transparency Lacking in Routing of Manitoba-Minnesota Transmission Line, sponsored by the honourable member for La Verendrye (Mr. Smook).

That's for information of the House.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(Continued)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

(Continued)

THRONE SPEECH (Eighth Day of Debate)

Mr. Speaker: Now proceed to orders of the day, government business, and to resume the adjourned debate on the motion—on the proposed motion of the honourable member for The Pas (Ms. Lathlin) and the amendment thereto, standing in the name of the honourable member for Steinbach; he has two minutes remaining.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): And so in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting our amendment later this afternoon and not the government's main motion because they have failed to properly indicate to Manitobans how they're going to be paying for their promises, and as a result, we know that the only way they can do it is to again raise taxes on all Manitobans, which Manitobans could not bear.

Mr. Speaker, thank you very much.

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): It's a pleasure to have a chance to address the Throne Speech that our government just brought in.

I'm going to follow the good advice of my colleague sitting to my left here, the honourable member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), who

reminded me that, you know, this'll be the last throne speech before the election, and for all of us who have made our commitments to this Chamber over the last four years, I want to thank you, and we never know when we're going to have a chance to come back; that's always up to the voters. And my colleague to the left, he reminds me he was first elected to this Chamber the same year that I graduated from high school, so I think I should probably follow his sage advice.

Mr. Speaker, with regards to the Throne Speech that was brought in just last week, this is a truly remarkable document, and I hope that for anyone considering my remarks in the days ahead that they have a good number of reasons to understand why it is that I will be so proud to support the government's Throne Speech.

I think when we look at a throne speech, you have to ask, what is the vision behind it? What is it attempting to accomplish? And then you also have to ask yourself, well, what is the track record of the people presenting the throne speech and how does that contrast with the competing visions in the province from the other political parties?

And, of course, Mr. Speaker, I don't have to tell you we're heading into an election term. Everybody is suddenly going to be claiming that they support every issue, up one side and down the other, regardless of the truth or merits of that.

* (14:50)

So I've picked out a few key points within the Throne Speech that I think will serve to illustrate the remarkable vision that our government has articulated and how that is incredibly different from the other political parties here in the Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, the indigenous people of Turtle Island were the first inhabitants here, so I think it only appropriate that I begin my remarks with some stories of how we have been partnering with indigenous communities all across Manitoba. I am so proud that in our own caucus, we have the first indigenous Deputy Premier in the history of Manitoba; we have the first indigenous Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro; we have the first indigenous woman ever elected to this Chamber. It is an incredible asset to have all of them in our caucus and offering their sage advice, and I put to you, Mr. Speaker, I don't know that there's another provincial Legislature in the country which would have no less than three indigenous people in the front

bench of their government. Three out of the eight ministers that sit in the front row of our government are indigenous, either First Nations or Metis.

It's an incredibly proud accomplishment, and let's just look at some of the things—just some of the things—that our government has already accomplished with indigenous people even before the Throne Speech came out. We have, for instance, become the home for the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation housed at the University of Manitoba.

We are building a multi-billion-dollar project in the form of the east-side road to bring very important transportation access to remote communities there.

Our Premier (Mr. Selinger) has been a national leader on the national stage calling time and time again for a national inquiry on missing and murdered indigenous women. The previous government wanted absolutely nothing to do that. We were very pleased to see that the new federal government has listened to our Premier's work and the voices of the community on this front and has agreed to conduct such an inquiry.

We have managed to complete historic land claims 'settlements' and—including harvesting rights agreements with the Metis of Manitoba. We are pursuing the UNESCO World Heritage Site on the east side of Lake Winnipeg. And First Nations communities are now full partners in new hydro projects.

All of this we have accomplished already, Mr. Speaker, and now, in the Throne Speech, we have multiple new visionary initiatives coming forward. We have committed to pay one third of the costs of Shoal Lake's Freedom Road, the source of Winnipeg's drinking water. We are bringing legislation forward which will authorize and empower the East Side Road Authority to take on that work even though this community is located in Ontario. That is a remarkable and just and visionary initiative on our part to address an historic wrong that should never have happened in the first place.

We are rebuilding the communities that were so devastatingly flooded years ago surrounding Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin. We're bringing more support for indigenous land-use planning. Difficult for people in the south of the province to imagine that in other parts of the province, you would not have the ability to decide what to do on land that is traditionally and historically yours. Imagine if

someone said, no, you can't build a garage in your backyard or no, you can't do that sidewalk, even minor things like that. Far more significant is the fact that many communities have not had proper support and control over the traditional lands that they call home. We have put significant resources already around the UNESCO World Heritage Site to make that process happen, and we've committed to do more.

And here in the south and all across Manitoba—all students in Manitoba—it will become a legislated requirement that they learn about the histories, the languages, the cultures and the traditional knowledge of the First Peoples of this great province. And I'm incredibly proud to do my part in voting for the Throne Speech on that front.

We have also been talking recently, Mr. Speaker, about diversity in another form here in Manitoba, that of immigration and the incredible refugee crisis that the world is grappling with, coming out of the war in Syria and elsewhere in the Middle East. Our track record on this has been, I would say, exemplary. We have been a national leader in welcoming new people to Manitoba, record numbers of new persons here. And, beyond that, we have extended health benefits to refugees when the previous Harper government cut them. We were one of the few provinces to do that. We took the additional step of also providing health benefits to the migrant workers that come to Manitoba when the weather's warmer than it is today, to harvest some of the crops that Manitoba producers are providing for us and for the world. And these people did not have access to medicare—our medical services when they were working here, and now they do. And, when the Throne Speech was delivered, we, of course, made it very clear that we are hitting well above our weight again with the proportion of refugees from Syria that we will be welcoming here to Manitoba.

Ms. Jennifer Howard, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

Now, what, in both of these instances, with indigenous persons and with regard to new immigrants and refugees, what was the position of the members opposite? Well, for the most part, they've ignored the issues completely; we hardly ever hear questions related to First Nations or indigenous issues or people coming from members opposite in this Chamber. And, on the subject of immigration, they actually stood side by side with the cruel, unjust policies of the Harper government on immigration and refugees. And that, I think, should give anyone

pause, who understands the progressive side of Canadian history if they were considering supporting that Conservative approach to these incredibly important issues.

Let me switch to another global issue, if I may, that of the environment, an issue near and dear to my heart, which the members here know I speak to quite often. In this Throne Speech alone, we have announced that we'll be providing more support for electric buses to be used in Winnipeg's transit fleet. We're providing 100 million additional dollars and insisting that the City of Winnipeg speed up the rate at which they are retrofitting their water treatment—waste water treatment plants. Not many Winnipeggers know this, perhaps, but their own city is the single largest source of excess nutrients flowing into Lake Winnipeg, and City Hall needs to move on this faster. We are absolutely doing our part by providing all of those resources to make that happen.

We have brought in just this week new surface water management legislation to help protect wetlands and alleviate flooding. We've become the first province in the country to sign the Blue Dot declaration from the David Suzuki Foundation, and we've backed that up with a commitment to introduce environmental rights legislation right here in the Chamber. We will have a new climate change strategy coming in the very near future next week. We have said that we will be working with the City of Winnipeg to finally bring curbside composting service to the citizens of Winnipeg. Citizens of Brandon and their City Hall are to be commended. Many years ago, they came to us and said, hey, we would really like to do curbside composting, and we cost-shared it and fundraised that with them. We did not have that response from the City of Winnipeg. It has become a big issue, and we are now moving that issue forward, whereas the City of Winnipeg had been saying they were looking at delaying bringing that program in. So, once again, proactive action.

We are—just today I was so proud to host our hard-working Conservation Minister as he made a historic commitment to preserve 17 per cent of Manitoba's land area as protected spaces. And we put over 90,000 additional hectares into protected status today. We're funding the bus rapid transit corridor in the southwest part of Winnipeg. All of this, Madam Deputy Speaker, is committed to in this single Throne Speech. It builds on an amazing foundation

and legacy our government has built up on environmental issues already.

And just to give you an example of the response that this agenda elicits from members opposite, the Leader of the Opposition, in reference to the waste water management plans at the City of Winnipeg, has called that, quote, a waste of money, end quote. I simply do not understand how he can say that in this day and age. But then, there's some days, Madam Deputy Speaker, when I'm not sure he's from this day and age.

* (15:00)

And the last thing, I think, I will have time to comment on—there will be many topics I'd love to touch on— but I'd love to highlight just some of the amazing things that we are doing for my hometown, the city of Winnipeg and not just in the Wolseley constituency but across the city, because as Canadians, and especially as prairie folk, I don't think we step back and celebrate often enough our accomplishments.

So let's just review that, in Winnipeg, since our government came to office, we now have the following: the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, the MTS Centre with both the Winnipeg Jets and the Moose playing there. We have the Bombers stadium, which has already hosted the FIFA tournament and is hosting this weekend the Grey Cup. We have the Red River College downtown campus. We have CentrePort. We have the new Hydro building. We have hundreds and hundreds of new housing units in the downtown area. The University of Winnipeg has had so many new projects established on it, Madam Deputy Speaker; I don't have time to mention them all.

We've had enormous investment from the private sector as well, in new hotels and apartment and commercial buildings. We have restored the 50-50 funding relationship with the City for all public transit. We have the newly expanded Convention Centre. We have the Journey to Churchill exhibit, and we have record road-repair money flowing and, of course, we expanded the floodway to better protect all of these investments and all of Winnipeggers against the floods that we all know could come at any time.

And now, Madam Deputy Speaker, after that incredible track record, in this Throne Speech alone, we are committing to move the divisive rail lines that have long divided the northern part—the north end of

this city from the rest of it. We are committing to relocate those rail lines and have an incredible infill opportunity right in the heart of the city. We are bringing in a \$1-billion shared funding arrangement over five years with the City of Winnipeg.

That, Madam Deputy Speaker, is unprecedented; no one has ever talked about supporting the City of Winnipeg with that amount of money. And just in the last few days since we brought in the Throne Speech, we've already announced, as part of that, a new \$15-million contribution to the first indigenous art centre in Canada, the Inuit Art Centre, that will be built alongside the Winnipeg Art Gallery. There's the new partnership we are facilitating between the Reh-Fit Centre and the Pan Am Clinic and, of course, multiple highway interchanges in the southern end of the city have been announced that will greatly help all citizens when they are using the Perimeter Highway.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I didn't even have a chance to get to things like child care or housing or safety issues or health care or education, but, in each of these areas, the members opposite have been voting against this agenda. They are in favour of privatizing child care, privatizing the health-care system and cutting government to the core so that none of these things could actually happen.

This should not come as a surprise to any student of history. Conservatives consistently don't really like government. They want government to be small. They don't want it to do very much. It's an odd thing that they continue to apply for this job when they don't really believe in the organization, and they promise to do a lousy job if we're dumb enough to hire them. But they will be putting their names on the ballot, Madam Deputy Speaker.

I will be putting my name on the ballot. I very much look forward to the debate that will follow and, with a visionary agenda such as the one that I have just had a chance to name a few highlights on, I'm quite confident that the citizens of Manitoba will vote in their own best interests and realize what we have accomplished by working together, and how much more just and sustainable and prosperous that vision is compared to any other vision offered in this Chamber for this province's future.

Thank you very, very much.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I rise to speak in response to the Speech from the Throne.

First, I want to thank the people of River Heights who elected me, who I have the great privilege of representing and working on behalf of every day. I'm grateful and honoured to be able to work for and on behalf of the people who live in River Heights. The residents of River Heights care about and are always active in the community.

I want to acknowledge the human infrastructure in River Heights, the amazing teachers at our schools and the people in our community who work and volunteer in any number of professions contributing every day to the well-being of Manitobans.

It is in this context of helping others that I want to speak. Four and a half years ago, in the most costly flood of Manitoba's history, there were numerous people who were evacuated from the shores of Lake Manitoba, from homes around Dauphin Lake, from a substantial area in Brandon, but most particularly from four communities in the Interlake: Lake St. Martin, Little Saskatchewan, Dauphin River and Pinaymootang.

I was in Lake St. Martin the day people were being evacuated. People were lined up to get on a bus outside the health centre in the temporary band office. They were told to bring a few belongings and to expect to be gone from their community for two or three weeks before they'd be able to return. Sadly, Mr. Speaker, it is now—Madam Speaker—it is now four and a half years later and almost all are still evacuated. Children are growing up displaced without ever knowing their own community.

It is very similar in Little Saskatchewan First Nation. Indeed, we must ask why it is that in four and a half years at Little Saskatchewan First Nation, not even a single house has been built. More specifically, why, even in this year, no house has been built yet. The community has worked hard to prepare a plan. They had a plan for the development of an area in their community on high ground. This plan was ready in September of 2014 more than a year ago.

Instead of quickly implementing the plan, the provincial government has delayed and delayed, using the community as a ping pong ball in debates with the Harper Conservative federal government over one small detail or another, with the result that, as of today, the tender has not even been put out yet to build the houses.

In but one of the many slow and tedious rounds of discussion, in September of this year, the plans

were ready and just needed to be approved. But instead of making the situation of the people of Little Saskatchewan a priority, the provincial government waited for more than two months to even get back to the leadership in the First Nation. Mr. Speaker, two months in the life of this government may not be much, but two months in the life of people who are evacuated is a long, long, long time, let alone four and a half years.

Every single step of the way, this provincial government has delayed. Three weeks ago, the Premier (Mr. Selinger) said he was working on it. Three weeks ago, the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs said the tender for the construction of the houses would be out the next week, but three weeks later, we are still waiting.

This is terribly unfair treatment of the people this NDP government chose to displace by redirecting the flood waters to their community in the first place. It has been shocking that this provincial government did not put top priority on the evacuated and displaced people of Little Saskatchewan First Nation.

And now, the snow is here, and much of the opportunity to build houses in optimal weather conditions is gone, and the situation is still not addressed. Those houses should have finally started construction in April or May of this year. Indeed, Mr.—Madam Speaker, those houses really should have been built starting in April or May of 2012.

Madam Speaker, the situation must change. We need a new government, a Liberal government in this province. Never again must a community be neglected in this way, desperate and displaced for so long. And I still can't believe it has happened and is still happening here in my province, in Manitoba.

* (15:10)

The NDP government, in its inaction, has demonstrated that it has forgotten many other Manitobans as well. We have today more than 10,000 children who this NDP government has displaced from their families and their homes. Almost every day we have Manitobans camped out and protesting in front of our Legislature, telling this NDP government that it's time to support children and families in a way that keeps families together.

Almost every day in the Legislature the NDP government talks about supporting families, and yet every day we have people protesting and speaking to the fact that the government is not listening and not

paying attention to the realities of people's lives in this province.

Mr. Speaker, it is not as if valid models of how to better support families do not already exist. In 1989, the people of New Zealand who were seeing their families being broken up, like the current NDP government is doing in Manitoba, they said enough is enough. The government there passed legislation, which mandated that families must be empowered to have input through a family group conference before the state had a right to even consider breaking up families.

Individuals like Diane Redsky and others at Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata have taken the initiative themselves to use family group conferencing and demonstrated its benefits during a Maori visit last week. Yet this NDP government dawdles and drags its feet on implementing system and funding changes to use this model throughout the whole province.

Mr. Speaker—Madam Speaker, at the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, Felix Walker and his team at the Family and Community Wellness Centre have demonstrated that they can use an integrated service model, which is highly effective in supporting families and which has reduced the number of children taken away from their families into the care of foster parents or group homes by 34 per cent over the last two years.

Such clear evidence, yet this NDP government will not bring in changes to enable the wide-spread use of successful approaches like this. Instead of a real commitment, the government, in its Throne Speech, paid mere lip service yet again to the importance of supporting families. For two months now, an immigrant family torn apart by this NDP government has been protesting in front of the Legislature. Mr.—Madam Speaker, this is an immigrant family who came from a war-torn country for a better life here. This is an immigrant family who were seen to be exemplary in their own community. This immigrant family has been strongly supported by many, including the doctors who've looked after them and those who employed them, but certainly not by this NDP government.

This government is not listening to the struggles and the distress of immigrants like these who come to Manitoba seeking a better life. Madam Speaker, we need a new government, a Liberal government, in this province.

This NDP government talks about looking after our environment, and yet, just recently, an eminent report produced by SeaChoice has taken a careful look at the NDP performance and found it lacking. Indeed, they have concluded that the fisheries on our great lakes—Lake Winnipeg, Lake Manitoba, and Lake Winnipegosis are among the worst managed fisheries in the world.

Madam Speaker, today's NDP government has let the fishers of our province down, and it has let Manitobans who are concerned about our environment down. The report did not say that the NDP government fell a little short of ideal. The report did not say the NDP were doing a bad job. The report said today's NDP government is among the worst in the world.

And we should understand why this is. For many years, the NDP have known that Lake Winnipegosis was being poorly managed. They are responsible for it. I have repeatedly raised this issue many, many times in this Legislature. But the NDP never listened. And then, in 2011, a technical report was produced which outlined the problems in NDP fisheries management on Lake Winnipeg in detail, showing it was not up to today's standards. And the report provided a step-by-step approach to addressing the problems and improving the management. But the NDP, in the four years since, did nothing to address the issues.

Indeed, the NDP have steadily reduced personnel in the Fisheries Branch and removed the director of Fisheries. The result is that the Fisheries Branch, which used to have about 90 people in the 1980s, now has about 11 positions, and not all of those are filled. We have a Premier (Mr. Selinger) who has publicly been said to demonstrate the same anti-science sentiment and distrust of scientists and evidence that was shown by the former Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper. Scott Forbes has said it in the Free Press. The neglect of the NDP for fishers and for those concerned with the environment is shocking. Indeed, it is unbelievable. Madam Speaker, we need a new government, a Liberal government, in this province.

In health care, thankfully, Manitoba is not quite the worst in the world like our fisheries management is, but our emergency room waiting times are among the worst in Canada. In many areas of mental health care, there are long waits and poor access, if any, and yet the NDP do not act. Manitoba Liberals will act and will include critical psychological services like

those for postpartum depression, for autism and many more under Medicare. Madam Speaker, we need a new government, a Liberal government, in our province.

In education, the legacy of the 16 years of NDP government is post-secondary education students with extraordinary high levels of student debt. This has put many students at a disadvantage during their years in post-secondary education and continuing from the day they graduate. Manitoba Liberals will address this by changing the provincial portion of student loans from loans to non-repayable grants. Manitobans—students need this change and want this change. They have been calling on the government for this change for years. Madam Speaker, we need a new government, a Liberal government, in our province.

There are many other areas where a Liberal government will deliver effective solutions in 2016. These include improved management of infrastructure problems and projects, phasing out the PST paid by municipalities with a rebate program, covering in vitro fertilization under Medicare, removing the PST from children's sporting goods, exempting first-time homebuyers from paying land transfer tax, addressing the high prices and poor choice of liquor in this province, improving access to ride sharing while treating our vital and important taxi drivers fairly, bringing effective programs together and filling in the gaps to reduce family and interpersonal violence through education and improving democracy by bringing in proportional representation.

The lack of attention by the NDP to other critical areas is also apparent. The performance of our manufacturing sector since 2007 is just one example. While manufacturing sales in Saskatchewan have grown rapidly, manufacturing sales have slumped and stalled in Manitoba. And in the very latest month of available data, September of this year, manufacturing sales are still below the level of October 2008, seven years ago. The NDP government have just not understood how to best support and foster the growth of manufacturing in Manitoba.

*(15:20)

Connected to the decreased level of manufacturing sales and to the lack of opportunities for businesses in Manitoba, we have more people leaving Manitoba than coming to our province, particularly our young professionals. Indeed, the

outmigration of people from our province is very telling. Madam Speaker, we need a new government, a Liberal government, in our province.

And what is the NDP answer to the travails of Manitoba? It is to lock as many people in our jails as they possibly can. Indeed, our jails are full to overflowing and, strikingly, many of these have not yet even been tried, let alone sentenced.

The cost of the NDP approach is staggering. The loss in human potential that could result from decreasing recidivism and helping people to correct their mistakes and become productive citizens is enormous. Once again, a better way is already evident.

The NDP have not put a priority on the Drug Treatment Court. Not only are we still awaiting the program expansion to Brandon and Thompson, but there was no access to the program available for any new intakes for about 15 months. The NDP are less interested in rehabilitating people and more interested in putting more and more people in our jails. Such a hard-line approach also smacks of a recent but no longer standing Conservative federal government, Madam Speaker. We need a new government, a Liberal government, in our province.

Mr. Speaker, under the NDP, the desperately needed attention to those who are living in poverty has fallen short. Food bank use has increased faster and, on a per capita basis, is higher than in other provinces, reflecting the lack of focus on poverty here. Only this week's Campaign 2000 child and family poverty report was released, to show that Manitoba has the highest rate of child and family poverty of any province in Canada.

Sadly, the NDP record 'forells'—falls far short of what would have and should have been expected. Mr. Speaker—Madam Speaker, we need a new government, a Liberal government, in our province.

There is much more I could say, Mr. Speaker. Indeed, I—Madam Speaker, I do want to make one more point, and that is this: that it's time for whomever is government in Manitoba to put greater trust in Manitobans to make good decisions. We should trust municipalities to make good decisions instead of putting municipalities in a straightjacket as to what they must spend on. We must trust Manitobans to make good decisions on how they spend their own money. We should trust Manitoba businesses to make good decisions on how they

spend their money and how they contribute to our province.

Manitobans want and deserve greater freedom and greater trust than we've seen under this government. Manitobans want a government they can trust and a government that will trust them. Madam Speaker, we need a new government in this province, a Liberal government.

And now I will conclude. Manitobans no longer trust the NDP to provide real solutions or to achieve the substantial changes that are needed in our province. Indeed, Manitobans no longer see the NDP as a credible government for our province. Madam Speaker, we need a new government, a Liberal government, in our province. Thank you. Merci.

Hon. Melanie Wight (Minister of Children and Youth Opportunities): While it's always an honour to speak to our Throne Speech, I would have to say that this particular Throne Speech is the most inspirational that I happen to have been here for.

Build on all the work that has gone before in making our province the amazing place that it is now, and I'm so grateful to all those people who, through those many years, accomplished so much and now speaks to the work that still needs to be done to keep that Manitoba momentum growing and moving forward.

I did want to speak briefly to the Syrian refugees, who Manitoba will soon be welcoming, to that situation. Last weekend, I was at a meeting out in the North End called by an MP on the topic, and she had a list of about 13 she thought was going to arrive for that meeting and 40 people came into this little tiny room because there was so much interest and such a desire by Manitobans from all over to be involved and to be part of the welcoming and to do whatever they could, and they were offering all sorts of different things and trying to figure out where they could volunteer and all of those.

It made me proud to be in a province that has not bowed to the fear that we have seen in some of our other provinces and in—certainly in the United States of America, so I'm very, very grateful that here in Manitoba we have continued with our reputation of ensuring that all people are welcome and we are working together to ensure all needs are addressed.

So I was able to announce a little bit of funding last week for trauma-informed care and after-school programming and First Jobs Strategy for war-affected youth as a start. So I'm very pleased

that we're able to do that, but every department and all of our incredible community partners who are experts in this are working together. And today we had another gathering, as you know, where again we had just an outpouring from the community of people wanting to support this effort. So I would just like to say how proud I am of all of the people in the community in Manitoba.

I'd like to take a few minutes to thank the people of Burrows who allowed me to represent them. It is such an honour to be here, and Burrows is a very diverse and always interesting part of our city. And I—we have indigenous people together with folks from all over the world, some who immigrated many, many years ago as well as those who have made that difficult trip more recently. So, from Ukraine to Italy and from India to the Philippines, we have formed communities here working together to build a better Manitoba.

And I am very proud of the things we've done together in Burrows, some small, some large: the NorWest food centre, for example, which has just been a tremendous success, and I hope that we will see more of that model used throughout the city; as well as the ACCESS Centre, the new gymnasium and classrooms at Lord Nelson School, an exciting cyber academy at Sisler High School where our students are more than holding their own with some of the very best schools in the United States.

It was the brainchild of Charles Bazilewich and Robert Esposito, and it is the first of its kind in Canada. It specializes in information technology education, and it ensures that the Manitoba high school students are introduced to relevant technologies in grade 9 and they're supported through grade 12, and often we are finding already that they are getting jobs right out of high school in the IT world.

Their program delivers students capable of thinking critically to solve real-world business solutions while they master technologies, and the goal of that program is to provide students the fundamental skills to safely and efficiently contribute to Manitoba's skilled IT workforce moving through the 21st century.

So this kind of innovation in our schools is not unusual, and, in spite of the opposition's claim that our teachers in Manitoba don't do a very good job, this could not be further from the truth. Our students are being educated by some of the very best teachers in the world. And you know what we're doing, we're

teaching our children to think, to understand how to learn, how to question, to be creative and innovative, and we're providing more opportunities for all our youth, regardless of where their talents lie, to succeed, and we're making it possible for the kids to get things like university credit courses while in high school.

We've reduced class sizes for K to 3, ensuring that every child will get the attention they need and deserve to excel. We made becoming an apprentice much more possible. Our graduation rates have gone, as we know, from 71 per cent to 87 per cent, and we intend to do everything we can to keep that improving.

* (15:30)

And I'm just so proud that we have here an inclusive vision. We want all our youth to be able to end up in rewarding careers, and, as Minister of CYO, I got to be part of the First Jobs Strategy, so as we work to ensure that barriers don't stop our youth from achieving their goals.

So we've been building and we will continue to build our province for the future. With the low interest rates that we're able to lock in, there is no better time to be doing this. We are expected to have the strongest economy in the country in 2016. But, most importantly, for the families who live in my constituency and many other people's constituencies, Manitoba is now the leading job creator in the country and more Manitobans have good jobs than ever before.

So earlier this week there was an article in the paper by the economist Jim Stanford, noting that "economists," and I quote, "worldwide have undergone a sea change in attitudes on public deficits and debt in the last five years . . . With rock-bottom interest rates and stubborn unemployment, economists in many international agencies now support expanded deficit financing to inject badly needed vitality into stagnant economies." End of quote.

He goes on to note that the Manitoba government with its massive injection into infrastructure was ahead of the policy curve and we are reaping the benefits of that decision.

Quote: "Manitoba's strategy of boosting public capital spending, financed both by new debt and a one point rise in the PST, is now exactly the sort of policy supported by international agencies as relief for widespread economic stagnation.

"Manitoba's approach has contributed to a macroeconomic record among the best in Canada. Provincial unemployment fell (even as Canada's overall economy entered a shallow recession this year), and at 5.3 per cent, Manitoba's rate is now the lowest of any province.

"Total employment grew three per cent over the past two years, . . . Full-time employment grew even faster, by four per cent—rebuffing the trend toward part-time, precarious jobs seen elsewhere." End of quote.

And we saw all of Canada endorse this Manitoba approach recently in the federal election. We believe that there are few things more important than people working and being able to provide for their family. I know in my community folks are often providing for their family here, and they're also sending money back to their home country.

So ensuring there is work for Manitoba—for every Manitoban, is key, and ensuring our children can carry on after high school to post-secondary education in universities, in colleges, or trades, so that they, too, can take care of their families and remain in Manitoba, couldn't be more important.

And if you happen to be an entrepreneur, Manitoba is a fabulous place to start a new business. It is so affordable, you have a huge advantage. This year Winnipeg was named the most business-friendly city, yay, by Canadian Business Magazine.

Also in the Throne Speech, and so vital to Burrows, is the chance to move the railroad tracks, and that will be a long-term project, and if we could get going on it that would be transforming for the North End, which has been set apart since—I don't know—the beginning of time, and the movement of that with new, exciting development in that area, maybe some beautiful green spaces also added in there, it just would transform our city and really would be responsible for building safer, stronger neighbourhoods in the communities.

And this would not have even been a possibility if we had not had the foresight to invest in CentrePort Canada. I'm guessing the opposition was against CentrePort Canada. Could they have been? Yes, they were. But it is this kind of foresight in government, and I'm so grateful to the people of Manitoba for allowing us this time because it takes this kind of time to be able to put in place some of these most important things that allow us to continue

the momentum, and having the vision to do that is essential.

And in Burrows, of course, we also could use some better public transit and we have committed to working with the City of Winnipeg to ensure that happens. I've had more than one community member ask me why the city isn't using more electric buses, especially since we make them right here in Manitoba, so they will be just pleased to see the Province is providing new money for that.

And we all know how important recreation is and the recreation centres that allow us to gather, so I was very pleased to see that we have again committed to working with other levels of government to provide these, and I would like to thank the many, many volunteers in the field of recreation because there's just thousands of people that give so much of their time to ensure that those various recreation programs happen in all of our constituencies.

I know that my constituents, as is true for everyone, value our commitment to invest in a robust health-care system, from our multi-year strategy for children and youth mental health to the new Women's Hospital to the new state-of-the-art CancerCare facility, no user fees for home care, funding to seniors and to new personal-care homes that are culturally responsive as well as legislation to help families find balance while caring for their loved ones.

Perhaps most important of all is our willingness as a government to invest, always, in the social determinants of health: providing access to healthy foods—the gardens that I know at least one of the other members has spoken of, particularly up north; increasing minimum wages every year that we've been in government—bringing people's income over the poverty line by doing that; working with all the other levels of government to end homelessness; modernizing our supports to people who face employment disadvantages due to severe and prolonged disabilities; and strengthening our social enterprise strategy. This is not the time to be going backwards on those or ending those. And both of the opposition parties would be doing those things.

The member from the Liberal Party was speaking only moments ago and talking about doing more, but, with the massive cuts they've said they're going to give, I believe, a \$450-million cut to big corporations like banks—I just don't even understand it. I can't understand where they would ever get the

money. If they were to privatize Liquor & Lotteries, that's another \$350 million out of the budget. So that's \$800 million out of the budget. So I don't think that they could be talking about possibly expanding anything at all. There will be massive cuts if they're going to do those two promises just alone.

Our province has grown, as we are all aware on this side of the House, tremendously over the past 16 years since we became government, and our economy has doubled in that time. Many people that are now in our province, they may—they don't remember what it was like to have a government that was not investing in building in the future but did instead short-sighted things like selling off the telephone company and mothballing our hydro future. They cut funding, for example, to things like all of the friendship centres across the province. Nothing was being built. Not one piece of social housing was built during their time in government. And it was a very different province back then.

And now, our province has been transformed, and we hope to continue that transformation if we're allowed to go forward with our plan. There was no MTS Centre then. The Jets could not have returned to our province without that. There was no museum of human rights. The downtown had died. And few would have thought it possible that we would one day be on the top-20-destinations-in-the-world-to-see list. No one would have believed that in the '90s. Well, I'm proud to say that the downtown and our province has been resurrected and that we have worked with community groups and business and every possible organization to see that happen.

There was an article recently in the paper called the dawning of a new Winnipeg, and it said, over the last 10 or 15 years, significant new developments have put Winnipeg on the map. And they name a number of those, some of which I just named: the MTS Centre, the return of hockey, the condo explosion in the trendy Exchange District, the—all the work being done at The Forks, the world-class Journey to Churchill exhibit, the Canadian museum of human rights. Do you know what? Those didn't happen randomly. They didn't just appear out of nowhere. They happened because we have a government that was dedicated to ensuring that we invested to grow our province. And I couldn't be more proud.

The province's health is being revitalized. Partnerships are occurring with our indigenous people as never before across the North. As the

Throne Speech notes, thanks to our incentives and affordability, Winnipeg's business community is growing like never before. Manitoba is becoming known for its innovation and creativity.

* (15:40)

We're on the National Geographic's top 20 places in the world to visit, and, as you know, in that Throne Speech we promised to continue to help Travel Manitoba. We're known as a creative hub for the arts, and we will be investing further in that.

We can promise you that we will not sell off or mothball Manitoba's Hydro future. We will keep Hydro strong and continue our export sales contract that are the very reason that we have the lowest rates in North America. The Opposition Leader has said he will cancel all the export sales contracts, which are worth billions of dollars to Manitoba, and which ensure our ability to keep our rates low and kill all development. We're also going to be bringing in new programs, so Manitoba can save on their energy bills.

I would like to speak just for a moment about my ministry in Healthy Child. I want to thank all the incredible people involved in the Healthy Child Committee of Cabinet and all of those people who support it and all of the different communities, members as well, that have been involved.

I'm so proud that our government has made a commitment to put a strong focus on prevention and supporting programs like Families First to ensure our children are helped as early as possible and allowed to grow to their fullest potential. We have researched and we have studied during the past years to find out what works best and where we most effectively invest to reduce the suffering of our most vulnerable families. And we know what those programs are, and we are ramping them up.

Also incredibly important is our government's commitment to create 12,000 more child-care spaces. We believe that every family who needs it should be able to access high-quality, affordable child care. And it is my hope that these will be of a great variety and reach some of our most vulnerable families.

Also noted in the Throne Speech is an expansion of our many programs to provide healthy breakfasts and lunch and snacks in school. Close to my heart is the commitment to early childhood hubs, which, I hope, over time can be expanded throughout our province. Our desire to make more dollars move from the back end of the system to the front end can

be transformative for the province of Manitoba. As I said, we've done the research, we've done the pilot programs, we know what works, and we are going to take the natural step, as the Throne Speech said, and ramp those programs up.

I would also just like to mention just a word about our veterans and how many people over the years have said to me, I don't understand why November 11th isn't a statutory holiday. So I am particularly pleased just to note that the level of respect that we have on all sides of the House for our veterans and that we will be doing that in this—as mentioned in this Throne Speech.

I did also want to just say thank you to all those who have been in the House who are not returning, who are not running again and just thank them for their amazing commitment and dedication that they've shown over many, many years, and I know we're going to miss all of them on both sides of the House.

Thank you so much.

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): It is a pleasure to rise today to talk about the Throne Speech that was brought forward, I guess, eight days ago, and we've seen several members get up and talk about what's been important to them and what their particular issues are.

And I want to start by thanking the great people of Lakeside that has given me the opportunity to represent them since 2003. Time certainly flies. I've had a lot of fun, I can tell every member of this House. And we all take our roles very seriously, and we try to represent those values that—of the people that put us here. And I know that when I go from community to community listening to what the good people of Lakeside have to say, I think that from what I've been told, that we're on the right track. We're trying to hold this government to account in order to show that there is an alternative out there, and, to me, I think that's the most important thing that any one of us can do when we go back to our communities and listen to what they have to say.

Before I get too much more into the subject that I want to talk about here a little bit more, I do want to thank the table officers and those other people that make our job that much easier and also those members that are not going to be running in the next election, in particular, my colleague to my left, the member from Agassiz; and, of course, the colleague that I started with in 2003, the member from Riding

Mountain—she gave her farewell speech the other day—and, of course, the member from River East. The information and sharing that she's been able to share with us so-called newbies, for somebody that's been here 30 years, we're certainly pleased to be able to take advantage of her knowledge.

Having been in opposition my whole career, certainly, it's nice to be able to rely on those folks that have been in Cabinet. I know I tease the member from Thompson that he was in opposition half his career before he actually got started that—before he got into government. I hope we don't wait 16 years for me to get into power, but that's some of the—what the democratic process is all about, so we'll certainly find out.

And, of course, on the government side, I want to pay tribute to the member from St. Vital. She's very passionate about the issues she brought forward as well.

The member for Assiniboia (Mr. Rondeau) that came in with a near margin of victory when he was first elected and continued to increase his plurality in that area, you know, time and time again. In fact, I door-knocked in the area several times over the past elections, and I know he works very, very hard to look after his constituents. In fact, I knocked on this door of a lady that is a—I know, is a true conservative, and I said, you know, I'd like you to support our candidate. And she said, you know, I would dearly love to, but I just love our little guy that represents us here. He carries my groceries to my car on occasion when I'm out at the Superstore, and she said maybe next time. And so we're certainly going to miss him. I know that he's done a great job for looking after his constituents, and I want to pay him full respects for that.

The member from Dauphin, we've had many a debate throughout this time together in the Chamber, and even though we didn't agree on everything, not that we need to agree on everything, I certainly respect everything he had to say, and, of course, his help in one of my major issues in the Shoal Lake area in Interlake, as we know what those farmers and ranchers went through, through the flood system. I give him full marks for listening. I know that we didn't get everything we wanted, but we certainly fought a number of things together, and certainly wish him well and his family as he moves on to the next chapter of his life.

The member from Gimli, again, was elected the same time that I was, and I know he's going to be

moving on to something different; he's already started that process. And I know that his role in—as the minister of Education and, of course, his other portfolios, I'm sure he had a great time with that, and certainly wish him and his family as much as—all the best, as well.

And the member from Southdale, I know that she got elected that same time in 2003. I know that she was very passionate about her issues, and of course, as minister of Health, she certainly had a number of challenges.

The member from Radisson really moved me the other day in his speech, and, of course, we know that we all want to make a difference and we all do whatever we can in order to make that change. And, even though he was not in Cabinet, I know that he had the passion, the fire in his belly, to look after his constituents. And I think he can leave here proud of the fact that he's accomplished everything that he could in his position that he was in, and, as the MLA, he listened to those folks and he told some interesting stories about going door to door in that community. I certainly wish him and his family all the best.

Finally, the member from Seine River. What a ride she's had. From, again, being elected the same time I was, I recognized right away she had a lot of talent—a lot of talent—and I told the day of our orientation, I said to the member—I can't say the name, but I can tell you the riding—from Seine River, that I said you're going to be in Cabinet and you're going to be a great MLA. And sure enough, she was—sure enough, she was—and she had extreme values that she was brought up with, and put on the record, and openly. And I pay her full respects for standing her ground for what she truly believed in.

* (15:50)

I think every member in this Chamber has the obligation to do their very best. And, if you don't agree with it, speak out. And I know, in our caucus, I speak out on my issues that I believe in. Everybody in this Chamber, I'm sure, does too.

So I certainly wish her all the best in whatever steps that she has going forward, and I know that when she made the comment that she was brought up to tell the truth, to tell what was on her mind, and that she had to do what she had to do. So I certainly pay her full respects for that.

Now let's get into some of the issues that's been talked about here earlier today, and some of those is

Manitoba Hydro. Manitoba Hydro is an issue that I'm very passionate about, and I can't believe that this government actually went door to door in the last election to every person's door, and it wasn't just the First Minister. It was every member on that side of the House, and made it very clear that Manitoba Hydro with the expansion of Keeyask, Bipole III and the Minnesota-Wisconsin transmission line would not cost—would not cost—Manitobans 1 cent.

They put a brochure out—they put a brochure out—to even carry it to the next step. What happened? We called a committee on Manitoba Hydro just a few months later, and we find out that that, in fact, was a falsehood. It was going to cost Manitobans the full cost of that.

What we have clearly said, and the government always seems to jump on this, we're not opposed to the expansion of Manitoba Hydro at all. The plan that they had originally talked about where the cost of the product would be built in the price of what you sell it for. I'm a businessman, as many other people have been on this side of the House, and when you do the cost of a product, you do exactly that. So there's the cost of the dam; there's a cost to the poles; there's a cost of the labour to put those in; there's a cost to building the generators. That's all part of your cost. So, when you go to sell that product, you have to make a profit. You don't go back to the very people or your staff and say, well, let's work for nothing; you guys pay for that. That's like me asking my children to go out to supper and then, oh, by the way, you pay the bill. That just doesn't make sense, not at all. So the government of the day has lost the trust of all Manitobans—all Manitobans—just on that case alone.

Then the next thing they do is they decide on the Minnesota transmission line that we should maybe just give just part of the hydro line that's going to be on the US side free. So we're going to give that line to them and let them maintain that line, create the jobs, the opportunity for economic benefits for those communities of which it's going to go through, be it Wisconsin, be it Minnesota, and I find that totally wrong, Madam Speaker.

We know there's legislation in place that we—should've been talked about prior to that deal being made, and we find it is unfortunate that that has happened.

I know the member from La Verendrye has brought up several times—several times—about the fact of the way the line was chosen, and there was

several meetings some of which I was at and talked to and had concerns. I met with a number of those folks, and the minister the other day in the House on Monday put on the record the decision was already made. So which is it? Was it already made or was it not? And if it was—if it was already made, they should've been honest about it with those Manitobans when the report of that consultation process of which it should've been listened to those folks so that they truly did have input.

And I know the member from Dawson trail has been getting emails. I've got copies of those emails that they've cc'd me on, and I can tell you they're extremely upset—extremely upset—that they can't reach out to their MLA and have him respond to them on those requests, whether it be—whether it be for the placement of the line, the cost of the line, of how the deal was made. But what we have truly seen, and Manitoba Hydro has talked about this in the Public Utilities Board hearings, the hydro rates have to go up at least 4 per cent each and every year.

Under this leadership of the Selinger government, what we have seen is 26 per cent rate increase in hydro rates since his nine-year term. We also know that in the next 10 years it's going to be again a minimum of 4 per cent of increased rates on Manitoba Hydro. Talk about a tax on the poor, talk about those First Nations communities where they don't have enough money to pay for the food, for the shelter that they need and the necessities that they have to have in order to meet their day-to-day needs. Surely to goodness that was part of the discussion when they were talking about these rate increases.

We talk about the ability to be able to meet those needs as we look at what the next steps would look like. In fact, when you look at the 4 per cent compounded rate increases over the next 10 years minimum, and we know that it will probably be more than that according to the studies and, of course, the documentation that Manitoba Hydro has put on the record with the PUB, that rates will at least double.

And I know in my particular case, we're very, very frugal in our house. We have rules in the house. When we go to bed we turn the heat down to the lower temperature, throw on a few more blankets, so most like the old days when we didn't have anything but wood heat, and we get up in the morning and stoke the fire, so now we're fortunate enough to be able to get up, turn the thermostat up and get dressed that way instead of gathering around the old chimney and doing the hop to put one pant leg in and then the

other pant leg in order to stay warm around the chimney.

And I know most people don't understand that, but part of my generation, maybe I'm one of the older ones here, I don't know, but I certainly do remember it, and I also remember getting running water, that was a—that was a real treat, and, of course, the ring-off phone, probably most people don't even know about a ring-off phone. What's a ring-off phone? Well, that was them great crank phones that we used to give Betty and Alice a call, and the operator would come on and we were able to talk about some of those issues. Of course, they were very good about helping us get the services that we need and they did a good job for us. Sometimes, I think that actually we spend too much time on the phone, but it's one of the necessary things we have to do, but, anyway, it is what it is.

On the budget, the Throne Speech, what we heard from this government on last Monday is \$6 billion in promises with no plan—no plan at all on how to pay for them. That is a huge, huge amount of money, and yesterday the Selinger government was challenged in the debate about how they were going to pay for them. And what do we hear from the First Minister is that he would not rule out taxes, but he also said that in 2011. In fact, he said it was nonsense that they were going to raise taxes. They said it was going to be nonsense, so I'm hoping that the new Finance Minister, the member from Selkirk, will be able to jump up next week in the House and table this plan, but he's been busy going around the country doing these consultations about the budget—doing the budget. And then he comes back in the House and said, well, no—no, I didn't mean to do the budget. I wasn't really going to do a budget. I just wanted to hear what Manitobans had to say.

So, unfortunately, those folks were misled just a little bit—just a little bit. I know he didn't have a lot of people show up. I know he invited the member from Steinbach to come and talk, and I know we had the—our candidate in Gimli show up and he asked a few questions, and—but I know the member from Interlake got it mixed up a little bit when he introduced the Finance Minister, he said his last name was actually the same as the leader for the party. He didn't really remember the Finance member's last name, so I think they could practice. They could practice, do a little role modelling and get each other's names right. Maybe he just wasn't real sure who the Finance Minister was, or maybe the current Finance Minister's not really in control.

He may just be somebody that's the puppet for the First Minister.

So we'll see how he comes out with this new finance budget in February. We're looking forward to him tabling that budget. We've asked several questions whether or not he will, in fact, do that. One day he is; one day he's not, so time will tell. They'll weigh their options—weigh their options. That's the best way to do it for Manitobans to have a clear vision about where this government's going to go. So a clear vision is what it's all about. Well, where is this \$6 billion going to come from—\$6 billion? Where's it going to come from? We make a lot of promises—we make a lot of promises, and promises are easy to—and make, but it's hard to fulfill those promises, so, really, when we drill down on this, what are we really going to find? What are we going to find from this government is—

An Honourable Member: How deep does the hole go?

Mr. Eichler: Exactly. How deep is the hole now? We really don't know that, either, because we will find out if given the opportunity in April of 2016. We will perhaps have the opportunity if the fine folks of Manitoba decides that they like what we have to say. We've been very clear on what our plan is. We did an alternative Throne Speech of which we were very pleased to be a part of and we think it's a vision of which there was a number of things that were talked about and we were very pleased about where we were going and the direction.

* (16:00)

I know yesterday the Minister of Infrastructure talked about all the AMM fellows coming up and talking to him and congratulating him on a job well done. But he didn't finish it all, and they said, this year. This year was a good year that we're able to see, so as we've said before, the only budget—the only budget—within this government's side was underspent and was infrastructure, in the last four years. This year, they go, boom, boom, bust. Bust, bust, boom. They can't seem to get it under control about what they really want to do and how they want to get there.

So we're going to be interested to hear what the First Minister has to say here shortly on regards to how he wants to pay this \$6 billion on the backs of Manitobans. So we want to know exactly what his plan is.

An Honourable Member: In conclusion.

Mr. Eichler: No, we're not quite there yet. I appreciate the member from Assiniboia encouraging me to go on, and I may have to do that. But what it is—it boils down to—is trust—trust. Can we really trust this government once again with another mandate? We know that as we look at servicing what we've been spending is \$6 million a day—\$6 million a day—more than what we've budgeted for. That's on the backs of every Manitoban each and every day. Think about it: \$6 million a day. That's a lot of money. And I can tell you that the last legacy I want to leave for my children and my grandchildren and my great-grandchildren is a debt, a debt that's going to be put on them, on their backs, through no fault of their own—through no fault of their own. And I encourage—I encourage—all members of this House to stand up and be accountable for really what the cost is, and that's what we'll have to be entrusted with. That's what we were elected to do: be factual about our numbers, be honest about what it's going to cost and how you're going to pay for it.

I also want to also put on the record, Madam Deputy Speaker, that, before I turn it over to the First Minister, as we go forward in the next few months—there's roughly 140 days left before April the 19th—that we go out and make it true about what our intentions are. And, when we say you can trust us, we want to be able to trust us. And whenever we talk about trust, the only way we can do that is have a change for the better.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): I'm proud today to stand in support of this Throne Speech, a truly optimistic vision for Manitoba's future. First, I want to say what a privilege it is to serve the people of St. Boniface.

J'aimerais dire, c'est un énorme honneur et privilège à servir les citoyens et citoyennes de Saint-Boniface.

Translation

I would like to say it is a great honour and privilege to serve the citizens of St. Boniface.

English

It is such a diverse and vibrant community, and it inspires me every day to ensure that the work we do here is inclusive and responds to the needs of all Manitobans.

This morning, we honoured the life of a dear friend and tireless advocate for francophone rights, René Toupin. And earlier this week I was proud to introduce The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act, which will promote a vibrant and dynamic francophone community.

And, when I look at all the incredible work the members on this side of the House are doing, from welcoming newcomers and refugees to promoting reconciliation, I am proud that this Throne Speech has put forward a truly unified, inclusive vision for Manitoba's future. I want to thank all the members on this side of the House, as well as the other side, who helped us support this plan. I'm looking forward to them voting on it, Mr. Speaker.

I'm fortunate to stand beside such a diverse and dedicated group of NDP MLAs who work hard for all Manitobans, and that is really what this Throne Speech is all about. It's an inclusive vision. It builds opportunity for young people, families, seniors, indigenous Canadians and newcomers. It is strategic. It promotes steady growth, creates good jobs and builds core infrastructure all across Manitoba from our urban centres, our rural communities, all the way up to the North. And it makes life better by investing in services that matter to families, enhancing our thriving cultural scene and protecting Manitoba's natural beauty.

Our plan is ambitious, but it is well within reach. The naysayers opposite don't think so, as we've just heard. But we know they'd sooner give tax breaks to wealthy insiders than invest in the priorities of average Manitobans. Our not—our plan is not for the skeptics opposite, Mr. Speaker, who still believe in the failed policies of deep cuts and privatization. Because we know what would happen if we listened to them. Manitoba wouldn't be the growing, dynamic place that it is today.

If we listened to the Leader of the Opposition and his Conservatives, we wouldn't have the proud community assets that have come to symbolize the rebirth of our province, like the Jets and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. We wouldn't have the lowest unemployment rate in Canada. We wouldn't have the highest job creation in the country. We wouldn't be creating jobs faster than any other province. Last year, our core infrastructure plan created more than 9,700 good jobs for Manitobans. And we wouldn't have economist after economist praising Manitoba's economic plan and predicting

that we will be one of the fastest growing provinces in the years ahead.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba is being transformed. You see it in Winnipeg's growing skyline, in the expansion of Brandon, in vibrant rural communities and a strong northern economy. This country is recognizing Manitoba's emergence as a leader in everything from design, tourism, construction, job growth and so much more.

With this year's Throne Speech, we are building on this momentum. Now, more than ever, it is time to invest. Now is not the time to slam the door on growth. We will build on Manitoba's strong economic foundation with smart, strategic investments in the future. Our core infrastructure plan is creating good jobs and growing the economy, and by extending it beyond the year 2020—beyond 2020, for a total investment of more than \$10 billion. This investment will allow us to continue to focus on the projects and good jobs that matter to Manitobans, projects like replacing stop lights on the south Perimeter with modern diamond interchanges, which will mean Manitobans 'spess' less time in traffic and more time with their families. This forward-looking thinking initiative will create a continuous high-speed roadway that connects to CentrePort, creating efficiencies for local businesses and transport trucks. By extending our successful core infrastructure plan, we will build the roads and highways that matter to families as well as build on the strategic investments in trade infrastructure we've made on the Trans-Canada going east and west, as well as Highway 75 going south and Highway 6 going north.

Investments in infrastructure are creating thousands of jobs in 'Manitober'—Manitoba. And I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to speak to the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association, and they said when the members opposite were in government, they had, maybe, on a good day with the sun out, 200 members. Now they have over 700 members building the province of Manitoba. And, when I visited with the electricians' union in Manitoba, the IBEW, they said the same thing. They used to have 400 members in their organization; now they've got over 1,200 people working in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, this Throne Speech is also about working with local governments to build strong communities. 'Togay'—today we will have the—we will pave the way to a brighter future for rural and northern families. Yesterday I was at the Association

of Manitoba Municipalities convention, and I can tell you the meetings we had there, people appreciated the investments they were seeing in roads. People appreciated the investments in sewer and water. People appreciated the investments in personal-care homes outside of the city. People appreciated what we're doing on schools out there. They appreciated the fact that we're seeing more people doing apprenticeships in rural Manitoba and setting up businesses and continuing to live in their community, and they appreciated the fact that there's more doctors in rural Manitoba than we've ever seen before in the history of the province, as well as more ambulances, as well as more nurses, as well as more nurse practitioners. All of those things, they thought—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Selinger: —they thought, Mr. Speaker, all of those investments were making a gigantic difference in their quality of life.

Earlier this week, we launched a five-year, \$325-million Growing Communities plan focused on transforming rural infrastructure, such as 'roge'—road and bridge renewal, rural recreation, water projects and municipal airports. And we have a willing federal partner at the table that recognizes that modest deficits in a time of low growth will help rebuild our communities and create good jobs. That's a very different, Mr. Speaker, than what we see the members opposite, even with their gigantic, and I might say, gigantic flip-flop, on deficits. They're not putting the money into infrastructure. They're not putting the money into jobs. They're putting the money into tax breaks for the wealthy.

* (16:10)

And because recreation centres are at the heart of our communities, starting in 2016, our government will establish a new five-year recreation fund to build and renew everything from hockey arenas to local curling clubs. We will support strong, connected communities by establishing a new Manitoba community airports program and expanding rural and northern cell service and broadband coverage, Mr. Speaker. Significant highways renewal will also be undertaken in every part of the province, including working to connect First Nations communities to the provincial road system.

Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, when our minister of indigenous and northern affairs introduced new legislation for the construction of Shoal Lake 40's

Freedom Road, that's another step on reconciliation. That's another step of ensuring that everybody is treated fairly in this province and our neighbours to look—help us look after our water supply.

We also—this—in the Throne Speech, laid out a new vision for Winnipeg. Winnipeg has seen an incredible renaissance of development over the past decade, and our plan builds on this growth with a new flexible partnership totaling \$1 billion over five years. We will embark on a visionary project to move the rail lines out of Winnipeg, ending a century-long division within our city and opening up new opportunities for growth and development downtown, in the North End, in the south end. Those opportunities there, we nearly really—all we have to do is have the vision and reach out and grab them. We will invest in modern public transit network, waste water treatment plants to protect our lakes and rivers and new recreation centres to build strong communities, and we will build the modern, big-city roadwork Winnipeg needs, with projects like the Waverley underpass, upgrading Marion Street, replacing the Louise Bridge, extending Chief Peguis Trail westward and upgrading Kenaston Boulevard.

Mr. Speaker, we are also building with our community partners to build a dynamic Manitoba that is a great place to live and visit. We already have great new attractions like the world's Journey to Churchill exhibit and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, and our world-class sporting venues allow us to host some of the most loved sporting events like the FIFA Women's World Cup and the Grey Cup Festival unfolding as we speak in the great city of Winnipeg. Is it any wonder—is it any wonder that National Geographic named Winnipeg one of the world's must-visit destinations—one of the world's must-visit destinations. Bye-bye San Francisco, hello Winnipeg.

The world wants to come here and see all the great things Manitoba has to offer, and the only people who seem to be complaining are the members opposite, the nattering nabobs of negativity, Mr. Speaker. They're a party of no. They said no to building the MTS Centre. They said building—said no to building the Investors Group Field and no to revitalizing downtown.

This Throne Speech builds on Manitoba's growing leadership in the arts and culture and tourism. Our MOU with the territory of Nunavut is bringing 7,000 pieces of Inuit art to the Winnipeg Art Gallery. And just last week, our government

announced \$15 million to support the Winnipeg Art Gallery's Inuit art centre, which will be a cornerstone of the downtown cultural and arts scene, Mr. Speaker. And that collection that's coming down here is the property, the cultural assets, of the people of Nunavut, the Inuit people of Nunavut. And they will benefit by that. That partnership will benefit by that. They will see that art distributed around the world including like countries of France. In exchange for sharing Inuit art, impressionist art will come to Manitoba. It will also go up to the people in Nunavut so they can enjoy that. Manitoba, we're joining the global scene for artistic endeavours, and we're doing it in partnership with the people of Nunavut.

We are continuing to promote Churchill as a tourism destination and a gateway to the North with world-class research facilities in arctic science. And to boost tourism all across Manitoba, we have announced a new sustainable tourism funding model that will market Manitoba to the world. And that is a great story, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we want young Manitobans to be able to take advantage of all the incredible opportunities in our province. This Throne Speech recognizes that indigenous communities must be full partners in our efforts to support and keep families together. We will introduce customary care legislation to ensure children can thrive safely in their community, strengthening their connection to language, culture, and family. And we are following through on recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, including introducing legislation that ensures all Manitoba students learn about the histories, language, cultures, and traditional knowledge of indigenous people.

This Throne Speech also puts forward an inclusive accessible vision for child care in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker. We will make child care universally accessible by eliminating the wait times and adding 12,000 more spaces for families in Manitoba. This will ensure young people can get the strong foundation they need, and as students move on to grade school, we will support them with new community schools and after-school programs in the inner city and northern Manitoba.

Just yesterday, Mr. Speaker, while I was in Brandon, we announced the construction of a brand new school in Brandon's thriving south end community, and I can tell you, when I was at that announcement, we saw the young children from

kindergarten up to grade 5, we saw the diverse families that were there, and we know that when we build that school some day their children will go to that school. That asset will serve that community for generations to come, and that is what a growing community needs, a government partner that believes in them, believes in the children, believes in the families, and is willing to build their assets.

And, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition had an opportunity to support that, and when he was asked, he deferred. He said he wouldn't be able to make that decision right now. He had no commitment to those people in Brandon.

In our Throne Speech we help young people succeed. The Leader of the Opposition, he'd sooner fail them, tell grade 9 boys they don't have a future at all, Mr. Speaker. We will connect Manitobans with advanced learning and good careers by expanding the First-Year Now initiative, which is helping high school students get a head start on their future.

We will expand community-based programs to help skilled newcomers get good jobs in their chosen careers. Our universities and colleges are growing and attracting more students than ever before. We will support their growth by building more student housing at places like Brandon University and the University of Winnipeg.

We will double the number of women apprentices in the skilled trades and build a new University College of the North trade centre—training centre in Thompson, Mr. Speaker, to help students take advantage of the good jobs created by Manitoba Hydro and our investments in northern infrastructure and mining.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba is a province where we look after one another. We are compassionate, caring and kind, and Manitobans expect the same from their government. Manitobans want a government who invests in services that are accessible and inclusive. With this Throne Speech, we are ushering in a new era of women's health care with a state-of-the-art Women's Hospital, an expansion of the Women's Health Clinic, more access to midwives and an expansion to the Fertility Treatment Tax Credit.

The opposition's plan is for American-style two-tier health care in Manitoba, where the wealthiest can buy their way to the front of the line with their chequebook or their credit card, Mr. Speaker—unacceptable in a country like Canada, unacceptable in a province like Manitoba.

Our nation's leading cancer strategy is reducing the time it takes for patients to move from diagnosis to treatment, and by building a new state-of-the-art CancerCare facility, Manitobans will have better access to expanded treatment.

Last week I joined with two world-leading health organizations here in Winnipeg, the Reh-Fit Centre and the Pan Am Clinic, to announce an exciting new partnership that will bring these two like-minded organizations together to build the Pan Am Clinic of the future, and I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, there's very generous people in our community that are willing to make very significant donations to that facility. They've done well in Manitoba; they immigrated to this province; they prospered in this province, and now they're taking the fruits of their labour and reinvesting them into the community for the well-being of all Manitobans. That's the kind of citizens we support in Manitoba.

* (16:20)

We will enhance funding to senior centres and work with our partners to develop more seniors housing, build new personal care homes and improve palliative care services. Together, with partners like Make Poverty History in Manitoba, we will take steps to increase the minimum wage and bring the incomes of Manitoba families above the poverty line.

The opposition plans to privatize the delivery of social services, which won't help Manitobans; it will only help corporations profit from the poorest, Mr. Speaker. Our government stands up for the—Manitoba's most vulnerable.

We will continue to be a leader in addressing the important issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. We will take important steps to provide paid leave to Manitobans who are victims of domestic violence, and we will make legislative changes to strengthen protection orders. And we will partner with our post-secondary institutions to make our campuses a safer place for all students, with policies to prevent and respond to sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Mr. Speaker, we also believe in a healthy environment. This Throne Speech presents a positive, inclusive vision for Manitoba's future, but that future would not be complete without the pristine natural beauty that Manitobans cherish in our natural environment. I was proud to stand with David Suzuki last month as Manitoba became the first province to sign on to the Blue Dot declaration.

We will be bringing forward legislation to guarantee every Manitoban's right to a healthy environment, clean water, secure and healthy food, clean—and clean air. We will protect the water in our lakes, rivers and streams by ensuring waste—or treatment plants meet the highest standards. And we will ensure clean air and pure water by protecting the boreal forest, which acts as a filter for water into Lake Winnipeg and one of the world's largest carbon sinks. And, in preserving the boreal forest, we will tap into our knowledge of indigenous peoples who have been stewards of the forest for thousands of years; they have been keepers of the land and that is a role we want them to continue to play. We will work with them through indigenous land-use planning and moving forward on protecting Pimachiowin Aki, the land that gives life, as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

And I can say, this week, Mr. Speaker, I was proud to stand with First Nations leaders on a land-use approach in Manitoba. The land-use approach we took on the east side where we brought in legislation supporting the First Nations and indigenous peoples over there to come up with their own plans gave certainty for future development and also gave certainty for future protection on the east side. That is the way forward, as we respect the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Mr. Speaker, this is our vision for the future. It is a vision for all Manitobans. It is a vision where all Manitobans belong. It is an inclusive vision, and it is a vision that we are announcing as part of our Throne Speech, and it is also at a time when we are going to welcome thousands of refugees from Syria and other places in the world to Manitoba, because we know this is a place where anybody can live in prosperity, peace and security.

Manitoba works best when we come together as a province and work together, and despite the 'goneglowing' global uncertainty Manitoba has kept moving forward, because together we are working towards a common goal to make Manitoba a place where we can raise our families, a place where our families will want to live in the future.

Our strategic investments are fuelling our economy and are preparing our children to build a successful life in this province. More growth, sustainable growth, good jobs, more opportunities for our children and youth; that is our plan and it is working, Mr. Speaker. These are the priorities of

Manitoba families. These are the values that we hold dear, and these will be our priorities into the future, as represented by this Throne Speech.

And I thank you for the opportunity to address the Legislature, and I look forward to everybody voting on it from the other side of the House.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Is there any further debate on this matter?

Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is the amendment to the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Does the House wish to have the amendment read?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No. Okay. Is it—all those in favour—is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: The amendment, pardon me?

I hear a no.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

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

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Recorded Vote

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): A recorded vote, Mr. Speaker.

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

* (16:30)

Order, please.

The question before the House is the motion of the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Pallister), that is, the amendment to the motion

for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Division

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

Yeas

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

Nays

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

Deputy Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish): Yeas 18, Nays 32.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the amendment lost.

Now, pursuant to rule 45–44(5), we'll now proceed to put the question on the main motion of the honourable member for The Pas (Ms. Lathlin), and that is the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

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

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: Opinion of the Chair, the Ayes have it.

Recorded Vote

Mr. Goertzen: Recorded vote, Mr. Speaker.

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

Order, please.

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

Division

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

Yeas

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

Nays

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

Deputy Clerk: Yeas 32, Nays 19.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

And I must thank our pages very much. That was a very impressive performance here today.

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I have leave of the House to call it 5 o'clock.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, November 26, 2015

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