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of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Fortieth Legislature

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, November 19, 2015

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

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

Good afternoon, everyone. Please be seated.

Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Municipal Government): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the Legislature at my first opportunity to address a matter of privilege that was raised yesterday in the Chamber during my absence to attend the funeral of a friend in Brandon.

I wish to state that I made a generalized comment in the Chamber on Tuesday, which many members do from time to time in the heat of the moment, for which I apologize to the House.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: I thank the honourable minister for the apology, and I think that should resolve the matter.

Thank the minister for that.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Mr. Speaker: Now move on to routine proceedings. Introduction of bills? Seeing no bills, we'll move on to committee reports. Tabling of reports? Ministerial statements?

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Jocelyn House Hospice

Ms. Nancy Allan (St. Vital): Mr. Speaker, losing a child has to be one of the hardest things anyone could be put through. But Bill and Miriam Hutton saw an opportunity to channel their grief into a way to help others. I knew I was going to do this.

When their 17-year-old daughter Jocelyn died from bone cancer, they were inspired by her wish to spend her final days at home surrounded by their loved ones.

The Huttons decided to turn their St. Vital home into a hospice with a homelike environment for terminally ill Manitobans. They named it for Jocelyn. And as of this October, Jocelyn House Hospice has been offering warm, homelike support and progressive palliative care for 30 years.

Bill Hutton established a strong foundation for the hospice by registering and incorporating Jocelyn House as well as leading the early fundraising efforts. Jocelyn House has now become a symbol of care in the community.

That's why I was so pleased to hear that Bill Hutton was one of the recipients of this year's Manitoba heroes awards. These awards are a chance for Manitobans to recognize the extraordinary things everyday people do without thought of reward for themselves.

Bill fits this description perfectly and is tenaciously committed to improving the world around him. He's an ordained Anglican minister, worked as a school guidance counsellor, advocated for displaced children in war-torn Yugoslavia and has been a lifelong supporter of the arts, most recently creating a Rene Highway Scholarship for students with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet.

This week our provincial government announced they will be creating new hospice beds in partnership with Jocelyn House. This is wonderful news.

To all the staff of Jocelyn House, thank you for your continued commitment to adding life to a patient's final days.

Thank you to the Huttons for their incredible generosity many years ago. And congratulations, Bill, on being named a hero. We wish you the best in the future.

Bernard W. Hayward

Mr. Ron Schuler (St. Paul): Mr. Speaker, today I honour the memory of Springfield's own Flight Lieutenant Bernard W. Hayward.

On September 3rd, 1939, the night Britain entered World War II, Bernard flew over Europe, dropping leaflets warning residents of the conflict to come. Seven months later Bernard's bomber was shot down over Denmark. Bernard was taken to the

prisoner-of-war camp Stalag Luft III where he was registered as POW No. 204.

This prison camp was immortalized in the 1963 Steve McQueen movie *The Great Escape*. Bernard and over 600 POWs took part in this dangerous construction and concealment of three escape tunnels dubbed Tom, Dick and Harry. Flight Lieutenant Bernard W. Hayward and his fellow POWs managed to hide and steal 1,219 knives, 478 spoons, 582 forks, 1,400 cans and over 4,000 bed boards for the construction of the tunnels.

On March 24th, 1944, 76 men escaped before the 77th was spotted. Seventy-three escapees were recaptured; 50 were executed in violation of the Geneva Conventions.

Bernard survived Stalag Luft III, and after returning home, marrying Beth Kennedy in 1946, Bernard returned to farming and the couple raised four children, two of whom, Gladys Hayward Williams and John Hayward, join us in the gallery today.

Flight Lieutenant Bernard W. Hayward, a father, husband and hero, passed away on November 3rd, 2007, at the age of 95.

Canada will never forget you, Flight Lieutenant Bernard W. Hayward.

Futurpreneur Canada

Hon. Erna Braun (Minister of Labour and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, this week is Global Entrepreneurship Week. This is a wonderful opportunity to recognize our community's entrepreneurs who fuel our local economy and create good jobs in our province.

This year, Futurpreneur Canada is hosting local events that help entrepreneurs access the tools to become self-starters and innovators.

I am pleased to welcome representatives from Futurpreneur Canada, as well as representatives from one of our province's many successful businesses, Retail Management Systems Limited, to the House today.

Futurpreneur Canada provides loans to young Canadians who are seeking to start full-time businesses. They help assess candidates' business plans and provide support. They recently extended their funding to provide resources for northern and rural Manitobans that will help them build their businesses.

Organizations like Futurpreneur Canada are making the young entrepreneurs of today the business leaders of tomorrow. These young people will create the jobs that keep our Manitoba economy strong.

Rene Cyr, president of Winnipeg-based Retail Management Systems in northeast Winnipeg, started the small company in 1998. When creating his business plan, Rene had a choice: follow a formula that prescribes structure or make your own rules that allow for individuality and flexibility.

* (13:40)

Rene opted to take the load—road less travelled and created a very unique technology company. At his company, people are responsible for customer service, rather than machines, and team spirit with an honest dedication to their customers' needs defines his company's workplace culture.

Rene has since become a voice of authority in the retail management sector. His experience as an entrepreneur taught him an important element of success: that with sheer determination, you will succeed.

During Global Entrepreneurship Week, Futurpreneur Canada is spotlighting our young people's entrepreneurial spirit and providing the resources they need to transform their ideas into companies like Rene Cyr's.

Thank you, Rene, for your hard work and example, and good luck to all our young entrepreneurs in their future endeavours.

Louis Tanguay

Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler): Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to draw the attention of this House to Louis Tanguay, who was recently named the Winkler Community Foundation's Citizen of the Year at the Winkler foundation fall Citizen of the Year Banquet. Louis is a long-time resident of Winkler whose diligent volunteer efforts have led to his success on a number of high-profile events in the community and throughout southern Manitoba.

Louis's most recent role was as co-chair for the 2015 Scotties Tournament of Hearts held in Winkler in January of 2015. His efforts along with his volunteer crew allowed the organizing committee at the end of that venture to donate almost \$50,000 to area organizations. Due to the success of the Scotties, Louis was subsequently named CurlManitoba's Volunteer of the Year for 2014-15.

Louis has been involved in numerous other activities including the 2014 Manitoba Games held in Morden, the RM of Stanley and Winkler. The end result of that event was a \$70,000 donation to both the Winkler Community Foundation and the Morden Area Foundation.

Over the past years, Louis has been involved in many other roles. He has served on the Winkler Curling Club board, on the Winkler Chamber of Commerce, as a church board member, as well as a coach of area sports teams.

Without the contributions of people like Louis many of the events enjoyed by people in southern Manitoba would not be possible. The events leave lasting legacies, and without tireless volunteers like Louis they wouldn't be possible.

Louis recognizes the importance of teamwork to any organization, unlike today's NDP, which has been unwilling to work co-operatively with so many Manitoba groups, including the AMM, business community, tourism, women's shelters, the Jockey Club, not to mention taxpayers and businesses being shut out of Saskatchewan tendering opportunities.

I welcome—or I—it is my pleasure to recognize Louis Tanguay for his hard work as he continues with his efforts. With that kind of passion, those around him will be inspired to contribute to their community with the same kind of dedication.

I wish him all the best in future undertakings.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Meet Me at the Bell Tower

Hon. Melanie Wight (Minister of Children and Youth Opportunities): Mr. Speaker, when you represent a constituency in the North End, as the member from Point Douglas and I do, you get to meet people who, instead of seeing barriers and challenges, see potential and possibility.

Tomorrow will mark a special day in the North End as we celebrate the fourth anniversary of Meet Me at the Bell Tower. Our young leaders started the bell tower rally as a way to speak out and demand an end to violence in the community. Every Friday at 6 p.m., people come together at the bell tower at Selkirk and Powers. People of all ages and different backgrounds gather to discuss community issues and to make the North End a better and safer place to live.

For four years, the bell has rung for change and to celebrate the North End uniting together. These people are proud of who they are, proud of where they come from and proud to give back. They know it is important that we take the time to share our stories of success. They are creating opportunities to find more common ground and build more understanding, understanding that leads to the kind of co-operation needed to strengthen our city for everyone.

Thanks to the bell tower rally, the North End and our city for growing a bit stronger every Friday.

Today I would like to acknowledge some of the Aboriginal Youth Opportunities who help make the bell tower rally happen: Michael Champagne, Gracie Lou, Jenna Wirch, Markus Head, Lenard Monkman, and Chris Clacio. These young role models inspire our future leaders and bring hope to our community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of the House to join me in congratulating the members of Meet Me at the Bell Tower on their fourth anniversary.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: That concludes members' statements.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: And just prior to oral questions I have a number of guests to introduce.

First, seated in the Speaker's Gallery, we have with us today Mr. David Warner, the former Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and the current vice-president of the Ontario Association of Former Parliamentarians.

On behalf of honourable members, we welcome you here today, Sir.

And also seated in the public gallery we have with us today Gladys Hayward Williams, Peter Williams, John Hayward, Louise Garbutt and Dr. Cindy Pachal, who are the guests of the honourable member for St. Paul (Mr. Schuler).

And also seated in the public gallery we have with us today from Jocelyn House Hospice and the Jocelyn Hutton Foundation, Bill, John and Kelsey Hutton, Jackie Stephen, Colleen O'Rourke, Doris Smith, Rose Marie Reimer, Sister Jo-Ann Duggan, Cheryl Mazur and Tracy McMahan, who are the guests of the honourable member for St. Vital (Ms. Allan).

And also seated in the public gallery today we have with us from Tec Voc vocational high school, we have 45 grade 9 students under the direction of Frank Harms, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Minto (Mr. Swan).

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

Involvement in New West Partnership Impact on Manitoba Businesses

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): Mr. Speaker, the Selinger NDP government's refusal to join the New West Partnership is having a negative impact on Manitoba businesses.

In fact, Leech Printing, located in Brandon and Winnipeg, employs more than 60 people in our province. This NDP government's refusal to join the New West Partnership has now precluded them from bidding on larger contracts with various Crown corporations in Saskatchewan.

My question for the Premier: Why has he jeopardized business opportunities for Leech Printing by refusing to join the New West Partnership?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, we trade more east and west than any other province in Canada. That's a huge part of what we do.

Manitoba has the lowest unemployment rate in the country. Manitoba has the best job creation rate in the country. We're building infrastructure. We're educating people in our schools with skills labs, science labs, more investment in proper facilities, including gyms, so that young people can have the best facilities to learn and improve themselves in.

And we are growing the economy. We are one of the top three economies in Canada, and all the economic forecasters are saying Manitoba will be in the top two or three economies not just this year, not just next year, but with the plan we're following, over the next decade, Mr. Speaker.

And I can tell you while in the Agreement on Internal Trade, which I am a member with three other premiers, we are working on a system that will allow us to trade in all parts of the country, all the territories, all the provinces east and west of us, and we look forward to all the provinces working with us to improve trade opportunities for all of us so that we

can all benefit in every part of the country, Mr. Speaker.

Mrs. Stefanson: The Selinger NDP government's refusal to join the New West Partnership—

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

I know that I've been a bit lenient on allowing members the opportunity to use—referencing members by their name, but in this particular case, I'm going to ask the co-operation of the honourable member for Tuxedo that when she's referencing members of this House that she references members by their constituency names or ministers by their portfolio. So I'm asking for her co-operation in that regard.

Mrs. Stefanson: It wasn't a problem with the former premier. I guess this Premier is a little sensitive about this.

Mr. Speaker, Leech Printing employs more than 60 people in our province, and by jeopardizing the future of business opportunities in Manitoba, this NDP government is threatening the future of jobs in Manitoba.

Will they agree to reverse their decision, join the New West Partnership today in order to protect these Manitoba jobs, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, the best job creation record in the country—best job creation record in the country. Lowest unemployment rate in the country, and after forecasts from all the economists all across the country that we'll be one of the top performing companies in Canada over the next decade.

And what was it like when the members opposite ran the government? Higher unemployment rates, less young people graduating from high school.

* (13:50)

They had a policy for young people called three strikes and you're out. If a young person got into any kind of challenges at school, they tossed them out onto the street, Mr. Speaker.

We've gone from a 71 per cent graduation rate to an 87 per cent graduation rate. We're partnering with institutions like technical—Tec Voc High School, with the aerospace industry, to have good jobs for young people when they graduate from high school. We're partnering with high schools like Sisler High School on a cybersecurity academy in partnership with some of the best businesses

anywhere in the country to create the jobs of the future. We're building heavy-duty mechanic shops in Swan River, Manitoba, so young people can have jobs in their region. We have—

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

Mrs. Stefanson: The NDP government's refusal to join the New West Partnership has had a negative impact on the future of businesses in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, Leech Printing, once able to bid on major government contracts in Saskatchewan, is no longer able to bid on these contracts, a direct result of this government's refusal to join the New West Partnership.

Mr. Speaker, why are they putting Manitoba businesses in jeopardy? Why are they refusing to join the New West Partnership?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, this is just another example of the flip-flop of the members of the opposition. They're now advocating for protectionism in this country. They're advocating that it's okay to shut your borders to businesses.

We're opening up the borders of Manitoba. We're inviting people from around the world to live in Manitoba. We're doing a process in partnership with indigenous people on reconciliation. We're working to bring refugees to Manitoba.

And just recently, the National Geographic Traveler said that one of the top 20 places anywhere to visit in the world, Mr. Speaker, Winnipeg—Winnipeg—one of the top go-now destinations in the world: the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, the FIFA World Cup, the Festival du Voyageur in the wintertime, the Journey to Churchill exhibit, which we've just completed at Assiniboine Park.

And now we're going to have—this morning I signed an agreement with the government of Nunavut. The Premier of Nunavut graciously came to Winnipeg. We signed an agreement. We will have the largest collection of Inuit art anywhere on the planet in Manitoba. We will do that in partnership with the people of Nunavut.

We will be a place where people from—

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

Involvement in New West Partnership Impact on Manitoba Businesses

Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Arthur-Virden): Mr. Speaker, this NDP government refusal to join the New West trade partnership is taking away opportunities for Manitoba businesses and jobs. Several Saskatchewan corporations, Crown corporations, are now excluding Manitoba companies from competing with contracts. Joining the New West trade partnership is best interests of Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, T.L. Penner Construction is a construction company in the constituency. They're concerned about the NDP's refusal to join the New West Partnership. They have been in business for over 40 years and do about half of their business in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, why is this Minister of Jobs and Economy not doing more for Manitoba businesses like T.L. Penner Construction?

Hon. James Allum (Acting Minister of Jobs and the Economy): Again, I just want to reiterate the point made by the Premier (Mr. Selinger), which is I don't understand why the members opposite are defending protectionism in Saskatchewan.

In fact, this government has a very impressive hydroelectric deal with Saskatchewan that will send good, clean, renewable energy to Saskatchewan, that will have impact for jobs here in Manitoba but also reduce GHGs in this part of the prairies.

Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we're working on the internal agreement on trade. We're working with four different provinces across the country, as the Premier just indicated, to make sure that there are open borders all across Canada.

On this side of the House, one Manitoba, one Canada.

Mr. Piwniuk: Mr. Speaker, it seems like they're closing the doors on Manitobans.

T.L. Penner Construction is a local business that bids on major contracts such as schools, hospitals and commercial buildings throughout Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Many of them have—are government contracts.

Why are they currently trying to figure—they're currently trying to figure out why—how they can bid on an upcoming SaskPower project. They cannot find reasons why Manitoba won't join the New West

trade partnership to give them a chance to bid on this contract.

Does this minister have a reason?

Mr. Allum: Well, Mr. Speaker, as we've reiterated in the House on several occasions, we sit in the middle of the country, and we have an equal amount of trade going west and an equal amount of trade going east. In fact, we're free traders all across this great nation, from coast to coast to coast.

Now, Mr. Speaker, our economy is working very well. We do have among the lowest unemployment rates in the country. And every forecaster across the country has said that Manitoba will be among the top three next year.

The greatest threat to the economic well-being of Canada, to the greatest threat to the economic well-being of Manitoba, is to let these folks from across the floor have their hands on the instruments of power and will threaten jobs from coast to coast to coast.

Mr. Piwniuk: Mr. Speaker, as a result, T.L. Penner Construction is currently planning to move part of their operations to Saskatchewan, and they are seriously considering moving the entire company to Saskatchewan permanently so they can be eligible to bid on these contracts.

Under this NDP Premier (Mr. Selinger), our local jobs in our region are on the chopping block. Over—after 40 years of business in Manitoba, this NDP government is doing nothing to keep them from moving to Saskatchewan.

I ask again to this minister: What does he have to say to T.L. Penner Construction while local jobs are at stake?

Mr. Allum: Well, Mr. Speaker, as I said in an earlier answer, we trade equitably across the country with all of our partners. We have a great hydroelectric deal with Saskatchewan that's going to, as I said, create jobs here in Manitoba while reducing GHGs and exporting clean, renewable energy to our sister province to the west.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, in the Throne Speech earlier this week, we articulated a smart, strategic vision for building this province. On the other hand, what we got from the alternative throne speech sometime last week within a closed-door, invitation-only kind of setting, what we got there was an agenda for tax cuts that will only reduce programs for Manitobans.

We govern for all the people of Manitoba, all the time.

Involvement in New West Partnership Impact on Manitoba Businesses

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Riding Mountain): Mr. Speaker, and what this government doesn't understand is they've been kicked out of the sandbox.

Minty's Moving of Onanole is a business in my constituency that employs 40 people, most of them located in the Riding Mountain area. In the recent past, Minty's were successful in bidding on SaskPower contracts. They are now ineligible for bidding on these contracts because of this government's refusal to join the New West Partnership.

Mr. Speaker, why does this minister not care or understand that by failing to join the New West Partnership, his government is having a negative impact on Minty's Moving business operation and the livelihood of 40 families in rural Manitoba?

Hon. James Allum (Acting Minister of Jobs and the Economy): Well, Mr. Speaker, the truth of the matter is that this government makes an enormous effort that was articulated again in the Throne Speech earlier this week to invest in communities and neighbourhoods all across this great province. And the result of that commitment to investment is new, renewed infrastructure that will enhance trade to all four corners of the globe.

What we're doing on this side of the House is to invest in Manitoba, create jobs and build a better society for every single Manitoban, not to just stand with their friends in the wealthy part of the Manitoba Club.

Mrs. Rowat: Mr. Speaker, it's very unfortunate because Manitoba, because of this government's policy, has the best out-migration policy in this country.

Mr. Speaker, what does this minister and this government not understand? Minty's was successfully bidding on Saskatchewan Power contracts in the recent past. Their success in award contracts have allowed the 40 employees and their families to enjoy a good quality of life in the communities that they live in. This has now been taken away from them because this government refuses—refuses—to join the New West Partnership, so they are going to have to look for other contracts.

Mr. Speaker, simplified for this minister: Why are you supporting policies that are potentially shutting down businesses in Manitoba?

Mr. Allum: Well, Mr. Speaker, when these folks were in government, businesses were shutting down in Manitoba all across this great province.

Here we can say that business investment is at a high, unemployment is at a low, and we continue to invest in the things that matter most to Manitobans. Earlier this week, we tabled a Throne Speech in which we articulated a smart, strategic vision for the future growth and development of this province.

* (14:00)

As I said earlier, we just signed a 100-megawatt deal with Saskatchewan, and we're close to signing a deal with Saskatchewan on water as well in order to protect the environment.

Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, as I just said a few minutes ago, we govern for the people of Manitoba all the time.

Mrs. Rowat: That's why people are leaving Manitoba in droves, Mr. Speaker, because of this government's inability to manage.

Mr. Speaker, Minty's Moving employs 40 people within our province. Forty families are directly impacted by this government's decision to not join the New West Partnership, period.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 40 families and the ownership of Minty movers, I'm asking the minister: Does he not agree that your failure to join the New West Partnership is failing—failing—Manitoba families who are employed in the business of Minty's Moving in Onanole and so many other businesses, like Leech Printing and like T.L. Penner? This government is failing Manitobans.

Mr. Allum: Well, Mr. Speaker, the difference between our side and this side of the House is they think that this country can be balkanized into small, discrete trade blocs that don't serve the interests of this country.

On the other hand, on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, that we work on the internal agreement on trade that will work from coast to coast to coast to ensure that all Canadians benefit from trade from coast to coast to coast.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the AIT allows for set-asides for indigenous communities and local economic development. One of the great advantages is working

on a national vision for this country is to ensure that our First Nations and Metis and Inuit people have a fair place in our community so that they can grow and prosper like every other Manitoban.

Ambulance Services Patient Off-Load Wait Time

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, ambulance off-load times have been a very serious issue for a long time, despite many promises by the NDP Health ministers to fix this critical problem.

This Minister of Health, in January of this year, said that she brought a new set of eyes to the problem and has made the issue a top priority.

If so, I'd like to ask the Minister of Health to explain why an ambulance in Winnipeg on Monday evening had a nine-hour wait to off-load a patient.

Hon. Sharon Blady (Minister of Health): Thank the member for the question.

We know that when you have an accident or when something goes wrong suddenly with your health, you want a paramedic at your door as quickly as possible. And Winnipeg does have one of the fastest response times in the country, which makes me thankful every day for our excellent paramedics and firefighter paramedics.

For the over 45,000 Winnipeg patients that arrive at an ER in an ambulance every year, the vast majority, meaning 75 to 80 per cent, are transferred from a paramedic to ER staff within the targeted time of 60 minutes.

Now, the critics seem to think that the sole goal of our highly trained paramedics and firefighters should be to drop patients at the hospital front door. We don't agree. We want our highly trained paramedics to stay with patients until they can be safely transported to hospital staff.

And we've heard that they say that they're worried about wait times—

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

Mrs. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, this Minister of Health, in January of this year, also said, and I quote: I'm an academic by trade. I'm asking department staff to get me the numbers to figure out what trends are there that maybe we're not seeing because we haven't been looking for them. End quote.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that seems to have worked out really well.

Can the Minister of Health (Ms. Blady) tell us: What trends did she find to explain a nine-hour ambulance off-load delay on Monday evening of this week in Winnipeg?

Ms. Blady: As I said, Mr. Speaker, I really do appreciate the work. I appreciate the work, members on this side, Manitobans appreciate the work that firefighters to paramedics do on a daily basis. And, as we've said, we want to make sure that those paramedics stay with patients can they—til they can be transferred safely.

We've heard again that they're worried about wait times, but they have yet to offer a solution. And I have been working with our front-line folks. I have been working with the departmental staff. And I have listened to paramedics and firefighters in a way that I know members opposite never did in their time. We're working with them.

And, again, the individual cases involved means that we are trying to ensure that that person got the care that they needed on the front lines. And if it meant a paramedic stayed with them, then that's what it took.

I trust the medical professionals to deliver the best care at the front lines. It's too bad the member opposite doesn't.

Mrs. Driedger: Well, Mr. Speaker, her academics really helped her with that answer, but she's not answering the question.

Mr. Speaker, under this NDP government, Manitoba has the worst ER waits in Canada. The NDP have promised over and over and over again to fix this. They have failed miserably. And talk about spending more and getting less: That's a perfect example right now.

Why should anybody believe anything they have to say, Mr. Speaker, because they promise and promise and promise and then break and break and break every single promise they are making. They are failing patients, and a nine-hour off-load delay is totally unacceptable.

How can she possibly stand here and answer the questions the way she is when we are looking at something that is, in probably many cases, unsafe for patients?

Ms. Blady: I thank the member for the question, and, again, while I see, as usual, there seems to be a little bit of Ph.D. envy over on that side of the Chamber, I can tell you that I do work with the professionals and I am proud of the investments that we continue to make.

The member opposite actually was with me when we announced the Grace Hospital emergency department expansion, one more part of the investment in emergency departments in this province. Again, if they'd like to hear the answer, that's fine. So I'm pleased with the work that we're doing.

We value the professionals. I know we value the professionals that work to help with our off-load times, with the QuickCare clinics, because nurse practitioners—yesterday was Nurse Practitioner Day, and I met with the president of the Nurse Practitioner Association of Manitoba, who was very much dismayed by the tone that the member opposite takes with nurse practitioners.

We value them. Manitobans value them. It's unfortunate members opposite didn't value—

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for River East.

Affordable Housing Units Rental Costs and Wait Times

Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East): But I don't need a Ph.D. to recognize the arrogance that we're seeing from the Minister of Health.

A lack of decent affordable housing is forcing Manitobans to live in cold, mice-ridden and bedbug-infested apartments, and those aren't my words, Mr. Speaker. They're the words from the chair of the University of Winnipeg's inner-city studies, one Jim Silver.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister just admit today that he and his NDP government are failing the most vulnerable citizens in our province by not providing safe affordable housing to those who need it the most?

Hon. Mohinder Saran (Minister of Housing and Community Development): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I'm thankful the minister—member for asking this question because that's giving me a chance to show the Manitobans' enthusiasm about our Throne Speech, and they are very enthusiastic. They are ready to set the record.

This NDP going to be *[inaudible]* and we are doing lots of work. We had 1,500 social housing units; we had 1,500 affordable housing units. We are building 500, again, social housing units and, again, 500 affordable housing units, and we also have brought in Rent Assist.

So we are providing everything possible, and we are getting known as—

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

Mrs. Mitchelson: And I don't think the minister can stand in his place and make excuses for cold, mice-ridden and bedbug-infested apartments that he provides to people that are most vulnerable in this community.

Mr. Speaker, rents have increased by 65 per cent in Winnipeg under this NDP government's watch. Wages are not keeping pace with rising rents, and seniors on fixed incomes can't afford these new increases. They're having to move out of their apartments.

Why has this NDP government broken yet another promise to keep rents affordable for those who desperately need access to low-income housing?

Mr. Saran: Mr. Speaker, I think the member should look closely at our Rent Assist system.

* (14:10)

And we are taking care of seniors. If you talk about seniors, and as we talk about seniors, we are providing a \$235 tax rebate, school tax rebate, to the seniors last year. And, again, we are providing \$470 to the seniors tax rebate. And next year it's going to be eliminated.

And what would they are going to provide with a \$500-million cut in the tax budget? I think they should look into their side, but don't criticize us.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, but it's unacceptable for the Minister responsible for Housing to stand up and defend cold, mice-ridden and bedbug-infested apartments that they provide to the most needy citizens in the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, wait-lists to get into Manitoba housing have increased from 400 in 2005 to 3,000 today on the wait-list.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister stand up and defend that? How many individuals are living on the

streets and homeless as a result of the failed policies of this NDP government?

Mr. Saran: I tell the minister Manitoba Housing has a comprehensive strategy to eradicate bedbugs, including provincial education and the most advanced pest control treatment.

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

What they are—they could have provided with the—if they have not built anything? Where did they—could have find bedbugs—how—what kind of policy they could have provided? I think they should look into what they will—

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

Gillam Mall Appraisal Value

Mr. Ron Schuler (St. Paul): Last month at committee, the Manitoba Hydro board chair said he would take all questions on the Gillam mall under advisement. To date, no answers.

The Hydro president won't even open his mail and the Hydro FIPPA officer says it's not her duty to answer questions.

Can the Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro inform the House as to why he has taken no interest in the Gillam mall, which cost \$16 million to build and is now appraised at \$2.6 million?

Hon. Eric Robinson (Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro): As I responded yesterday, Mr. Speaker, let me repeat the answer again.

I said that the questions that were taken under notice by the chair of the Manitoba Hydro-Electric Board, Mr. Bill Fraser, along with the acting CEO, Darren Rainkie, took this and other questions under notice, and I anticipate that the questions that were raised by the members opposite will be addressed in that response that'll come from Manitoba Hydro.

Mr. Schuler: The Manitoba Hydro board chair won't provide answers, the president of Manitoba Hydro won't provide answers, and the Manitoba Hydro FIPPA officer says she doesn't have to answer.

If the minister doesn't know the answers either, why isn't he holding Manitoba Hydro accountable? Why doesn't this minister take action and find out why a \$16-million Gillam mall was built in 2014 and is now appraised worth \$2.6 million?

The question then really should be: Has the minister asked?

Mr. Robinson: Yes, I have asked and I am holding Hydro accountable and I anticipate that they'll be responding in due course.

Mr. Schuler: Mr. Speaker, 12 questions at Hydro committee, no answer; one letter to the president of Manitoba Hydro, no answer; 1950–19 FIPPA questions, no answer; five questions directed at the minister and no answers.

How many more questions need to be asked to find out why the Gillam mall, built in 2014 for \$16 million, is now appraised at being worth only \$2.6 million?

Can the minister responsible stand in this House, be accountable and give an answer to the question: Why is the Gillam mall, built for \$16 million, now appraised at being worth \$2.6 million? Can he please give us an answer?

Mr. Robinson: Well, you know what, Mr. Speaker, we have many Manitobans that are very busy in working on our hydro projects in northern Manitoba ensuring a future for us in—the other Manitobans, and that is what they are doing.

With respect to these questions, yes, they were asked. Mr. Fraser and Mr. Rainkie took them under notice and they will be responded to in due course.

In Vitro Fertilization Medicare Coverage

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, in vitro fertilization is now being used in up to 2 per cent of pregnancies. It is a valid and legitimate health expense and it's now being covered under medicare in Quebec and will be in two weeks in Ontario, and yet that—this current NDP government doesn't treat it that way. They don't include in vitro fertilization under medicare.

I ask the Premier: Will the NDP adopt the Liberal position that in vitro fertilization should be covered under medicare in Manitoba?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, we brought in a fertility tax credit in Manitoba to support families that want to have more children

when they have challenges to do that and they need medical assistance in that regard. We made it a commitment in our Throne Speech to improve the ability to support families that are seeking treatment with respect to fertility.

And I just have to say that the member's approach that has been put on the record is for one single treatment for a very narrow scope of service in Manitoba. The existing fertility 'trax' credit that we have in Manitoba covers much more than that. It covers a wider gamut of services. It pays out more to families that need that support, and we will look at ways to make that even better.

But the member's approach has even been criticized by the community as being inadequate, too little, too early and not sufficient to help families with the full needs that they have when they're seeking fertility support for their futures, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, in vitro fertilization should be covered under medicare because it covers all and not just a few.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier argues that his Fertility Treatment Tax Credit is the answer, but in fact that only helps the 15 per cent of those who can afford the upfront costs. It's still less than supportive treatment under medicare. The tax credit, indeed, is highly income biased.

Why is the Premier using a highly income discriminatory approach like a tax credit for a procedure that should be available to all Manitoba families?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, the approach taken by the member opposite is one that's very narrow and only—it actually takes away hope from people; they get a little bit of help and then it all disappears.

Our credit applies to a wider range of services and provides more generous support. And we've already indicated we're looking at ways to improve that, Mr. Speaker.

The member asks for it to be covered under medicare. I have to say to him the following: Home care is not covered under medicare, Mr. Speaker. All of those services we're providing in Manitoba are 100 per cent provincial dollars.

We'd like to see many more things covered under medicare. The original promise of medicare brought forward by the Tommy Douglas government

in Saskatchewan was for hospitals, physician services and then to broaden it beyond that to provide services in the community to allow people to live wellness—well in their communities for a longer period of time. We need reform in medicare, no question about it. We look forward to the opportunity to pursue that with the new federal government.

We're committed to universally accessible health care. The Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Conservative Party has said two-tier health care is something we need in Manitoba. We do not believe you should get to the front of the line based on the size of your wallet, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Gerrard: But, Mr. Speaker, tax credits are based in part on the size of your wallet.

Mr. Speaker, covering in vitro fertilization under medicare, as will happen in Ontario and is happening in Quebec, also ensures a high-quality procedure with a single embryo. It eliminates the risks of multiple births, which is a larger expense to the health-care system.

Why, after 16 years, does the NDP not see the sense, the wisdom in covering in vitro fertilization under medicare in Manitoba?

*(14:20)

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, the tax credit in Manitoba relates to the amount that you spend. It gives you more back than anything that the Liberals are offering. I wish the member would acknowledge that. He's doing too little for too narrow a range of services. We're making more resources available for a broader range of services. We think we can improve upon that and we will improve on that.

And I'm very glad to see that the member's finally speaking about medicare. That is a system that needs to be protected in this country. It needs to be enhanced. It needs to be strengthened.

We have no pharmacare covered under medicare in this country. In Manitoba, we have a universal system available to all Manitobans based on their ability to pay, Mr. Speaker. We have a fertility tax credit which relates to the actual costs that you incur. Their approach is too narrow, it's too little, and it's too late. Our approach deals with more Manitobans, covers more Manitobans, not only for that but for home care and for pharmacare.

And we look forward to the opportunity to take universal, accessible and affordable medicare to

another stage of development all across the country of Canada.

Farmer Appreciation Day 11th Annual Event

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Mr. Speaker, any opportunity that we have as MLAs to meet with our agricultural producers is a welcome one. And as a urban MLA, increasingly people are concerned about where their food is coming from and the people that are producing it.

We also know that farm families and farmers and producers in our province drive—help drive our economy forward and are an important part of the Manitoba success story.

We're proud, Mr. Speaker, to support the growth and expansion of modern agriculture in Manitoba, and as our government continues to invest in rural infrastructure, we know that we can help producers be more competitive.

Mr. Speaker, would the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development please talk about the important ways that we're partnering with the agriculture sector?

Hon. Ron Kostyshyn (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development): Mr. Speaker, it truly is my pleasure to stand up from the NDP party and our government how important agriculture is in the province of Manitoba.

It is truly my pleasure today, along with the Premier (Mr. Selinger) and a number of MLAs, to be at the event this afternoon which marks the 11th annual Farmer Appreciation Day. Thirty-four thousand Manitobans work in the agriculture sector, and this number continues to grow.

We know that the best way to keep growing in our economy is creating new jobs in agriculture and investing in innovation, research and targeted on farm infrastructure.

We would like to applaud KAP for their leadership as a Manitoba general farm organization, and they provide strong leadership for their memberships. We are proud to work with the groups like KAP to support the sustainable agriculture practices and deliver programs like the environmental farm plan workshops and the 4R Nutrient Stewardship program.

We look forward to working with them to find solutions to the challenges we face today, but not

only for the experienced ones but the future of the young generation farmers and the farm families that provide—

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

Highway 1A West Access Safety Concerns

Mr. Ian Wishart (Portage la Prairie): Well, Mr. Speaker, since this NDP government's been in power, there are now 14,000 less farm families in this province.

Mr. Speaker, since 2011, the west-end access to Highway 1A at Portage la Prairie has been reduced to one lane because of damage caused by an overheight load on Highway 1. We have received complaints and passed them on to the minister. These are too numerous to count. This is a serious safety issue.

When is the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation going to deal with this serious highway safety problem?

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, a question from members opposite about infrastructure. I look forward to answering this because it allows me to put on the record that on Monday—and maybe the member opposite didn't notice—that we announced an historic increase in our already historic investment in infrastructure in this province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the member that we've invested over the last couple of years in a major way. We had the second best year last year, in terms of paving, in history. This year it was 30 per cent higher than any other year in history.

And yet, Mr. Speaker, we're not stopping there. We're doing significant work on Highway 1. We're doing significant work throughout the province. We announced earlier this week four interchanges, interstate standard interchanges on the Perimeter Highway.

So, Mr. Speaker, once again, it's the get-'er-done NDP versus the shut-'er-down PCs.

Mr. Wishart: Well, Mr. Speaker, I know this minister loves to lead a parade, and that was certainly his attempt to do so. But we're not asking for a new one. We want you to fix the one you got, which you never do.

Overwidth loads coming into the city of Portage la Prairie from this west access cannot get through the reduced space, which is not marked on the highway, Mr. Speaker, leaving them to back down onto No. 1 Highway in a high-speed place that is a blind spot caused by the Portage Diversion bridge.

This is a very dangerous situation, and if the minister's not interested in infrastructure, maybe he should be interested in public safety, or maybe he should be taking on the liability of anyone who's injured or killed in this spot.

Mr. Ashton: I need no lectures opposite—from members opposite about safety and investments, Mr. Speaker.

Perhaps the member opposite would care to explain why when the members opposite were in government, they spent a grand total of about \$90 million on highway capital. Their total budget for the Department of Highways and Transportation was \$179 million. This year alone it's over \$700 million. In 2014-2015, for the first time ever, including municipal infrastructure, we invested more than \$1 billion in infrastructure.

And, indeed, when we bring forth throne speeches like we did on Monday, one of the reasons we put forth the additional money is to deal with the rehabilitation of the existing network, to add to the network, to deal with the fact we're growing as a province.

The real question, Mr. Speaker, is why do members opposite continually vote against—

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

Mr. Wishart: Well, we've certainly heard what they want to do, but we haven't seen what they can do.

Here we have a bridge that has been damaged for four years and they have done nothing whatsoever to fix it, and it's become a serious safety issue, not only for the people who want to cross on it, but because pieces keep dropping onto Highway 1 underneath.

So will the minister wait until somebody actually has a piece of the highway drop on them before he gets to fixing this?

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, that's pretty desperate on members—the part of members opposite.

Let's put on the record that we are investing historic levels in infrastructure, and that includes our

bridges and structures. And I want to put on the record the degree to which, when members opposite—they didn't do—they didn't invest anything in terms of rebuilding those structures.

I ask the question—I ask this again, Mr. Speaker: Name me one major project that the members opposite did on our highway system the entire 11 years they were in government. It's a trick question. The answer is zero. They did nothing then.

And we'll see how they vote on this Throne Speech. My prediction, they're going to vote against historic increases again. So the bottom line is, Mr. Speaker, 2015. The answer, what did the PCs stand for in terms of investment in infrastructure, zero.

Mr. Speaker: Time for oral questions has expired.

PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: We're now moving on to petitions.

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

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This is signed by C. Dokken, M. Stroud, C. Eide and many, many other fine Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Lakeside. Oh, wait a minute. Prior to that, I have to put on the record that, in accordance with rule 132(6), when petitions are read they are deemed to have been received by the House.

Now, the honourable member for Lakeside.

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

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

These are the reasons for this petition:

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

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

* (14:30)

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition submitted on behalf of T. Polhill, S. Morden, J. Chartrand and many other fine Manitobans.

Applied Behavioural Analysis Services

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Riding Mountain): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

And the background to this petition is as follows:

Provincial government broke a commitment to support families of children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, including timely diagnosis

and access to necessary treatment such as applied behavioural analysis, also known as ABA services.

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

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

Mr. Speaker: That concludes petitions.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

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

House Business

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, would you please canvass the House to see if there's leave to defer the putting of the question on the amendment to the motion for the address in reply from Wednesday, November 25th, to Thursday, November 26th, with the question to be put at 4:30 on Thursday prior to the question being put on the motion for the address in reply?

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to defer the putting of the question on the amendment to the motion for the address in reply from Wednesday, November 25th, to Thursday, November 26th, with the question to be put at 4:30 p.m. on Thursday prior to the question being put on the motion for address in reply? *[Agreed]*

The honourable Government House Leader, on further House business.

Mr. Chomiak: I want to thank members of the House, Mr. Speaker.

Would you also canvass the House to see if there is leave for no recorded votes or no quorum calls for Wednesday, November 25th?

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House that there be no recorded votes or quorum calls for Wednesday, November 25th? *[Agreed]*

Any further House business?

THRONE SPEECH (Third Day of Debate)

Mr. Speaker: We'll now proceed to resume adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the honourable member for The Pas (Ms. Lathlin) and the amendment thereto, standing in the name of the honourable member for Arthur-Virden, who has nine minutes remaining.

Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Arthur-Virden): I just want to sum up the—what I spoke about yesterday about fiscal responsibility of this government, and I wish, you know, like, when we consider this Throne Speech that we heard on Monday, it was more that—was more of a campaign speech that the Premier (Mr. Selinger) had written for our Lieutenant Governor.

And biggest concern I have is, again, when I said I was in the finance world and giving advice to clients, individual personal finances and business finances, I used to deal with a lot of business people in financial planning, and like I said, if anybody came to me, if it was personally or businesswise, and they were spending way more than they were actually bringing in, one thing I would tell them, Mr. Speaker, is that, you know what, if they continue with this course of action they're going to be bankrupt in no time.

And this is what I feel about this government right now with all the promises that they're giving for in this third Throne Speech and basically all the

promises going into the next general election, how can Manitobans afford this? Either one thing we're going to have—they would have to do is either raise the PST to 9 per cent, possibly 10 per cent, or create more personal income tax on individuals because somehow these promises have to be paid.

Ms. Jennifer Howard, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

And by the—every time they tax individuals or businesses or corporations, more and more people are going to be leaving this province economically. They're going to look for more opportunities out west in the province of Saskatchewan.

Right now, living right by the border, a lot of people are coming into the region, especially in the past when we had the oil explosion. When we had an explosion in the oil industry, we had so many people deciding to move to Moosomin. We looked at it last census. Like I always said, our growth in the town of Virden grew by 3 per cent since the last census. Meanwhile, Moosomin had grown by over 13 per cent.

And that's really disturbing because the fact is, you know what, we have almost the same opportunities for our communities. We have good, solid communities on both sides of the border. I feel that, I'm being biased, that I think Manitoba is a better province to be in. But we've—people have chosen to move into Saskatchewan.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we see communities like Langenburg, Saskatchewan, who also grew by 13 per cent because of the Esterhazy mine. Those same people could live in Russell but they've chosen to live in Saskatchewan because of the preferential 'trax' treatment.

My brother, who actually works at the potash mine in Esterhazy, he actually talks to his colleagues; he's a unionized guy. He says, one thing, when I first got elected, he says, we got—you guys got to have to get these—this NDP government out of here, because he sees what his colleagues are making in Saskatchewan. And they're making a lot more by paycheque in Saskatchewan because they're residents of Saskatchewan. Meanwhile, being a resident of Manitoba, he is being taxed even greater. So this is a major concern to a lot of people.

And the other thing is, Mr. Speaker, you know, right now, financing the debt is very inexpensive because the low interest rates. I always tell people, my clients, you know, don't get in too far debt, or businesses to get in too much debt. Be—have this

manageable debt because you never know when interest rates will rise.

And I saw for myself when I was talking about my family, when they got into the dairy farm business, they did not account all the increases in interest rates from the early 1970s to the late 1980s—early 1980s when interest rates skyrocketed to about 21 per cent. I don't believe it's going to happen that high, but even if it has to double, if interest rates move from 1 per cent on the prime, 1.2 per cent, to even it doubles to 3 or 4 per cent, this is a big impact to a lot of individuals and also to this government.

And the interest rate right now that they're paying, 5 per cent servicing, but that can expand to 7 or 8 per cent, and how much more services that will take out of our economy to service the—our health-care costs, our education costs. It's very important that this has to be focused on.

Right now, they almost feel like they have pixie dust. And you know, they're going to promise this, they're going to promise that. Meanwhile, who—someone has to pay for it. And my biggest concern, it's going to be my children and my grandchildren who are going to have to pay for this cost of this poor mismanagement of this government—*[interjection]*

And when I see the member of Burrows who are complaining—who's saying things here right now while with my speech, she just has to go to Melita and talk to some of the locals, the mayor of Melita, who says his biggest concern even with that increase in PST, the movie theatre, the local movie theatre, he said that, you know, how many more people actually go to other—the other side of the border to go to the movie theatre there. This is a big impact for his community.

And right now, we're seeing, along the Manitoba-Saskatchewan border, a lot of these are towns in Manitoba side, so much retail is closing down. It's very disturbing. In—even in my community of Virden there's so much retail that's closing down. People are going to Saskatchewan or into larger centres. And this is really affecting the balance of the competition.

* (14:40)

And we also said with not joining the new western partnership, like we see one of our businesses, TL Penner Construction, you know, their biggest concern is that they employ over 40 people in the community of Virden. And, if they can't go after

some of the contracts—right now, they told me that one of the contracts that they're working on is the school in Langenburg, Saskatchewan. They depend on these contracts for their opportunity to grow their business, to employ people in our community, to do—then spend money in our community. And this is what's going to happen again. We've, again, we have lost so much retail stores because of the PST increase, and now we possibly could lose our construction companies or other companies that actually do have contracts with Saskatchewan Crown corporations.

And that is very, very concerning to my constituents on the west side of this province, and many, too—the member of Riding Mountain too. You know, she has many businesses that are in the same situation as me, and I would also say it's the member of Dauphin too. Roblin is a community that I went to high school in, and, again, they have concerns, too, that, you know, a lot of the retail is off to Yorkton to buy products and items, and, again, our communities in the western region are not going to survive with this NDP policy, this economic policy.

And the other thing that was also in the Throne Speech here was, too, was the promise of Churchill, the tourism that's going to be spent in—for the town of Churchill. I was up there. I had the opportunity to go up there in August of last year, and it's really disturbing that—how I saw the economics of that community and seeing some of the businesses who have resorts there, how they're saying right now that, you know, this government has sort of failed them, you know, when it comes to, you know, most of the houses in Churchill are Manitoba Housing and about—over 20 per cent of them, 30 per cent are actually vacant and are—need renovation for people to move in. They said that the opportunity they would like to see is more people buying homes. If that was the case, then there's opportunities for more tradespeople to be living up there and actually doing their work. Right now the way it is, that they actually bring in tradespeople from other parts of the province, and it's, you know, for Churchill it's very costly. For Manitoba taxpayers, it's very costly.

Churchill has such a great opportunity to be promoted as an international community. We actually, when we were actually kayaking, we actually saw a person—a woman from Spain and her son actually kayaking, and they had two—about four different stops. They were going to northern Ontario, they were going to Churchill and then eventually to Tofino. And that's important that, you know,

Churchill is well known throughout the world and with our famous polar bears, and here's an opportunity to really promote our tourism industry. *[interjection]* And mosasaurs too.

And the other thing was also was mentioned in the Throne Speech was the east-side Pimachiowin Aki UNESCO World Heritage Site. That was promised in the last election, I believe, and the thing was, it was never done in these last four years, and again it's being promised again this coming year, and like I said, this government has so much broken promises. Manitobans are tired of their—

Madam Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time has expired.

Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister of Tourism, Culture, Heritage, Sport and Consumer Protection): It's my pleasure to speak to the Throne Speech, and our government has made showcasing Manitoba to the rest of the world a priority and we have an exciting plan to attract more visitors and spur new businesses to continue growing our province. And our smart, strategic investments that we've made will help Manitoba tourism grow, and the whole sector grow, quite frankly, whether it be in Winnipeg or Churchill or rural Manitoba.

Let me just say first of all, Madam Deputy Speaker, that I'm honoured to be here in the Chamber, elected by the constituents of Dawson Trail, a new constituency, and every day I try not to forget that, that I am representing a great deal of smart, intelligent Manitobans that know what kind of policies they would like to see in their government and what they would like to see their government do.

Members opposite have often talked about the different kind of cuts that they're looking forward to making, where they would like to cut back, and my constituents don't want to see any of that, quite frankly, Madam Deputy Speaker. They just feel that they've had a taste of that, going back to when the Progressive Conservatives were the government of Manitoba, and they've seen too much of it prior to that when they saw Sterling Lyon, as well, the premier of Manitoba, and with his acute protracted restraint, it's just a different model that we see in the current leader, and my constituents certainly don't want to see that. So every day I try to represent them in this Chamber and put forward views that they would like and things that they would like to see our government do.

So the investments we're making are proven to attract more people to our province. In fact, because of FIFA Cup that has taken place just recently at investors stadium, tourism in Manitoba was up 57 per cent in June alone, Madam Deputy Speaker, and there are not many other places that have as much to offer as Manitoba does, and we're growing—diverse, dynamic centre of the arts, culture and sports.

This is where Canada's heart beats and it truly does, and recently Winnipeg was the only Canadian city listed in the National Geographic's best trip for 2016 feature. And so this is the first time we've attained those heights, quite frankly, and there are places like New York, like Botswana, like Paris that have been recognized before but to have Winnipeg—Winnipeg—the only Canadian city—it bears repeating—to make this list in the National Geographic's best trip of 2016 feature is truly quite amazing.

So the people of Manitoba, all the tourist industries in Manitoba, not only the Museum for Human Rights and the Journey to Churchill at Assiniboine Park but the tourism industry as a whole in Manitoba deserve a great deal of credit for doing everything they can to really showcase Manitoba, and now it's being recognized worldwide. And we should really be thankful and grateful to all those tourism operators and people within the hospitality industry, the restaurant association, the hotel association, all of those that contribute to a great tourism experience in this province really need to be congratulated.

I know that we often don't pat ourselves on the back. Manitobans are often very humble and maybe that's just our nature, but there are times, really, we need to be speaking out and really bragging more about what we have in this province and try to tell people more, as opposed to, you know, as opposed to the opposition that seem to be always finding a grey cloud or negative light or just pointing to all the benefits of these other provinces. And not to take away from other provinces but just the one example I gave about Manitoba and the city of Winnipeg being recognized by National Geographic is really something to trumpet and to be very, very grateful about and be proud of.

So creating jobs and boosting our economy, Madam Deputy Speaker, is also part and parcel of what we have in our Throne Speech and is something that, as a government, is something that—and many of the initiatives have been worked on by many

ministers on this side and many MLAs who've contributed to this Throne Speech. These things have not just happened overnight. These initiatives have taken a lot of time, a lot of thought, a lot of consultation with Manitobans. As the Minister of Finance (Mr. Dewar) pointed out, he has gone around Manitoba consulting with Manitobans, finding out from them where and what kind of initiatives they would like to see our government move forward, and this is an important point—an important piece to point out, quite frankly, that the consultation is an important part, and we'll increase our annual expenditures to achieve the level of investment that's called for while creating a sustainable funding model to boost tourism and market Manitoba to the world.

We met with the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce and—on a number of occasions, and this is something that they had suggested to us, that we need a sustainable funding model which would be a first for the province of Manitoba. And in our Throne Speech we've acknowledged this and said that this is something that as a province we are going to be delivering on. So stay tuned; there'll be more to come, more information behind that particular comment in our Throne Speech, and it'll be happening in the very near future.

So I won't spend a lot of time on that today, but I just want to say—and my reason for mentioning it was because you have people on the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce that are involved in the restaurant association, the hotel association and many small businesses throughout rural Manitoba and throughout the province that are—make it their business to make tourism the best it can be for their region and their town and their village and their city, outside of Winnipeg as well. So for us, as a government, this strategy will create new jobs and welcome visitors to a great province, and our government knows that feeding the tourism industry benefits everyone. Every dollar spent in tourism, the return on that dollar is \$1.67—pardon me—\$167 for every dollar invested in tourism, and it's earned by local businesses and helps to grow our economy so Manitobans and visitors alike are enjoying exciting opportunities that make us really special.

* (14:50)

For those of you that had the pleasure to go to Odyseo or Cavalia will know that that show was spectacular: first time ever in Manitoba, first time ever held, I believe, first time ever held in a city

under a population of 1 million, will often go to cities—that show often goes to cities like Vancouver or Edmonton or Calgary or Los Angeles or New York, but they selected Winnipeg. And you know, they saw something in Winnipeg before the National Geographic acknowledged Winnipeg and made that announcement. The people who are responsible and owners of *Odysseo* or *Cavalia* thought, you know, Winnipeg has something really special. And *Maclean's* magazine acknowledged this same thing about the arts and the culture of our province of Manitoba and how exciting it is.

And, as a government, this is something that we believe that we are step-in-step of where Manitobans want us to go. They want us to invest in this province. They know we can do better. We know we can. And that's the kind of steps forward we're trying to take by showing the vision in our Throne Speech and where we want to go.

And Premier (Mr. Selinger) should be congratulated for having this vision and this foresight to see and listen to Manitobans on where they want us to go as a government. And you can see this through the Throne Speech and the reaction that's coming back to us from Manitobans and acknowledging the kind of vision that we have moving forward and wanting Manitoba to be in years ahead.

In northern Manitoba—a member from western Manitoba, a member of the opposition, mentioned that he was up in Churchill and talking to people from Churchill and what a great place it was, whether it's beluga whale canoeing or watching, as well as polar bear watching. But as a government, we have continually invested in Churchill, not only in the town centre of Churchill, millions of dollars, but also trying to work with the tourism industry in Churchill to make sure that that industry is sustainable and will be long-lasting many, many years to come for our children and grandchildren.

And we know that tourism is more than just the only thing going on in Churchill. In the town of Churchill, it is the gateway to the North, but with world-class research facilities in Arctic science which often we don't point out. But the MLA for the Interlake and the Minister responsible for Conservation and Water Stewardship often has referred to this, about the kind of research that is going up and going on in northern Manitoba, and it's truly important that we acknowledge that because others around the world see the research that's taking place on polar bears and Arctic life and the

ecosystem and how it may be impacted by global warming in years to come is really something to praise and acknowledge on what is happening.

To conclude a little bit just on tourism, Madam Deputy Speaker, I would just like to say that, with regard to tourism, the fact that's often missed is that tourism is a \$1.5-billion industry to this province; \$1.5-billion industry is absolutely nothing to sneeze at. In fact, our government has made it our goal, by the time Manitoba celebrates our 150th anniversary in 2020, that we'll have tourism at a \$2-billion industry for this province.

So, in order to do that, it takes a lot of work, but it all takes—also takes a lot of co-operation amongst the tourists—tourism industry itself, of all those businesses, those small businesses. Provinces can't do it alone. We certainly can promote a healthy tourism industry and Travel Manitoba by ensuring that they have the funds that they need in order to do what they do best, and that is to promote this province in the United States, in China, in Germany, in England and throughout the world.

So, as a government, in order to acknowledge, or what they're asking and what they want, what we've done through this Throne Speech, and we'll be doing this in days and weeks and months to come, is to ensure that they do have a sustainable funding model which you have to thank, again, the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce and many of the people that are in the tourism industry for working with us as a province, and really for them to see that whatever is going to happen with regard to funding, it cannot happen just overnight. They are looking for and asking for a great deal of funds to help promote this province. We don't disagree with it. We agree with them in principle. It's not something that can happen overnight, but we agree with that formula. We have most recently had a conversation with the principal owner of WOW! Hospitality who stated to me on that they understand. There's an acknowledgement that you can't just all of a sudden just change things overnight. It's been the first time that any government has really acknowledged the fact that we need sustainable funding and funding that we know will be well used by Travel Manitoba in order to deliver what we need.

But, so, Madam Deputy Speaker, I just want to say that tourism is made up—and I'm proud to be the minister of the portfolio—but tourism is made up of many different components. We have some of the greatest festivals. There are over 300 different

festivals—whether it be the festivals related to music or the arts—in the province of Manitoba. There is not a community that I certainly can think of, at least at the moment, that doesn't have a festival of some sort. They want to show the pride in that community. They want to show the people who live in that community that it is worthwhile living there.

We have an untapped diamond in the rough in Morden, Manitoba, where you have a Monasaurus but you have a museum that is being acknowledged now around the world. People see around the world the value of this museum and what we have in Manitoba, and Lake Agassiz was here a million years, many millions of years ago, had many water dinosaurs, dinosaurs of that type of species.

But, again, why I'm commenting about, for example, the Morden museum, a museum in Morden, it's not because of just the value it brings to tourism, but it's what the volunteers and the people who have worked so hard in Morden, and including the MLA for Morden, who also has acknowledged over the years that there are many benefits to rural Manitoba, including dinosaurs of different sorts, and I know that for a fact.

Mr. Rob Altemeyer, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

We've seen the MLA for Emerson—well, I digress, but I will continue with my notes; I won't digress too much. We've had already—but I will state, though, that there are a couple of investments that I need to point out, and I would like to just point out the fact that our 150th birthday in 2020 is very, very symbolic in more ways than one. Many arenas, many curling rinks, many recreational opportunities came about in 1970 when Ed Schreyer was the premier of this province, and we, as a government, have tried to work with the communities on recreation and all the opportunities that they want for sport and recreation for their citizens, and that is something that not only investing in our Manitoba Museum recently to highlight our history and our heritage, over \$10 million to renovate the Nonsuch area inside the Manitoba Museum, which will draw a great deal of tourism to the province, but, again, to thank all those volunteers that volunteer every day in small communities in Manitoba and throughout the province to make tourism special, and also the arts and culture in their local community to show how important that is.

Today the Premier (Mr. Selinger) made an announcement or signed an agreement with the Premier of Nunavut signing an MOU which would

have many Inuit artifacts go to the Winnipeg Art Gallery, which was really a very touching ceremony, quite frankly, because of the long connection between Nunavut and Manitoba. There are many people in Nunavut, as a matter of fact, who were born at Churchill hospital and our previous Speaker was from Churchill and Mr. Hickes is well known in northern Manitoba and also in Nunavut and so are the Tootoo family, and they are certainly ones that will be very proud of the fact that the Inuit art and the world's largest collection of Inuit art anywhere will be here in Winnipeg at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, and Stephen Borys, Dr. Stephen Borys, should be congratulated as well as the board, the chair of the board of the Winnipeg Art Gallery and all of those individuals who work so hard every day to make sure that the Winnipeg Art Gallery is one of the best, not only in Canada, but anywhere in the world.

* (15:00)

And at one time, the Winnipeg Art Gallery was just—it was a perception that it was the limousine crowd were the only ones who were going to the art gallery, which the current board and others have worked extremely hard to have that perception erased and to show that it's all Manitobans. And now with this investment, the world's largest collection of Inuit art coming to the Winnipeg Art Gallery, I think that'll—that will—we will take gigantic steps towards getting rid of that perception, that the Winnipeg Art Gallery is just for people who are in town cars or arrive in limousines.

We have over 12,000 students every year attend the Winnipeg Art Gallery, so it will truly become an educational institution in of itself. And it's something that our Premier has shown great initiative, along with the Premier of Nunavut, to make this happen. It—real leadership to bring it together. And thank you also to the board and Dr. Stephen Borys for everything that you've done to make this happen. And stay tuned. There will be more to come.

Our government supports Manitoba's signature museums so they can also be successful. Yes, the Manitoba human rights museum, or the museum for human rights positions Manitoba. It's one of those iconic tourism attractions in the province that draw people and will draw people from all over the world. And so this museum saw 386,000 national and international visitors the first year, creating nearly 250 jobs and raising the global profile of Manitoba and Winnipeg as a city.

We are so proud to support over 3,000 volunteers who work nearly 120,000 hours every year to support 109 community museums throughout this province—109 community museums. And it takes a lot of volunteer work, a lot of time to make those museums successful, and congratulations to all of you.

And we understand the importance of local festivals to this province. I mentioned that there are over 300 local festivals. Manito Ahbee helps Manitobans to learn, share, enjoy our rich indigenous culture and traditions. And we should be extremely proud, and I certainly would want to at this time thank the Minister responsible for Aboriginal and Northern Affairs. He was the one many years ago who really pushed Manito Ahbee as an important, rich indigenous cultural event, and with all its traditions. And it's one of those events that also helps to educate our population and others who attend. It is not just for indigenous people, it is for everyone, and I'd strongly encourage everyone in this Chamber and anyone who happens to be listening or reading the transcript of my comments to attend Manito Ahbee. It's truly awe-inspiring to see the different cultural aspects to this great, great musical and festival and cultural festival.

Festival du Voyageur is another one of these festivals that brings Manitobans together at Fort Gibraltar really to uncover and celebrate Franco-Manitobans' history and legacy. You know, we have such great advantages in this province and we have a great history of Metis people that—really a Father of Confederation for Manitoba, Louis Riel, was a true visionary and a hero of not only the Manitoba Metis people, but also—*[interjection]*

I might want to comment on that, that the Leader of the Opposition, when he was in Parliament, and I can't recall the date, but it's recorded in Hansard, said he totally disagrees with Louis Riel being a Father of Confederation. Instead, I guess he supports old, stuffy white guys from eastern Canada as Fathers of Confederation.

But, quite frankly, Louis Riel is a champion, champion of his people, champion for Manitoba. Without Louis Riel and the leadership taken by Louis Riel, Manitoba, our history may be far different than we have today. So we, on this side, believe that Louis Riel was truly a Father of Confederation, and whether the Leader of the Opposition does or does not, I think, in many ways,

shows you that he's out of sync with the values and where Manitobans want to be.

Aside from—and I won't digress too much, Mr. Speaker—but we've seen many comments made from the Leader of the Opposition, and I'm not going to get too personal about it, but the fact when you're taking a look at human rights, no matter what its shape, and calling it—calling it a social experiment is really not the values of this province, I don't believe, the value of Manitobans, quite frankly. We are a generous people, open-minded and a province that has such a multicultural, diverse population in this province and you—all you have to do is just take a look at our benches on this side of the House, and you can see diversity is reflected in all of our members; diversity is reflected in our Cabinet; diversity is reflected in ideas and suggestions that are being made by individuals on this side. And I know other Manitobans, not only I, see this, literally see it, and it's something to be proud of and we are proud of that.

And—and so—well, I might digress a little further and say we need more women, quite frankly, elected in this Chamber, but that day will come. That day will come and include, maybe in Dawson Trail, we'll see a—maybe we'll see a female member of the Legislature, and I truly hope someday that'll happen, and also in many constituencies. We need more women in this Chamber, and there's too much testosterone to go around, quite frankly, sometimes, and we need more women here to express that view of a majority of the population of this province.

So, with that, I just want to make a couple more comments about investing in our capital city. Not that Winnipeg is overlooked but our government wants to nurture our capital city, and we'll invest in the infrastructure necessary to make Winnipeg look and feel like a cultural, political and economic hub of Canada. That slogan, that brand, where Canada's Heart Beats, is what Travel Manitoba has used, and Winnipeg is really at the heart and centre of this country, and the city of Winnipeg has been acknowledged everywhere. We have such great things coming forward—or coming up in the next months and years ahead that will make Winnipeg truly even greater than what it is, and downtown Winnipeg is home to major attractions and the MTS Centre.

And just take a look at the skyline, and many of us can take a look at the skyline of Winnipeg now and what it looks like compared to a short even

10 years ago, 16 years ago; what a change. It's—you know, the SHED district, the hospitality industry and what people have done to make downtown Winnipeg vibrant. And there's more to do, much to accomplish, more to do, but, as a government, we want to work with the City of Winnipeg. We truly want to make Winnipeg greater than what it is and we know it takes a common goal; it takes partnerships; and we want to work with Mayor Bowman and the councillors, Brian Mayes and city councillors in Winnipeg for the City of Winnipeg, to make Winnipeg even better.

So I just—you know, so thanks to our incentives and affordability, our business community is growing like never before. This year Winnipeg was named the most business-friendly city by Canadian Business magazine, the best—the best—and you never hear this from the opposition. You never hear a comment that we've been acknowledged by National Geographic magazine as the only city in Canada—the only city in Canada—that people should be visiting, and it has received that kind of—those kinds of accolades.

But also we want to make sure that our new partnership with the City includes ramping up infrastructure investments and including large-priority projects like Louise Bridge, Chief Peguis Trail, Kenaston Boulevard. Hopefully, there will be some money for Archibald and Marion someplace because I run into a train there every morning and like other easterners, the people on the eastern side of the province, coming into our great capital city.

But through these partnerships we'll be spending over—wait for it—over a billion dollars—a billion dollars on infrastructure, never heard of in this province before, and the MLA for Thompson has shown great leadership—great leadership—on this file. This—the MLA for Thompson has been a strong advocate not only—not only—for infrastructure in Manitoba but has taken a great leadership role when it comes to partnering with our sister provinces, our provinces to the west of us, on weights and measures.

*(15:10)

Now the members opposite will always say, well, why aren't you part of the great west, you know, this great west partnership. But we have been working with our provinces to the west of us and to the east of us. As the Minister of Education pointed out today, we're not just concerned about working with the west; we work with all of Canada and, in

fact, probably of what the kind of trade that goes on in the—in Canada today probably 50 per cent goes to the east of us and probably 40 per cent to the west of us or thereabouts. And so we believe being in the centre of Canada, where Canada's heart beats, in the central geographical area of the province of—where province of Manitoba lies, it is truly important that we also trade with everyone—east, west, north and south.

I only have a couple of minutes left, but I just want to say that, as a government, we are committing a full one-third of the current cost to upgrade Winnipeg's waste-water system plants, and our share will increase by nearly \$100 million, and the MLA for Lakeside and the Minister responsible for Conservation and Water Stewardship has commented on this any time he's had an opportunity to stand in the Chamber, has been asked questions on how important Lake Winnipeg is and what we need to do with regard to preserving Lake Winnipeg, and doing whatever we can to protect the fishery and the economics surrounding that is certainly very, very worthwhile. And I know, also, with the completion of the southwest leg of rapid transit connecting the University of Manitoba to downtown, and that commitment to partnership is really important.

And the City of Winnipeg has been asking for many of these initiatives for years, and the Speech from the Throne, or the Throne Speech, has acknowledged this. We've heard Manitobans; we know what people want, but one thing they don't want is the Conservative cuts that would take us back to the no-growth, no-fun time when they were government, and that is absolutely clear to us.

In fact, you see the Leader of the Opposition twisting and turning himself into a pretzel now about how, oh, we won't spend five per cent; we'll go to four per cent. Well, to me, that's still a cut. Five to four is still cutting, and no matter what, he just can't get over the fact that Manitobans want investment.

The Opposition Leader and his Conservatives are out of touch with Manitoba families when it comes to supporting the arts and tourism. We hear it often. They feel that it's a waste of money, somehow. Their \$550 million reckless cuts that they talk about would destroy things. It would make Manitoba a great place to live and visit and drag us back to the no-growth time when they were government. Back then, they slashed funding to museums by 10 per cent. They raised the gas tax and then cut the highways budget.

Our government has worked to reverse this with new Canadian Human Rights Museum, as well as updates to the Canadian museum and Manitoba—our Children's Museum and Manitoba Museum. They voted against MTS Centre. You know, the Winnipeg Jets left town when they were government. The Winnipeg Jets came back because the MTS Centre was built. They voted against it and, Mr. Speaker, all I can say is that the Opposition Leader has extreme positions on social issues, positions which majorities of Manitobans don't share. He believes that only some parts of a culture and heritage are worth celebrating. Our government knows that Manitoba's diversity is what makes us great, what makes Manitoba a great place to live, grow, work, raise your families. Thank you.

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): Recognize the honourable member for Morden-Winkler.

Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler): It's my pleasure to stand today and to respond to the motion, the amendment that's been brought by the Leader of the Opposition party. It's been a year since I've had the chance to stand and speak on a Throne Speech, and of course we know, as members of this Assembly, a lot happens in a year outside of the time we spend in this Chamber, and my own family has continued to get older and I was remarking just now as I was waiting for my turn to speak that my youngest daughter now is actually older than my oldest daughter was when I was elected, so it's interesting how time passes so quickly. So my oldest is now in university, just starting out at CMU as a music major, and my youngest is starting grade 9 and grade 9 was the age that Maddie was when I started into this job.

So the kids are getting older and we know, on both sides of the aisle, there's a lot of moments that we don't see as parents and as grandparents for the time that we give to this cause. And of course it is an honour to serve here. But, we know, we're aware of the fact that we miss some of those markers. We're not always there for every choir concert or every school event or every sports event, and so perhaps it makes us more present when we are actually at those events. We relish them a little bit more.

Nevertheless, I don't mean in any way to suggest, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it isn't a tremendous honour for me to be in this place and have the opportunity to speak today. It is certainly my great honour to represent the constituency of Morden-Winkler, as did Peter George Dyck before

me, Don Orchard before that time. And my area has had some very, very credible representation, and so it is constantly impressed upon me that I have big shoes to fill and endeavouring to do so every day in my role.

Le 4 octobre, 2011, les électeurs de la conscription—circonscription Morden-Winkler ont élu—me ont élu pour les représenter à l'Assemblée législative du Manitoba, et depuis les quatre ans, je travaille dur pour comprendre et remplir les rôles divers d'un député. Je suis honoré d'avoir la confiance des électeurs de Morden-Winkler et je travaille chaque jour à garder leur confiance.

Translation

On October 4, 2011, the voters of the Morden-Winkler constituency elected me to represent them in the Manitoba Legislative Assembly, and in the four years since, I have been working hard to understand and to fulfill the various roles of an MLA. I am honoured to have the confidence of the Morden-Winkler electorate and I strive every day to keep their trust.

English

The member for Fort Rouge (Ms. Howard) was mentioning some special things she has in her office the other day, and I was listening intently to see what those things are. I think many of us keep things, perhaps in our office or in our constituency office, things to which we refer, things that are important to us for whatever reason. So as I listened to those mementos she keeps around her—I keep a couple of things in my office. As so many of us have done, we receive things from people. And sometimes there are school groups who, you know, we—maybe we visit a classroom and they'll write us a letter. I just felt so terrible to be throwing out a letter from a seven-year-old who's taken the time to write it, I started a special file that I just call mementos. And on the days that are more difficult, I'll open that file up, and you look through it.

And, if my colleagues across the way, including some of the newer colleagues in the Chamber, if they're not doing that, I challenge them to start today. Those things have meaning. Those things have such meaning for us later on as we look back, some of them funny, some of them just very memorable, and some of them very humbling when we know that we have had an opportunity in some small way to help someone.

I remarked to someone the other day that—someone came looking for assistance to me, and I was able to provide that assistance, and I remarked later on that it was so easy for me to help. And it caused me to reflect later, it would have been so easy for me not to have helped. I could have said I was busy. I was busy, but I made what call I could based on the people I knew. It helped in some way, and it really humbled me to think that we can, in those small ways, effect a difference in our own communities for real people who are trying to navigate government. Many times they stop at our office and our office is not the appropriate place for them to be. We can direct them to the right place of inquiry, but every time, they express that thanks, that gratitude, that we took the time. And as those of us who haven't been here as long as, perhaps, some other members like the member for Lakeside (Mr. Eichler) or the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), we get better as we go along at helping to direct people to the appropriate place.

And I would say as well that I have appreciated those people in our hard-working civil service who are able to recognize that the vast majority of times, we as elected members of this Assembly are not coming to them with an issue that is political in nature; we're coming to them for an issue that is non-partisan in nature. And I've always appreciated where I've been able to interface with the civil service, with people in other departments, to be able to work for the benefit of those people who are relying on us.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would also, at the beginning of my address, want to recognize, as so many of my colleagues have, the tragedies that have taken place in Paris, in Beirut and other places. We know that these are difficult times for our world.

We know that we have so many benefits here in Manitoba. We have this luxury of being able to quarrel over things in a respectful way—99 per cent of the time—that others would so long to have the opportunity to do. Instead, they are having to fight and protest and to work strongly and to risk so much for things that we take for granted every day.

*(15:20)

And so I appreciated very much the moment of silence that we took as members as we began our deliberations a few days ago. I appreciate that members continue to wear the Canada-France pin as a demonstration of solidarity with our neighbours there. I appreciate so much that we have dressed the

Legislature in the red, white and blue colours of the French flag. I noticed that again last night as I left the Legislature and the snow was starting to fall, and that's a powerful tribute showing that we will stand in solidarity against these terrorist acts.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's a photo that hangs in my wall in my office, speaking of mementos that we keep. It often—it hangs where I can see it when I sit at my desk, and it often reminds me of how I got to this place. It's a photo of myself, my younger brother and my father, but it's taken when I'm about probably 10 years old. I remember that I hung that picture there because my dad delivered it to me in my office shortly after I was elected. He brought it by as a kind of, I guess, a constituency-office-warming present. I would want to inform all my colleagues that the gift was given by my father and it looks like a Walmart frame, so I won't have to be disclosing this to the commissioner. I'm quite sure that the gift is under the \$250 threshold that would require me to have to disclose it as a gift. But, in any case, this picture is my dad and my brother and myself standing on the grand stair of the Legislature.

It's important to me for a few reasons. It was the first trip I ever made to the Legislature at 10 years old. I remember when my dad parked the car and we got out on the west side of the building, and I could look up and I first saw the elm trees and then I looked at the building. And I'll never forget seeing a building that was probably the grandest building I had ever seen before and walking inside and being so in awe of the architecture and of the installed art and of the many features that make this place so unique, one of the most important architectural edifices in all of North America, without question. So I was quite overcome and, actually, there are still days when I am overcome with awe as you walk down a hallway or see something new in a hallway that you hadn't noticed before.

My niece is a—was a fine arts major at University of Manitoba who did a research paper on art and architecture in the Manitoba Legislature, and she has pointed out to me things I've never seen before. Members of this Chamber can look at the doors and they'll notice that the bison are proceeding in one direction; my niece informed me that that was never the intention of the architect. He had meant, like so many things in this building, for that to be symmetrical. The bison were supposed to be looking at each other, but as they got closer and closer to the completion of the building and they realized they were out of money, and they realized that there was a

war taking place and they needed to divert assets to help fight the war, they had only cast one of those bison, and as they installed them the architect took exception. He said, this is not what I want; go back and do it right. And they apologized and said there was no more money left in the budget, so he rationalized it and he said, well, that's okay, he says, because bison actually migrate and they move in a field in one direction so this is actually symbolic of that.

So the other day when my daughter was here for take-your-kid-to-work day and I had a chance to visit with the Lieutenant Governor who graciously opened her doors to welcome my daughter and the daughter for the member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson), I explained that to our new Lieutenant Governor, and she was unaware so we both exchanged our notes about what we knew about the building. And I should say as well the—Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor was very curious to know what we knew about the building because she is trying to acquaint herself more and more with this building even though we all understand that she has already spent a lot of time in this place over the years. I think she will just do a fabulous job in this role. We're so pleased to see an appointment that has the endorsement of all Manitobans.

To finish my account, though, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the reason that photo is so important to me in my office is because that day that my father took me to the Legislature was also important because, I believe, if I'm not mistaken, it was the day that we dropped my mother off at the Health Sciences Centre to begin her cancer treatments.

My mom was a cancer survivor for many years, first diagnosed when I was very young and then another bout of cancer treatments after a second diagnosis when I was in my teens, and a third shortly after I graduated, and passed away just a number of years ago now. But it was that day, I believe, my dad was probably trying to give us a good memory on a day that would have been very, very hard for us. We didn't understand all that was taking place. We certainly did not understand the extent of the struggle that my mother was embarking on because she was a private woman and she was a stubborn woman, and she didn't want to worry us kids like so many of our mothers are like, and so she chose to keep a lot of that from us but we could still—we could sense it and we could see it, and we walked through that as best we could as a family. So I keep that on my wall as a remembrance of my first time at the Legislature.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's a book that I read a number of years ago, and it's by a Canadian author called Bruce Grierson. It's entitled U-Turn and it talks about switching from one career to another. There's a famous quote by Jack Canfield that says, switching from one career to another can be scary, but it can also be a thrilling experience. Look at it as an opportunity to really go after what you want to accomplish in life and make a difference in the world. The key is to take small, conscious steps and prepare yourself for a successful transition.

That's very meaningful to me, I think, for all of us. Whether we started out in the public sector or the private sector, our transition to this place is never seamless, and we know that this place comes with a great cost that we pay not just in the time we pay—spend away from our families, but it comes, of course, with uncertainty and it comes with elections every four years, as it should be. And we must constantly demonstrate again to our constituencies that we still have their confidence and that we are still able and qualified and have the enthusiasm and the integrity and our ideals and our ideology to continue to represent them.

So I read that book, the U-Turn, and it was really life changing for me. It helped me at a time when I was still in the public school and teaching where I taught for 12 years to undertake incrementally the steps that would eventually lead me back to university and then into an office where I was executive assistant for a Member of Parliament and eventually into a place where I was able, with the support of my family and of many backers, to seek the nomination for the PC Party in the Morden-Winkler constituency.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, among my—among the many things that come—have come my way this year has been an opportunity to meet some new Canadians. As you may know, in Morden-Winkler there are more and more new residents. We have a strong ag manufacturing and other manufacturing that takes place in the Morden-Winkler constituency, corporations, companies that were started and continue in this area. And if I began to name them, I would be remiss because I would leave out some.

But anyways, many of them are looking for workers. And so as workers continue to come to our region and our population grows, as a matter of fact, our population in our cities is growing by as much as 20 and 25 per cent over a four-year period. A lot of growth there, a lot of—it's interesting, as an MLA,

how many of my issues are perhaps different than those, you know, faced by my predecessor and his predecessor. Where someone like Don Orchard would have faced a lot of issues around agriculture, I've faced more issues, perhaps, around ag industry. We face issues around transportation and affordable housing and infrastructure. So those are areas that my—that Morden-Winkler has been addressing, and many of those solutions come from the local community. So many successes, such a great community.

But, as I was saying, with all of this growth comes new residents. I met a gentleman a few months ago at a Settlement Services meeting that I was speaking to. I was amazed to go into this room. New Canadians and newcomers to the community, some of whom do not have their Canadian citizenship yet, and all of them taking English-language classes. And I went in to address them. And I was thinking to myself I would see a lot of people, perhaps, from Germany, and there were some. What was amazing to me is in that same room were individuals from France, from the DR Congo, from South America, from places like the Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Russia. It's amazing how you can walk down the street in my region and hear so many languages spoken now.

I met, at that time, a man whose name is Assani Muhanuzi who was from the DR Congo and told me a harrowing story of his escape. And I know many of my colleagues will understand that this area is so afflicted with war; it is so broken after years and years of conflict, horrific things happening to families, horrific things happening to young people conscripted into war efforts, horrific things happening to women who are not safe.

* (15:30)

And he told me a story of him escaping at night, not over a period of hours, a period of months as he ran from country to country without paperwork and persuaded officials and prayed and was accepted into country after country until he was finally imprisoned in South Africa. He was eventually released. He went to work. He rose up in the workforce. He became the—I think he was a dispatch. He ran a shipping division of a major food company and eventually came to Canada, and he's now residing in the city of Winkler where he's raising his family.

I congratulate Assani and his wife. He just had a new daughter, a baby daughter, I believe, not a son. I think it's a daughter. And I was blown away by this

new resident of our province who is focused on working for others. He has such a view towards helping others, and I was deeply impressed with the extent to which he's involving himself to help others who are newcomers to the community—not just the Congolese community but all newcomers to the community—helping, connecting people to resources. What a tremendous encouragement to see that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wanted to say how pleased I am to support a leader who has brought an alternate throne speech that is talking about a different way of doing business in the province of Manitoba.

La semaine passée, le chef du parti opposition a prononcé son discours du trône alternatif. Il a partagé beaucoup des idées. Il a prononcé une vision distincte d'un gouvernement progressiste-conservateur au province du Manitoba. Le chef a parlé au besoin d'une nouvelle époque a Manitoba.

Translation

Last week, the Leader of the Opposition delivered his alternative throne speech. He shared many ideas. He shared a distinct vision of a Progressive Conservative government for the province of Manitoba. The leader spoke about the need for a new era in Manitoba.

English

He spoke about a need for a new era in Manitoba.

Il a parlé de la confiance, du travail d'équipe, à l'importance du bon sens, de la transparence, de la responsabilité. C'est un message qui est si important pour notre province après 16 ans d'équipe dysfonctionnelle, le gouvernement néo-démocrate.

Translation

He spoke about trust, teamwork, the importance of common sense, transparency and responsibility. This is a message that is so important for our province after 16 years of a dysfunctional team, the New Democratic government.

English

He spoke about transparency. He spoke about teamwork. He spoke about authenticity. He spoke about common sense.

C'est un chemin de la collaboration, à travailler avec des groupes diverses, à inclure tous les gens, tous les perspectives.

Translation

It is an approach based on co-operation, on work with different groups and the inclusion of all people, all viewpoints.

English

He spoke about an approach that includes all people, that includes diverse groups, that includes a lot of perspectives.

Leur approche, c'est la même comme toujours.

Translation

Their approach is the same as always.

Their approach is always the same.

C'est un chemin des promesses non tenues, un chemin qui cherche à diviser, à chercher à déformer nos intentions, notre plan.

Translation

It is a path of unkept promises, a path of trying to divide, trying to distort our intentions, our plan.

English

Their procedure is always the same. It's an approach that seeks to divide Manitobans. It's an approach that seeks to discredit us by deforming what we are saying to Manitobans. And it's an approach, I find, that is not in keeping with the place in which we serve. I heard, when the member for Brandon West (Mr. Helwer) brought yesterday a—or he brought a grievance, that in his rationale he quoted former Speaker Dacquay who said that words in this place should be temperate and worthy of the place in which they are spoken.

And following that alternate speech from the throne, the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) got up and proceeded to put on the record—I won't talk about the content of his address; I was just discouraged as a legislator that after 16 years—that after 16 years—many of them spent as a minister, he didn't have more to say about his record, he didn't have more to say about his accomplishments. It was clear from his address their intentions—and I think we should thank them because their intentions for the next election became clear. They won't run on their record. They will run on fear. They will distort and they will try to run on fear when really what Manitobans are understanding more and more, no matter what they say, is that what is to be feared is a government that says one thing and does another.

Over time, more and more Manitobans are understanding they cannot count on such an approach: broken promises to taxpayers, broken promises to special interest groups, broken promises to AMM, broken promises to those who run women's shelters, broken promises to the Jockey Club, broken promises to people in the north, east, south and west of this province.

Les Manitobains et les Manitobaines sont fatigués de cette approche. Ils sont fatigués des promesses non tenues et ils sont prêts pour un nouveau message, un message de la collaboration, d'une façon à faire des affaires où on garde les promesses.

Translation

Manitobans are tired of this approach. They're tired of the unkept promises and they are ready for a new message, a message of co-operation, of a way of doing things where you keep promises.

English

An approach, a way of doing things where you keep promises.

Où on a l'espoir.

Translation

Where you have hope.

English

Where you have hope. And they are ready for change in the province of Manitoba.

On désire un changement pour le mieux.

Translation

We want a change for the better.

English

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I became aware as the Throne Speech was being spoken that there was an absence of any language in the Throne Speech that had to do with fiscal responsibility. Now, the NDP members might say, well, that wasn't their plan; they—you know, it wasn't part of their priorities. I guess it isn't part of their priorities because it never came up during the address. But I would remind them it's been there before, and it was missing this time.

Because in 2009—and in 2009, this is what was included in the Throne Speech. They said: "We are managing these fiscal pressures by targeting

spending...and tightening our belts in all other areas. Most ...departments are on pace to reduce spending..." That was their promise. So when the member for Dawson Trail (Mr. Lemieux) gets up this afternoon and says that any decrease in spending he sees as cuts, he's forgetting it was his Throne Speech in 2009 that promised to be on pace to reduce spending.

Now, of course, they didn't do it, so in 2010, they brought a new Throne Speech. What did it say? It said: "We will return the province to balance over a five-year period..." Well, I'm happy to report we're now in 2015. How did that go? Are we in balance? No. Is the deficit down? No. It's up. It's a broken promise in a spectacular fashion. And I would remind the House that in this period—it was just disclosed eight weeks ago when the public accounts were finally disclosed on the last day allowable by the rules—that the government actually overspent by \$200 million, even though they realized unanticipated government business enterprise revenue of more than \$200 million. They had unanticipated additional revenue, yet they still missed their own—their target by more than \$200 million.

So in 2011, they brought another pledge in their Throne Speech. And in 2011, the Throne Speech said their continuing goal is to sustain economic growth, find efficiencies and meet their fiscal targets and our commitments to Manitobans. Only they didn't do it. They blew their budget. As a matter of fact, they've now presided over seven consecutive budget deficits. And I would remind the House this is a government that has outspent, overspent its planned budgetary target each and every year that it has been in power.

So they didn't make that promise, so in 2014, they tried one last time. I remember it. I know the members here in the House who were in the House that day, 2014, one year ago during the last Throne Speech read by the former Lieutenant Governor.

And this was their pledge. It said: "In Manitoba our plan is to responsibly return to balance without major cuts..." And how is that going? It's not going well. Because what's happened, of course, is they've broken the promise once again. Deficits are up, not down.

And it comes at a real cost, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The real cost, of course, is rising debt-servicing costs. The real cost is that the money spent on debt-servicing costs is money that cannot be spent to help produce and promote and to develop front-line

services. This is why the Leader of the Opposition has brought his motion.

* (15:40)

And we understand that this government has not listened to Manitobans when it's come to taxes. They've not listened to them when they've talked about the importance of living within your means. This government has had every opportunity: rising transfer payments, record low interest rates. And in this—and I should say, and rising revenues accruing to government. And, in that perfect storm of opportunity, they have failed to move us in the right direction. And I'm worried. I'm worried both as a Finance critic; I'm also worried as a father of three children as I look around my community and more and more of our—more and more of my residents complain about their children moving to other jurisdictions where the opportunities are.

I remind this government that they have the worst record when it comes to net out-migration of any province in Canada. Sure, our MPNP program is doing well. We built it. It was a PC government that brought the MPNP program. We're proud of the fact that we brought it in. This is a major source of immigration and how it comes to—*[interjection]*

If members are disputing that the PC Party brought the MPNP program, I would go back and I would challenge them to go check that again. It was members like the member for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson) who were instrumental, and others, for bringing that program in, for understanding the need for our promise to—province to grow, not just by keeping kids at home but by looking at other jurisdictions and welcoming newcomers here. We were the architects of that program and we were the protectors of that program and we will continue to be in the future.

But, in any case, it's a sad fact that more people continue to leave in terms of out-migration than come here. As a matter of fact, I know even our Opposition Leader has shared recently about a group of Filipino women with whom he had met. They're mothers and grandmothers who had explained that their concern is that their kids are going to Saskatchewan. And, you know, and they said, why do we have to be in a position whereby our children are choosing to go to other jurisdictions? We should be doing everything we can to keep them here.

When you're paying \$3,200 more as a family here than in Saskatchewan, when it comes to income

tax and it comes to sales tax, you know you're not creating the conditions that will keep people in this place.

In my—the short time that is still afforded to me, let me just simply say the NDP has brought a Throne Speech. What's been the result? The media is largely condemning it. One headline reads, NDP promises the world but doesn't have the money to pay for any of it.

I saw a poll the other day on CTV News and they were saying, give the government feedback on their Throne Speech. And I noticed that within an hour, the poll was reading 56 per cent, give them an F. So I know that the Minister for Education doesn't believe in grading, but if he did believe in providing actual evidence on how people did in assessment, real assessment tools that are transparent and available for parents and learners and all stakeholders, then he would understand that's not a good thing, to get an F.

So, anyways, in my—in the time remaining, let me just say, Mr. Deputy Speaker:

Le gouvernement provincial a refusé d'écouter les Manitobains et les Manitobaines qui ont assez des promesses non tenues.

Translation

The provincial government has refused to listen to Manitobans who have had enough of unkept promises.

English

They've had enough of promises that are broken. They understand that this litany of promises that have been presented now is just another list that is waiting to be broken. And, for that reason, we support the motion brought by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to rise today to share some—

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): Order. Order. Excuse me. Order. Order.

Sorry. There's just a fair bit of background noise. I'd just ask members to—if they want to have a conversation, we have some lovely couches available.

Return the floor to the honourable member for Concordia.

Mr. Wiebe: Mr. Speaker, it's my absolute pleasure to stand in this House today and to put some words on the record with regards to the Speech from the Throne and really to speak to what I see happening in the province of Manitoba and which is reflected in our speech, which is the hope and the optimism that I feel that Manitobans have.

And, you know, listening to members of the opposition, I certainly see that they don't share that vision. But when we look at this document and we hear the amazing things that are happening in this province, I would say that folks on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, certainly see the positive and see the optimism and hope for the province.

I did want to take an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, before I get to my remarks to just to thank the—my constituents, to thank the good people of Concordia for bringing me to this place. And this may be the last opportunity that I have in terms of giving a thank you to them in this format in a Throne Speech, so it's my pleasure to do that, and to really just thank them for everything that they give me, and that's a lot of amazing ideas, and there's no end to those ideas. They certainly—they energize me. They, from time to time, challenge me in terms of their ideas and their thoughts, but it's such an honour to come to this place to take their ideas and their passion and their excitement for this province to this place and to represent them here in the Chamber.

I also wanted to take this opportunity to thank some staff who are so important to where I am today and to helping me to represent folks in my constituency. And first and foremost of those I'd like to thank my constituency assistant, Jim Still, who many folks around this building know. Jim has been an amazing assistant to myself, also served the former Premier Gary Doer in his role as the MLA for Concordia.

And Jim is an amazing person, and this past year he suffered a severe personal tragedy in that his wife, Joan, passed away—Joan Still passed away, and Joan was an amazing person in her own right, and certainly the support that she provided for Jim helped him to serve the constituents of Concordia so well over the years.

So I just wanted to make mention of that, Mr. Speaker, and I did want to acknowledge the amazing work that Jim does every single day for the people of Concordia and represents me in the constituency when I am not able to be there and helps me to communicate properly with them. And his

knowledge of the community and the service that he's provided over the years is second to none. I know I wouldn't be here without his faithful service, and I just wanted to show my appreciation for him today.

There are a number of staff behind the scenes, Mr. Speaker, as we all know, that help us to do what we do here in this Chamber. I wanted to acknowledge our fabulous staff at the Clerk's table. In particular, I wanted to mention Monique Grenier, who does such a fabulous job in assisting me in my role as co-chair or vice-chair, I should say, of Public Accounts Committee, and she's done a lot of work with us as a Public Accounts Committee in helping shape what that committee will look like into the future. So I did want to make special mention of her. I was hoping she'd be here. I'm not sure if I'm allowed to mention whether she's in the Chamber or not, but I was hoping that she would be here so that she could hear that first-hand, but I wanted to pass that sentiment along to her and as well to our Speaker. I know that it's not the—sometimes the easiest job and—to be up in that Chair, but he does do a fabulous job. So I wanted to thank the clerks for all their work and for the Speaker for his work.

I also wanted to make mention of some of our staff in our NDP caucus. In particular, Renee Cable, who has been an amazing behind-the-scenes person and has done an amazing job in our caucus in helping to assist us in what we do in the Chamber.

You know, I think often we forget the work that they do behind the scenes and—or at least we fail to mention it in a public way, so I wanted to make sure that that was done here today. And I really do believe that the staff behind the scenes have just as strong a commitment to public life as many of us do, and they truly do work for the betterment of our province. And so I just wanted to let all of the staff know how much we appreciate what they do. It's been a particularly tough year for some of them, but they have stood fast and been amazing in supporting us in the work that we do.

And, of course, I'd be remiss, Mr. Speaker, if I didn't mention my own family, who have stood with me as the member for Concordia and have been there to support me, and especially in this very busy year that we find ourselves in, and it's only going to get busier. I just wanted to say how much I appreciate my family and their support that they provide to me.

* (15:50)

I also wanted to make mention of something that has been mentioned by a number of members in their responses to the Speech from the Throne, and that is our steadfast commitment from the people of Manitoba to those folks in France and in Syria and Iraq and, frankly, all over the world, Mr. Speaker, who are affected by terrorism and unrest. And it really meant a lot to me that we took an opportunity to take a moment of silence in the Speech from the Throne. I'm not sure if that's ever been done before, but I do appreciate this.

And, you know, as our world, it seems, marches towards more conflict and more war, you know, this really, profoundly saddens me, Mr. Speaker. And as a Mennonite, this is something that I feel very strongly about, and I do feel very strongly that we should stand with those who stand up against war and aggression throughout the world in so many different ways.

And I'm—feel very good that there's a number of people who are standing up against war and aggression and that march towards further conflict, and I do feel very emboldened by the words of President Obama and even our Prime Minister, who have taken stands in various ways against, I think, against a—words of despair.

I'd also extend that to our Premier (Mr. Selinger), because one of the things that struck me most in this Speech from the Throne was our commitment to the people of Syria and Syrian refugees. And the day that the—we gave—the Speech from the Throne came down, others in Canadian political life were making strong statements against this kind of support that we showed in the Throne Speech.

And, again, as a Mennonite, Mr. Speaker, it's something that hits very close to home for me. I have a very strong personal connection to refugees. Many of us do in Manitoba. I'd like to mention that because I think many of us come from this type of background.

But my family came to Canada as refugees and came at a time just shortly after World War II where I can imagine—well, I don't need to imagine because I've spent a lot of time talking to my family who was—who came during that time, who came at a time of extreme hardship. And they came shortly after World War II as refugees from Germany. They were Russian Mennonites. We were from southern part of Ukraine but were forced out, first the, of course, the advancing German army and then with the advancing

Russian army, and got caught up in the turmoil. My family travelled from Ukraine to Germany. Over 300 kilometres of that was on foot. My grandparents, with their four kids at that time, over the mountains, the Ore Mountains, travelled into Germany. And they were refugees in Germany. And when they came to Canada during or just after the—after World War II, they were German-speaking Mennonites from Germany at that time as refugees.

And so I can see the parallel with people from Syria right now, and I know that there's a lot of distrust and there's a lot of concern, and there was at that time too, Mr. Speaker. People didn't know who they were and they didn't know who these refugees coming to Canada were. But we opened our doors, and—here in Manitoba, we opened our doors.

And my family, you know, they settled here, and I'm very, very proud to be representing the neighbourhood that my grandparents came to. And my grandmother wasn't alive—she had just passed away just before I was elected, but I am very proud to represent the area that they settled in, that they committed to. And, you know, I can't imagine anybody questioning us being Canadian, and I hope it's the same for members of the Syrian community.

So I was very proud that our Premier (Mr. Selinger) was—stood up strongly and that this Speech from the Throne did take that strong message of our role on the world stage and our commitment to those who are vulnerable, who seek safety and support in our province. We do have a strong history in this province of supporting refugees and other newcomers, and we believe that we have the skills and capacity to fully participate in the federal project to welcome 25,000 refugees to Canada.

Our government is eager to respond to this call for progress, and with a willing federal partner at the table, our government is being presented with a greater opportunity to continue to support those folks. As you know, our initial pledge of \$1.4 million for settlement services is now starting to flow to organizations so that they can begin to prepare for the influx of newcomers, and this included \$200,000 immediately for humanitarian relief dollars which have already been directed to projects in Jordan, Lebanon, and carried out by the Mennonite Central Committee, the Canadian Lutheran World Relief and UNICEF. Their work is offering psychosocial supports and non-formal education to approximately 1,900 students including kindergarteners, school-age children, youth and adults and after-school

programming for girls who were exposed to violence and risk of dropping out of school. And this is so important, Mr. Speaker, to folks at the grassroots level in these affected nations.

We welcome the new government as a willing partner, as I said, in welcoming those refugees to Manitoba, and we'll work with our partners in settlement services to ensure refugees get support when they arrive. You know, this is a key to the success. I believe that government dollars can be partnered with local agencies on the ground who can best provide these services to people, and I know minister—the Minister of Labour and Immigration (Ms. Braun) has already spoken with Minister Mihychuk and others. The Department of Labour and Immigration has also been actively communicating with our partners on the ground to plan, including a meeting with over 15 of our partners which just happened yesterday.

We're prepared to assist another 2,000 refugees in their arrival to Manitoba by the end of the year, and most of these people will have been—will have to be sponsored by the federal government. We're—we have appointed an internal co-ordinator with experience working with refugees to oversee this response. So, again, what we're doing is we're investing in the grassroots, front-line humanitarian organizations who can support the settlement—who are supporters of the settlement sector. They are able to co-ordinate the response. We're facilitating and increasing the private sponsorship of refugees with new supports and ensuring the successful integration of refugee youth through educational, employment and mental health supports.

You know, when we look at a crisis of this magnitude, it's really—it's easy to see—get lost in the international effort, and it's easy to get lost in the sheer magnitude of the crisis and how the effects can be felt in our own community. But what we see time and time again in humanitarian crises, even one of this size, that they're not solved by governments alone. And it's the local non-profits, the faith organizations, but most importantly, Mr. Speaker, it's the individuals and the communities who come together to welcome refugees, to invest in them and their futures. They're the ones that have the biggest impact.

I really do believe that settlement services, whether it be housing or language training and job training, when partnered with a dynamic NGO sector that has firsthand knowledge of the situation we can

have the biggest impact. And I really do believe that very strongly that our government in standing strong with those who are coming to Canada and to Manitoba will ensure that our province continues to grow and prosper.

So I spent some time—more time than I expected—but some time talking about refugee—the refugee situation and it really is something that affects me strongly, but I did want to take some time to talk about sort of the bigger picture or the bigger—dollar-wise, anyway—projects, ones that we really do believe in and ones that are, you know, with the investment that we're seeing in our—from our government really will help grow our province and make it the best place to live in Canada.

*(16:00)

We really believe, Mr. Speaker, that the time to build our future is now, and we're very proud to be investing in our future.

And, you know, sometimes there's concern about this; there's worry from the other side of the House. I don't see that. I see investing in our young people, investing in our future is the right way to go. And, when you look around our province and see everything that's getting done and getting built, we know that by locking in these strategic investments at these historically low interest rates and borrowing costs, will continue to keep our province prosperous.

I can go on and on, Mr. Speaker. I'll only mention a few that happen to be—affect the constituents of Concordia. There are certainly more. I think it crosses all boundaries of the province, whether it be rural or urban or northern Manitoba. But, in my own constituency, it's very exciting to see work progressing on Highway 59 and the Perimeter. This project is a \$200-million-plus project, state-of-the-art interstate standard interchange that will revolutionize the transportation in my neck of the woods. And I would say that this is a project that's been on the books since before I was born, and it's my—it's—really makes me proud that we can come get it done, get 'er done, maybe, as the Minister of MIT would say. But this is a project that's been a priority for years, and it affects everybody from those of us that want to go up to the east beaches for a summer holiday to, of course, our trucking industry that uses Highway 59 and the Perimeter as a major corridor for getting goods to market.

I'm also proud, Mr. Speaker, that this is the first provincial infrastructure project that included a

active transportation component from the design stage up. And we're very excited to connect communities through the Northeast Pioneers Greenway to Birds Hill Provincial Park and to the town of Birds Hill and beyond. And this will make a big difference in connecting our communities. I could go on. Highway 59—I do, as many members of this House know, take time to visit our great beaches, including Grand Beach, in the summertime. And driving up Highway 59 this summer was made a lot easier, a lot safer for folks going up there in the road improvements that happened there.

We're all—I'm also very excited, Mr. Speaker, too, that the Throne Speech made mention of Chief Peguis. The extension of Chief Peguis, of course—the original from 59 to, I guess, Henderson Highway and to Main Street was an important linkage for our community, and many folks in my neighbourhood use this as part of their daily commute or to get across the city quickly. With the extension now beyond and further out west, I think this will only help streamline traffic and help folks from the northeast part of the city get to the west part of the city more quickly.

And, of course, Mr. Speaker, the Louise Bridge, which is a very exciting project. This is exciting for me personally as I worked in the—before I was elected, worked closely in the Elmwood community on a number of community initiatives, and there were always these sort of dream projects, the bigger-picture projects. I can count Disraeli Bridge as one of those. But it was with our community input that we were able to shape what that looked like, the active transportation component that's part of Disraeli Bridge, even down to something as simple as the welcome to Elmwood sign that exists at the base of Disraeli Bridge. I was very proud to be a part of that design decision. And, as we look at Louise Bridge now, it's just an amazing opportunity for the community of Elmwood and for all of northeast Winnipeg, and I really do believe that there's a lot of opportunity there.

The bridge itself has a very rich history I won't take too much time to go into, but for those in the Chamber that may not know, Tommy Douglas, for a short, very brief period of time, lived in Winnipeg in his younger years and actually made his home in Elmwood. And, when he was in his younger days there, he worked in a foundry across the river over in Point Douglas. And so Tommy Douglas would have actually walked across the existing Louise Bridge; the bridge that we still drive over would have been

his transportation out to Point Douglas. And so for us to come forward now and to make this a priority to redevelop that, to couple that with active transportation, with rapid transit, and a better way to manage traffic through the neighbourhood of Elmwood, I think is a very, very positive step, and I'm very glad to be working with the member from Elmwood and the city councillor from Elmwood-East Kildonan to see this project go forward, and I'm very excited about that.

So I'm very excited, Mr. Speaker, in general, about the number of infrastructure projects that are going on. We have a number of exciting jobs and training opportunities that I'd like to quickly mention. Of course, coming out of our five-year plan, our \$5.5 billion investment in Manitoba, we've seen the results and we've seen 60,000 jobs being created. But we're not stopping there. We are considered one of the most business-friendly places in Canada. Recently, Canadian Business Magazine, in fact, awarded us that, or rated us that, and I can just say, in my own constituency, there's so many great local businesses that are thriving and I get a chance to meet a lot of those small business owners, and I cannot get over their ingenuity, their passion, and the work that they do in our community.

We are investing in our young people, Mr. Speaker, whether it be training in our high schools, in our colleges, access to good jobs. We want Manitoba to be the kind of place where folks want to stay and raise their families. I spend a lot of time over at Kildonan East Collegiate where they have an incredible culinary arts and pastry arts program. I'm actually looking forward to the Christmas dinner that they're putting on for the community coming up very shortly. But these are skills that we're teaching our kids that they're taking forward into the workplace and they're only amplifying as they go forward.

We have an amazing automotive program, Mr. Speaker, electrical and HVAC program that exists at the school, and these kids are learning with state-of-the-art technology which, frankly, would blow most people's minds about the kind of stuff that they have in high school, but they're getting a leg up and they're getting their foot in the door and ready to tackle the jobs of tomorrow, and they're so important.

We are also investing in jobs by our commitment for 12,000 day-care spaces. Again, that is something that hits very close to home,

Mr. Speaker. I still have—one of my youngest is still in daycare, and finding that quality daycare space was a challenge, but once we were able to find that, what a relief it was and what an opportunity it was, then, for us to continue to work to move forward in it. So it was something that really means a lot to young families, and I know this from any time I go out knocking on doors I'm going to get this on the doorstep, and I can point to the amazing investments in our own community, whether it be at Sherwood School or whether it be at some of our other local daycares where we've invested in the facilities there.

New spaces—we're really excited about this. Mr. Speaker, 12,000 new daycare spaces is an ambitious target, but it is one that's achievable and one that will make a big difference in the province of Manitoba.

I could go on and on, Mr. Speaker, but I am maybe—I am going to just wrap things up, and I appreciate the opportunity once again to come stand before the Chamber and to put some words on the record. It really was an important opportunity for me. And it's so important when we're bringing forward such a positive, smart, and strategic Throne Speech that when we can bring this forward, when we can contrast it with what's coming from the other side, I always appreciate when there's such a clear divide. The other side is doubling down on austerity. They're talking about cuts, still. They're talking about putting on the brakes on the Manitoba economy, and we see that, with partners like the federal government, in light of global pressures that we see, we really do think that this is our opportunity now to not stop, to continue to build. We believe in tomorrow. We believe in our youth. We believe in our entrepreneurs in Manitoba. We believe in our students, our business people, our farmers, our innovators. We believe in the future on—in this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, and we know we're going to get there with the right plan.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

* (16:10)

Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson): As it gives me great pleasure to rise today to put a few words on the record in regards to the Throne Speech and, of course, in regards to the alternate throne speech put forward by the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Pallister).

Mr. Speaker, the amendment moved by the leader for the opposition is a telling composition.

And I'm sure that anyone that took the time to listen to it would agree with me. There was a number on the other side of the House, of course, that have a problem with listening. I think their hearing is okay; they just don't listen.

But this is an amendment focused on the fact that the NDP has refused to listen to Manitobans who are tired of the same old NDP broken promises and liked the—and liked their commitment to balance the budget for 2014 without raising taxes. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, before I go into this in much detail, I'd like to refer to the Throne Speech and just prior to the Throne Speech last year. As you'll quite well remember, it led to a—there was a bit of a disruption, one might call it, on the other side of the House in the NDP party. And there were five members who felt so terribly strongly that they actually went public with the disagreement that they had with their leader and the direction that he was taking them. And that resulted in a lot of back and forth between different members and accusations, and it was clear that the government was broken at the time. And it's clear that they're still broken.

Ms. Jennifer Howard, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

But, if I can just quote a few quotes of the candidates who then ran to become the Premier of the province, because that's a pretty prestigious position and one that people in the province of Manitoba hold dear. These are the leaders—these are the leaders—that are going to create the destiny of our province going forward, and the destiny doesn't really look very good for our children and our grandchildren with the debt that has been created by the current leader and the people that have supported him.

So, if I can, Madam Deputy Speaker, with your indulgence, what I might do is just quote some of the quotes from some of the candidates that put their names forward to lead this province a year ago.

The member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), and I quote: If I'm elected premier, one of the first moves that I will make is to allow Manitobans to have their voice through a referendum on the PST, he told a roomful of supporters at his leadership-campaign kickoff. Quote: I believe it was the right thing to bring in a PST increase, but it's also the right thing to do to allow Manitobans to have their say.

And I wonder today—I wonder today—if that same member for Thompson, who was unsuccessful, he was unsuccessful in his leadership bid, I wonder if

he's had any input into the Throne Speech this year, because we never heard anything about giving Manitobans the right to vote, the right to vote on their future and their destiny. And yet he stands in his place supporting now the now-Premier (Mr. Selinger) of the province. So I'm wondering if there is any inclusion within the NDP party when they put together a process that is supposed to lead the province out of the hole that they have dug now, lead it to prosperity with anything but empty promises, Madam Deputy Speaker, rhetoric that has gone on for years and years and years—16 too-long years.

Also want to quote what he said: I want to look at some of the office closures that have been proposed the last period of time, but a specific initiative of government that looks at us partnering with local communities to provide government services in rural Manitoba. With the technology that we have to communicate today, there is some potential significant advantages to having government employees and government offices in rural Manitoba.

The Throne Speech that we just heard, Madam Deputy Speaker, did not address that issue whatsoever. In fact, it barely touched on rural Manitoba. The New West Partnership would've been a great opportunity for the Premier of the province of Manitoba, the Leader of the NDP party, to regain a bit of faith from Manitobans. But, instead, he continued on his disgraceful venture into a black hole, a black financial hole that he's leading all of Manitobans into.

I would like to say, at one time, that there were employees and government offices in rural Manitoba, and it may come as a big shock to the city dwellers, those that are encircled by the big cement circle around the city of Winnipeg that suffer from that type of, oh, claustrophobia, that they don't know what really goes on out in rural Manitoba, that one job—one job—in a community like Dominion City makes a big difference. One job in a community like Ridgeville makes a difference. Forty jobs in Onanole makes a big difference. In the city of Winnipeg, they just looked—the people that represent the ridings in Dominion City—or Winnipeg—don't care what happens outside the city of Winnipeg.

It's clear the Throne Speech didn't address any of that, and when I hear the chirping from the member from Brandon East who hasn't stood up—I'm waiting for him to stand up and tell us that he did not agree

with the First Minister when he put his budget—our Throne Speech out there and didn't include the New West Partnership. I want the member from Brandon East to tell us exactly what he thinks about that, to tell us that he is happy to see jobs leave western Manitoba.

Companies, if they move an office to Saskatchewan—to Regina, to Moose Jaw, to Yorkton—why would they keep one here? Give me a reason. Give me a reason why they would keep one here when the PST is 3 per cent higher than it is in Saskatchewan. These people are in Manitoba in spite of—in spite of—the policies by the members opposite. For 16 years they have built their businesses in spite of—not with, but in spite of, Madam Deputy Speaker, of the NDP's fiscal policies.

To go on quoting the member from Thompson, he said: If you wrote a script like this for the House of Cards, nobody would believe it. And he's right. The quote that I liked best from him, and I will always remember he did this in the House, and it's on Hansard, when he stood up and said: Mr. Speaker, I submit that this is the most dysfunctional Legislature in Canada. Further to that he said: I submit that it's the most dysfunctional Legislature in the Commonwealth. I would even go so far as to say it's the most dysfunctional Legislature in the world.

And I heard him the other day stand up and speak in favour—spoke in favour of this Throne Speech. That is not integrity; that is hypocrisy. That's exactly what that is, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Did I agree when I saw the rebel five get so frustrated, and they had to be frustrated—I'm sure they were frustrated in order to go public prior to the last Throne Speech because they couldn't change things. And I saw three of them not put their name forward to run again.

Did I agree with what they did within their own ranks? I don't think mutiny should ever be condoned. But, at the same time, they had the integrity not to run again. That's integrity in my mind. Some haven't—some haven't—done that, and they will stand up and speak in favour of this Throne Speech that really is nothing more than promises—promises and promises. But prior to—

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear. Promises are a great thing. Hear, hear.

* (16:20)

Mr. Graydon: And I would like to say to the member that is doing the heckling that, yes, promises are great things, but they will not buy you a cup of coffee. They won't buy you a cup of coffee; they won't buy you a hamburger; and they will not pay your taxes. Promises, to the NDP, are to be broken; that's what they are.

But, when I listened to the—also to the member from Assiniboia prior to the last Throne Speech, he says during caucus meetings we had tried to bring people together, and there were efforts to vent things but again it wasn't successful, he said. When you have fundamental differences to go to work and on work as—such as the member for Seine River's (Ms. Oswald) leadership campaign, it's an appalling abdication of responsibility in both instances. I felt sorry for him. I felt sorry for him when he had to do that in public, when he had to say that in public. That's unfortunate. He's elected by 20,000—there's 20,000 people in his riding; how many voted for him I have no idea, but he was still the person who was successful, and yet he had to say that there's fundamental differences within our party that we can't mend. And I don't know if that even came into his decision not to run again, but he's not running. He's not running after many, many years of representing the people of Assiniboia, but he says my own position on the leadership race hasn't changed. I haven't endorsed anyone, at that time that he said that.

But, of course, we had other people that have said the same thing, Madam Deputy Speaker. We had people like the member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer). The member for Wolseley, a well-spoken individual with many, many opinions on many, many different things, and he says it's never a good thing to abandon your post in a time of need. Yet the former ministers decided that just prior to our Throne Speech was a good time to resign.

He also wrote most—more recently, with a crucial budget due in the spring, many senior political staff have simultaneously taken vacation time to go to work on the Seine River—the member for Seine River's leadership campaign. He was upset because people were actually exercising their democratic right that they could work on someone's campaign. He was upset because he doesn't like democracy; that's what was bothering him. He doesn't like democracy. What he likes to do is make promises that he doesn't have to keep; that's what he wants to do. But he says also, I haven't endorsed anyone but so long as the member for Seine River's

campaign doesn't win, I would consider the result a victory for democracy and for integrity of Manitoba. But, at the same time, he wanted to take away the democratic right of those that were supporting her, people who had—from any other departments, they have the same democratic right as anyone on the street and he wanted to take that democracy away. My goodness, he talks out of both sides of his mouth.

In any constituency where there's a chance that the member for Seine River (Ms. Oswald) might win, I think it's entirely appropriate for local members of the other two camps to combine forces, split the delegate spots between them as they see fit, and let the chips fall where they may on the convention floor.

He had no opinion before; now he has an opinion as long as it's not one individual who has stood up for the people of Manitoba. She stood up for the people of Manitoba when she said that the First Minister was more interested in getting elected or re-elected than he was in doing the right thing for Manitobans.

The member for Dawson Trail (Mr. Lemieux), he had a great quote. She's 20 years younger than the Leader of the Opposition or the First Minister. There's a reason to vote for someone: because they're 20 years younger. So he says: Who's it better to hope for and who gives us a fighting chance in the 2016 election? That was—he just looks for younger people, I guess, to lead him out of the wilderness that he's going to be in.

But the member for the Interlake (Mr. Nevakshonoff), and being from rural Manitoba, he has a small degree of common sense, and he says: We're in the rapids right now. I think that that goes without saying. Some of the government's decisions, not necessarily all well-articulated, the results being we're in bad shape, particularly in rural Manitoba. Our numbers are down, and I just don't think the status quo's good enough anymore. Our own party pollsters have told us we're facing oblivion in rural Manitoba, and there's a serious news for all of us.

So it was clear, at that time, that the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger) was not someone that he was prepared to support. And it was also clear, as time went on, that he was supporting the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton). But, Madam Deputy Speaker, it's quite clear that since he became a minister, that he's changed his opinion; the same as the member of—for Thompson. They're going to support the member for St. Boniface. They're—it's

clear that they've had no input into the process, into the Throne Speech process, and, you know, if the Finance Minister would ever answer a question, whether he is actually going to bring in a budget or think about talking about it or it could be an option, but we don't really know if we aren't or aren't, will they have any input into a budget, or are they just figureheads filling chairs? Manitobans don't need figureheads, and they don't need people that are going to continue to break promises, promises, one after another.

They've had an opportunity, Madam Deputy Speaker. We've had an opportunity many times, and the NDP government has had many opportunities, with encouragement from us, that it would be unanimous if we were to join the New West Partnership. The benefits—we've named benefits after benefits after benefits. All of them would benefit Manitobans in every aspect. And yet we don't get a positive response; all we get is just negativity—negativity—from the government that's supposed to be leading us out of this big, dark hole, financial hole, that they they've created. And now, with Saskatchewan saying, no, you can't bid on our contracts, we have places all over Manitoba, and I've alluded to some of them earlier, but we also have them in Winkler where we have Grandeur Homes. Grandeur homes has been a very successful business in spite of NDP policies for a number of years. They have still been able to build a business and prosper because they could market outside the province. Now they're restricted; they can't market their product in Saskatchewan, which means that they will lose millions of dollars. Conquest homes, from the RM of Rhineland, been a very successful business, a family business, smarted—started very small in a shop in the backyard and now build homes for all over the world, except Saskatchewan; they can't bid on government jobs in Saskatchewan, because the NDP government doesn't see fit to join the New West Partnership.

What we want to do—*[interjection]*—I think I've got a fan here. I think I've got somebody on my side, somebody with a little bit of integrity that's not running again.

* (16:30)

But, Madam Deputy Speaker, I have talked about the New West Partnership a lot, the benefits. We have tried to impress the multitude of benefits on the NDP government and what would be good for Manitoba, and it's fallen on deaf ears.

But the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Gaudreau)—how did he put this now, because he's so well spoken—

An Honourable Member: Make sure it's parliamentary.

Mr. Graydon: And I will try to make it parliamentary, if I can, but it is a quote from the WFP—what is that? At any rate, that's EIA increase by the member for Seine River (Ms. Oswald), own words about pushing the Premier, the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger), for months behind closed doors, to leave and then having to go public.

I guess we should have went public and talked openly about her resistance to the idea, the member for St. Norbert said in an email. That's when he was still on Twitter. That's before he got off of Twitter. I don't know why he quit there for a while, but I guess he's back on it again. He got his Blackberry back.

But, at any rate, Madam Deputy Speaker, it was clear—it was clear—that the government was broken. We know by the financial books that the government is broken. We know by the promises that this government has made in the past that they have broken, that they do not have integrity. The people of Manitoba do not believe anymore what they're being promised. The City of Winnipeg is questioning, openly questioning in the paper what they were committed for in the Throne Speech. You have two top levels of government that should know that they have room to sit down and discuss this, but the City of Winnipeg said, we don't know what they're talking about; we haven't heard anything.

And yet we had a Minister of Finance (Mr. Dewar) flying all over the province, telling people we might—well, we might not—we could have, but we might not have a budget, but we'll have something.

But what we have is a bunch of nonsense. That's what we have—doubletalk from a broken government, and there's nothing in Manitoba that can't be fixed by Manitobans themselves, and they will fix that very soon. They will fix it. They're tired. They're tired of broken promises.

And, when we talk about all of the money in the infrastructure, there's none of us that disagree that there's money needed to be spent in infrastructure. Not here, not there. It needed to have been done in an organized fashion for a number of years. But which budget—which budget was underspent for four years in a row? Can I get any help? Can I get any help

from the government side of the House? Which budget? The only budget that was underspent for four years in a row was infrastructure. Thank you for that, the member from Swan River. I think I heard him say that it was infrastructure. He must have noticed that too in his riding.

But you can't do it all in one year. You can't plan it all in one year. It doesn't matter how much money you throw at something. You can only move so much material. You can only move so many—much equipment. And because most of the equipment operators had left for—gosh knows where, but we do know that we had an out-migration, the highest out-migration in 2014 and 2015 in the last six years—a net out-migration of over 6,000 people. These are workers. These are people that can find jobs other places. These are people that are earning money somewhere else. Yes, their family might still be here, but, quite clear, that if they're happy where they are, their family will move. So, if their wife and kids follow them wherever they are, or the husband and their children follow them wherever their wives are, grandpa and grandma are soon to follow.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, it's important—it's important—that we can keep our people here, but we can't keep them here by just going: Bust, bust, bust; ooh, we're off to the races. It doesn't work like that.

Agriculture, as we heard the minister stand today and tell the House all of the importance of agriculture in the province of Manitoba—more, more, yes, but the rest of his colleagues don't believe it. They don't believe it. They have no respect for that minister. It's clear they have no respect for him, because there wasn't a word in the Throne Speech about agriculture—nothing—nothing—in the Throne Speech.

If it was so terribly important—if it was so terribly important—to the members opposite, to the NDP government that agriculture was so important, why would they not talk about it? Why would you not put it in there? Why would you not make a promise? The one thing I'll give him credit for is he hasn't got a promise to break. You don't have a promise to break on that; that's one thing I'll give you credit for.

We were told clearly that there would be no raising of taxes. There would be no raising of the PST. Our sales tax is 3 per cent higher than Saskatchewan. How do we compete? How do we compete? It's difficult. However, in the alternate throne speech, it was laid out how to compete. So, if

any of the members opposite don't have a copy of it, I can arrange that you get a Hansard. And, if you need somebody to help you with the understanding and comprehending, we'll arrange that too.

The broken promises outlined in the Speech from the Throne represent classic evidence of what the most key issue is going to be in the next election. *[interjection]* Yes, who do Manitobans trust to keep their word? Who do you think they trust to keep their word? You know very well who they trust to keep their word. The member for St. Vital (Ms. Allan), she knows. She's not going to stick her neck out there again. The member for St. Vital knows who they're going to trust.

Manitoba shouldn't be fooled by this NDP laundry list that isn't a speech. But what we have presented we presented the priorities for a better Manitoba. For a better Manitoba, we will and have presented the values of Manitobans. No. 1 is trust. No. 1 is trust, and I would submit, Madam Deputy Speaker, that the NDP government has broken that trust, not once, not twice, handfuls of times—handfuls of times they've broken that trust. They did it with things like trying to give tenders—or give contracts without tenders and then perhaps getting money donated to their campaigns. I don't know that for a fact, but that seems to be what the facts show.

But we have said that trust, compassion, common sense—common sense—perhaps the member from Selkirk can tell me what common sense is when he goes out and says, we might have a budget, or, well, we might have something like that, or maybe we will or we won't. As the Minister of Finance (Mr. Dewar), who sits beside the First Minister, who just put out a Throne Speech and he doesn't know if he's going to do a budget? He doesn't know what his job is? My goodness, there's no common sense involved in that.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

Common sense is—common sense is—something that you don't go out one day and go, I will not raise taxes and the next day you do that. That's not common sense; that's misleading. And, in fact, in the country I come from, when you break your promise and you do it knowingly, that's a lie. That's what that is; it's not common sense. That's what it is. That's a lie.

* (16:40)

Inclusion and teamwork—we have seen teamwork. We've seen teamwork at its best on the other side: shooting each other, darts and arrows and

verbal spears at each other, tearing each other down. That's the teamwork that the NDP government have shown Manitobans that they're capable of. No trust, no teamwork, just a broken government. And I would go so far as to say, Mr. Speaker, that they would continue—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Emerson's (Mr. Graydon) time has elapsed.

Ms. Nancy Allan (St. Vital): I have to say I'm a little disappointed in the member's speech across the way because, you know, it really wasn't the kind of speech that I would've expected from him, and I'm really disappointed that I'm not going to be at the Brandon winter fair this year with him to beat him in the snake pit with my fabulous push-ups.

But it is a pleasure and an honour to be here today to speak as the representative for St. Vital to our government's Throne Speech. And I just want to start by saying what a privilege it has been to represent the riding of St. Vital for the last 16 years, and I want to say what a privilege it has been to participate in democracy and to have the opportunity to work with my colleagues here in the Manitoba Legislature, and sometimes, you know, it wasn't just the colleagues on this side of the House that I was working with. I would be remiss if I didn't say that I've had the opportunity to work with some of the colleagues, my colleagues across the way, on legislation, particularly the architects and engineers legislation that was so important to the scope of practice—*[interjection]* Yes, as my colleague reminds me, that was a doozy.

And, you know, it really has been a privilege to be here, and in my maiden speech in the Legislature in 1999, in September, I was asked by the previous premier of this province, Premier Gary Doer, to move that speech, and that was an honour, and I paid tribute to my mother at that time because my mother was one of the first women to run in the province of Manitoba. She paved the way for women to run. She was from the Lakeside constituency, and she was—she ran in 1953 and 1958, and she was a New Democrat living in a mostly Tory riding, and women were not often candidates in those days. And the person that she ran against was Premier Douglas Campbell. So you might find this a surprise, but she did not win, but I still recall those early, early days. I was very young at the time, and I remember my mother doing an interview on the radio, and I just remember how amazing it was to hear my mother's

voice coming across on the radio doing an interview. And she inspired me to get involved in politics, and I still recall how proud she was in—on—in September 1999; my family were with me, and so was my mother, almost in her 80s at that time, and it really is wonderful to have participated in this Legislature as the MLA for St. Vital.

I'd like to thank so many of my constituents that I have met along this fabulous journey. They have been fantastic. I would like to thank my constituency executive for their solid support over the years. They've been terrific. And I'd also like to say thank you to the Clerk's office for all of—you know, I—when I announced my retirement, I wasn't even sure how many pieces of legislation I had done, and I said, you know, I think I've done almost 30, and they actually counted it up, and I'd done 31 pieces of legislation. And I have to tell you, it got easier as it went on, but to have your support in those committee hearings and to have your support as you're developing legislation and working through it, particularly some of the legislation that I did wasn't the easiest. Sometimes there was amendments and changes in committee. Sometimes there was circumstances where people—I remember one night with the architects and engineers legislation, where a group of people went off out of one committee room and went into another committee room and drafted amendments and brought them back in, and Legislative Counsel and the Clerk's office, it was. You know, you folks are amazing. You keep this place running when sometimes we're—it must be like herding cats. I have no idea, sometimes, how you get all of this amazing work done and keep track of it, and so I just wanted to thank you, that you do a fine job, and we really are appreciative, as legislators, to have the opportunity to work with you.

And, of course, I've had the opportunity to work with many wonderful bureaucrats along the way. You know, one of the privileges of public life is, without question, the amazing people you get to work with on this journey—you know, bureaucrats and legislators. I've got some great friends in the bureaucracy that I've had so much fun with, and they've really made this job really terrific and really enjoyable, and I really want to say thank you to them.

I—also, I guess, I should say thanks to my family. They've been terrific and supportive throughout this journey, and I'm really excited about—I know this sounds a little silly—but I'm really excited about my calendar this year, because I put my photograph in,

of the night that I won—the night I won in 1999, and I actually had a colleague of mine tell me that I haven't changed a bit, and I looked at them and said: That's the right thing to say, which we know is definitely not true.

I just want to speak—I just want to take this opportunity to say how proud I am of this Throne Speech, and I wanted to talk about the commitment to child care in this Throne Speech. The commitment to the 12,000 spaces, as we go forward, is so important to my constituents and to the families in my community, because, without quality child care and affordable child care and accessible care, families these days, they cannot participate in our economy and they cannot participate in our society. And my community is a very mixed community, with lots—with a broad range of socio-economic status, and having child care that meets the needs of new Canadians and families in my community is very, very important.

I'm pleased to say that we have new child-care spaces opening up and being built at Little Saints Learning Centre in my community, and I want to thank, at this time, Pat Wege, for her commitment to the—to child care—the child-care community in this province, and she's been very inspirational. And I listened to her interview on the day of the Throne Speech, and she was very complimentary, and I know that Pat, you know, if she doesn't want to be complimentary, she's definitely not going to be complimentary. She calls a spade a spade, and she was very complimentary in regards to some of the negative stuff that we've been hearing from the opposition about, well, you've had 16 years and what have you done, and, you know, blah, blah, blah, and she said: No, this government has been committed to child care from the very beginning. We will have one of the best child-care systems in the province. We've increased wages. There is now a pension plan. We've increased spaces, and she said every time we rolled out a strategic plan, whether—there was one that was 5,000 spaces, we've met our commitments on this.

So we have been a leader in child care from the very beginning, and we're very, very proud of that, and it is a very important initiative for our families and the families in St. Vital. And I just want to say thank you to Pat Wege. She actually was a validator and said: I was quite excited that the Province is taking a bold step—bold, but necessary, and lots of Manitoba families are waiting for the kind of news that we heard today. We will be the first province outside Quebec to introduce a universal child-care

system. There's lots of good news in today's Throne Speech.

So I just want to thank Pat for continuing to work with us and look forward to Little Saints Learning Centre and the new child-care spaces.

* (16:50)

I'd also like to mention how thrilled I am with the announcement that I was able to make at Dakota Collegiate about three weeks ago. I made that announcement with Councillor Brian Mayes; and my colleagues in the Legislature; and Jill Mathez, the principal there; Dean Favoni, who is the head of the field of dreams announcement; and Robbie Mager, who is a long-time educator at Dakota Collegiate. And this is a very exciting announcement about having a football field and a cricket field as well and a running track around the football field. This is a huge accomplishment for the Dakota Collegiate, and this—our government is committing a million dollars to it.

Councillor Mayes committed the first lead gift of \$600,000. There's an aggressive fundraising campaign happening to complete the project; it's a total of \$4.2 million. But our lead gift of a million dollars is really going to help the Dakota Collegiate realize that dream.

It's hard to believe that Dakota Collegiate, they—the football team can't even practise at their high school; they have to—they have nowhere to practise. They have to go somewhere else to practise. They have to have their own games at someone—somebody else's high school because they have nowhere to play football.

Like, I am just so thrilled, and I really want to congratulate the leadership at Dakota Collegiate who have seen—who are just so committed to this project, and it's such an exciting project. And it's going to be a project where the community can also participate and come and use the cricket field, can come and use the green space, and it's really going to be exciting for St. Vital and the whole community.

Of course, as the former minister of Education, I'd be remiss if I didn't say what an honour it was to be the minister of Education for four years, and it was just an absolutely wonderful four years of my life working with all of the education partners in—and they were just so fantastic to work with. And I'm very proud of our government's investment in

education, and I really was proud to be able to do some legislation while I was the minister.

One of the things that was near and dear to my heart was changing the age of going to school from 16 to 18. I felt that it was important to have that in legislation because, you know, education is a equalizer. If you don't have an education and you don't have that diploma in your hand to show that you have graduated from high school, that is a barrier, and I was so pleased that the education community just came right on board with that and said absolutely we need to find ways of keeping our young people in school.

And, like, not every young person wants to go to school from 8:30 in the morning until 4 o'clock in the afternoon. So many young people—many young people that are going to school have part-time jobs; some of them have part-time jobs and they're helping their parents because their parents have part-time jobs. Many young people have children, and they're trying to finish their education.

So it's important for us to realize that we have to look at the world that we're living in and support those young people in getting their education and providing resources to them and providing different models of education, not saying, okay, if you're not here from 8:30 to 4 o'clock, we're failing you. No, just—the educators told me if we can just get them to come in the door; regardless of how long we're here, we can continue to work with them so that we can get them their education.

I really want to thank all of the educators that I chatted with about that legislation who just were so positive about it and came on board right away.

Of course, we made significant investments all across this province. Science labs, I remember how this all started. I was—I'd only been the minister for about a year, and I went out to visit my old high school. And I was touring around the high school and having a look at the new music room, and we were on our way back from the music room and I was walking down the hallway and I went, oh, it's the science lab. I remember doing—I remember being in the science lab, and I'm not going to say some of the things I might have been doing in there, but I just kind of wanted to visit it and drop in for a bit. I walked in and I looked around and I went OMG, it has not changed since I left school and that wasn't exactly yesterday.

I came back to the—to my office and I met with my deputy minister and I said, what are we doing about science labs in this province? And that started the whole thing. And I'm just so proud that we have been investing in science labs all across this province because how can we educate our young people for the jobs in the new economy when you don't have proper science labs? And they're so exciting these days. The science labs in these schools, they're doing stuff that is just so exciting. It's—it really is helping them with their education. And, of course, then there's gymnasiums. We've—we had some schools that had no gymnasiums; now they have gymnasiums.

I'm very thrilled that Jocelyn House was mentioned in—[interjection] No, I won't start crying again. I'm very thrilled that Jocelyn House and palliative care was in the Throne Speech. I talked earlier today about the importance of Jocelyn House, one of the first palliative-care homes, a safe place for people to spend their final—their lives in their final stages of life and to be supported.

And I was actually in Jocelyn House about six weeks ago. I stopped by to have a conversation with Jackie Stephen about their project for more capital beds—capital—more spaces, more beds. And it was a beautiful experience because there was this woman that was sitting there in the living room, and Jackie and I are meeting at a table, and there is this woman sitting, like, literally six feet away from us, and she is sitting there, and she is knitting, and she is knitting for Siloam Mission and for charities and she had moved into Jocelyn House recently, and she had been somewhere else where she spent all day in her room, and she had—she did not have good quality of life, and she was—we had an opportunity to chat with her and talk to her, and then I attended a luncheon about a month ago, and the—and she came to the luncheon, and she was there to speak on behalf of—say a few words, and she's just—it's just meant the world to her to have this place. And that's really what

we want people to be able to do is to die with dignity, and I just want to say that I'm just so thrilled and congratulate Jocelyn House and the board of directors for their vision for more palliative-care beds.

I do also want to say that, you know, I mentioned that I did 31 pieces of legislation, but, obviously, the one that was nearest and dearest to my heart, of course, was Bill 18, and I want to say thank you to all of my colleagues on this side of the House who were so supportive of Bill 18 and who unanimously supported Bill 18. Bill 18, a piece of human rights legislation that we know is the best in the country because it covered all schools, including funded independent schools, is making a difference, and we know that because when we have conversations with the Rainbow Resource Centre and they tell us about the number of gay-straight alliances that are now in schools, we—and the training and the support that they are providing to those schools, we know that this is very exciting, because we know what a difference gay-straight alliances can make in schools. We know, and teachers told us, gay-straight alliances save lives. And we heard that very clearly during the Bill 18 committee hearings.

And I believe that this is—and this isn't the only thing that our government has done in regard to human rights legislation for the LGBTTQ community. We have been very progressive on this, and we have to have respect for people, for their diversity, and we—and I should just mention this; I'm sure they'd be thrilled to be mentioned in my speech today, that I got a message from—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order.

When this matter's again before the House, the honourable member for St. Vital will have 10 minutes remaining.

The hour being 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow morning. The House is adjourned.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, November 19, 2015

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