

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

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The Honourable Myrna Driedger
Speaker*

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-First Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALLUM, James	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
BINDLE, Kelly	Thompson	PC
CHIEF, Kevin	Point Douglas	NDP
CLARKE, Eileen, Hon.	Agassiz	PC
COX, Cathy, Hon.	River East	PC
CULLEN, Cliff, Hon.	Spruce Woods	PC
CURRY, Nic	Kildonan	PC
DRIEDGER, Myrna, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EICHLER, Ralph, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FIELDING, Scott, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
FLETCHER, Steven, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni	St. Johns	NDP
FRIESEN, Cameron, Hon.	Morden-Winkler	PC
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
GRAYDON, Clifford	Emerson	PC
GUILLEMARD, Sarah	Fort Richmond	PC
HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
ISLEIFSON, Len	Brandon East	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake	PC
JOHNSTON, Scott	St. James	PC
KINEW, Wab	Fort Rouge	NDP
KLASSEN, Judy	Kewatinook	Lib.
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAGIMODIERE, Alan	Selkirk	PC
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Burrows	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom	Flin Flon	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Flor	Logan	NDP
MARCELINO, Ted	Tyndall Park	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	Morris	PC
MAYER, Colleen	St. Vital	PC
MICHALESKI, Brad	Dauphin	PC
MICKLEFIELD, Andrew, Hon.	Rossmere	PC
MORLEY-LECOMTE, Janice	Seine River	PC
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine, Hon.	Midland	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Arthur-Virden	PC
REYES, Jon	St. Norbert	PC
SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	NDP
SCHULER, Ron, Hon.	St. Paul	PC
SELINGER, Greg	St. Boniface	NDP
SMITH, Andrew	Southdale	PC
SMOOK, Dennis	La Verendrye	PC
SQUIRES, Rochelle, Hon.	Riel	PC
STEFANSON, Heather, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
SWAN, Andrew	Minto	NDP
TEITSMA, James	Radisson	PC
WHARTON, Jeff	Gimli	PC
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WISHART, Ian, Hon.	Portage la Prairie	PC
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
YAKIMOSKI, Blair	Transcona	PC

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, November 24, 2016

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

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

Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 4—The Provincial Court Amendment Act

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I move, seconded by the Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living (Mr. Goertzen), that Bill 4, The Provincial Court Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Cour provinciale, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Stefanson: Bill 4 is a step forward in our commitment to improve access to justice and reduce court delays, a commitment that we made in our recent Throne Speech.

The proposed amendments in this bill will provide for a more efficient administrative structure within the judicial justice of the peace program. We believe that this is an important step toward ensuring that we can be compliant with the Supreme Court ruling in the Jordan case. So we believe this is a very important bill.

Thank you very much.

Mrs. Sarah Guillemard (Fort Richmond): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded—

Madam Speaker: Oh, pardon me; sorry. I'm supposed to ask something else.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion by the Minister of Justice? Agreed? *[Agreed]*

Bill 201—The Service and Therapy Animal Day Act

Mrs. Sarah Guillemard (Fort Richmond): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Selkirk (Mr. Lagimodiere), that Bill 201, The Service and Therapy Animal Day Act; Loi sur la Journée des animaux d'assistance et de zoothérapie, be now read for a first time.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Guillemard: Madam Speaker, whether it be for companionship, to inspire confidence or a life dedicated to service, protection and assistance, service and therapy animals play an essential role in the lives of those who depend on them. These animals help those in need perform tasks, accomplish lifelong goals, embark on adventures, overcome debilitating mental illnesses and safeguard military security and police forces across the country and in the world, that is why I believe it is crucial—this is a crucial role and help that service and therapy animals provide in the lives of those who need their assistance deserves to be respected and honoured.

Thank you.

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

Committee reports?

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I am pleased to table the annual report of the Vehicle Impoundment Registry.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Madam Speaker: I would indicate that the required 90 minutes' notice prior to routine proceedings was provided in accordance with rule 26(2), so would the honourable Minister for Sport, Culture and Heritage please proceed with her ministerial statement.

Teresa Collins—Francophone Affairs Appointment

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister responsible for Francophone Affairs): Earlier this year, this assembly unanimously adopted Bill 5—Projet de loi 5, Loi sur l'appui à l'épanouissement de la

francophonie manitobaine, The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act.

Ce projet de loi répond aux demandes de la communauté et reconnaît leur contribution à notre province, en plus de protéger les services en français offerts par le gouvernement et les entités publiques.

Translation

This bill responds to the needs of the community and acknowledges its contribution to our province, in addition to protecting the French-language services provided by the government and public bodies.

English

Madam Speaker, as I said in introducing this bill, Le Manitoba a une population francophone dynamique qui a toujours contribué au développement de notre province. La francophonie manitobaine a beaucoup changé au fil des années et est beaucoup plus diverse qu'il y a vingt ans.

Translation

Manitoba has a dynamic Francophone population that has always contributed to the development of our province. Manitoba's Francophone community has changed significantly over the years and is much more diverse now than it was twenty years ago.

English

And how this bill protects the administrative structures and tools that have been put in place over several administrations.

Today I am pleased to indicate to the House that we have taken another step in strengthening this structure with the appointment of a new executive director in the Francophone Affairs Secretariat.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to inform the House that effective December 1st, 2016, Ms. Teresa Collins will become the new executive director of the Francophone Affairs Secretariat. Ms. Collins was selected through an independent competition conducted by the Civil Service Commission, which included representation from Société franco-manitobaine.

Ms. Collins is returning to the Secretariat where she had previously serviced as a French-language services co-ordinator prior to her present role of director of the Translation Services branch within the government of Manitoba. Ms. Collins brings with her

solid credentials in this field as a graduate of the University of London and the Université du Québec à Montréal.

As a proud member of the Franco-Manitoban community, I know that the government and the province will be well served by her dedication to working with the community.

J'ai hâte de travailler avec Madame Collins au cours des prochains mois et années à venir.

Merci beaucoup, Madame la Présidente.

Translation

I look forward to working with Ms. Collins in the coming months and years.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Greg Selinger (St. Boniface): La présence française ici au Manitoba remonte à la fondation de cette province en 1870, quand Louis Riel a garanti qu'en vertu de la Loi de 1870 sur le Manitoba, le français et l'anglais occuperaient un statut égal dans les domaines législatif et judiciaire au sein de la province.

Nous reconnaissons que la communauté francophone ici au Manitoba fait partie intégrale du patrimoine et de l'histoire de notre province. C'est pourquoi nous avons été heureux d'appuyer le projet de loi sur l'appui à l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobaine, qui offre un cadre nécessaire afin de favoriser l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobaine et d'assurer que le Manitoba continue de bénéficier d'une communauté francophone puissante et diversifiée. Nous félicitons la ministre d'avoir nommé les membres du Conseil consultatif en partenariat avec la Société franco-manitobaine, et nous attendons avec impatience leurs recommandations. Et maintenant, avec la nouvelle directrice Teresa Collins, on peut avancer cette initiative conjointe avec la SFM.

* (13:40)

Nous avons beaucoup progressé depuis les luttes passées pour les droits linguistiques francophones. Pourtant, il reste toujours du travail à faire. Pour assurer que la francophonie continue de s'épanouir et de grandir, il faut continuer d'investir dans les nombreux organismes culturels et éducatifs qui travaillent pour agrandir l'espace francophone et élargir les services bilingues.

Madame la présidente, à l'approche du 150^e anniversaire du Manitoba, reconnaissons l'importance du français ici au Manitoba, et continuons de promouvoir la vision de Louis Riel : un Manitoba fort dans sa diversité et son bilinguisme. Merci.

Translation

The Francophone presence here in Manitoba goes back to the founding of this province in 1870 when Louis Riel guaranteed that, under The Manitoba Act of 1870, French and English would be given equal status in the province's Legislature and courts.

Madam Speaker, as Manitoba's 150th anniversary approaches, let us recognize the importance of French here in Manitoba, and continue to promote Louis Riel's vision of a Manitoba that is strong in its diversity and bilingualism. Thank you.

We recognize that the Francophone community here in Manitoba is an integral part of our province's heritage and history. This is why we were happy to support the proposed Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act, which provides the framework for enhancing the vitality of Manitoba's Francophone community and ensuring that Manitoba will continue to benefit from a strong and diverse Francophone community. We congratulate the minister on the appointments to the Advisory Council made in partnership with the Société franco-manitobaine, and we look forward to the Council's recommendations. And now, with our new executive director, Teresa Collins, we will be able to move this initiative forward jointly with the SFM.

We have made considerable progress since the struggles of the past for Francophone language rights. But there is still work to do. To ensure that the Francophone community continues to flourish and grow, we must continue to invest in the many cultural and educational organizations that work to expand the Francophone presence and enhance French-language services.

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows): I ask for leave to speak in response to the ministerial statement.

Madam Speaker: Does the member have leave to respond to the ministerial statement? [Agreed]

Ms. Lamoureux: I would first like to congratulate the new members of the Francophone Affairs

Advisory Council as well as the new executive director Teresa Collins.

I am certain this group of Manitobans will do a lot to encourage the francophone community around the province. Because of the historical role that the francophone community continues to play in building Manitoba to be the abundant province that it is today, our caucus was thrilled to be able to support the act.

We have a strong and proud Franco-Manitoban community, and it is our jobs here in the House to listen and help strengthen the francophone community and recognize the diversity that makes Manitoba the amazing province that we love.

J'ai l'intention de continuer à étudier le français. Merci.

Translation

I intend to continue to study French. Thank you very much.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Hindu Society of Manitoba

Ms. Janice Morley-Lecomte (Seine River): Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I address the House today about an organization that has been an integral part of the Seine River community for more than a decade. The Hindu Society of Manitoba became incorporated as a religious and charitable organization on December 9th, 1970. In 1979, the society opened their first temple on Ellice Avenue.

In 1998, the temple development committee was appointed to spearhead a plan to construct a larger temple to meet the needs of this growing community. This ultimately led to a mobilization amongst the entire community for this common goal and through the hard work and dedication of its members, the Hindu Temple and Dr. Raj Pandey Hindu Centre was opened on St. Anne's Road in 2005. This community building is 30,000 square feet and incorporates the temple, puja hall, four classrooms, the Academy of Hindu Studies, a community kitchen and a gymnasium.

I had the opportunity to take part in celebrating the recent completion of the kalasha on the top of the temple which symbolizes the potentialities of life and growth. This was a truly memorable event. The Hindu Society is vibrant, welcoming, and eager to share their culture with everyone around them. In addition, this event would not have been possible

without the many volunteers and community members who dedicated countless hours to this endeavour. Now, Madam Speaker, I'd like to ask all members to join me in congratulating the Hindu Society of Manitoba on the completion of their structure.

Just TV Program

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): I'm so honoured to acknowledge the phenomenal work of the Broadway Neighbourhood Centre's Just TV program, a community program mentoring youth in multimedia skills and creative expression through music and video creation. Just TV understands supporting youth to explore the continent of possibilities each of their lives represent is the surest way of ensuring their empowerment and leadership.

Just TV believes providing safe space to explore the myriad of youth's interests and passions has an immediate and tangible impact on young people's lives, on the lives of their families and community and in shaping Manitoba.

In their 10 years, Just TV has seen over 150 youth graduate from the program. The staff of Just TV, like Laura, Addison, Paul, Naomii, Jason, Terence, Kayla—of course Spatch—mentor youth to create music and videos from start to finish as a creative expression and a testament of their life journeys.

Just TV youth have produced music and videos highlighting being in CFS care, youth suicide, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, mental health, while always creating positive and connecting messages for their peers that they are not alone.

I've had the honour of working with Just TV on a couple of video projects and was absolutely in awe of the sheer talent of their youth. Like Erica Daniels, from Sagkeeng First Nation, who thrived in video producing and has travelled to different parts of the world, filming, and now mentors other young women. In fact, Erica just returned from Standing Rock.

Or Tesfa, who has only been in Canada for three years and who has worked so hard, taking full advantage of the program, that he is now a Just TV apprentice and recently recognized by the RCMP for a banner video he produced for them.

Tonight, Just TV is hosting their 9th annual showcase at the West End Cultural Centre featuring all of the amazing work of the youth alongside live

performances. I encourage everyone to attend and see their success first-hand. Please join me in acknowledging their success and their youth.

Crohn's and Colitis Awareness Month

Mr. Jeff Wharton (Gimli): I rise in the House today to recognise Crohn's and Colitis Awareness Month, which is marked every November in Canada. Crohn's and colitis—Chron's disease and ulcerative colitis are diseases that inflame the lining of the gastrointestinal tract and disrupt the body's ability to digest food, absorb nutrition and eliminate waste in a healthy manner.

Crohn's is believed to be caused by a genetic tendency and a trigger in the environment. Evidence of this genetic tie is very apparent in very close family friends of ours. Mom and both daughters have been experiencing a number of surgeries, medications and other forms of care to help with everyday activities that we take for granted. Their courage and strength is to be commended.

Madam Speaker, it is important for people with Crohn's and colitis to manage the risks associated with their disease. We know that those suffering with the disease for more than 10 years have a risk of colon cancer and should be screened regularly. For those who have Crohn's and colitis, the message is clear: be proactive, be informed and get screened.

Today, one in every 150 Canadians live with Crohn's or colitis. Although they are somewhat manageable with medications, the rate has unfortunately doubled since 1995 and is today, in Canada, one of the highest in the world. This number is staggering and is further evident—evidence that there is work to be done to find a cure.

Madam Speaker, it is important that we recognise the hard work of the—done by the Crohn's and colitis in Canada on outreach, awareness, support and funding research. With Manitobans' generosity behind these efforts, I am confident that one day these diseases will be cured.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Jim Prentice

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): It's with a heavy heart that I rise today in this House on behalf of my husband Jason and my children Victoria and Tommy, to pay tribute to Jim Prentice, whose life was recently and tragically cut short. While many Canadians knew

Jim as a dedicated public servant, we had the privilege of knowing him as a colleague and a friend.

Over the years, we watched Jim's federal political career expand through senior Cabinet portfolios, eventually moving to provincial politics as Premier of Alberta. I know that he brought his tireless work ethic to the position of senior executive vice-president and vice-chairman of CIBC, where Jason had the opportunity to work with him very closely.

I also had the pleasure of working with Jim in his role as the federal Minister of the Environment while I served as the official opposition critic for the environment here in Manitoba. He always gave sound advice and supported me in my political roles.

His wife Karen, his children Christina, Cassia and Kate, his sons-in-law John and Ryan and to his grandchildren Jack and Caeleigh, you have lost a remarkable husband, father and grandfather. Our deepest condolences go out to you all.

Jim will forever be remembered in our hearts for his unparalleled public service, his fondness for the outdoors and his genuine love for his family, his province and his country. But mostly he will be remembered by us as a true friend.

In that spirit, I would like to share with the House a toast that Jim wrote in our camp guest book during one of his last visits with our family: Old wine to drink, old books to read, old logs to burn, old friends to trust.

Goodbye, old friend. We will miss you.

Thank you.

* (13:50)

Improvements in Brain Health

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, today I reach out to all who've been affected by brain and mental health issues, either directly or indirectly. There is hope.

Our Manitoba Liberal brain health report concludes we can do better. Whether it's the fentanyl crisis, depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, dementia or a learning disorder in a child, using multimodal approaches can help.

Multimodal approaches were pioneered elsewhere. In cancer, radiation therapy, surgery and various chemotherapies are used together; in heart disease, a careful analysis of risk factors had led

to reducing many at once to achieve the greatest benefit.

We need to similarly optimize brain health. For dementia, research shows addressing multiple risk factors at a time can reduce the incidence of dementia and even enable individuals with the dementia to improve and return to work.

Advances in preventing depression through dietary and psychotherapeutic approaches are emerging. In Scotland where multiple sclerosis is frequent, as it is in Manitoba, they are trying to drastically reduce its incidence, an approach which they estimate may save up to 19-fold the money invested.

While Manitoba staggers forward with the highest infant mortality rate in Canada, other jurisdictions are moving forward with measures to improve brain health to reduce infant mortality and to give us healthier babies while dramatically reducing the number of children in neonatal intensive care units and saving dollars.

Other nutritional interventions are improving children's learning and school grades and reducing violence. It sounds magical, but the evidence keeps rolling on.

The time to act is now. I urge all MLAs to read our Liberal report and to collectively work together to improve the brain health of our province, to decrease sadness, to save dollars and to improve our gross domestic product at the same time.

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: Prior to oral questions, we have some guests in the gallery that I would like to introduce to you.

We have seated in the public gallery from Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology, 23 English-language students under the direction of Patricia Culleton-Koebel, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Fort Garry-Riverview (Mr. Allum).

And also, I would like to draw your attention to members in the public gallery where we have with us today from the Hindu Society of Manitoba: Mrs. Sonia Sharma, Mr. Rajneesh Sharma, Mr. Dinesh Sharma, Mr. Raji Sharma, Mrs. Hasmita Trivedi, Mr. Rajinder Goyal, Mr. Paul Sharma and Swatanter Dev Parbhaker, who are the guests of the honourable member for Seine River (Ms. Morley-Lecomte).

And on behalf of all members here in the Legislature, we welcome all of you to our Manitoba Legislature.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Front-Line Workers and Services Government Election Promise

Ms. Flor Marcelino (Leader of the Official Opposition): The government's Throne Speech was nothing more than an agenda of cuts to front-line workers and privatization of front-line services.

This government campaigned on the promise to protect front-line workers, but the Premier's real plan is clear from his Throne Speech. He wants to cut jobs and slash front-line wages. Instead of growing the economy, the Premier wants to reach into the wallets of Manitoba's workers and take money from them.

Will the Premier admit that he has broken his pledge to front-line workers? Will he apologize for the harm he has done?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, I thank the member for the question.

But I must observe, Madam Speaker, that the simple repetition of erroneous information does not make it any closer to truth, and so I would encourage the member to deal with the real issues we face as a province and to join in participating as part of the team that will address those things. We have finances to fix. We have services to strengthen. We have an economy to rebuild, and we will embrace the challenge of doing so on this side of the House with or without the help of the members opposite.

Madam Speaker: The honourable interim Leader of the Official Opposition, on a supplementary question.

Ms. Marcelino: It is disappointing to see the Premier avoid responsibility for his actions.

The government made up its so-called efficiencies and is now gunning for his real target through cuts to jobs and wages of front-line staff.

We now know the government inflated the deficit numbers by over \$150 million for partisan purposes. The Premier has manufactured fake crisis after crisis in order to launch an ideological attack on Manitoba's front-line workers and the services they provide.

Why did the Premier break his election pledge to front-line workers? Will he apologize for the harm he has done?

Mr. Pallister: Madam Speaker, apologies are warranted from some in this House, but hardly on this side.

And the fact of the matter is that, Madam Speaker, it was not imaginary when credit rating agencies—respected credit rating agencies—reduced our credit rating not once but twice as a consequence of the overspending and wasteful practices of the previous administration. This takes tens of millions of dollars away from front-line services, and the very important front-line services are provided by front-line workers.

So if there's an apology warranted, Madam Speaker, and I believe there is, I would encourage the member opposite to provide it to the people of Manitoba and the front-line civil servants who provide those services to us.

Madam Speaker: The honourable interim Leader of the Official Opposition, on a final supplementary.

Ms. Marcelino: Cuts to wages and jobs undermine our front-line workers and the important services they deliver. The Premier is asking our front-line workers to do more with less and breaking his election promises in the process.

So far this government has stripped Manitobans of bargaining rights and threatened the very services that he clearly and publicly promised to protect. The Premier has ignored Manitoba workers and families in favour of a small, privileged minority to advance a plan that could stall the economy, worsen poverty and take jobs away from Manitobans. It's clear the Premier planned all along to cut front-line services.

Will he just admit that his promise to protect front-line workers was written in disappearing ink?

Mr. Pallister: Promises in disappearing ink, Madam Speaker, such as the previous administration made to the people of Manitoba that they would not raise their taxes when they went to their doors and they knocked—they said to the people of Manitoba, we will not increase your taxes on your home, but did; on your benefits at work—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

Mr. Pallister: —on your benefits at work, but did; and on numerous hundreds of other times. Those are broken promises.

Madam Speaker, we'll keep our promises to Manitobans. We ran on a commitment to fix the finances of our province, and we will work together in partnership with those who work within government services and those across our province, it appears, with the absence of participation by the members of the NDP.

We—I would like to compliment the members of the Liberal caucus for participating in our prebudget consultations.

I think this is an important thing for us to do together. I don't think that the members opposite need to repeat the same desperate fear-mongering lines that got them where they are, but if they choose to, they may as well continue because it got them to the rump position they're in today, Madam Speaker.

Collective Bargaining Process Proposed Legislation

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): This spring, the Progressive Conservatives wanted Manitobans to believe they would protect workers, including front-line workers, yet at its earliest opportunity this government ignored the protests of Manitoba workers and pushed their labour bill that'll make it harder for workers to be represented by a union.

Their next move was to interfere with an ongoing labour negotiation and provoke an unnecessary strike that affected tens of thousands of students and their families.

Now the Premier says he'll impose legislation which will impair collective bargaining and reach into the wallets of front-line workers.

Can the Premier just 'telp' Manitobans today why he's broken his promise to protect workers and, above all, front-line workers?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Madam Speaker, what we've done already is given Manitoba workers the right to a secret ballot, something that's enjoyed by two thirds of Canadian workers all across the country.

* (14:00)

To protect Manitobans, front-line workers and all Manitoba taxpayers we're also going to be making sure that they have a say in whether or not they wish to pay higher taxes on Manitoba's major taxes, as opposed to the previous administration, which promised they would not raise those taxes and then took away the right by going to court.

Now, Madam Speaker, this is standing up in a real way for workers and for their families—
[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —to protect their income levels in their own homes. This is how we protect front-line workers. The previous administration demonstrated how they put those workers at risk.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Minto, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Swan: Well, Madam Speaker, this Premier needs to learn the difference between a negotiator and a dictator. It's a constitutional right—it is a constitutional right—in this country for workers to bargain collectively.

Section 2(d)—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Swan: —of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects the right of employees—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Swan: —to associate for the purpose of meaningfully pursuing collective workplace goals. The Supreme Court has noticed—has noted this right means that employees are entitled to have real input into their workplaces, free from their employers, and there must be a meaningful process of collective bargaining. The Supreme Court has overturned laws passed by other right-wing governments that have impaired workers' rights.

Will the minister table for the House today any legal opinion she may have regarding this proposed legislation?

Mr. Pallister: We are dedicated to a partnership approach, a teamwork approach. I'll be working with, and all my colleagues are working with, our union leaders in this province. We'll continue to do that.

But I want to encourage the member who refers to me as a dictator that he also should remember he also referred to the man in front of him, the former leader of his party, as a dictator, and he needs to remember to restrain his language and show respect for the people in this Chamber more frequently than he seems able to do.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Minto, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Swan: It's the second time I've asked that question—the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Stefanson)—and it is very clear there is no such opinion. And it's also clear the Premier's pledge to front-line workers is not worth the paper it's written on.

He was not telling the truth when he said he'd protect their jobs and the services that Manitobans count on. He wants to reach into the wallets of our front-line workers and off-load his problems onto the backs of workers.

Again, this proposed legislative attack on front-line workers may not be lawful, and it will not include any meaningful consultation with Manitoba workers.

When will this legislation be tabled so the front-line workers of our province know exactly what it is this Premier has in store for them?

Madam Speaker: I would just indicate to members that when we're making comments in the House, that indicating or using the words not telling the truth is not acceptable language to be used here, and I would ask the member to withdraw those words.

Mr. Swan: I do withdraw that.

Madam Speaker: Thank you.

Mr. Pallister: I appreciate the member withdrawing the comment.

The sentiment, of course, remains, and the fact of the matter is that the member opposite, when he was given the opportunity to stand up for the people of his own riding and the people of Manitoba who refused to do so, he supported a PST hike which he himself promised people they wouldn't have to endure in his own riding, went to the doors of the people in his riding, looked them right in the eye, promised them he wouldn't raise their taxes, raised their taxes, and then, when it turned out that—then when it turned out, Madam Speaker, that the polling results were going south and that the people of Manitoba resented that kind of behaviour, he jumped ship on his own people. He organized a rebellion. He decided to label the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger), his former leader—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order

Mr. Pallister: —as something—as someone unfit to lead.

Madam Speaker, I didn't agree with him then. I don't agree with his comments now. I don't think his own colleagues do either.

Health-Care Services Wait Time Task Force

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Madam Speaker, this government didn't say a whole lot during the campaign, but one thing they did promise was to have a—within their first 100 days to have a wait-time-reduction task force.

More—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Wiebe: Two hundred days and two throne speeches later, all talk and no action, Madam Speaker. The Health Minister tries to blame the federal government once again, but, clearly, this isn't a priority for him. Or maybe he's just waiting for KPMG to talk about their cuts before he actually talks to the front-line workers about wait times.

Will the Health Minister just admit that he broke his promise to develop a wait-time task force within the first 100 days?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): Madam Speaker, unlike things in the health-care system, there are some things in this House that are worth the wait, and the member is going to see the results of this in a few days.

Well before he's home for Christmas, having a nice turkey dinner with his family, the wait-times task force will be announced, Madam Speaker.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Ready?

The honourable member for Concordia, on a supplementary question.

Privatization Concerns

Mr. Wiebe: I guess you call that the wait time for the wait-times task force.

During the campaign, while making it clear that there were no sacred cows, this government also promised to protect front-line workers. Now we—the more we learn about this health care review, it seems to be a cover to squeeze out and freeze out front-line workers.

This Health Minister warned KPMG that they would have to sell the cuts that they're making to the, quote, numerous and diverse groups working within and across the health-care system that will be impacted by the recommendations made. His review says nothing about listening to labour. And the Premier (Mr. Pallister) has refused to clearly define who a front-line worker is.

Will the minister admit that he's broken his promise to front-line workers and admit that this—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Goertzen: Madam Speaker, this is the member who tried to scare individuals during a election campaign about losing their cancer drugs. He tried to besmirch KPMG as an organization, a well-respected organization in Manitoba. He said we weren't going to listen to Manitobans.

Yesterday I was pleased to announce the survey process of the KPMG report, and yesterday alone, we got more than 1,000 answers from Manitobans. Manitobans are listening. Why aren't you, sir?

Madam Speaker: I would just remind members that when we're making comments that all comments be directed through the Chair.

The honourable member for Concordia, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Wiebe: Six months in, we've already seen the Health Minister take dangerous steps towards privatization of health care, despite a promise to protect public services that Manitobans count on.

Both the minister and Premier mused about privatization. This summer the minister travelled to Saskatchewan to see how they're implementing two-tier diagnostic testing.

The minister failed to direct KPMG to maintain a user free public health-care system at all costs. Now we know what kind of recommendations they'll come back with: the same that they had for home care and health care in the '90s. He's launched a partisan attack on ACCESS centres, QuickCare clinics, the Birth Centre, Madam Speaker.

I ask this minister: Will he just come clean about his plan to privatize and Americanize our health-care system?

Mr. Goertzen: Madam Speaker, I don't know why this member doesn't like Saskatchewan, doesn't like other parts of Canada. We are committed to working with provinces and the federal government.

I want to update him. I indicated to him that went to Ottawa on the weekend and asked the federal government for a number of different initiatives. One was to work with China on restricting the importation of fentanyl from—into Canada, and I was pleased to learn today that an MOU has been signed between the Minister of Public Safety of Canada and the government of China to work on exactly that.

We're working with the federal government to get things done. He should get on board, Madam Speaker.

* (14:10)

Child Poverty Rates Reduction Plan

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): A report released by Campaign 2000 says Manitoba has the second highest rate of child poverty in Canada, which affects nearly one in three children.

Manitoba children need this government to set real targets and timelines to address poverty and make life affordable for every Manitoban. It's baffling as to why this government has refused to raise the minimum wage and why their Throne Speech completely ignored children living in poverty.

Will this government bring in a comprehensive reduction plan that raises the minimum wage to a living allowance and increases benefits to end the poverty?

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Families): I very much appreciate the question.

I know there was a report that came out. While the government will be reviewing the report, I can tell you that, in opposition, this government fought extensively for things like the Rent Assist program until the dying days of the late—of the last administration where they threw it in at the very last minute. Those are concrete actions that this government has taken to address things like poverty. We're going to continue to do more things to help the lowest income Manitobans succeed.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for St. Johns, on a supplementary question.

Persons with Disabilities Accessibility Standards

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): This Throne Speech ignores persons with physical disabilities who are advocating for a more accessible province.

Our government passed legislation when—which laid out a vision for a barrier-free Manitoba that allows all Manitobans the same opportunities. We were making steady progress on those promises, including requiring all public and private organizations to remove barriers to accessible customer service.

Will this government continue our progress and invest real dollars to advance the accessibility legislation and set standards for all workplaces so that everyone can work?

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Families): That legislation that she has spoke of is something that was endorsed by this—in opposition—this government as well. We're well on our track in terms of the standards, in terms of the accessibility that's a part of it. We were working with people like the Manitoba Association of School Trustees. We're looking—working with people like the Association of Manitoba Municipalities to make this a reality. We're committed to this legislation.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for St. Johns, on a final supplementary.

Income Assistance Increase Request

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): Make Poverty History is demanding that the government raises the EIA rates to at least 75 per cent of the poverty line—not even the 100 per cent—which would alieve a reliance on EIA and free up resources from buying the basic needs. It means people could have the time, the energy and the money to get training, to find jobs and to achieve financial independence.

Our government raised the EI rates before, and this government should take up that torch and be a leader for all Manitobans.

Will the minister build on our progress and raise the EIA basic needs benefit to at least 75 per cent of the poverty line?

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Families): Ensuring poverty is something that we all can embrace in this House.

The unfortunate thing is we saw under the previous administration things like food banks spike in terms of what the NDP are. We also know that in terms of the rate of poverty, doubled under the previous administration.

We also know that this government has made a priority of investments in things like housing, which we think will help things. We also know that this government invested in things like Rent Assist that gives more people more money to do everyday items, which is extremely important for those people.

So we're proud of our record. We encourage the NDP to joining us on our budgets and our Throne Speech that lay out a groundwork for these types of items.

Affordable Tuition Rates Future Increase Concerns

Mr. Wab Kinew (Fort Rouge): Affordable tuition is an investment in the future of our province. That's because affordable tuition is an incentive for more people to get a post-secondary education.

Now, post-secondary students have been telling me since the election that they're concerned that the Premier (Mr. Pallister) will raise tuition rates, and he seemed to confirm as much in a scrum after the Throne Speech with a reporter from The Manitoban, the University of Manitoba student newspaper.

So on behalf of the current and future students of post-secondary institutions in this province, I'd like to ask the Premier: How much does he plan to raise tuition by?

Hon. Ian Wishart (Minister of Education and Training): It's a pleasure to rise and I appreciate the question from the member.

I'm certain all students in Manitoba are looking forward to a good education, and we're very pleased that the University of Manitoba has been able to settle its strike and those students are now back at school. I know it was very disruptive not only for the students but for their families, and we certainly all heard very much about that.

We are working very constructively with the post-secondary institutions to make sure that we can put in place a sustainable education system in this province.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

The honourable member for Fort Rouge, on a supplementary question.

Indexed to Inflation

Mr. Kinew: Yes, the students at the University of Manitoba are back in class this week, and I agree that they are probably, many of them at least, pleased that

they were able to salvage this term, but that's why these comments from the Premier are so poorly timed: welcome back to class; boom, here's a tuition raise.

Will the Premier reconsider those comments about raising tuition and commit that next year's post-secondary tuition will be tied to the rate of inflation?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): I'd point out to the member who, again, peacocks for students and does so at his own expense, Madam Speaker, that the comments in respect to tuition are his, not mine.

And I would make a point of saying that we increased the funding last year for education and training by almost \$44 million.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Fort Rouge, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Kinew: Question? Okay. Thank you, Madam Speaker. I apologize. I wasn't sure whether you were done speaking or not.

Keeping tuition affordable is the best way to minimize student debt. Right now, many millennials are being crippled by student debt when they graduate from post-secondary. It's forcing them to delay life decisions, and it narrows their vision of the future. It means paying off student debt instead of taking out loans to start a business or to buy a home.

Scholarships will only have a fraction of the impact on student debt, but keeping tuition affordable does. That's why it was disappointing to hear nothing about affordable tuition in the Throne Speech.

Will the Premier acknowledge the oversight and commit to keeping tuition tied to inflation next year?

Mr. Pallister: Madam Speaker, we're committed as government to making sure the barriers to post-secondary education and training are low and kept low. The member's concern about student debt is one I share and certainly have experienced.

And I also would say that we also have a concern about the students' debt in terms of their proportional ownership of the debt that the NDP created for them in our province. We're also aware of the circumstances facing many rural and northern students who have other costs that concern them as well besides tuition: travel costs and so on.

This is why we've contributed—we will design and have designed and we'll implement a

plan that will double, effectively, the amount of money available from scholarships and bursaries to our post-secondary education students because we believe very strongly that these barriers must be kept low and student debt must be kept low as well.

Addiction Services Access to Treatment

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, the forefront of brain health concerns is the fentanyl overdose crisis. It is devastating to see young people overdosing and dying, including young pregnant mothers. It hurts, it jars and it's hard to comprehend.

There have been young Manitobans who recognized their addiction and tried to change, but found the system didn't respond quickly enough when a person needs help. One of the most critical steps, as we say in our brain health report, is ensuring that when a person calls for help for treatment that the treatment and help they need must be there at that time, not later.

What steps is the minister taking to ensure that the health and treatment is there when Manitobans need it?

* (14:20)

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the question from the member. I know he brings it forward with the same heart that all members have about this issue.

We've all heard too many stories of young people, but not just young people, people from all areas of Manitoba and all walks of society who've been impacted by fentanyl, by carfentanyl, by opiates generally, and sometimes the improper prescribing of them, not just on the illicit side.

So that is why we've been working not just provincially but also nationally. And I'm pleased to say we've had some success nationally in some of the efforts that were announced today and we expect there'll be future efforts announced by the federal government in the coming days that will help with this problem, and we'll continue to take action in Manitoba as well, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for River Heights, on a supplementary question.

Brain and Mental Health Service Improvements Needed

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, the government is consumed with saving money and growing the economy, but has not sufficiently considered investing in preventing brain health issues.

Such actions can [*inaudible*] long-term savings to our economy and, indeed, grow our GDP.

The Conference Board of Canada has estimated that preventing depression and anxiety alone could improve Canada's GDP by \$50 billion. On a per capita basis, this has the potential to increase Manitoba's GDP by \$1.8 billion.

When it has been shown that improving mental health can give such big GDP gains, why is the government not putting more focus on improving the brain and mental health of our citizens?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): I will acknowledge that the addictions services treatment that we have inherited as a government isn't where I'd like it to be, and I don't think it is where most Manitobans would like it to be. It didn't have a good co-ordinated system under the previous government.

We've been hearing from many experts, and we listen to experts, Madam Speaker, that you need to have the co-ordination of mental health and addictions together. It is why we have committed to realign the system to ensure that those two silos are broken down and that the mental health and the addiction side are brought together.

The member will hear more about that before he is having turkey dinner with his family at Christmastime, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for River Heights, on a final supplementary.

Mental Health Services Support for Bill 200

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, yesterday many people came to the Legislature to support Bill 200 to end bullying and discrimination against those who are of large physical size.

It is fair to say that up to 10 per cent of depression and anxiety may be related to the bullying and discrimination that occur 'agonst'—against those who are of large physical size.

Bill 200 will provide protection for such individuals from harassment, bullying and discrimination, will reduce anxiety and depression and can help increase our GDP.

Will the Premier (Mr. Pallister) support Bill 200 and help enable its quick passage to enable Manitobans who are now being harassed and discriminated against to leave happier, healthier and more productive lives?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): Madam Speaker, I want to thank the member for River Heights for bringing forward the private member's bill and his idea.

We have certainly seen in past years, for many years, that private members' bills are duly considered in this House. Many of them are adopted, others inform different policy directions of the government. But regardless of how they proceed in the Legislature, they're always, I think, well respected and well received.

And I appreciate the fact that this member has put the effort into bringing forward this particular private member's bill. There is a process for private members' bills, a well-respected process in this House. It'll proceed through that process, and we'll give it due consideration, Madam Speaker.

Justice of the Peace Legislation Backlog Reduction Plan

Mrs. Colleen Mayer (St. Vital): In the Speech from the Throne, our government is setting a new course for Manitoba.

After the NDP decade of debt, we are focused on fixing our finances. After the NDP decade of decay, we are focused on repairing our services. After the NDP decade of decline, we are focused on rebuilding our economy.

Madam Speaker, can the Minister of Justice please tell this House about our government's plan to repair our services and what measures we're taking to increase the efficiency of our court system?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I want to thank the member for St. Vital for that very good question.

Now, Bill 4 introduces a senior judicial justice of the peace program and represents an important step forward and a commitment to improve access to justice and reduce court backlogs, a commitment that

was made in our recent Throne Speech just three days ago.

We believe that this is an important step forward. We hope that all members of the House support this important piece of legislation because it goes towards making sure that our communities are safer for all Manitobans.

Wilderness and Water Protection Government Intention

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): Can the Premier (Mr. Pallister) please explain why his minister apparently has no mandate to protect Manitoba's waterways and wilderness areas?

Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sustainable Development): I'd like to thank the member opposite.

You know, I think that Manitobans would feel very differently about what the member opposite said. I've travelled widely, thousands of miles this recent—this summer, and, you know, everywhere from Churchill, Norway House, Spruce Woods, Duck Mountain, Turtle Mountain, all over, and, you know, I've heard from individuals, individuals first-hand—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Cox: —who have told me it's the first time a minister has ever been there. They said in the past they just drove right by.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

The honourable member for Wolseley, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Altemeyer: The minister's reply is very concerning. Not only was there zero mention of protecting wilderness areas in the mandate letter that came from her Premier, not only was this the first Throne Speech in over 20 years to not mention anything about protecting additional wilderness areas in Manitoba, we've now learned that the existing environmental strategy for the government, called TomorrowNow, is no longer available on the government's website.

Where is the evidence this government has any intention of doing more for Manitoba's wild spaces?

Mrs. Cox: I'd like to thank the member opposite again for that question. It's an interesting question. He talks about forests and protected spaces, and

I'd just like to say that in the 17 years that they were government they increased protected spaces by 3 per cent. So, thank you.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Wolseley, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Altemeyer: Well, the minister continues to refuse to answer the question in this Chamber.

What is her plan for Manitoba's wilderness? We're used to seeing that, but that's not good enough for Manitobans, and it's certainly not good enough for future generations who are going to live here. We're very proud that, working in partnership with local First Nations communities, we brought over—close to 40 new protected areas into existence in this province in our time in office.

Can the minister promise today she's going to match that in the years ahead?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, order. I haven't recognized the minister yet.

I would just indicate that with the heckling that's going on, what is happening is that you're burning time in question period for questions and for answers, and if you really want to hear questions and answers and get your full 40 minutes I think we need to take the time to be listening to all of that.

The honourable Minister of Sustainable Development.

Mrs. Cox: Again, I'd like to thank the member opposite and thank you, Madam Speaker.

They had 17 years to get it done, Madam Speaker. You know, they've reduced the conservation budget by \$17 million in the past three years.

* (14:30)

So I'd like to know how much they really care about the environment. They're more interested in media attention than environmental protection.

Manitoba Hydro Financial Status

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): Just a few weeks ago, the minister for Crown corporations repeatedly said that Manitoba Hydro is bankrupt. And he kept on repeating a number, which is \$25 billion.

Now, will he finally do the right thing and say that the Hydro corporation, which is our crown jewel, is not bankrupt, and will he apologize to the corporation?

Hon. Ron Schuler (Minister of Crown Services): It's great to have a question again from the member opposite.

And I would like to point out to the House that under their administration the debt in Manitoba Hydro is going to go from \$12 billion to \$25 billion.

Under our government, we will fix and repair the finances of Manitoba and once again make Manitoba Hydro a jewel in the crown of Manitoba.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Tyndall Park, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Marcelino: I thank the minister for the answer, I think.

The untendered contract that the minister for Crown corporations gave to the Boston Consulting Group was \$4.2 million. And I took a chance at reading all the pages of the report. And nowhere does it show the number that just—I mean, the minister kept on repeating, which is \$25 billion.

I want—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Order.

I would just like to remind everybody that the efforts to improve decorum in this Chamber has been somewhat lacking today and has been accelerating during this week, and I really think that is a disservice to all of us, and it's a disservice to the public. And I would ask that everybody, you know, when everybody's asking a question or answering, I think they would like to be heard. So I would just ask the—everybody to just be conscientious about that. I think we need to make some more headway in having a respectful work environment.

The honourable Minister for Crown Services, to respond.

Mr. Schuler: I'm glad that the member opposite read the Boston report, because on page 5 it lays it out very clearly, and I quote: "The magnitude of project risks and their impact on the company's financial health should have been provided more weight and consideration in the evaluation."

We saw a decade of debt, Madam Speaker, and under our government we were elected to fix the finances of Manitoba, and I'd like to report to this House that's exactly what we are doing.

Madam Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

Petitions?

ORDERS OF THE DAY GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

House Business

Mr. Jim Maloway (Official Opposition House Leader): On House business, pursuant to rule 38(8), I'm announcing that the private member's resolution to be considered next Thursday will be one put forward by the honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey). The title of the resolution is Port of Churchill.

Madam Speaker: It has been announced by the Official Opposition House Leader that the private member's resolution to be considered next Thursday will be one put forward by the honourable member for Flin Flon. The title of the resolution is Port of Churchill.

THRONE SPEECH (Third Day of Debate)

Madam Speaker: Resuming debate on the proposed motion of the honourable member for Fort Richmond (Mrs. Guillemard) and the amendment and subamendment thereto, standing in the name of the honourable member for the Interlake, who has 15 minutes remaining.

Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake): Madam Speaker, I just want to remind everybody where I was—\$160 million spent on vote-buying agreements mere weeks before the election totalled more than the previous six years combined for agreements of \$153 million.

Madam Speaker, this is what our Throne Speech is about. After a decade of debt we are focused on fixing our finances. Getting Manitoba back on track after 17 years of mismanagement is the direction this government is on the road to.

Our Throne Speech is proof of that, Madam Speaker. This government will reintroduce a legislation to eliminate the unnecessary duplicate administrative body known as the NDP's East Side Road Authority. Reducing red tape is part

of our government's plan to grow our provincial economy. Our government is committed to making Manitoba the most improved province for regulatory accountability by 2020.

Our Red Tape Reduction Task Force—I still favour orange tape reduction task force, as one of our honourable members alluded to—nevertheless, the task force will consult with external stakeholders, 'identifor'—identify regulatory barriers and develop options to eliminate them.

Our government is committed to ensuring value for money as we rebuild our provincial infrastructure. We will implement a return on investment test to prioritize government's investments in highways, bridges, water management infrastructure, as well as social and cultural projects.

We have 'expedited' the release of our list of plans, strategic investments for the 2017-18 season. This allows the construction industry to plan for another season of building, grading, paving, repairing and improvements to our roads and highways, thus further allowing us to get better prices for the next season's work.

After a decade of decline we are focused on rebuilding our economy. Along with our federal partners, our government will continue to engage indigenous communities from the east side of Manitoba and Shoal Lake with the ultimate goals of building roads and ensuring the communities actually benefit from that training and capacity building.

We're excited to break ground on the road to Shoal Lake and are confident that Manitoba Infrastructure can deliver the project in a professional way, securing good value for money and working collaboratively with the local communities.

We will 'applow'—apply these principles of inclusion and meaningful engagement with indigenous communities as we move ahead with the Lake St. Martin-Lake Manitoba flood outlet channel. This is the largest construction project undertaken in our province since the expansion of the floodway a near decade ago.

This project is essential for the indigenous communities in my constituency and everyone who lives around the shores of Lake Manitoba.

*(14:40)

After a decade of decay, we are focused on repairing our services. Manitoba needs innovative solutions to improve home and primary health care so it can match other countries which have overcome similar problems, getting better results while keeping their spending under control. Manitobans are tired of paying more and getting less. It's a myth that Canada has the best health-care system in the world. It's even more so of a myth that Manitoba has the best health care in Canada.

After 17 years of NDP decay, we've spent near the most per capita on health care, more than the majority of other provinces. What's worse, Madam Speaker, is while we do this, we've gotten poorer outcomes for our patients under the previous government. While our spending is near the top, our systems is near the bottom of national rankings.

So there is no question, Madam Speaker, that when we need to become more efficient and start getting better service as better value for taxpayers' money. The work done by our health-care professionals is excellent, but the system in which it's delivered needs to be improved. While the federal health-care budget has ballooned to historic heights, our province is paying historical highs as well.

To what avail, you may say, Madam Speaker? After 17 years of NDP rule, we successfully have gotten the longest wait times in emergency rooms in Canada.

Other countries, not to mention provinces, are spending less per capita as a percentage of GDP because they have done a better job of co-ordinating health care. A comprehensive assessment of Manitoba's entire health-care system has begun via the health sustainability and innovation review. This exercise will identify opportunities for the elimination of waste and inefficiency.

We will recommend measures to improve the effectiveness and responsiveness of the entire health system, including core government, the regional health authorities, as well as Diagnostic Services Manitoba, CancerCare Manitoba and the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba.

To review, we will also make recommendations on how to make health-care costs more sustainable over the long term while setting out expectations for better results in the program and services provided to Manitobans.

The review will measure Manitobans' spending on health against three criteria: (1) whether services are being implemented and delivered at a reasonable cost; (2) whether the provisions of services is achieving expected outcomes; and (3) whether the results achieved represent value for the money expended.

The previous government has left us with a mess, Madam Speaker. With this Throne Speech, our government is setting a new course for Manitoba, a course that will lead to economic opportunity, improvements to front-line services and that will put Manitoba back on a responsible fiscal track.

When the great people of Manitoba need to put our province back on course, they elect a Progressive Conservative government. And that's what they did with conviction on April 19th, Madam Speaker—you heard it, conviction.

Our Health Minister and our new Progressive Conservative government is having ongoing talks with the federal government about health spending. This is an opportunity to set health care on a new course and to move from the bottom of the barrel compared to other provinces and countries. This government will put health care back on the right track. This Throne Speech addresses these issues, Madam Speaker. We are committed to making Manitoba Canada's most improved province, making Manitoban families safer and stronger.

I have spoken on freedom for the fishers in Manitoba. I was able to share my stories of my first and last day of commercial fishing. I was able to put on record the hardships that the fishers must endure to earn a living. Every single day they risk their lives to earn very little money and potentially lose a substantial sum of money.

The member for Gimli (Mr. Wharton) has brought this very important issue forward. This is our team at work.

Our government is listening to Manitobans, and we will govern for all Manitobans. We will fight for changes that will result in a stronger, safer and more prosperous province.

On September 29th of this year, I was graciously asked to present the 2016 Interlake Award of Distinction, supplied by the Interlake Tourism Association. This award recognizes exceptional attributes in community leadership, service, marketing, product development or partnerships for an individual business or an

organization in the Interlake that realizes distinction as a high-quality tourism destination. The winner is committed to the excellence of the Interlake and Manitoba's tourism industry.

This year's winner was the Arborg and District Multicultural Heritage Village with a dedicated group of volunteers seeing a common vision of a working heritage village that portrays insights into multicultural history of the Interlake, and being situated on 12.9 acres alongside the Icelandic River is one of many tourism destinations not only in the Interlake riding, but in Manitoba as a whole.

Madam Speaker, our government will celebrate the 150th anniversary in confederation—a special events and activities taking place throughout the province during 2017. It will be destinations, like I just mentioned, that will bring people to visit Manitoba in this exciting year. Manitoba's rich cultural and linguistic diversity, unique geographic landscapes and tourism destinations with unmatched commitment to volunteerism will be on display to not only our nation, but to the world.

We are moving forward on tourism, after all, we are the land of 100,000 lakes. Our government is committed to making Manitoba the most improved province for regulatory accountability by 2020. A red tape reduction task force who will consult with external stakeholders, identify regulatory barriers and develop options to eliminate them.

Our new Progressive Conservative government will also table legislation in the new year to create regulatory accountability. Our government is committed to ensuring value for money as we rebuild our provincial infrastructure and will implement a return-on-investment test to prioritize government investments in highways, bridges, water management infrastructure, as well as social and cultural projects.

As you can see, we live in a time of great changes and challenges. For an innovative government like ours this also means new opportunities. Sometimes this requires the courage to take bold decisions and seize these opportunities. Success is the result of ambition, courage and action, Madam Speaker. Ambition to make a meaningful difference in the world, courage to take the bold decisions when needed and action to get the tangible results.

This is not something we have seen in the past 17 years, Madam Speaker, hard work will give us the

focus and strength to imagine and build a better future for the hard-working people of Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, I chose to run because I am committed to a positive change for the people of the Interlake and Manitoba as a whole.

This Throne Speech delivers this positive change for all of Manitoba. We have made commitments to protect front-line services while eliminating wasteful government spending and putting Manitoba back on a responsible fiscal track. We recognize the need for a plan to return the province to fiscal balance to avoid further downgrades to the province's credit rating. This Throne Speech pursues measures which will responsibly restore Manitoba to a fiscal balance in eight years.

Our provincial growth should not be strangled by red tape and excessive tax. Our Throne Speech includes no new taxes or tax increases and will not draw from the Fiscal Stabilization Fund. We will index the basic personal exemption as of January 1st, 2017.

Our seniors will experience continued education tax relief through the seniors' school tax rebate. We have committed to making Manitoba the most improved province in Canada.

Quite frankly, Madam Speaker, Manitoban's were tired of paying more and getting less. This Throne Speech addresses those concerns. Manitoba is the home of hope, a diverse and special place with potential for greatness.

I would like to thank our entire PC team for the hard work that is being put into this plan to make Manitoba thrive again.

Thank you Madam Speaker.

* (14:50)

Mr. Kevin Chief (Point Douglas): Glad to put a few words on the record about the Throne Speech and the amendment to it. I do got to say, listening to members opposite, they spend more time talking about our record than they do about their own Throne Speech, so I'll continue that trend. I'm proud to talk about the former government's record.

In fact, we had a government that was proud to stand with business owners, proud to stand with labour leaders, with training institutions, with young people, with our seniors, with our elders. And, Madam Speaker, it's because of them Manitoba did the best of any province for creating new jobs. It's

because of them that last year, in Winnipeg, had the best job creation rate in more than two decades. It's because of them that the number of new people working in Manitoba was the best of any province in Canada last year. It's because of them that we had the second best record in the country for new private sector jobs last year. It's because of them that we consistently had one of the lowest unemployment rates in the entire nation.

You know, Madam Speaker, I don't expect members opposite to take my word for it. So I will give them some validators that validated the job creation record, the economic performance of the former government.

Conference Board of Canada says Manitoba's economy will keep humming over the next two years when we were in government. Now, who is the Conference Board of Canada? They're researchers. They conduct meetings and conferences, and they provide expert information on economic performance in our country for more than 70 years.

The Bank of Canada said that Manitoba would have one of the top performing provinces for 2016 and 2017. Now, who's the Bank of Canada? It's, again, an economic research team made up of dozens of the country's foremost financial analysts, economic forecasters and fiscal policy experts. That's what they said about our government's record.

TD Economics says that Manitoba will be one of the top three performing economies over the next three years. Well, who are TD Economics? It's an organization whose expertise is recognized and relied upon by tens of thousands and investors and policy-makers around the globe.

The reason that we had such a strong job creation, one of the strong economic performing—and that's what these validators are saying—it's because there was always a government that stood with business owners, that stood with labour leaders, that stood with training institutions and that stood with young people and our seniors.

Well, Madam Speaker, I do got to say times have changed, that Manitoba families are worried. In a Throne Speech, for the first time in 17 years, people who work hard every day, but many of them continue to make less money than other people, are minimum wage earners, were—continue to be ignored.

Mr. Doyle Pivniuk, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

So the only government, one of the only governments in the entire nation, that hasn't said anything about minimum wage, first time in 17 years. Now, members opposite should know. They represent, without question, minimum wage earners. Now, let me tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, who they are, often. They're often single parents, they're often women and they're often working full time.

What do—what does the research say about minimum wage workers? What does the science say? What does the data say? It says that if you increase the minimum wage, it helps lift people out of poverty. Not guessing; that's what the science and the data says. It reduces the need for social services. And people who make minimum wage ultimately end up spending more, which then 'helpens' strengthen our economy.

So let me give you a Point Douglas example, and each one of those members opposite would have a very similar story about a minimum wage worker. In fact, those minimum wage workers, they asked them, they went to their homes and said, yes, we'll support you. And I'm sure members opposite, particularly the ones that sit in the backbench, probably do support minimum wage and they want to increase minimum wage. And they have to make sure that they push that front bench to let them know that they made commitments to minimum wage workers, young people like Shayna and her little son Joseph.

She worked a minimum wage job this summer, trying to make a better life for herself and for her son. She worked all summer at a sport rec cultural camp, trying to make life a little bit better for low-income kids in the neighbourhood that I represent. She did a great job. This fall, now, she's in a training program, working hard to become a social worker. The message that this government continues to send to people like Shayna is the work that she's doing doesn't matter, because they fail to mention, in the first time in 17 years, how important Shayna and her son are to Manitoba's economy.

The list goes on of people who are concerned, that have felt ignore. Lifelong public servants feel threatened from the message they continue to hear from this government. The Finance Minister actually stood up at a press conference and he proudly said he wants to cut 112 jobs from lifelong servant—public servants.

Now, who are these people that the Finance Minister's talking about? They could be the resource co-ordinators that make up our Home Care program in Manitoba, of course a very important service and resource for Manitoba families. It could be the patient co-ordinator at the Health Sciences Centre. It could be a community safety officer up in Thompson, Manitoba. These are the kinds of jobs that potentially this Finance Minister could be cutting.

Now we've just recently heard the Minister of Infrastructure (Mr. Pedersen), he wants to cut 20 per cent from the Infrastructure budget. That's \$126 million. These economic forecasters will tell you an investment in infrastructure helps grow the economy, so who is he talking about? You can't cut \$126 million and expect not to affect some jobs. Is he talking about those heavy equipment operators, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Is he talking about highway safety officers? Is he talking about a disaster management co-ordinator? These are the kinds of jobs that will be affected by cuts to infrastructure, cuts to the public service. These are people, why they feel worried and feel threatened—these are families.

And over and over again, workers, when they heard the Throne Speech, they feel completely left out. They heard things about wage cuts and freezes, job losses. And over and over again, Manitoba workers have said the same thing about this government, is that there is no dialogue.

Now, again we heard the members opposite often talk about our record more than they have about their own Throne Speech. Well, what do the headlines say about our record versus the headlines we're starting to read now? Manitoba, an economic elite, was a headline when we were in government; job numbers up nationally; strongest growth is in Manitoba; construction business booming in Manitoba; province economic growth ahead of the national average; strength in diversity; major projects boost construction job growth; construction workers needed; job prospects in Winnipeg looking up.

That—those were the headlines that we consistently saw. What are we consistently seeing now? Layoffs come out of nowhere, says a town's mayor. It's pretty heartbreaking, a worker says, after he and others received layoff notices. Region coming apart at the seams, Manitoba to cut 112 jobs, infrastructure promise lacks concrete plan. That's how their jobs plan, their economic plan, is being

described, and that's why Manitoba families are worried. And that's why when they hear a Throne Speech like we just heard, of course they're going to be worried. There's nothing there to alleviate that concern.

* (15:00)

So we're seeing a trend, Mr. Deputy Speaker—a trend that ignores minimum wage workers, that threatens lifelong public servants, and a trend that workers continue to be left out. The other trend that we're seeing now—I know the Finance Minister would have to know about trends. This isn't about a month or two months, but we're at six months now; we're pushing seven months—Stats Canada, not the member for Point Douglas (Mr. Chief) or Fort Garry, but Stats Canada said that in the last six months since this government's been elected, there's been 12,000 and counting full-time job losses.

Now, that's the trend that we're seeing. Now, when you take that trend and then you match it up with the Premier's (Mr. Pallister) record, and I do want to remind people the Premier does have a record. He did sit around the Cabinet table and he had a record that including freezing minimum wage seven different times.

So this isn't the first time that the Premier has ignored minimum wage workers. He has done that in the past, and that's why you can see why families are starting to worry, that in one budget—and this is important for members opposite—in one budget, when he sat around the Cabinet table, cut 56 organizations in one budget, and those organizations represented programs and initiatives that supported our most vulnerable families all throughout Manitoba. They included family resource centres, youth agencies, community centres. In one budget they wiped out the funding to every friendship centre in Manitoba—friendship centres, gone.

So you take the member for Dauphin (Mr. Michaleski), he should go and talk to the good folks at the friendship centre and ask them, are they worried? I bet you they're worried, or the member from Swan River, or the member for Thompson (Mr. Bindle). These are important programs and initiatives that this Premier actually cut back in the day, wiped it out.

Why are friendship centres so important? Well, indigenous people from all over Manitoba move into cities and move into towns and they want to have a

place where they can find belonging. And we know that if we don't provide young people something positive to belong to, someone will seek them out and get them involved in something negative.

I remember when my friendship centre was cut. That's a vital service. In fact, in 1999, when New Democrats got elected, the first commitment they made was to reinstate funding to friendship centres all throughout Manitoba.

They didn't stop there. They didn't stop there. They decided to invest in a snitch line. They decided to invest in a snitch line, an attempt to embarrass, shame and stigmatize some of the poorest people in our province and they campaigned on it. They were proud of investing in that snitch line. That was a record that this Premier had back when he sat around the Cabinet table—

An Honourable Member: We were talking about today.

Mr. Chief: Exactly, so let's talk about current things today. Let's talk about Point Douglas. Let's talk about Point Douglas and the Merchants Hotel and what we saw at the Merchants Hotel. Let's talk about when a former government stands with businesses and labour leaders and training institutions and non-profits and youth and our elders, what can happen.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I don't expect you to know what the Merchants Hotel is. You're not from the North End, but I'll explain it to you. It's a hotel that has always had a lot of challenges. There was violence there, lots of heavy drinking, lots of challenges. And a group of people from the neighbourhood decided to come together, business owners, young people, our seniors, our elders, our training institutions, the good folks at the friendship centre, all decided to come together and approached the government and said: We need to close this place.

Now, as a young boy growing up, me and my friends, we'd go get a Safeway cart, we'd take it out there, and on Friday evenings our parents used to party pretty hard, and we used to go to each others' home and collect beer bottles and we would put empty beer bottles in the Safeway cart every Saturday morning and we'd push it to the Merchants Hotel because you'd get 10 cents a bottle and we'd get a few extra bucks and we could go buy candy. That's—that was the Merchants Hotel that I grew up with.

But now my children, my three young boys, won't be taking beer bottles to the Merchants Hotel; they'll be taking books. And I guarantee you that in every single riding in this province we have a place where the community has come together and they have made it a better place to live, for children, for young people, for seniors.

Now, that's not all that happened and that's not all that's happening at the Merchants Hotel. It's called Merchants Corner now. When the government stood with members of the community, including law enforcement, we saw a 30 per cent reduction in property crime. We saw a 27 per cent reduction in violent crime. So it's had enormous impacts.

But, most importantly, when you have a government that stands with people, that when a Throne Speech can represent the values of people, it sends a strong message that no matter who you are or where you come from you should be able to say you're proud of who you are; you're proud of where you live; you're proud of your hometown; you're proud of your home province. And everybody, no matter who they are or where they live, should have the opportunity to give back.

So, when you have a Throne Speech that decides to exclude our minimum wage workers, when you have a Throne Speech that threatens public servants, when you have a Throne Speech that continues to ignore Manitoba workers, it's a Throne Speech that of course people are going to be concerned about.

Now, I do want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I want to talk a little bit about our young demographic and what that means to Manitoba. And one of the things that we saw in our time in government, and often highlighted in throne speeches, was what happens when you invest in young people.

And, if you look at places like in Steinbach, at Valeant they can invest anywhere in the country. They decided to 'veste' in Manitoba. And Shaw Communications decided to invest here in Manitoba and establish 500 brand new jobs here; in fact, it was in the Premier's (Mr. Pallister) own riding. Canada Goose, with an international brand, not only established roots here but continued to expand here with hundreds of jobs, probably going to be over 1,000 jobs by the time they're done.

And you ask these businesses, and the Minister for Growth, Enterprise and Trade or the Finance Minister could ask those businesses, why did you

establish in Manitoba? And they'll tell them, because Manitoba is and was, in our time, an affordable place to do business. They also said they liked the fact that the demographic was young, that there was a young workforce, but they also said they were always proud to work with a government that would invest in training of that workforce. Very little, I don't even know if anything, was mentioned about training young indigenous people, training our new Canadian, our immigrant, our refugee population. We didn't hear that in the Throne Speech. But this is what these companies did. This is what they said.

So you take a place like Canada Goose, they opened a second location. That's over 300 jobs. You talk to the good folks at Shaw Communications that decided to put 500 jobs in the Premier's own riding, and they said that they did research and they collected the data. And they didn't want to just put 500 jobs anywhere in the nation unless they knew they were going to have success. So they told us that the reason they invested in Manitoba is because when you have a government that stands with businesses to train that workforce, that workforce stays with those companies longer, that Manitoba workers are more loyal to those companies here than anywhere else in the nation.

And so, when you hear a Throne Speech that makes no mention of any of these kinds of things, right, it tells young people, sends a message to young people. And, of course, you're going to get young people worried about their future.

Now, I do want to end with a—on a high note and remind the members opposite what they inherited from the previous government, that Winnipeg was among the world's top seven intelligent communities; that Winnipeg's population grew at one of the fastest rates in the country between July of 2014 and 2015; that here's what Julia Deans of—the CEO of Futurpreneur had to say: I go all across the country. I don't think there is another community that is as mutually supportive and connected as a place like Winnipeg.

* (15:10)

Our downtown, a record amount of people going to school in our core area, a record amount of people working and starting businesses in our downtown, and now a record amount of people that want to live in our downtown comes with a government, a former government, that stood with business leaders, that stood with labour leaders, that stood with training

institutions, that stood with young people, our seniors and our elders.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): I'm pleased to have this opportunity to rise and to respond to the Speech from the Throne delivered earlier this week. And I would like to proceed exactly from the point where the member for Point Douglas (Mr. Chief) left off, because I think it's a perfect transition that the member of Point Douglas has given us. He said he wanted to end on a note where he would talk about what we have inherited as a province and as a government, and I think I would like to fill in the blanks that he strategically tried to leave out.

What we inherited, Mr. Deputy Speaker, indeed, is something that was described even just this morning at the Conference Board of Canada western Canada business update meeting that I had a chance to address, in that room, what we inherited was described by those key members of our community as a mess by the business community, by those that he professed to be helping. And they said over and over to us last night at a ministers meeting sponsored by the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce, they said today, at the Conference Board of Canada report, they have been saying to us since we were elected in April, what you've inherited is a mess. And what you've inherited will take time to clean up, and we've heard that what you've inherited—we trust you to do that work and accomplish what you're setting out to do.

So, let no one in this Chamber and let no one in this province be fooled by what the member for Point Douglas was attempting to convey. He said at one point about his government's standing with businesses—I think that if that member would want to convey outside of this room that his party was somehow the one that business community could depend on to stand with them, I think it would be a very difficult sell. I would tell him that when he sits in the seat in his Legislature, he had better get a seat belt for the next four years, because the road ahead for him will be blisteringly fast as this government begins to have effect, as the good work that we will do takes effect, as that message is conveyed to the business community, to the commercial industry, to sectors across this province and to outside of this province. As we work to reconcile the conditions here, to address trade barriers, to take down disadvantages that have existed and have been

unaddressed by our predecessors, as we do all of that good work—

An Honourable Member: Name them.

Mr. Friesen: And I will name those things in my speech. I guarantee you, and the Minister for Growth, Enterprise and Trade would guarantee you, and our caucus of 40 members would guarantee you, it will have effect. We will grow this economy, and it—the we that I speak of is not 12 ministers or 40 members or one Premier, it is all of us, harnessed together as Manitobans, not pointing fingers, but doing the hard work that has been undone until now. So, I do not accept that argument put forward by the member for Point Douglas.

And just before I make comments on the Throne Speech, I have to address at least what that member said about even something so central to our platform as one initiative to reduce senior management within government, senior management that has grown at an expression four times that of the overall civil service. And he spent a lot of his time describing what he said was going to be—well, who should be worried—who should be worried about a senior management reduction strategy? He said, who should be taking down notes? Who should be worried?

I'm reading from a news release by the NDP government, November 19th, '99. It is a preliminary response outline to Deloitte and Touche. It is a financial management and accountability review announcement, and in this announcement, and I'm quoting from the second page, it says, a careful review of all vacant positions and a senior management position reduction strategy in keeping with election commitments.

An Honourable Member: Did you say reduction strategy?

Mr. Friesen: So it's a reduction strategy by the NDP as soon as they took office. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the hypocrisy of that member for Point Douglas stand in his place today and try to scare workers when his government did the exact same thing. When they did it, they said it was prudent fiscal management. When we do it, they say it's scary. It is not a defensible position that he can take.

On the same subject, he made reference to pauses in what—in sector wage increases. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am reading from the 2010 Manitoba NDP budget. I'm in a section called managing government spending. Now, just—because they never did it, it doesn't mean they didn't write it down on paper.

They take—they took great enthusiasm in trying to communicate to Manitobans, in 2010, that they were going to reduce spending in government departments to focus on priorities. They said they were going to limit the average increase of government core departments. And they said they were going to negotiate a pause in public sector wage increases: 2010 NDP government document.

And, indeed, of all the things that the NDP said they would do and didn't do, they actually did receive from labour, in 2010, wage pauses. Now, every day in this House the NDP members get up and they throw their hands up in the air and they say the sky is falling because there's a possibility of a wage freeze. But, in their own document, in 2010, one of their commuter-communicators crafted, on the instruction of a minister, on instruction of a premier, on instruction of a caucus and Cabinet, an instruction to say, negotiate a pause in public sector wage increases.

So I throw the words of the member for Point Douglas (Mr. Chief) right back at him. Who was supposed to be afraid in 2010? Was it a WRHA worker? Was it the heavy construction industry operator that he just referenced five minutes ago? Was it a disaster co-ordinator? Who was supposed to be afraid? Well, they said in 2010, no one was to be afraid. This was a normal course of action that governments undertake from time to time in order to focus on fiscal prudent management. That's what they said in 2010. It suits their purposes to say something else now, and so they will say something else now.

But do not be fooled by the words of the member for Point Douglas. He's clearly—he has an advantage now to somehow claim that the situation is perilous, but six years ago it wasn't perilous. Six years ago, he said business as usual; now he says he very afraid.

Madam—Mr. Deputy Speaker, it simply is an argument that you could shoot a thousand holes through, and I would love to continue to do so, but in the short time that's available to me—and I do want to highlight a few things that I see in the Throne Speech that will serve all Manitobans—but I should also mention, on the subject of flip-flopping, this Throne Speech talked about strengthening—strengthening—our innovative approaches to drive good decision making around infrastructure investments. We don't take an ideological view; we take a results-driven view.

Now, this group across the aisle, they took an ideological view. And just yesterday, even between the first set of questions in question period and the second set of questions, they could not even line up the questions so they remained consistent. Their interim Leader of the Opposition got up yesterday in question period and said, public-public partnerships are an effective way of making investments in Manitoba. Indeed, when they brought the legislation in a few years ago—[interjection]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Friesen: —it's exactly what they said.

No sooner had the interim Leader of the Opposition sat down, having delivered that message three times, that the member for Fort Garry-Riverview (Mr. Allum) stands up—I guess he didn't hear his interim leader, or I guess he didn't heed what she was saying, or maybe there was another rebellion forming in their ranks—but what he said is, and I quote: P3s are a back-loaded, high interest credit card, and the real winners are big investors who make profits.

* (15:20)

Now who is inaccurate? Who on that side is not following orders? Is it the interim Leader of the Opposition? Is it the member for Fort Garry-Riverview?

Two sets of questions directly located, neither one of them lining up in any real way. They are taking advantage of an opportunity, they think, to create and agitate and suggest that somehow this is unsafe.

The member for Fort Garry-Riverview went even so far as to say we have the best legislation in Manitoba on P3s. What he declined to say is that we have the only legislation on P3s in all of Canada.

So you must ask yourself—and the member for Minto (Mr. Swan) is clapping because he thinks he's somehow that far ahead. He thinks that he is boldly going where no other provincial jurisdiction has deemed valuable to go. So what the member for Minto should perhaps ask himself, is truly, really, based on his own record, is he that far ahead or is he that far behind?

If the NDP government had been truly interested in innovation in considering the value of P3s, not in every instance, not as an ideological reflexive solution to everything, because I would be the first

to suggest it wouldn't make sense, it would not represent good value for money—if you're about to go and create a daycare space, I couldn't imagine you'd be able to achieve the scale where a P3 approach would help; it would probably hinder. But it would show me that these members on the other side don't actually—haven't actually done the work to understand what these approaches can create in terms of advantages to government. It can create a number of advantages when the analysis is done right, when the facts are properly understood, when there is sufficient scale of a project so as to attract the number of bids necessary to get a good competitive process going. But then, again, what would they know about a good competitive process?

So that also is foreign in their lexicon. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, regardless of how they flip-flop in their question period strategy or lack thereof, we understand that P3s are underutilized. How do we know? There's been none done here. The P3 legislation that the NDP brought was not a P3 piece of legislation designed to enhance and contemplate where these could be useful; they were designed to create a wall. They're about creating walls just like the US President-designate right now. He's talked about creating walls, and perhaps he's backing away a bit from that language now.

But the NDP was all about creating walls: walls to trade, walls to investment, walls to access the capital, walls to co-operation with their federal cousins, walls to the New West Partnership and, of course, walls to P3s and other ideas innovative that other jurisdictions were contemplating, but they could not have been bothered to, or they were advised by their friends, that that is not an avenue that would be—that they'd have any appetite for.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to come back to the Throne Speech, this is a tremendous document that provides a path forward for Manitoba. I actually heard my Premier (Mr. Pallister) describe it on Monday as a blueprint for hope for Manitobans, and this province needs an injection of hope. And it is our new government along with the many partners who are bringing on side who are bringing that hope back to Manitoba.

I've heard colleagues say, and the Premier say, this is the home of hope. And so this is a Throne Speech that goes far to indicate what paths we will go down as a new government in order to fix our finances and repair our services and rebuild our economy, and that is exactly the job description that

was on the table. It was the one for which we applied and it was the one for which we were hired. And we are honoured and delighted to have the opportunity in these next few years to have Manitobans test us in our resolve to do exactly what've said we will set out to do.

Results matter, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is not just about inputs; it is not just about ribbon cuttings; it is not just about language. It is about results. It is about value for money; it is about return on investment. That is hard work. It means careful consideration. It means asking important questions about what government is doing, how it is doing it, with whom it is doing the work. It is looking for areas to innovate and create change. It's looking at existing operations, always with a critical eye to say where are there inefficiencies? Where is there waste? Where is there duplication? Where is there overlap?

And now our colleagues across the way would suggest that that's a very scary process. They would say bringing in outside help is outrageous. They would say, oh, you know, what are you doing asking questions about program delivery?

But I'm reading from a document from November the 19th, 1999, from the new NDP government at that time, and what did they do? Well, they advertised to Manitobans that they were immediately taking steps in response to a fiscal situation reported in an interim report by an outsider—outside contractor who had been, I believe, hired by the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger), along with the Health minister at the time, Dave Chomiak—we can say that name now because he's no longer in the Legislature—and these individuals, Mr. Dave Chomiak—that's correct, Mr. Dave Chomiak, yes, and these individuals had seen that government and Manitobans would be well resourced by drawing in a contractor with expertise, with knowledge of systems, with experience in 'examining'—examining systems for strengths and weaknesses. And that's what they did.

When they did it, they thought it was a great idea. This government's doing it and they say it's a very, very scary process. And it's absurd to think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we should for a minute think that they can have it both ways.

This speech goes a long way down the road of identifying what we will do next. I think about where the speech went in terms of about talking about investments in housing, investments in terms of driving down the deficit, investments in our children,

investments in education, investments in training—the very things that the member for Point Douglas (Mr. Chief) got up and said they weren't in the speech. He's wrong; they were in the speech, but then you would have had to actually listen or read the speech to understand what's in it.

So I do invite him again to read the speech. I would want to say from my vantage point as the Finance Minister, that we have embarked on the largest and most robust prebudget consultative process in this province. I remember when I was the Finance critic asking the minister of Finance at the time to answer for the fact that he had billed the province for \$40,000 of expenses pertaining to a prebudget consultation process that did not, in fact, lead to a budget.

And, in this case, I would suggest to all colleagues in this House that we're getting good value for the money, because I want to declare in this House right now that our prebudget consultative process will lead to the delivery of a budget in Manitoba, and more to follow after that.

But the fact is it's—the process itself, in and of itself, is not important. What is important is the demonstration of the willingness of this government to listen to Manitobans, to all groups, to groups across this province, all sectors, all parts, north, 'eath'-east, south and west. We have done that listening in in-person meetings, online tools, a portal for civil servants to give us feedback. We are bringing important changes in terms of a red tape reduction. We are building our economy. We are training young people. We are opening the North through an exciting new northern strategy.

All these things, Mr. Deputy Speaker, contained in the speech—we are looking forward to assembling and going through all the data that we have collected, the viewpoints, a diverse—those people who came to these meetings to present, and forming a budget that will put Manitoba further down the path of the goals that we all share: to grow this economy, to make sure that our young people stay here.

Oh, and speaking of times from the past, it's wonderful to see a former colleague come to the Legislature. I know that we cannot comment as to the presence and absence of members, but I think that the rules will be lax about me commenting on the presence of a former member joining us in the loge this afternoon.

* (15:30)

So, just to sum up, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know that we should never regret to say that we are only here as members in this House because of those families who support us. Each one of us has one, and we are thankful for our families who allow us to do this work. We are thankful for the constituency staff that we have that do such good work in that interface position between each of us and our community. We are thankful for the constituency staff that we have that do such good work in that interface position between each of us and our community. We are thankful for the opportunity that our voters give us and we take that very seriously on all sides of this Chamber.

And I am thankful for a Throne Speech brought by our Lieutenant Governor that puts us further down the path towards making Manitoba the most improved province in all of Canada.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Before I continue, I just want to acknowledge that Jim Rondeau, the former member for Assiniboia, is here with us today. I want to thank you for coming in.

* * *

Mr. Deputy Speaker: We'll continue—the honourable member for Burrows.

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows): You know, time is flying by. It was nearly six months ago that I responded to the first Throne Speech, and now I get to respond to the second.

I want to begin by saying how grateful I am for this opportunity to continue serving Manitobans. I have been thriving and I've been having just the most incredible experience in getting to know the people of Burrows. The community has welcomed me with open arms, and for this I'm eternally grateful and incredibly motivated to make Burrows proud.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, my parents have been extremely supportive of my choice in career and they never forget to tell me how proud of me they are. I know I can rant to my mother and not feel guilty as if I'm talking about myself too much because she always want to hear about what's going on in my life. And then there's my father, my pops. He's taught me more than anyone can fathom. He holds me accountable, and even though he is extremely busy, he always makes time for me.

I'm also grateful for my friends. I'm sure they don't appreciate that I always bail early on our nights

out, but they've never doubted my abilities, and I'm very lucky to have them.

Since being elected, I've also been able to get to know some of my colleagues here in the House, and I've had a privilege to learn more about them, whether it's through reading their books, whether it's their likes and their dislikes or whether it's the exchange of candies—and we had a really good one here in today's session. In doing this, I have come to take comfort in coming to work. I am reminded that politicians are only human, and even though we don't always see eye to eye on everything, I am very sincere when I say that I appreciate all members in this House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I've learned a lot these past seven months, whether it be legislative protocol or issues that affect Manitobans across the board. When I run into old friends, the question that I usually get asked is what has surprised you the most? And honestly it isn't the job that surprised me, it's the facts about Manitoba. It's how there are so many reserves up North with no running water. It's how seniors are being prescribed medications that are hurting them. It's how long Provincial Nominee applicants are having to put their lives on hold, and it's how there are children who want to attend school but still aren't. I'm astounded by how lives are so profoundly impacted in such extreme ways. My perspective and knowledge of Manitoba has been extremely broadened.

My father has told me that I'm often too hard on myself, and I always respond by saying I have to be if I want to be accomplished. To be honest, I don't know how accurate my response is, but I know that it works for me. I want to encourage the members of this House to do the same, and I say it with a sincere and a happy heart, but challenge yourself, ask yourself what you have done to better people here in Manitoba. Ask yourself what you could be doing to make your constituency stronger.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I recently read *Master of My Fate*, written by Linda McIntosh and the member from Assiniboia—what an eye-opener. And I can say because of the book I have formed some new thoughts on important medical issues, as well as a deeper appreciation for those struggling with end-of-life decisions. This book helps me further understand my friend from Assiniboia and this makes me want to pick his brain, which he already knows I fully intend to do. It motivates me to learn as much as I can. It galvanizes me to have

the important talks, the controversial debates, and it sparks my passion in politics.

I'd like to quote a sentence from the book: The fact is that there is no such thing as a bad seat in the House. Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I read that, I take pride and I acknowledge that this means I can make a difference. I can make the lives of Manitobans better, and I plan to continue doing this.

Since being elected, I have attended countless events. I can't mention all of them, but I do want to talk about a few.

Back in June I participated and celebrated many graduations. In July, many of us celebrated Canada's 149th birthday. On this day, my father and I co-hosted a Canada Day celebration for the community. It was a great success.

Throughout the summer months that seem oh so far away now, I danced in the Manitoba Filipino Street Festival. I observed Mela Teeyan Da, and I ate a lot of food and enjoyed all the Folklorama pavilions. The biggest highlight of my summer, and this was not easy—

An Honourable Member: Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Point of Order

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Government House Leader.

Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader): I'd just like to raise the point of relevance. I appreciate the anecdotes about dancing and coming home early from nights out with one's friends, but I believe it's a Throne Speech debate, and I'm wanting to know how it pertains to the Throne Speech.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: On that point of order, there's no point of order. Yes, just—there's a Throne Speech and there's a wide base of relevance when it comes to the Throne Speech, so I want the member for Burrows (Ms. Lamoureux) to continue.

* * *

Ms. Lamoureux: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The biggest highlight of my summer, and this was not easy to decipher, was when I experienced riding with the BC Sikh Motorcycle Club here in Winnipeg. This group rode across the country raising money for cancer awareness. It was an honour to share the road with them.

More recently, I celebrated Lord Nelson School and the opening of their new gym. You know, the songs that the students sang still makes me smile.

My father and I co-hosted another event, our first annual fall lunch at the Maples Community Centre, where we had some very unique entertainment. Everyone is invited next year. I also went to a lot of football games, and through this I had the opportunity to participate in coin tosses, in talk shows, and, of course, I got to binge on junk food like tacos in a bag and watch the game.

More recently, I celebrated Diwali, I think five times this year, and I was able to attend the First Nations caring society annual dinner, where I was amazed by the incredible talent and paintings.

Now, I will switch gears a little bit and transition here. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Throne Speech yesterday encompassed a wide array of issues. While it is understandable that the government is devoting time to very specific issues, the government must keep in mind that they have to follow through with action. If no action takes place, Manitobans will get what they need in other ways. We witness signs of this in recent UMFA strikes and again on the 28th with Nelson House.

My colleagues from River Heights, Kewatinook and myself have divvied up the critic roles and have started discovering some underlying interests. This is one part of the job that assures me I'm in the right career. I love when I learn statistics about Manitoba that truly shock me. I don't always like the statistics, but it reminds me why I pursued politics and why I will continue to advocate for Manitobans.

As a member of the third party, I have the responsibility of holding the government accountable. Allow me to begin by discussing how the Throne Speech did not adequately discuss issues and concerns of seniors. Mr. Deputy Speaker, a troubling trend is that many seniors are forced out of their homes despite the fact that the reason that push seniors to leave home are completely preventable.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to put forward some recommendations that were raised at the forum that I co-hosted with my colleague from River Heights this past weekend: No. 1, we need to enhance possibility for home care under a model that is efficiently financed, perhaps multidisciplinary type models; No. 2, we need to consider training seminars for those who are not health-care aides but would like to take care of their loved ones out of the comfort of their homes for as long as possible; and, No. 3, we need to put in more effort to keep senior couples together. It is not fair to separate a happily married couple. It will take a toll on their

relationship, on their emotions, on their mental health as well as on their finances.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I mentioned on Tuesday the recommendations that derived from the forum. Interestingly, there was a collective sediment of agreement among seniors on the idea of protesting government-funding-prescribed-medication reviews. If I were the government, I would consider this to be of emergence.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the government also omitted discussing a key election promise they made. During the election, the government campaigned on the promise that they would cut ambulance fees by 50 per cent. Manitobans were receptive of this. They thought that, at last, ambulance fees' invoices would not overwhelm their budget expenses. However, once elected, this government stated that they would start by cutting them by 5 per cent.

* (15:40)

A couple short months ago, we were made aware that that 5 per cent decrease hadn't yet taken effect. It's a prime example of the government saying something and doing nothing. It is also worrisome and, frankly, baffling that the ambulance fee reduction was not brought up in the Throne Speech. Nonetheless, from the recent inaction on this issue, one thing is certain: Manitobans were misled. Has the government forgotten about it, or did they change their minds? It cannot be stressed enough that promises of this nature should have been made immediately by the government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know I'm going to raise this: the Provincial Nominee Program. Four sentences, four sentences in the Throne Speech dedicated to the Provincial Nominee Program, four sentences that, I may mention, raise many, many red flags. We heard the government make a commitment in dealing with the backlog, but this is barely a scratch on the surface and means nothing without details and set goals. It is telling of how the government fails to comprehend the value and significance of the Provincial Nominee Program. I must reiterate that the program was, is and will continue to be one of the prime engines of the province's economy. I find it strange that the government emphasizes the need to achieve economic growth, but they do not tap into the Provincial Nominee Program and use it to its fullest potential.

In order for the program to operate in its optimum capacity for economic growth, it must be administered properly. The government, so far, has not given the Provincial Nominee Program the attention that it needs. Last session, the government has, on record, promised and committed to processing 4,000 applications during a certain time period. However, according to a FIPPA I submitted, the government broke their commitment. The government can only go so far in blaming the previous administration for mismanagement. They have now been in power for more than seven months, and it is time that the government began intensifying the work that they said they were going to do on immigration. I've reached out to the minister, and I've insisted that I be part of the discussions around immigration, and he told me that, historically, we don't do that. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, times are changing.

We've also heard the government claiming that they spoke and consulted with Manitobans. I would like to know whether the government understands the personal and subjective experience of these applicants. I have personally heard these stories and experiences of constituents who put their lives on hold for more than three years, three years, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of uncertainty, of anxiety, of confusion, resulting from two words: application pending.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, although the Provincial Nominee Program is an economic program, it is also an emotional trial. Families who are separated by thousands and thousands of miles have the opportunity to be reunited here in Manitoba under the program. However, given the outstanding problems of backlog and the lack of detailed responses on application statuses, families are left wondering how long will it be before they see their mothers, their titos, their katchias [*phonetic*] and so forth. Manitobans are counting on us as elected representatives, and we need to do something about this problem, which is another reason why the decorum in this House has to get better.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also like to hold the government accountable regarding their goals for our criminal justice system. The Macdonald-Laurier report, released this fall, indicated that the Manitoba justice system ranked the lowest among the provinces. The report indicated that administration of justice offences are the key contributor to the backlog of our court system.

I have heard that some offenders on probation would like to be incarcerated because they find the conditions to bail too restrictive. That being said, the conditions in the Remand Centre are just as, if not worse. So offenders are being put in a hard place, between the two, and this affects their ability to come and transition back into society. This is very recent news to me, but should be further explored.

Attention must also be given to the Remand Centre. It is overwhelmed by such an intake and has yet to be alleviated. The government must take the initiative of establishing programs that will reintegrate offenders into the community properly post-incarceration. Many of the offenders I've spoken with talked about odds being stacked against them. Whether it be the criminal record, the little to no education, difficulty finding employment are just some of the factors that contribute to offenders being pulled back into a criminal lifestyle.

I believe in second chances. I believe that crime prevention can be achieved through social intervention. The government must assist in the re-integration process by working with communities to establish programs that meet this objective.

We also have to consider the mental health. Alternatives to conventional methods like imprisonment, detention and custody must be developed and established in order to appropriately deal with persons with mental health issues adequately.

Madam—or Mr. Deputy Speaker, last week, our caucus released a report on brain health, and we articulated just how brain health can affect our justice system and poverty here in the province. Allow me to quote from it: Those with brain health issues from learning disabilities to traumatic brain injury to depression and schizophrenia are disproportionately represented in the criminal justice system. It does not have to be this way. We recommended that (1) every effort possible needs to be made to have a comprehensive, responsive and effective justice system to address brain health issues so whenever possible individuals with brain health issues are not criminalized, and (2) the issues raised in Set Up to Fail: Bail and the Revolving Door of Pre-trial Detention needs to be addressed urgently, and changes made by the—in Manitoba by the provincial government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what I have learned from touring correctional facilities here in Manitoba and touring post-incarceration programs, such as the John

Howard Society and the Elizabeth Fry association, is that there is a dire need for more programs and resources to be set up so previous offenders and those on bail are given a chance to turn their lives around if they choose to.

I am sincere when I say that I'm encouraged to see the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Stefanson) take a genuine interest, and I'm grateful that she seems forthright when she tells me that she wants to work with me.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm going to end here, but I just want to reiterate once again what an honour it has been to be here in the House, and I'm looking forward to the session coming up. Thank you.

Mr. Nic Curry (Kildonan): I would like to completely change the demeanour to wish my regrets, of course, to my former colleague, Mr. Dave Chomiak. On 23 October, his loving mother passed away. I was very happy to have been at the ceremony where we bid her farewell and I'm very happy that he himself is at a good state. We had a very lovely discussion. He did great service to the North End, great service to Kildonan and I know that everyone here can bid their respect to Mr. Dave Chomiak and the grief that any son will have following the death of parents in this time right before, of course, the holidays when we are all with our families.

So I'd like to have everyone just keep him in their hearts as they are with their families, and I'm very, again, happy that he himself is at a very good state. And I'm very glad of that, again his dedication to our community.

It's a lovely community. I'm very happy to be part of the North End. I'm very happy to live in Garden City. There's wonderful new things and my compliments to many of the projects that certainly predate myself; we have the new school at École Rivière-Rouge, the community of Riverbend has been growing strongly and it's a lovely school that is certainly one of the projects that straddles governments and something that cannot be done without support from all walks of life, all political parties. We are very happy about having young people educated, young people educated in many languages, very happy that in Riverbend also programs are now in place through the Seven Oaks School Division, where Ojibwa is being taught at schools, something very critical, considering that, of course, Kildonan riding is where the Metis nation was born and that indigenous languages often are forgotten by, you know, the settler communities

that came after. It's important that we celebrate our history, our collective histories.

We have lovely new sports complexes in the Garden City area. We have now just announced that Garden City Shopping Centre and Northgate mall are undergoing extensive renovations. With the new Throne Speech there are new things happening all across Manitoba. These are new developments that there's a fresh air in Garden City, there's a fresh spirit that people are seeing. Things are getting done where they, the malls themselves, predate my own existence in terms of, you know, how it's, you know, gone up over the years. And this new spirit that we have in this new government, new direction we have through our Throne Speech I think goes hand-in-hand with how things are on the change in the North End, things are on the change in Kildonan. I'm very happy to be now part of that change.

People sent a strong message that they desired a fresh approach, a fresh perspective for both their representation in the North End and, of course, their representation here in the Legislature. Of course, I'm joined with the colleague from St. Johns, herself also newly elected to the North End, and my colleague from Burrows, also again newly elected, produce a vibrant, new approach here in our government. This is demonstrated in our Throne Speech and demonstrated when we were running for election.

I'm very happy that many of the new Canadians, who are my neighbours, are celebrating to this day. We have, of course, the Philippine Basketball Association that's run out of Garden City Collegiate; this is an association that is growing. The community is growing. It's a need of new dynamics and new growth from their provincial government, and we look forward to working with them.

* (15:50)

I'm very glad to stand with many members across both sides of this Chamber in our concern for climate change.

From the Throne Speech, we will apply the principles of inclusion and meaningful engagement with indigenous communities as we move ahead with the Lake St. Martin and Lake Manitoba flood outlet channel, the largest project of its kind in over a decade.

Many people in this Chamber were either elected officials in 2011 and I know were public servants at the time. Many other people volunteered their time for the flood in 2011, one of the worst floods to hit

our province in—easily since 2000—or since 1997. Myself, I was very excited; I got my first command. As a young corporal in 2011, I commanded a section of eight soldiers and a vehicle. We helped sandbag around the town of Elie for their septic system, for their water and waste system that was for fear of spilling over.

We also later folded into a greater structure and we were on the very banks of the Assiniboine River. At one point we cautioned ourselves and we thought maybe we should tie off to the trees for fear of falling into the river, and then we saw a tree get enveloped by the bank and go shooting down the Assiniboine River and decided it would be safer just to risk it.

Climate change is happening. These are things that friends of mine who are egg producers, they can tell you that the climatic change that they experience is new. The project at the Lake St. Martin-Lake Manitoba outlet is a critical project. We know that the great Premier Duff Roblin, who developed the idea of having a floodway—something essentially unprecedented in both this province but in many places across the world—of creating a river to divert another river, in some respects. This is something that the PC team on this side of the aisle is dedicated to, helping people who are both affected (a) in the local areas, people who are on the banks of the Assiniboine whose farmland was at severe degradation because of the flooding in 2011.

But this project will help the downstream communities, will help the city of Winnipeg, it will help all of Manitoba because it will secure a financial safety for things like these crops; things like local businesses that have to close up because of flooding; things like developments of innovation; things like if a company wants to, say, come from out of province, out of country, and innovate, set up investment in this province—perhaps they're cautious because of a risk of flooding. Something like the Lake St. Martin-Lake Manitoba outlet is going to be an incredible boost to the financial security of this province by not having a severe effect of flooding that will likely happen again.

The Assiniboine River is in a new stage of its life. It is, in some ways, millions of years in the making, this estuary, and we are now at a critical stage where we know that there will likely be greater flooding with the Assiniboine River. When we drove over the outlet bridge in 2011, every time we were worried it was going to wash out and our trucks be

caught, but in reality there was no question that the bridge was the least of our concerns. The farm fields that were washed out, the houses that were washed out, the factories that were at risk or the processing centres that were at risk in Portage la Prairie and other parts of the province, especially as well as Brandon, it felt like it was almost a siege mentality when we'd go through Brandon to work with supplies, work with people there.

These climate change effects are going to happen. There is a certain sense, in some ways, that people like to play the blame game. I like to play the solution game, and this is something that will be a part of the solution that will help mitigate climate change. It'll be a way that we can affect river estuaries that people have done for thousands of years.

Of course, in Europe, with the fields in the Netherlands, they've affected how they can control waterways. Many people theorize that the great Amazon basin, in some ways, had early human intervention with very simplistic tools that would be only manipulated by a person's body. As someone who's had to shovel out the sides of a riverbank, I can tell you if you have enough people, you can move a river. And people, perhaps in the Amazon, if some geographers are right, helped manipulate that estuary system to mitigate flooding. People can control their space and can affect their space and their geography, and I think the Lake St. Martin-Lake Manitoba outlet is going to do exactly that.

After a decade of debt that has strangled our ability to draw more business and attract more business, having the financial stability by mitigating further flood damages similar to that of 2011 is going to help repair the services and help fix the finances that people depend on, especially downriver and of course the great riding of Kildonan in Winnipeg.

One thing as a young person here in this Chamber, many people of my generation are looking to begin families. There are many things that go along with beginning families: having stable income, having a stable place to live, having comfortable friends and family to help aid them—as they say it takes a village to raise a child sometimes.

Our government will soon introduce legislation to reduce the excess and unnecessary bureaucracies and red tape currently delaying provisional support for services to children in need of care, allowing us to eliminate wasteful spending on administrative

processes so that we may focus it on providing these services.

Like many Manitobans, I was able to have child care—I was able to be part of child-care service that was in a home. I was able to have—be a part of child-care services. I went to daycare as well. Both are good systems. Both can be very safe and comfortable for people. I can tell you, though, fondly, with home care and home-based child care, I remember a certain sense of being right down the street, right in your own community, with people that you are close with, people that were family in some instances. You can have homemade meals. You can have a different kind of sense of being part of your neighbourhood with home-base child care.

And, when I was on the campaign trail, it was a situation, being fresh in politics. We had a home child-care house I knocked on; they had the kids there in the child-care spaces, and the person who was the child-care administrator had indicated, of course, that one of the children was family, and the remainder of the children were not family. And she had asked, well, when are we going to get the park at the end of the street fixed? Myself, being, again, fresh in politics, I had not realized that the provincial side of politics doesn't have too much influence on a park no bigger than a quarter of the size of this space here in the Chamber; however, luckily enough, that park was on the list of ones that got renovated. And, every once in a while, I can see that child-care group walking down the streets to this park that shares—that is shared by the entire community, that is shared by, one day, my family as we grow it, is going to be shared by my neighbours, by the new Canadians, by the many retired neighbours I have, whose grandchildren can come and play in this park.

This is something; the idea of having home-based child care can help emphasize the importance of community help, that village does raise the children; and, after a decade of decay in the way that child-care results have happened in this province, we will work with Manitobans to repair child-care services so that people do not have to use black or grey markets to receive child care. When we have thousands of spots on the wait-list, we know that people will sometimes turn to less scrupulous places for child care. By having—by easing the administrative burden on licensing child care, we'll ease the burden of fearing that this unlicensed place, which is just needed for the sake of the parents to continue their work, will no longer be used.

One thing too—again, I must compliment my colleagues from across the way. The good member from Fort Garry-Riverview, I had the pleasure of being in his riding for Peace of Mind 204. I know that he has participated in this event before, where young people discuss the importance of eliminating mental illness stigmas. I'm very happy that, again, this is a non-partisan issue. Mental health and mental illness are important nuances that, even myself when I was younger, the words sometimes weren't even uttered. People would be sad, and you'd need to listen to some good music or other awful nuances to how mental health and mental illness affect our society.

Young people who speak to me—and often I'm in the good position to being the old person in the crowd at some of these discussions—are concerned that mental-health services in this province are unacceptable to their needs, unacceptable to how they would like mental-health services provided. Our government is also developing a focused strategy to improve accessibility to, and the co-ordination of, mental-health and addictions services across Manitoba. This will include a renewed focus on public education.

Our Health Minister has talked frequently in Estimates in the Chamber about the importance of addiction treatments being related to mental-health treatments. Too long ago, addictions treatments—maybe even decades ago—was treated as a separate issue, treated as not a health-related issue. As we know, addictions is part of the nuance and a part of the continuum of mental health and mental illness. When someone is addicted to whatever narcotic, when they are addicted to things like alcohol, when they're addicted to many other substances, these addictions sometimes are unable to receive their services, especially young people who are not able—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It's hard to listen to the speaker, so I just wanted to have everyone have silence. I know that this transition where people are coming in and replacing other members, so if you could just be a little bit quieter, so the speaker can have that time to speak.

Mr. Curry: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Again, young people are understanding the nuances of mental health, mental illness. We know that everyone experiences stress. Everyone has external stressors that affect their daily activity, whether it be at school, whether it be at work, whether it be in family situations in the community;

sometimes we can be alone in a room and certainly not alone with our own thoughts.

* (16:00)

The stressors that we have in society will affect mental health. Mental health must be treated and must be understood as part of general health. If someone has a broken leg, that person will seek treatment to mend that broken leg. If someone has cancer, they will seek treatment to either cut out the cancer, mitigate the cancer with other methods and in otherwise heal that part of their body that was damaged.

When people have mental health problems and they have mental health illness, unfortunately they are not always able to be treated in the same way. They're not always able to seek the right treatment that is no different from how we'd treat a broken bone, a cut or a cancer. Mental health treatment must be understood in new ways.

Young people are telling this to me constantly, and they've told, of course, my friend from Fort Garry-Riverview as well. This is a non-partisan issue. This is something where there's a conversation that must continue to happen. There is no solution but there is a conversation. It is a continuing development; as we solve perhaps one problem, another will arise. And we must, as I tell young people, do not treat it like it will ever be done. You always will have to focus on health, both your physical health and your mental health. Do not pretend as if you get through one bad week that another one may not happen again. But prepare that we must find nuances, we must find better ways to deal with these stressors.

I'm very happy that we are going to work on public education for the addiction problems that are happening in our society; namely, of course, fentanyl is the latest one. But, of course, this is not a new issue in our society. Addictions in society perhaps go back hundreds if not thousands of years. Some way or another someone would consume a substance and that substance would be—would exacerbate their mental health stressors and their mental illnesses.

We know this with fentanyl, that it is not just a matter that people can die from fentanyl from overconsumption, but we know that people who do not die from fentanyl overconsumption certainly have other knock-on social costs and social risks, whether it be them committing harm to others; whether them committing harm to themselves;

whether them not being able to participate in society; whether through work, through school, through simply being active in their community. These are things where we take for granted people who are not suffering with mental illness or suffering with addiction, sometimes take for granted how addictions can take over their lives.

Public education is not the only thing that will be a part of this but it must be a part of the solution. Too many people come to me and say that they've heard about this fentanyl crisis, and what is fentanyl? I am, in many ways, trying to be a part of that, but we have taken steps, especially in the Throne Speech, to address that this is something that is a responsibility of everyone, to make sure education is a part of this, information is a part of this. And in so many ways, addictions treatment goes hand in hand with mental health, with mental illness. And those conversations must continue, conversations through Peace of Mind 204, through YAMIS and any other group that wishes to find ways to mitigate and help alleviate the stressors in our society by working as communities.

I spoke with one young gentleman, and he described his own depression through school—very happy to say that he himself is able to work and go to school now as a university student. However, he had mentioned that when he truly was in his grips of depression that he would lock himself in his room, turn off all of his electronics and just cut himself away from society.

When I asked him, oh, so you'd close the door? He said, yes, I'd close the door, I'd shut the windows. And I said, well, you weren't on your phone or you weren't on the computer? No, I turned everything off. And I looked at him, I said, you just built yourself your own prison. And he looked at me and he said, you're right, Nic. Yes, I did build myself a prison and I'm so glad I'm not in that prison anymore.

And this young gentleman, he was very happy that he was able to be a part of a discussion about mental health, about health strategies.

That I have a few young people who were gathered not too long ago as part of the Prime Minister's Youth Council, and these are things that young people are aware of, perhaps more so than generations before. For whatever reasons, that has happened. It is important that young people continue to share this information, continue to share their discussions on how they can help each other with their stressors.

And the one thing that this young gentleman said that was most important, that I said, of course, that's the answer, he said the best days he had when he was in the grips of his depression, his friends would go to his house and they'd rip him out of his room, they'd open the door and they would force him—come out, have a coffee with us. And he said it was nothing like being part of a group. And I said, oh, well, it's like you were being freed from prison. And he just smiled. He just thought—or he must have thought, yes, it must have been that. He just gave a smile. And I know that the more we can work together on these kind of strategies, the better we can be in our society.

To another point that I'm very happy to hear about is post-secondary education, the scholarship increased funding that we'll have with private interests who want to match funds with public scholarships or with public money to have scholarships and bursaries. This is something, myself, going through university, both—I was able to have scholarships, I was able to have bursaries. I was able also to save money. Unlike many people who are going to university, both in my time and before, I waited a few years to go to university to save money. Fortunately, my parents had a bit of money to help out, but, truly, they were able to help out with textbooks, not the tuition. I saved money for a bit of time and decided to go to school as a mature student. As I was—later found out when I applied for university, that's what I counted as.

I was very happy that I was able to work both multiple jobs to save money for school. Luckily, for young people, my experience through the military, it's a very good paying work, if you're able to work. Essentially, every month not in university, I would work military, and it was able to help mitigate those costs. I was able to eliminate my student debt and a good rate by both a combination of having effective workplace bursaries through the military, which, through the army reserve, there's very good university bursaries that go hand in hand with that. And then, also, of course, with scholarships, everywhere from—I was in a fraternity; I received our Canadian scholarship foundation award. I was able to receive scholarships through my faculties. I was able to write a paper and received \$500 scholarship. I spent a lot of time on that paper, and I later did the math, that I probably should have been working, and I might have got more money than that scholarship. I was very happy, though, to be able to get that and very happy that a Throne Speech mentions the

importance of receiving scholarships as not just a matter of helping to pay for the cost, but the sense of accomplishment students have when they get a scholarship is some of the best moments and something that can help motivate a student to go even further in their studies, perhaps even go to graduate level.

I'm very happy that these, mental health, child care, flood mitigation and things like scholarships, they're all part of this Throne Speech. That is why I will support this Throne Speech. Many of these things—I know members opposite supports, and I hope they will support this Throne Speech with me.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): I want to commend my friend from Kildonan for paying tribute to Dave Chomiak, who was a member of this House for a very, very long time. I think that was a honourable and decent thing to do. All of us, all of us stand on the shoulders of those who came before us, and so for him to reach out in that way and to make that kind of comment, I think, on behalf of our caucus, I want to thank you for doing that.

I also have to say to him that I'm willing to nominate him for Finance Minister because he actually spoke about the Throne Speech. When the Finance Minister got up after my friend from Point Douglas gave a fantastic speech, and so rattled was the Finance Minister that he couldn't even get onto the topic of the Throne Speech. He spent, actually, 17 of his 18 minutes talking about the member from Point Douglas, which only goes to show what a fine member my friend from Point Douglas actually is.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to say quite categorically, and this will come as no surprise to my friends, I won't be supporting the Throne Speech, and neither will any member on our side of the House. And we won't be doing it because it fails fundamental tests that any—any—throne speech needs to pass in order to get support from the NDP here in the House.

On the issue of promoting equality, the Throne Speech fails. On the issue of promoting fairness, the Throne Speech fails, and on the issue of promoting inclusion, the Throne Speech fails. On all those tests, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Throne Speech fails, and, as a result, they fail Manitobans, and that's why, on this side of the House, we're not only not going to support it, we're going to get out into our communities, into constituencies all across the

Manitoba, and we're going to reveal for Manitobans exactly—exactly—the type of government that we're dealing with in Manitoba today.

And we've learned a lot about the government of Manitoba in the last seven months. As my friend from Tyndall Park said, it feels like seven years. It does feel like a long time. And the reason for that is because the government talks and talks, talks and talks incessantly, but it doesn't do anything. It is actually silent on action, on actually accomplishing something, on doing something, on making life better for Manitobans, for Manitoba families and for this province and, frankly, as a contribution to the country of—to our country in Canada.

* (16:10)

You know, that's one thing we know, that the government, for them, talk's cheap; it doesn't cost anything. And the one thing we've learned about this government more than anything else, and it's quite something to me that every member on that side of the House, including my buddies over here, too—I want to include you on that side of the House—I know that—I know we talk more than you talk with the Premier (Mr. Pallister), but having said that, talk's cheap for these folks. It doesn't cost anything because every member on the 40 members of the House—I won't include our independent friends there—know the cost of everything and the value of nothing.

And that has been the central theme of the—since I came into the House in 2011. It was true through the election of 2016 and it's true today: the government knows the cost of everything and the absolute value of nothing. And that is going to leave Manitobans in a very, very difficult position, unless the 40 members of this House—and I'll take the 12 and a half Cabinet ministers out of that equation, so we're down to what, 27 and a half at this point; we'll take the Premier out, so we're down to 26 and a half. We'll leave them out because we know they gave themselves great big huge raises for actually doing nothing, so we'll leave them out of the equation.

So it's up to the other 26 and a half members of this House to say, you know what, we're not doing this; we're not going to fail Manitobans. We're not going to go down a path of discredited politics that was discredited during the Thatcher era, during the Reagan era, during the Bush era. We're not—you have to say to your Premier, we're not going to do that, we need to stand with Manitobans because the

needs in our communities are large and it takes large thinking, innovative thinking, creative thinking and the desire to actually do something to make sure that Manitobans are on the right path.

And then, you know, one other thing we've learned about the government over the last seven months, and again I want to—I'm talking to the 26 and a half members of the Conservative backbench—I want you—I want them, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to take their foot off the hyperpartisan pedal that they're on, because there's no need for it.

The Finance Minister's discussion of—or his speech about the Throne Speech that wasn't a speech about the Throne Speech, kind of like Dr. Seuss in its own weird way, reveals that this is a government that is still framed within an opposition mindset—they can't get enough of the NDP. They can't do anything but talk about us all the time, and the reason for that, I think, is that they're just a little bit envious—a little bit envious—of the record of this government over four terms. And when they talk about, oh, you had 17 years, I want to remind them that we were re-elected by the people of Manitoba not once, not twice, not three times, but four times. So don't talk to us about failing Manitobans when we were re-elected by those people four times.

Now, it's true the people of Manitoba have turned to the other side. That's right; that's democracy; that's the way it should happen. We do accept it; we do respect it. But we're here to do a job and the government is here only to still criticize the NDP and really not go out and do anything that makes a positive contribution to our neighbourhoods, to our communities, to our cities, to our province. And that, I have to tell you, is a tremendous disappointment. Not a surprise, because we kind of had a hunch during the minimalist election campaign that the Tories ran that they really didn't have much in the way of knowing what they wanted to do.

And so while we're disappointed, we're not surprised—[interjection] Well, you see, my friend from Emerson—my friend from Emerson, I'm not sure what he was just mumbling about.

An Honourable Member: I think he's hallucinating.

Mr. Allum: He might be; he might be doing that very thing.

But the truth is that the member from Emerson, who always turns around talking to me for some reason, which only reveals their ongoing fascination with us—can't talk about anybody over there, but he'll

come and talk to me—whatnot but—[interjection] He may well be.

But the truth is I think the government side needs to start rethinking the way in which they are conducting themselves as a government. There's no reason to be hyperpartisan at every turn. We want good things for our families and for our neighbourhoods and for our communities. That's what we're here for. And I expect for the 26 and a half members of the Tory backbench, that's what you're here for. So let's get together, let's find ways of working together and let's get over the hyperpartisan political conduct that happens in this House every single day on the part of the government front bench.

And the reason they're hyperpartisan, Mr. Acting—or Mr. Deputy Speaker, is because they're a government with no answers, no plan and no interest in governing on behalf of all of the people of Manitoba. And that's, frankly, what separates us, not just the divide here in the Chamber, but that's, frankly, what separates us. We're 'moted' by the desire to promote equality, fairness and inclusion, and we're motivated by the desire to make sure that every person, every single citizen of this province, has a place in our communities. And that's not happening. That didn't happen in the first Throne Speech. And, believe it or not, this one was actually, though had more detail to it, was actually less helpful to the people of Manitoba.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen) gets up today and he talks incessantly about us because he doesn't want to talk about his own record, his own inability to get anything right; fudge the deficit numbers. In fact, the deficit as it stands was never a billion dollars. He overestimated it to 20 per cent. I heard him say the other day half jokingly it was a rounding error. But that only goes to show that when—what he was really up to was a hyperpartisan political activity that did no one any good in Manitoba.

And we're not going to stand for that. We're not going to accept it. We're going to stand strong for Manitobans, because the fact of the matter is, while the deficit is an important matter, an issue to be managed at all times, we never torqued it. We never manipulated it. We didn't throw things in there that didn't belong. All's we were trying to do was build the central elements that makes for a healthy, productive province for everyone.

And we did so, we did so under very, very difficult times, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The financial crisis in 2008 was not just some little, minor blip. It was huge. It was colossal. And when faced with those same circumstances in the 1990s, the Filmon government turtled. They didn't do anything. They didn't invest. They made life miserable. And we said we're not going to make that same mistake. We're going to continue to invest in the services that matter to Manitobans. And we're going to manage that deficit but we're never going to let that deficit number get in the way of making sure that Manitobans have the opportunity to do the things they want to do, whether it's getting access to health care; whether it's getting access to child care; whether it's making sure they get a good education and whether it makes sure they get a good job, have a productive life here in Manitoba, raise their families and do the kind of things we want for all of us.

Now, I know my friend from Lac du Bonnet, and I quite like my friend from Lac du Bonnet, and during question period my friend from Fort Rouge asked the Education Minister by how much he was going to increase tuition in this province. Fact of the matter is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he should have asked my friend from Lac du Bonnet. He's already made it clear—

An Honourable Member: He's not a minister, so I can't ask him.

Mr. Allum: He—no, but you should ask him because he has the answer. He told the University of Manitoba newspaper, The Manitoban, just last year that he was going to double it. He was going to double it.

So, when my friends, over here especially, go knocking on doors and say—and the person says, why did you raise my kids' tuition, why did you double it? You say, well, there's no one else responsible, but the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko) who committed his government to making sure that students don't have an equal opportunity in this province.

* (16:20)

Let's remember what happened in the 1990s. Let's remember what happened when they started to defund education; tuition increased by 132 per cent. Did that encourage more kids to attend school? No, no—no, no—in fact, participation in post-secondary education declined by 10 per cent, and then there

was a one-to-one relationship between those two things, and that's what I'm urging my friends on the other side of the House to see. There's a direct causal relationship between their austerity agenda for Manitobans and making life worse for Manitoba families.

We have a job to do on this side of the House to defend those families, to make sure there are educational and training opportunities for young people and make sure that they have a chance to live happy, productive lives. That's what I always said to my kids. Really, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I said to them, success isn't measured by what you become. It becomes—it's measured by how productive you are and how satisfied and happy you are. And so, if you were a—you know, doing something as a dog trainer and you find that happiness in that and find that productive, that's what life ought to be about. But we want to make sure that people have those opportunities, and an agenda of austerity is not going to do that. In fact, it's going to do significant harm to Manitobans.

One thing became crystal clear in the Throne Speech, and I had said this to my friends during the budget. I said—the last budget, that very short budget that it was—I said, this isn't what you went out and knocked on doors for. That wasn't the kind of budget you had really campaigned on, and I think in their heart of hearts they knew I was right. They didn't want to admit it; I admit that. They didn't want to admit it, but in their heart of hearts, they knew that I was correct in that regard.

The interesting thing is, I think this Throne Speech is what they did go and campaign for, and I'm asking you, I'm begging you, don't do it. It's going to cause colossal harm in our communities. Don't let that happen. Don't let it happen, because we spent the last four terms in government trying to repair the damage done by the Filmon era. Don't take us down that path again. Don't do it. It's not necessary. There's a way of doing things that can be invest in the future of Manitoba without causing considerable damage to the people that we're here to serve.

The Finance Minister and, in fact, the government each and every day talks about their three-D approach to—or, their three-D characterization of our record. And they talk about a decade. Well, the only ones I can think of in recent memory who've governed for a decade was Stephen Harper. And, under that, yes, absolutely right, there

was a decade of decline. There's a decade of despair, a decade of disrespect. I mean, we could go through the whole section—D section of the dictionary and keep finding words to describe the Harper record.

I'm asking them, I'm begging them, I'm beseeching them, don't go down that path. But, more than that, no one—and my friend from Point Douglas pointed this out in his fantastic speech—talked about the things—the validators who had indicated how strong our economy was: among the lowest unemployment rates in the country, one of the best job-creation records in the country, and then, thirdly, the projected best economic growth in the country. That's very good. And this is really interesting; my friend from St. James—and I was telling him the other day I have quite an affinity for his predecessor, but, you know, you work with—you don't get to pick the people you work with and that's fair. But—gee, where was I? *[interjection]*

Credit rating, oh, yes. Yes, I educated one of our friends already. He doesn't quite understand the credit rating improved under our government. It's actually better now than it was when the Filmon government was here. What are they talking about? It's actually unbelievable. So I took the trouble, I went to the dictionary, I got my—I went to the own—my own section—D section of the dictionary, and there's no doubt that the framing, the characterization of the Manitoba's economy under our government can only be described as distorted, delusional and disingenuous.

And so, again, I say we're not going back down from our record. We're quite proud of it. Were we perfect? Well, sure, no, of course not. Was there more to be done? Absolutely. Were there other emerging issues that we needed to address? No question. But Manitoba in 2016 at the change of government was in such a better place than it was in 1999 when we came into government in the first place. And the signs are everywhere—everywhere—*[interjection]*

My friend from Brandon West is a classic example of knowing the cost of everything and the value of absolutely nothing. This is a member who should be getting up asking his Education Minister and his Finance Minister, where's my school? Where is it at the North Hill? What's going on there? How come there aren't more shops being built there? How come there aren't more gyms being built there? Let's get the former member from Brandon East back here to defend Brandon once and for all.

An Honourable Member: 30 seconds.

Mr. Allum: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know members are asking leave that I should have more time, but I—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Allum: —I only have 25 more seconds. But I want to reiterate where I started. I won't be voting for this Throne Speech. My colleagues won't be voting for this Throne Speech because it fails the test on equality, on fairness and inclusion.

I'm asking you: Don't go there. Vote against this Throne Speech, like we are.

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): I'd like to thank all my colleagues on the government side of the House, all 39 elected in the April election. Thank you to all of you for making such an incredible experience here at this—in the Legislature. And it's always a great pleasure to follow after my colleague from Fort Garry-Riverview has a chance to speak, and you would think that after the years of experience that he has had to be careful on what he's putting on the record because you just never know who is getting up after him to speak.

At this time I'd like to take the time to congratulate all of the new MLAs, whether it's the new MLAs from the—on the NDP side, or with the Liberal Party, or—and, of course, all the new ones on our side. We had quite the few years leading up to the election, getting to know the majority and almost absolutely every candidate that ran for us in the last election, and it sure epitomized the definition of what a team is, Mr. Acting Speaker—we—Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker—just Mr. Deputy Speaker—that's who he is. There, I finally got the words from my friend, my newly elected friend from the Interlake.

So I'd like to thank him for that, mister acting—or Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'll get it straight eventually.

When we start talking about the—this year's Throne Speech, we're looking at a newly formed government with, yes, 40 MLAs elected. But I was going to take the time—I did mention the 39, but I want to actually take an extra few seconds to congratulate the member from Charleswood, our Speaker, on becoming Speaker of the House, and she's—she was such a great representative for her constituency that when she was—when she did run for Speaker of the House and was successful in that, I think it was very, very well deserved, because she has the right temperament and the right expertise to

serve very—serve us all on all sides of the House very, very well here at the Manitoba Legislature

* (16:30)

I'd like to thank, of course, all of our clerks and the staff and table officers and all of our security and people that work here inside the Chamber on a day-to-day basis in regards—and as well as the—our Hansard staff who has to work 'tireously' to make sure that this all—every word that we put on the record gets put into the record for many, many years to come, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

A few things that I would like to highlight, and, of course, this is my first official speech since being elected again in April, I'd like to thank absolutely all my constituents in the Lac du Bonnet constituency. It was one of those mixed campaigns as far as the weather goes. Some days it was T-shirts and shorts, and other days it was toque and long johns and winter boots. And there was other days where you needed to make sure you had the umbrella out as well.

Madam Speaker in the Chair

I would like to thank my campaign team and many of the volunteers. So I would like to just mention a few of them by name: campaign team—campaign manager Bob; my Beausejour office manager Leanne; my Lac du Bonnet office managers Al, Elaine; and many of the other people as well. We've got Phil, who is my official agent; then I have Phil, who is my GOTV person; Gerry, who is my sign guy who's worked on approximately eight—seven or eight campaigns throughout the Lac du Bonnet constituency rebuilding signs, building signs, figuring out ways to manage the elements to make sure that all the signs went up and that they were able to stay up in the harsh conditions; Keith [*phonetic*], Devon [*phonetic*], and also Robert who helped out greatly throughout the campaign. And, of course, throughout the campaign you get—you have multiple—many, many, many volunteers that come and support, and whether it's help with phoning or putting up signs; baking for all the other volunteers; coming around, of course, doing door knocking. I know that these campaigns cannot be done, of course, just with one or two people. You do need an absolute team to be able to be—have a successful campaign.

I also like to say that, with Throne Speech the other day, we were actually privileged to listen to the Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba present

the Throne Speech for the Second Session of the 41st Legislature on November 21st. And the Throne Speech was a simple Throne Speech. It basically was going to be focusing on three main areas: fixing the finances, repairing the services and rebuilding the economy.

We've had 17 years, Madam Speaker, of NDP waste, mismanagement—a decade of decline, decay and debt. And now we have to turn that ship around and right—and send it in the right direction. And I know that the Premier (Mr. Pallister) of Manitoba has said on many occasions that that Golden Boy sitting on top of the Legislature is facing north for a reason and that is: we need to look to the north to—economic development. And I'm very proud of—in the almost seven months, just over seven months since we've been elected the new government here in Manitoba, in how much work has actually been done already. And it's changing lives. And there's many—there's a lot of hope out there.

You know, you go around, and, you know, unlike some of the members in the opposition—that sort of has a nice ring to it: the NDP being in the opposition. I'm sure that they're still licking their wounds a little bit from the last election. I know that they had some turbulent times.

I know I've mentioned many times in my speech already, just in the short eight and a half minutes, roughly, about the team that we have on this side of the House. I know on their side of the House, they've gone from 37 members now to 14, and within those 14 members, it almost seems to me that there's about five or six or seven different little mini teams happening over there.

And I know that there's some members that did not—were not successful on their side of the House that was—that were here in the Legislature for quite some time. And—but I know you can almost hear once in a while, whether it's a question being asked or a private members' statement being read, that a couple of those long-term, long-serving members on the NDP side are still in this building somewhere writing some of those questions for them. They're just—unfortunately just don't want to let go, Madam Speaker.

You know, I'd like to just put a couple words on the record and reference a couple of the things that the member from Fort Garry-Riverview mentioned. And it was interesting, because the member from Fort Garry-Riverview was actually elected class of 2011 alongside my really good friends from—you

know, the member from La Verendrye, the member from Portage la Prairie, the member from Brandon West, the member from Morden-Winkler and myself in 2011, and the member from Fort Garry-Riverview was also elected in 2011.

And it's interesting. He made a couple comments during his speech, and as usual, Madam Speaker, he's yelling and getting really excited and really passionate in his speech, and I think he was looking around or may be short a couple Snickers bars in his speech, and I know that there's a few members across the way would be really worried if I never mentioned that.

But the thing is, he had to turn—and keep in mind, the member from Fort Garry-Riverview, he was the Education minister twice in—since he was elected because they couldn't quite figure out which team they were on at that time. And he referenced The Manitoban, which, of course, the majority of us know that The Manitoban is a newspaper put out by students and senior students as well from the University of Manitoba. He actually had to turn—keep in mind, Madam Speaker, he was the Education minister. He actually had to turn to the member from Fort Rouge and just ask for clarification to make sure he was right mentioning that the name of the paper at the University of Manitoba was The Manitoban. And he was the Education minister.

It just—it baffles me when the member would stand up there—and I'm not sure if it was because he was screaming his speech out here in the Legislature that maybe he was losing some oxygen once in a while and just forgetting something, but it's interesting that he tries to get into the mud and throws stones across this—across the aisle, across the way at members on this side, when all he's got to do is look across—look around his own bench on—in the opposition, the 14 members, the NDP members, and actually maybe start asking his colleagues to start apologizing to him, because it's many of the actions that they had done that put us in such a disadvantage now that we're in government, Madam Speaker.

We're looking at a—after a decade of debt and decay—and I know the member from Tyndall Park is agreeing too. He's smiling; he's shaking his head, and I know that he's going to get up soon and he's going to be able to speak, but I know that the member from Tyndall Park, he went door to door in the 2011 election, door knocking, telling people, please, please trust us—trust us. You know we've broke—the NDP government before broke promises, but

then they were promising not to raise taxes, Madam Speaker, in the 2011 election.

* (16:40)

And what ended up happening? It was shortly thereafter in the spring of 2012 which was almost six months later, almost six months later, they went and they expanded the PST. So things like home insurance, auto insurance, hair cuts, life or-death-birth and death certificates, various items that people absolutely need on a day-to-day basis the NDP government of the day in 2011 went and expanded the PST and slapped on 7 per cent. But that wasn't good enough for them because what did they do during the whole 2011 election? They promised all Manitobans that they were not going to raise any taxes.

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Ewasko: Yes. Yes. I know the member from St. Paul is such a long-standing great member here in the Manitoba Legislature, and I wanted to commend him as well for the great job he's doing as Minister of Crown Services as well.

We have a lot of work to do, Madam Speaker, because these opposition members of the NDP, the 14 divided by about seven different teams, you know, two per team pretty much— that's the way it's looking—they basically had, by raising the PST and expanding the PST, they had roughly an extra half a billion dollars coming in on a yearly basis, and what were they doing? They were absolutely blowing it out the door. They were doing tendering—untendered contracts, sorry, not tendering, unfortunately, that's the way they should've been going, but they were doing untendered contracts for various things and they were asking their own friends to give them these items, such as the Tiger Dams and, unfortunately, it was—it's out of control. It's out of control.

And it got out of control to the point, Madam Speaker, where, when we took over just in spring about seven months ago, we found that they had not even come close to hitting their target deficit budget of \$400-and-some million. It actually went—it actually doubled; they doubled it. They were close to \$865 million—\$865-million deficit the last year. And, because of that, what has ended up happening? Throughout Manitoba we had the member—the newly elected member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger), oh wait, sorry, not newly elected, the past premier of the province since he took over as leader of the NDP party he had more than doubled the provincial debt.

He took the Province from just over \$12 billion to over \$30 billion in debt in a matter of eight to 10 years. That is not a record that we want, that I would want to have as the premier of Manitoba.

The changes and the opportunities that our newly elected Premier of Manitoba, the member from Fort Whyte, that is already instituted and with his mandate letters that he's given to the new ministers on our side of the House, we are going to be making some incredible changes here in Manitoba. And I know that he has said on more than one occasion, and I believe him, because he's got a vision and he's got a great team backing him, that we are going to be the most improved province in this great country of Canada.

Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, we've, you know, changed some of the rules here in the Legislature, so we're only given 20 minutes to speak. And it's amazing on how fast 20 minutes go, and I know that the members from—on the opposition side, of course, they're almost sounding like they're giving me leave to continue speaking for a little bit longer.

I would like to just touch base on a couple of things that we've already accomplished in the short seven months as far as in being in government.

I do have to mention this one major successful completion, because it speaks to the Lac du Bonnet constituency very, very well and the way that the previous NDP government absolutely disregarded their jobs, Madam Speaker.

Here's the title, November 10th, 2016, press release: Province of Manitoba offers congratulations on successful completion of sale of Tolko Industries' Manitoba operation to Canadian Kraft Paper Industries, Madam Speaker.

It took less than a week, Madam Speaker, for our ministers to show up, help out, listen and see how the process happens in The Pas. What happened in Powerview-Pine Falls in 2008? Not one minister of the NDP side showed up for over 100 days. Matter of fact, I think a couple of them, including the member from St. Boniface, jumped on a plane and went fishing up around Bissett as opposed to stopping by Powerview-Pine Falls.

I get emails and phone calls on a daily basis, saying, boy, member from Lac du Bonnet, do we ever wish that you guys were in government in 2008 because things would be different in Powerview-Pine Falls, and thank you, Progressive Conservative new government of Manitoba—40 elected MLAs—thank

you for doing the great job as well as those employers, the employees, the community of The Pas, for saving all those great jobs up in The Pas.

Things are going to be different once again, Madam Speaker, here in Manitoba. We are going to be the—one of the—the most improved province here in Canada. I thank you for your time. I'm going to hand over the floor to another member and see what they have to say. We're going to vote yes for the Throne Speech.

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): It goes without saying that I should also express my gratitude to the members of the government backbench for a standing ovation for me, and I would start with some expressions of gratitude that God has given me. I'm 70 years old and I'm still here, still breathing and taking it on as the day moves on ever so slowly with this government.

Now, there is mention about the University of Manitoba publication which happens to be very appropriate with the previous speaker from—the member from Lac du Bonnet. The member from Lac du Bonnet was very adamant about the tuition, and in an interview in *The Manitoban* he said, and I quote: If you bring it up to the national average—talking about tuition—which would be close to where Saskatchewan is—he's a very good fan of Saskatchewan—you will bring in 40 to 60 million more revenue into the post-secondary institutions. And that's closed quote.

* (16:50)

Saskatchewan's tuition is \$2,000 more per student per year, and I commiserate with the member from Lac du Bonnet. Maybe that's the reason why he's not in Cabinet. I would have wanted to see him in Cabinet. He deserves it.

Now, regarding the Throne Speech that we are supposed to talk about, because I'm afraid that the honourable member was—the Government House Leader (Mr. Mickelfield) might raise a point of order again to interrupt me, I will talk about the Throne Speech that seems to be more of the standard that's coming from this government of seven months, which feels like seven years. I know, Madam Speaker, that it's funny, from time to time, that we have to take it in for what it is. These seven months is equivalent to about 210 days, give or take two weekends. And, in that, the Throne Speech that was delivered, is very strong in vagueness. And

it's very standard Conservative. It's very standard Conservative. It never mentions anything about labour. It never mentions anything about minimum wage. It does not mention anything about poverty reduction. It does not mention anything about the affordability of our province, how to keep the rates of hydro, gas and MPI low.

And during the question periods that were past history of, what, three weeks ago, the Minister for Crown Services kept on mentioning a figure that he cannot defend. And it is the figure that I will not try to repeat, but it begs to be repeated often, too, because it provokes a picture of a Minister for Crown Services making it up as he goes. And being the critic for Crown corporations, I find it really difficult, to say the least, that the minister himself is trying to degrade Manitoba Hydro.

An Honourable Member: Very strange, dangerous.

Mr. Marcelino: It's a very dangerous tactic, to say the least. It is not what a minister of the Crown should do. And for that reason, I was asking the honourable minister if he would retract the word bankrupt that he characterized Manitoba Hydro. And he wouldn't do that. And I am almost sure that he will never say that he's sorry for having said those words. I understand why. The minister for Crown Services tries to repeat some facts, as he called them. He would call them facts. And he would keep on repeating them until somebody believes it. And that's the propaganda style of Joseph Goebbels. The minister of propaganda of the national socialist party during the time of somebody's friend, Adolph. He said that if you kept on repeating the lies, somebody, just somebody, will pick up on it and take it as true.

And it's not really that simple. I find it very difficult to accept that a minister of the Crown would attempt to hoodwink the public, to mislead the press and thinking all along, maybe, that by him keeping on harping on \$25 billion as Manitoba Hydro's debt will be accepted hook, line and sinker. And it's amazing how when you read up on the report of the Boston Consulting Group, there's no mention of that. What was mentioned was that Bipole III and Keeyask needed to proceed because it's been too far along.

Now, I didn't want to keep on raising that issue about the \$4.2 million that was paid to the Boston Consulting Group for a 40-page report, which appears to be \$100,000 per page. I could have done that for less, because the facts have

spoken for themselves over the last so many years. When Bipole III was discussed at length, studied, researched and then restudied and then judged to be necessary according to some experts, not all, I will agree, but engineering studies showed that we needed a reliable third bipole so that it would assure that we have the supply that we would need domestically.

And I was just hoping that the minister would come up with something innovative, as in something new, by saying—by him saying, before us, before this Chamber, that he's sorry for having misspoken. And I—maybe I expect too much from the minister, and I have learned that maybe we should not expect too much from any of the ministers of the Crown. I understand that the politics of it all is that there's only one person who makes the decision, and that's what the language of the member from Lac du Bonnet was saying. What he said just a few minutes ago was that Manitoba will be the most improved province because there's one person and there's a huge team of 39 others who are supporting him.

And the point is this: that this is a one-man show—this is a one-man show—which means that there's one star. And I was hoping that there's more. The member from Interlake is a star. The member from Southdale is a potential star. And the member from Brandon is a star in their own right. And—*[interjection]*

No, I'm not the member from Gimli. Well, I was just kidding. Okay, the member from Gimli has potential, but not a star.

My point is this, Madam Speaker: My speech is regarding the Throne Speech that was so vague that it did not provide any plans for our future, no vision. What it says when I read it—and pardon me, but English is my second language—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Tyndall Park (Mr. Marcelino) will have eight minutes remaining.

The hour being 5 p.m., the House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow. Oh, pardon me, 10 a.m. tomorrow. It's Friday.

CORRIGENDA

On November 21, 2016, page 1, first column, from the second paragraph to the sixth paragraph, should have read:

At 1:30 p.m. the Acting Sergeant-at-Arms, carrying the mace and followed by the Speaker, the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk and the Clerk assistants of the Legislative Assembly, entered the Chamber.

The Acting Sergeant-at-Arms returned to the north doors and met Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor with the mace.

The Acting Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms (Mr. Craig Waterman): Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor.

Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor, accompanied by the honorary aides-de-camp, the officer escort, the Premier and the Provincial Court judges, entered the Chamber and took her seat on the throne.

The Acting Sergeant-at-Arms made obeisance with the mace and retired to the side of the Chamber.

On November 21, 2016, page 8, second column, from the sixth paragraph to the ninth paragraph, should have read:

Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor rose from the throne and retired from the Chamber escorted by the Acting Sergeant-at-Arms carrying the mace and followed by the honorary aides-de-camp, the officer escort, the Premier and the Provincial Court judges.

Prior to their exiting the Chamber, the lyrics of God Save the Queen and O Canada were sung.

The Speaker proceeded to the throne.

The Acting Sergeant-at-arms approached the Speaker, made obeisance with the mace, then placed the mace on the table.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, November 24, 2016

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