

Second Session - Thirty-Ninth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

Official Report
(Hansard)

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Ninth Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALLAN, Nancy, Hon.	St. Vital	N.D.P.
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	N.D.P.
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	N.D.P.
BJORNSON, Peter, Hon.	Gimli	N.D.P.
BLADY, Sharon	Kirkfield Park	N.D.P.
BOROTSIK, Rick	Brandon West	P.C.
BRAUN, Erna	Rossmere	N.D.P.
BRICK, Marilyn	St. Norbert	N.D.P.
BRIESE, Stuart	Ste. Rose	P.C.
CALDWELL, Drew	Brandon East	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CULLEN, Cliff	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard	Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary, Hon.	Concordia	N.D.P.
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
EICHLER, Ralph	Lakeside	P.C.
FAURSCHOU, David	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	P.C.
GRAYDON, Cliff	Emerson	P.C.
HAWRANIK, Gerald	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
HICKES, George, Hon.	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
HOWARD, Jennifer	Fort Rouge	N.D.P.
IRVIN-ROSS, Kerri, Hon.	Fort Garry	N.D.P.
JENNISSON, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
JHA, Bidhu	Radisson	N.D.P.
KORZENIOWSKI, Bonnie	St. James	N.D.P.
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Lib.
LATHLIN, Oscar, Hon.	The Pas	N.D.P.
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	La Verendrye	N.D.P.
MACKINTOSH, Gord, Hon.	St. Johns	N.D.P.
MAGUIRE, Larry	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	N.D.P.
MARCELINO, Flor	Wellington	N.D.P.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McFADYEN, Hugh	Fort Whyte	P.C.
McGIFFORD, Diane, Hon.	Lord Roberts	N.D.P.
MELNICK, Christine, Hon.	Riel	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	P.C.
NEVAKSHONOFF, Tom	Interlake	N.D.P.
OSWALD, Theresa, Hon.	Seine River	N.D.P.
PEDERSEN, Blaine	Carman	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
ROBINSON, Eric, Hon.	Rupertsland	N.D.P.
RONDEAU, Jim, Hon.	Assiniboia	N.D.P.
ROWAT, Leanne	Minnedosa	P.C.
SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	N.D.P.
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield	P.C.
SELBY, Erin	Southdale	N.D.P.
SELINGER, Greg, Hon.	St. Boniface	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan, Hon.	Dauphin-Roblin	N.D.P.
SWAN, Andrew	Minto	N.D.P.
TAILLIEU, Mavis	Morris	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, November 22, 2007

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYER

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 2—The Public Schools Amendment Act (Trans Fats and Nutrition)

Hon. Peter Bjornson (Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth): I move, seconded by the Minister of Healthy Living (Ms. Irvin-Ross), that Bill 2, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Trans Fats and Nutrition); Loi modifiant la Loi sur les écoles publiques (gras trans et nutrition), be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Bjornson: This bill requires every school to have a food and nutrition policy and to ensure that schools do not sell or distribute food containing trans fats. There is a significant body of evidence indicating trans fats may do more harm than saturated fats and, as such, this legislation is yet another step in promoting and ensuring healthy choices for our children throughout Manitoba schools. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell): Before I get to the introduction of my bill, I am wondering if I could ask leave of the House—

Mr. Speaker: I'm sorry. I have to put the question to the bill.

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

Mr. Derkach: Thank you. Once again, I'm wondering if prior to my introduction of this bill, if I might ask for leave of the House for Mr. Speaker to alter the proceedings to introduce the guests who have assembled here this afternoon to mark the introduction of this bill and this important day.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House for the Speaker to introduce his guests that are in the Speaker's Gallery?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave has been granted.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Survivors of Holodomor Ukrainian famine of 1932-33 living in the province of Manitoba: Anastasia Kowalchuk, Halyna Panasiuk, Luba Perehinec, Anna Shewel; accompanied by Reverend Dr. Jaroslav Buciora, Leo Ledohowski, Cindy Carswell. These are the guests of the honourable Member for Russell.

Bill 217—The Ukrainian Famine and Genocide Memorial Day Act

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale), that Bill 217, The Ukrainian Famine and Genocide Memorial Day Act, be now read for a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, before I get to speak to the intent of the bill, I, once again, rise in an unprecedented way in the House. I know in my 20-some-odd years in the House I have not done this, but today is kind of an unusual day, when we have an opposition member's bill being seconded by a member of government. I think, in the true non-partisanship, I would also ask leave of the House that the seconder of this motion be allowed to put a few comments on the record in the introduction of this bill.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave for the seconder to put a few comments on this bill that's being introduced? Is there leave?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave has been granted.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, today the introduction of this bill is basically to commemorate an event that occurred 75 years ago, and the end of this month marks an occasion when we can all, in the world, in Canada and in Manitoba, mark a horrific event that occurred in the 1932 to 1933 year in the forced famine of Ukrainians in the Ukraine by the Soviet Union's forced famine.

Tonight, Mr. Speaker, we also will be celebrating, not celebrating, but commemorating this event with the Premier's (Mr. Doer) showing of a video that includes the members of our guests here today, who will be telling their story in terms of the famine, who lived through the famine and immigrated to this country and to this province. To that, we have to thank Canad Inns, Leo Ledohowski, who sponsored this film and indeed have put this film together to commemorate this event.

Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that we can join hands together with opposition and all Manitobans to pass this bill in Manitoba to commemorate this event and the horrific suffering and the tragedies that occurred as a result of the forced famine. There are many people across this province whose families were part of that genocide and it is time to mark that occasion. Mnohaya lita vichny iy pamyat to those who perished in that famine.

Translation

Many happy years and everlasting memories.

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Member for Russell for asking me to second this bill and for asking for leave to speak.

The purpose of this bill is to enshrine in legislation the same wording as my resolution of 2004, namely, that the fourth Saturday of November in each year is known as Ukrainian famine genocide memorial day. Vichny iy pamyat. [*Everlasting memories*]

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

Bill 201—The Phosphorus-Free Dishwashing Detergent Act

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the MLA for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), that Bill 201, The Phosphorus-Free Dishwashing Detergent Act; Loi sur les détergents à vaisselle sans phosphore, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

* (13:40)

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, this bill is a re-introduction of a bill which we first introduced about a year ago, which would essentially ban phosphorus in automatic dishwashing detergents and would be a very important step in reducing the

phosphorus load into Lake Winnipeg and helping, as one part, in the clean-up and the reduction of the algal blooms in Lake Winnipeg.

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

PETITIONS

Crocus Investment Fund—Public Inquiry

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to the petition is as follows:

The 2007 provincial election did not clear the NDP government of any negligence with regard to the Crocus Fund fiasco.

The government needs to uncover the whole truth as to what ultimately led to over 33,000 Crocus shareholders to lose tens of millions of dollars.

The provincial Auditor's report, the Manitoba Securities Commission's investigation, the RCMP investigation, the involvement of revenue Canada and our courts, collectively, will not answer the questions that must be answered in regard to the Crocus Fund fiasco.

Manitobans need to know why the government ignored the many warnings that could have saved the Crocus Investment Fund.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Premier (Mr. Doer) and his NDP government to co-operate in uncovering the truth in why the government did not act on what it knew and to consider calling a public inquiry on the Crocus Fund fiasco.

Mr. Speaker, this is signed by E. Tangco, Fred Marasigan, D. Mendoza and many, many other fine Manitobans. Thank you.

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

Dividing of Trans-Canada Highway

Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

The seven-kilometre stretch of the Trans-Canada Highway passing through Headingley is an extremely busy stretch of road, averaging 18,000 vehicles daily.

This section of the Trans-Canada Highway is one of the few remaining stretches of undivided highway in Manitoba, and it has seen more than 100 accidents in the last two years, some of them fatal.

Manitoba's Assistant Deputy Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation told a Winnipeg radio station on October 16 of 2007, that when it comes to highways' projects the provincial government has a flexible response program, and we have a couple of opportunities to advance these projects in our five-year plan.

In the interests of protecting motorist safety, it is critical that the dividing of the Trans-Canada Highway in Headingley is completed as soon as possible.

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

To request the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation (Mr. Lemieux) to consider making the completion of the dividing of the Trans-Canada Highway in Headingley in 2008 an urgent provincial government priority.

To request the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation to consider evaluating whether any other steps can be taken to improve motorist safety while the dividing of the Trans-Canada Highway in Headingley is being completed.

This is signed by Doris Anderson, Art Anderson, Natalie Girard and many, many other Manitobans.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Standing Committee on Crown Corporations First Report

Mr. Bidhu Jha (Vice-Chairperson): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the First Report of the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations.

Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk): Your Standing Committee on Crown Corporations presents the following as its First Report.

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on Crown Corporations presents the following as its First Report.

Meetings

Your committee met on the following occasions:

Thursday, September 16, 2004, (2nd Session – 38th Legislature)

Thursday, October 6, 2005, (3rd Session – 38th Legislature)

Wednesday, November 21, 2007

All meetings were held in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

The Annual Report of the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation for the year ended March 31, 2003

The Annual Report of the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation for the year ended March 31, 2004

The Annual Report of the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation for the year ended March 31, 2005

The Annual Report of the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation for the year ended March 31, 2006

The Annual Report of the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation for the year ended March 31, 2007

Committee Membership

Substitutions received prior to commencement of the September 16, 2004, meeting:

Mr. Jha for Mr. Dewar

Ms. Irvin-Ross for Ms. Korzeniowski

Mr. Eichler for Cummings

Mr. Goertzen for Faurischou

Committee Membership for the October 6, 2005, meeting:

Ms. Brick (Vice-Chairperson)

Mr. Dewar

Mr. Eichler

Mr. Faurischou

Mr. Jha

Mr. Martindale (Chairperson)

Mr. Reid

Mr. Rocan

Mr. Schellenberg

Mr. Schuler

Hon. Mr. Smith

Committee Membership for the November 21, 2007, meeting:

Mr. Dewar

Mr. Jha (Vice-Chairperson)

Ms. Korzeniowski
 Ms. Marcelino
 Mr. Reid
 Ms. Selby
 Hon. Mr. Selinger
 Mr. Borotsik
 Mr. Eichler
 Mr. Faurschou
 Mr. Graydon

Your committee elected Mr. Reid as the Chairperson.

Officials Speaking on Record at the September 16, 2004, meeting:

Winston Hodgins, President and Chief Executive Officer

Officials Speaking on Record at the October 6, 2005, meeting:

Winston Hodgins, President and Chief Executive Officer

Officials Speaking on Record at the November 21, 2007, meeting:

Winston Hodgins, President and Chief Executive Officer

Reports Considered and Passed

Your committee considered and passed the following report as presented:

The Annual Report of the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation for the year ended March 31, 2003

Reports Considered but not Passed

Your committee considered the following reports but did not pass them:

The Annual Report of the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation for the year ended March 31, 2004

The Annual Report of the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation for the year ended March 31, 2005

The Annual Report of the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation for the year ended March 31, 2006

The Annual Report of the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation for the year ended March 31, 2007

Mr. Jha: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Wellington (Ms. Marcelino), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Ukrainian Famine Anniversary

Hon. Rosann Wowchuk (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives): Mr. Speaker, I have a statement for the House.

I rise today in recognition of the day of the Ukrainian famine. In 1932 and 1933, an estimated seven million Ukrainians died of starvation in a deliberately induced famine which is one of the worse atrocities of the Soviet regime.

This horrible act was an assault on not only Ukrainian people but on the very principles of a democracy, freedom and human dignity. The realities of the genocidal famine known in Ukraine as Holodomor have slowly come to light since the disintegration of the Soviet Union. There is evidence that many Ukrainians suffered slow, horrifying deaths in a conscious act by the Soviet regime to starve the Ukrainian people and to take away their hope for a free and independent Ukraine. There are strong and vibrant Ukrainian communities here in Manitoba and across the country. The famine and genocide of the 1930s affected hundreds of thousands of Canadians who have their roots in Ukraine.

In 2004, on the 70th anniversary of the famine, the Manitoba Legislature unanimously passed a resolution brought forward by the Member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale), commemorating this tragic event. In doing so, we joined legislatures from around the world declaring the famine as a reprehensible act of genocide. The resolution also called for the government to declare the last Saturday of November as the Day of the Ukrainian Famine/Genocide of 1932 and 1933, which has been done.

In passing the resolution, we were able to stand with the Ukrainian community in a gesture honouring those who lost their lives and the massive impact it has had on Ukrainians throughout the world. In addition, we acted upon the principles which this government holds dear, the principles of democracy, freedom, human rights and human dignity. It is only with these hard lessons of the past that we can hope to prevent re-occurrences of political genocides in the future.

Mr. Speaker, after other members have made their statement, I would like to ask this House to join me in a moment of silence in recognizing the Ukrainian famine and genocide of 1932 and 1933.

Mr. Speaker, to the people in the gallery: Vichny iy pamyat and mnohaya lita.

Translation

Everlasting memories and many happy years.

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell): Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank the Minister of Agriculture for her comments today.

Mr. Speaker, this is an event which we all wish had never happened, but the reality of the world is such that events like this do happen in our history. It is important for us to recognize, even though they are horrific, even though they are tragic, that it is important to commemorate them so that as people we can learn from these mistakes, and we can commit ourselves to ensuring that things of this kind never happen again.

Mr. Speaker, I haven't seen the film, but tonight I look forward to hearing the recounts of the individuals who are with us here as our guests today in the Legislature. Rather than them being my guests, I think it's important to note that they are the guests of the Legislature and guests of all of us because I think this event, this horrific event, touches upon all of us because we are all citizens of this province who believe and hold passionately the rights of freedom and democracy.

* (13:50)

Mr. Speaker, as we commemorate this event, there are going to be celebrations, if you like. There are going to be church services, solemn occasions that are going to take place over the course of the next week. This Sunday, Father Buciora, who's with us today from St. Mary the Protectress church, will be hosting a Mass at which time our leader will be present at the event. This is once again an occasion to mark the importance of this day, the importance not only to Manitobans and Canadians, but indeed the importance to commemorate this event throughout the world.

It is also important to note that the United Nations are now in discussions to ensure that this is considered an act of genocide, Mr. Speaker, so it's recognized throughout the world as the act of genocide because the world has not really known about this in the way that it should know.

Mr. Speaker, there are other atrocities that have happened across this world that are commemorated, and this is another one that needs to be commemorated because there were more than seven million people who died in this genocide. And it was an imposed genocide, an imposed famine upon the people of Ukraine. Many of these people emigrated to this country and to this province and have richly contributed to the makeup of our country, and I only want to name a few. We have had the Lieutenant-Governor of our province, one of our Lieutenant-Governors of our province, has been of Ukrainian descent. The Premier, one of our premiers of our province, has been a descendant of the Ukrainian people. So Ukrainians have indeed contributed richly to the makeup and the culture of our country.

To our friends in Ukraine, we want to send them the signal that indeed, we do recognize this as a horrific event that occurred, and to them I say, and I'm sure I'm joined with members of this House, *[Ukrainian spoken]* And to the survivors, we honour you today. We know that some of these events that you have to recount are difficult for you, but indeed we honour you and celebrate the fact that you are with us here today to commemorate this important event.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member have leave?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave has been granted.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, I join the other members of this Legislature in an all-party effort to remember the tragedy that happened in the Ukraine with the famine of 1932, 1933. It was a terrible, tragic, awful and horrific event. It is one that we need to learn from. It is one that we should use and know about to arm ourselves to be ready to act when genocides are threatened or happen in the future as is going on now in Darfur.

But, certainly, members of the Liberal Party will be joining other MLAs in supporting Bill 217. It is important that we have a memorial day for Ukrainian famine and genocide of 1932, 1933. It is important that all Manitobans, all Canadians, are aware of what happened and acknowledge the wrongs that were committed then, understand the forces that led to

them happening and rededicate ourselves now and in the future to preventing such forces from ever coming forward again.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave to have a moment of silence?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave has been granted. We'll have a moment of silence.

A moment of silence was observed.

ORAL QUESTIONS

City of Winnipeg Water Rate Increase

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): I know that the Premier has an important commitment today on a human rights-related matter, so for that reason would just like to use some leaders' latitude to just say initially that I very much appreciate the comments made by the Deputy Premier (Ms. Wowchuk), the Member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) and the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach), on this important day and very much want to thank those members of the gallery who were able to join us today as survivors of that horrific era in the history of our world, and certainly look forward and feel honoured to have been invited to participate in the Mass to take place this coming Sunday.

I also want to just say, on a related note, convey to the members of the Asper family the congratulations of members of our caucus on the award that will be presented to them tonight at a gala in Toronto by the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews. The Premier, with our full support, will be in attendance at that event as an important participant and, I know, will represent Manitoba and the people of our province extremely well as he always does.

I just want to say thank you again to the Asper family, the late Israel Asper, for his great vision and commitment, Babs Asper, the next generation of that family, Gail, Leonard and David, for the outstanding work that they do on an ongoing basis to raise issues of human rights within our free society and also indicate again our full support for the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, our support for the role that the Premier has taken in bringing it about, and certainly look forward to the establishment of that

great institution which will allow us, in other ways, to recall and learn lessons from events such as the Ukrainian genocide that we have discussed so solemnly today.

Again, my good wishes, our good wishes, to the Premier, to the Asper family, as this important award is being presented. Certainly, when we listen to the significance of these events in history, it does put into some perspective the various issues that we debate here in this Chamber about what is taking place in Manitoba, although it does remind us of the importance of a vigorous democracy here in Manitoba, the importance of opposition playing a vigorous role and certainly government governing in the best interests of our province.

I just want to, on that note, in recognition of the various other important things taking place today, and certainly the event tonight in Toronto, come back to what is a matter of significant concern to many people, particularly here in Winnipeg, on a fixed income, many of whom are struggling to get by from day to day, many of whom don't have the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to automatically increase their income every time they are hit with an increased cost.

What I'm making reference to is the decision yesterday at Winnipeg City Council to hike water rates by in excess of 11 percent. For many Manitobans who are the more privileged ones among us that is something that may not seem unreasonable, but for those who are at the lower end of the scale and seniors on fixed incomes it is a significant issue, Mr. Speaker.

We know that, of the estimated \$1.8 billion that these projects represent, the government has announced a commitment to only 11 percent of that total cost even though the government has imposed close to half a billion dollars in costs that many scientists are saying are entirely unnecessary because of the requirement placed on the City to remove nitrogen at a time when scientists are saying proceed first with phosphorus.

The government has said no, we'll disregard that science. We'll impose an added cost of half a billion dollars, which at this stage has no scientific justification, on top of the hundreds of millions to be wasted on the power line, \$500 million in waste in respect of what the City is having to do and a commitment of only 11 percent in funding. This is an NDP water rate hike on the people of Winnipeg. It is

an NDP-imposed increase in water prices on Winnipeggers who are on fixed incomes.

Will the Premier take responsibility for his water rate increase, and will he indicate that from now on—will he take steps to make decisions based on science? And, instead of acting as though he's putting his own money into the project, will he demonstrate some concern, not just for Manitoba taxpayers, but for the Winnipeg ratepayers who are going to pay the price for his mismanagement?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): In terms of democracy and accountability, it is preferable that there be accountability on both sides of the aisle. I would point out the last time I looked there wasn't a lot of New Democrats at City Hall, not that I can comment on another institution.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

* (14:00)

Mr. Doer: You know, the old running with the hounds and baying with the wolves would be appropriate for members opposite, Mr. Speaker.

On Monday, they proposed that we match the federal Conservative amount of money for Lake Winnipeg clean-up which would have been a cut in the City of Winnipeg investment in water and the water investments we're making all over Manitoba.

Monday, it's a cut in our budget. Tuesday, they huddled for about 20 minutes and came out into the hallway and didn't know what to say. Wednesday, members opposite feign indignation and defend the federal government bureaucrat for potentially cutting money out of the floodway which would take away the potential for one-third funding for one of the three partners. And today, after we fund an unprecedented amount of money for the City of Winnipeg for sewage treatment, after we funded 50 percent of the West End treatment plant—they got the crumbs off the table from the Conservatives when they were in office—after we give a commitment for the North End and South End treatment plant to deal with the two licensing requirements, they then make another claim.

So, Monday, they want to cut the budget; Tuesday, they don't know what to say; Wednesday, they want to support the federal government from

walking away from the commitments of infrastructure; and today, they have abandoned their cousins at City Hall for raising the water rates.

Mr. Speaker, feigning indignation is not being held accountable for a consistent policy. We have a consistent partnership in Winnipeg, and we're proud of it.

Mr. McFadyen: The Premier is absolutely wrong on every single one of those points as usual, Mr. Speaker. I know that he has a hard time understanding why it is that a federal government would be concerned about putting money into the hands of a government that has a track record of waste and mismanagement of every single project they put their hands on.

You know, they overspend by \$60 million on the floodway because they enter into an agreement that scares off contractors from bidding on projects. Then they say, oh, why won't the federal government come along and bail us out? They impose \$500 million of wastage on the City of Winnipeg waste-water operation. And then they say, oh, why won't the federal government come along and bail us out of this one? They impose more than a billion dollars of waste on a Hydro decision, and then they wonder why the federal government is reluctant to enter into infrastructure agreements with this government.

So if he's wondering about accountability and who's responsible for the fact that he can't get things done with the federal government, all he has to do is take a look in the mirror and ask himself why, day after day, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursdays and Fridays, he flushes money down the toilet to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars, Mr. Speaker, and then turns around and expects the federal government to bail him out, time and time again.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Premier: Rather than attempting to blame Mayor Katz and members of council for the decision that they're making when it was his government that imposed on the City of Winnipeg a requirement to spend an added half-billion dollars on upgrades that the scientists are saying aren't required; rather than attempting to blame City Council for this latest example of mismanagement, then he comes in and says, oh, well, we're going to force them to waste half a billion, and we'll come in and cover half of that with provincial taxpayers' money, it doesn't add up. There's one taxpayer. Provincial taxpayers are going to underwrite half the waste that they've imposed on

the civic government. Water rates are going to go up more than 11 percent because of the NDP government that is mismanaging the province.

Will the Premier take responsibility for making decisions without science, and will he stop the process of blaming the federal government and blaming the City every time something goes wrong because of decisions that he's made, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, I actually thought the member opposite was the campaign chair for the incumbent mayor, and now he obviously wants to run against the mayor. I guess members opposite are going to abandon the Conservative Party of Manitoba and run against Conservatives in ridings all across the city of Winnipeg. I guess this is the clarion call that they're going back to City Hall.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member opposite, when he says he's wrong, is wrong. Because on Monday, his alternative so-called Speech from the Throne, besides saying, oh, we shouldn't be land developers, except that he forgot about his Point Douglas create-a-marina and knock-all-the-houses-down promise, and he added another \$328 million of tax reductions without explaining where he was going to get the money, besides all those inconsistencies from the election campaign—and he's lucky that people don't hold him accountable—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Let's have a little decorum here.

Mr. Doer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. His alternative Speech from the Throne, which would have been a cut in the investments and sewage treatment of water protection for Lake Winnipeg, his call ongoing for us to match \$3 million a year with the federal government, represented a cut in our water protection budget and our sewage treatment budget. The increase potentially for so-called—if you can look at the connection between this body and the other—represents a cut in money.

I'm pleased that we put in 50 percent of the money for the West End treatment plant. I'm also pleased that we pledged our one-third for the South End and North End treatment plant. I'm also pleased that we promised money for rural and northern Manitoba, and surely to goodness he's not saying that this political Legislature should overrule a licensing

requirement made by scientists and made by a body at the Clean Environment Commission. Surely he doesn't want to overrule the Clean Environment Commission, Mr. Speaker.

City of Winnipeg Government Funding for Sewage System

Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East): Mr. Speaker, there is one consistent policy that this Premier and this government has, and that is a policy that says that they haven't put a penny into fixing or upgrading the combined sewer system in the city of Winnipeg for seven years, and they're talking about not putting a penny in for another seven years.

Mr. Speaker, will this government come clean with the taxpayers and the City of Winnipeg and admit that the \$206 million that was pledged in the Throne Speech will not do one thing to fix the issue of raw sewage being dumped into our rivers?

* (14:10)

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I must admit, when I came to my office this morning, I read the newspaper. I predicted there might, for the first time, be a question about the City of Winnipeg from members of the opposition. Not one question in Estimates. Not one question on the budget of last year which brought in an 18 percent increase to funding in the City of Winnipeg. Not a question about the fact that after the cuts—[interjection]

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ashton:—when they were in government in terms of transit funding. We're now at 50-50 funding. The NDP government's reinstated that.

They skim over the waste-water funding, Mr. Speaker, the fact that they didn't send it to the Clean Environment Commission in 1992 when it should have gone. We did. We got the licensing requirements. We're now supporting the City of Winnipeg with funding. [interjection]

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Thanks—[interjection]

Mr. Speaker: Order.

The honourable Member for River East has the floor.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. If the government thinks that their dismal record on

Child and Family Services and the Department of Housing are questions that don't impact the city of Winnipeg, they're a little out of touch with reality.

Mr. Speaker, will the government indicate and come clean with the taxpayers of the city of Winnipeg? The Premier (Mr. Doer) indicated last week on a radio interview that they weren't going to do anything about raw sewage that's being dumped into our rivers till after 2014.

Mr. Speaker, will this government come clean, admit to Winnipeggers that they have no plan and take some action to stop the effluent going into our rivers?

Mr. Ashton: Indeed, Mr. Speaker, there's a great deal happening in the city of Winnipeg including the announcement today, the public consultation to the new Women's Hospital. In fact, I believe there's also an Access centre in River East, showing again that this is a government that's concerned about all elements.

Mr. Speaker, I find it absolutely bizarre that a member of the then-government that refused to send the issue of the waste-water plant or any licensing question for the City of Winnipeg to the Clean Environment Commission is now, after their leader has stated in Question Period and in the election campaign that he rejects the Clean Environment Commission's licensing requirement of removal of both nitrogen and phosphorus that now the Member for River East gets up and talks about the combined sewer overflow system.

I want to explain that before it was sent for licensing, it was going to be taken out in 50 years. It is going to be in a much accelerated removal. But, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Phosphorus Treatment Lake Winnipeg

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): Mr. Speaker, scientists at the University of Manitoba and at the federal Freshwater Institute say that the real culprit in the growth of blue-green algae in Lake Winnipeg is phosphorus. The manager of engineering at the City's waste-water department has said that if the Province opts for a phosphorus-first plan, the City could likely remove phosphorus from its waste water within a couple of years and it would cost, perhaps, a

quarter of the full nutrient removal plan the Province has mandated.

Mr. Speaker, given that well-respected scientists and engineers agree that dealing with phosphorus first will yield immediate results and be less costly, will the minister agree to refer this directive back to the Clean Environment Commission in order to save taxpayers of Manitoba billions of dollars, and get on with the real issue at hand and that is cleaning up Lake Winnipeg?

Hon. Stan Struthers (Minister of Conservation): So, Mr. Speaker, 1992 to 1998, members opposite stuck their heads in the sand, couldn't approach the CEC, didn't do a thing about the problem they're squawking about now, and now their Winnipeg position is to get tough; get tough with regulations, when their own leader goes out to Brandon and gives the other side of their position which is let's ditch all of these regulations.

What's your position? Is it your Winnipeg position or is it your rural Manitoba position?

Mrs. Stefanson: Mr. Speaker, what Manitobans are looking for on this issue is real action, real results and real leadership from this government. Unfortunately, they're not getting it.

Given that the Province is not willing to live up to its own mandate to cover one-third of the costs of upgrading the treatment facilities, the waste-water treatment facilities in the city of Winnipeg, and given that well-respected scientists and engineers in this province have stated that we need a phosphorus-first plan and it's less costly to taxpayers of this province, Mr. Speaker, why won't the minister do the right thing and refer this directive back to the Clean Environment Commission in order to save Manitobans hundreds of millions of dollars and get on with the real issue at hand, and that is cleaning up Lake Winnipeg?

Mr. Struthers: Let's be very clear, Mr. Speaker. This government, whether it's within the limits of the city of Winnipeg, has been there for people, has been there for the environment. We've been there working with the City of Winnipeg. We're the ones who went to the CEC in the first place when you wouldn't do it. We've been in every constituency, every community of this province along with our partners at the local level and at the federal level through Canada-Manitoba Infrastructure. We've been there when it counted. You missed the boat.

Shellmouth-Boulton Cottage Lot Development Sewage Disposal Agreement

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell): Well, the minister didn't only miss the boat; he's still looking for it.

Mr. Speaker, more than a hundred cottage lots have been developed along Lake of the Prairies with absolutely no plan for sewage disposal for all of those lots. The Province is the developer for those lots. The Municipality of Shellmouth-Boulton met with the Minister of Infrastructure (Mr. Lemieux) and asked him whether he and his department will enter into a development agreement with the municipality so that they can expand their lagoon to accommodate sewage from the hundred-plus cottages that are being developed along Lake of the Prairies. The minister and the Water Services Board told the R.M. that they have no responsibility for that particular infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask either the Minister of Infrastructure, the Minister of Conservation: Who is responsible for entering into a development agreement with the R.M. of Shellmouth-Boulton so that they can expand their lagoon to accommodate the sewage effluent from the cottages?

Hon. Stan Struthers (Minister of Conservation): It looks to me that the only thing green about members opposite is they're green with envy when it comes to both development and sustainability. I want to be very clear with the Member for Russell. We're not moving forward with this very good project without a plan which is in place, which is absolutely in place for the cottage lot developments, very popular ones, I might add, on Lake of the Prairies. We're not moving forward with the plan and Mr. Speaker, there is a plan. The jealousy across the way astounds me.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Derkach: Well, Mr. Speaker, the only thing green about this government is the growing green on Lake Winnipeg and the growing green on our lakes.

The minister says he has a plan, but the municipalities don't know what the plan is. The cottage owners who have built their cottages already don't know what the plan is, Mr. Speaker. Where is the sewage to go? I ask the Minister responsible for Infrastructure, who is also responsible for the Water Services Board, to explain the comment that his Water Services Board and he made to the municipality regarding the fact that it is not their

responsibility to enter into any agreements or to pay for any infrastructure at cottage development sites.

Mr. Struthers: Well, Mr. Speaker, specifically on the questions that the member's asking, the cottage lot development that is north of the Shellmouth-Boulton municipality and Shell River have an agreement at the Town of Roblin in conjunction with others in the area. South of that line, they have an agreement with the R.M. of Shellmouth-Boulton to do the same thing. There is a plan in place.

* (14:20)

On top of that, Mr. Speaker, I hope that members opposite, when they have a chance to vote in favour of the \$150 million for rural infrastructure that was mentioned in our Throne Speech, when they're asking these kinds of questions, they have the courage to stand up and vote for that because that helps, too.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, I can't help but accuse the minister of misleading the House.

I just spoke to the R.M. of Shellmouth, the CAO of the Shellmouth-Boulton municipality, who told me there is no development agreement in place between the government and the municipality for sewage disposal in that municipality. The lagoon at Inglis, which is the Shellmouth-Boulton lagoon, is full to capacity. The Roblin lagoon is full to capacity.

Mr. Speaker, what are cottage owners to do with the sewage from their cottages when, in fact, municipal lagoons are full and the Province refuses to enter into agreement with those municipalities?

Mr. Struthers: As usual, the members opposite don't have their homework done, Mr. Speaker.

There are plans in place and there's work being done and there is a place for the sewage that is being produced. It is a place for it to go in Roblin and in other areas in that part of the world. It's a good program. We've worked with the municipalities to make that happen, and it is happening, Mr. Speaker.

Economy—Manitoba Personal Income Tax Deductions

Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon West): Mr. Speaker, that is an amazing answer. I just can't believe the non-answer coming from that minister.

This Finance Minister seems to confuse stable with stagnant. This NDP government and the Finance Minister are only too happy with mediocrity.

That is why Saskatchewan is beating us in 10 out of 11 competitiveness rankings.

The Finance Minister could have been bold and he could have been progressive in this Throne Speech. He could have raised the basic personal exemption to match the feds at \$9,600, or the least he could have done is match Saskatchewan at \$8,800. He could have raised the middle tax bracket from 30,000 to match Saskatchewan's at 38,000. But no, Mr. Speaker, that would have been meaningful.

Mr. Speaker, is the Minister of Finance comfortable with being just mediocre?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, if the member would just spend a moment on the facts, he will notice that on January 1 the basic personal exemption will increase by \$200, taking 4,000 people off the tax rolls. The spousal amount will now be made equal to the personal deduction. It's an increase of 24 percent from about \$6,600 to \$8,000.

The middle income tax bracket will drop again. It started at 16.7 when we came into office. It's now down to 13. It will go to 12.75. The threshold between the middle and the top brackets has gone from \$60,000 to \$66,000.

The small business tax rate, which applies to over 80 percent of all businesses in Manitoba, is 3 percent, which is the lowest in the country.

Economy—Manitoba Venture Capital Markets

Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon West): As I said, Mr. Speaker, this minister thrives in mediocrity. Well, to be so blissful in ignorance. It seems our stagnant yet stable capital markets are not performing very well. The most powerful indicator of the true state of our capital markets is the recent closure of the TSX Venture Exchange office here in Winnipeg.

Let's take an inventory, Mr. Speaker: Crocus, oops; ENSIS, gone; TSX Venture Exchange, gone; confidence in Manitoba, gone; Finance Minister, unfortunately, still here.

Mr. Speaker, why wasn't the collapse of the venture capital markets addressed in this Throne Speech?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I think, first of all, it's important to correct

the record. The member is completely wrong about ENSIS. ENSIS was a desirable acquisition target to a venture capital fund which has a national presence. They wanted to be in Manitoba. They wanted to buy that fund. That was a transaction that bought out the management company which keeps ENSIS whole in Manitoba and brings national expertise and national leverage to that fund. So the member is just wrong on that.

In terms of the performance of the Manitoba economy: No. 1 in non-U.S. exports, No. 1 in farm cash receipts, No. 1 in total exports, No. 1 in the reduction in business bankruptcies, No. 1 on public capital investment. Well, three times above the Canadian average on private capital investment. That's not mediocre, Mr. Speaker. That's superior.

Agriculture Industry Assistance for Livestock Producers

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, in case the provincial government hasn't noticed, Manitoba's cattle and pork producers are facing extremely difficult times. The Minister of Agriculture claims she's put taxpayers' money on the table to help the agriculture sector while livestock producers need some concrete evidence that agreements have been signed and the monies will flow soon.

Mr. Speaker, since the government claims the money is there, will the Minister of Agriculture now outline how and when the money is going to flow to these livestock producers? Time is wasting. Why is the minister ignoring our livestock producers?

Hon. Rosann Wowchuk (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives): Mr. Speaker, I know that the member continues to criticize the CAIS program. He asks how money will flow. There are different parts of the program.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba Cattle Producers offers a cash advance that producers can apply for. There are challenges with that, and that's why at the federal-provincial ministers' meeting I raised the issue of changing the way that money is allocated.

Mr. Speaker, producers can apply for a targeted advance as well. The Manitoba Cattle Producers applied previously. They have not applied now. I will be meeting with them next week, and I hope that they will move forward with an application for a targeted advance.

Mr. Eichler: The minister knows darn well the CAIS program isn't working. There's \$63,000 that's

been paid out of the CAIS program in the cash advance and we know it's not working, Mr. Speaker.

The federal government says they're ready. The provincial government says they're ready to flow the most needed money to our producers. Smoke and mirrors, more rhetoric. They're just phony promises that have not been paid out to our producers. Enough is enough.

Madam Minister, will you today tell the producers when this money's going to flow?

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Speaker, in recognition of the importance of the challenges facing the agriculture industry, particularly the beef and pork industry, our government has committed \$95 million in this year, \$95 million. That's 40 percent of the program. There's the federal portion of the program.

Mr. Speaker, there are programs. The producers know that they can apply for a cash advance, and the industry knows that they can apply for a targeted advance on their sector. As I've said to the member, my department has been meeting with the industry. I will be meeting with the industry next week, and I hope that they will make application for a targeted advance.

Mr. Eichler: Mr. Speaker, the question was how and when.

Mr. Speaker, there is speculation amongst the cattle producers that the provincial government is going to make some changes to the BSE recovery loans program. If so, they would like to know about it sooner than later. If so, what are they planning?

Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Agriculture tell this House today if changes are being planned to the BSE recovery loans or is the minister simply waiting for a photo op or next week's luncheon?

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Speaker, I know the member opposite would like some photo ops, but I don't work for photo ops. I work for the industry.

Mr. Speaker, I work for the industry, and that is why I have lobbied my colleagues and that's why my colleagues have been so supportive and allowed us to invest \$95 million into the CAIS program. We recognize that there are challenges. There are challenges in many sectors, in the manufacturing sector, in the agriculture sector, and that's why I will continue to raise these issues and I will continue to work to make changes to the programs so they work better for the producers.

Seniors' Job Bank Government Support

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, on December 31 of this year, the 55 Plus Job Bank is going to be closed. This program has been around since 1978. This program needs \$140,000 in order to be able to survive. This New Democratic Doer government is not providing the commitment of \$140,000, and as a result, thousands of Manitoba seniors are not being well served.

* (14:30)

My question to the Minister responsible for Seniors (Ms. Irvin-Ross): Will she stand in this place right now and indicate that the \$140,000 will be there and the jobs bank doors will not close come December 31?

Hon. Jim Rondeau (Minister of Science, Technology, Energy and Mines): I'm glad to respond to the member's question. The question is that the job bank was started in 1970. Many years ago we had a large unemployment rate. We had lots of trouble getting jobs, et cetera, and the 55 Plus Job Bank was started many years ago to meet this need.

Right now, we have a very low unemployment rate. People are not having trouble getting short-term or long-term jobs, and we found the use of the 55 job bank went from hundreds to just a few hundred. So the board has said that they have seen that the demand has gone down for the job bank, and they said that there might be other options available to look after this demographic. So we're looking at that and working with the 55 Plus Job Bank board of directors to see where we need to create the support.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, this government is sabotaging this program. This program, even by the minister's own admission, helps hundreds of seniors today. These individuals that have benefited from this job bank are numerous. We have had so many seniors that have gained employment, so many Manitobans that have gained opportunities to fix homes, get snow cleared. You name it, so many things.

I don't know where the government is coming from. The minister needs to get his head out of the sand and recognize a valuable program when it hits him square in the head. The minister needs to recognize for \$140,000 we can ensure the longevity of this program. I'm challenging the minister to do the honourable thing, to do the right thing and to

commit that \$140,000 today so that the job bank will continue on.

Mr. Rondeau: I'd like to inform all members that, in fact, what's happened is, because the economy is doing so well, we've hit a milestone. We have 602,000 people employed in this province. I'm sure that the member's McDonald's that you go to have a Help Wanted sign on the window. We have a burgeoning labour force. We have people wanting employees. We have a workers shortage in this province. We have it because the economy is expanding, and we found that the need for the 55 Plus Job Bank has gone down.

So the board of directors is working with the government on a transition. When there was a large unemployment rate in the 1990s, hundreds and hundreds of people used the service. Now very few people are using the service, and we're looking at an orderly transition with the board of directors.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I have no idea what the minister was smoking. This is a strong, valuable program that has helped hundreds of thousands of seniors over the years. The minister seems to believe that there's no one in Manitoba looking for a job. Well, he should go down and talk to some of these unemployed individuals. There are many seniors that use this program today, that see the benefits of keeping this program, not because the minister says, well, there is low unemployment in the province of Manitoba.

There are people that are unemployed today, Mr. Minister. This is a valuable program, that for \$140,000, it's absolutely idiotic for a government to cancel or to sabotage this program. That's what this government is doing. It is not the board. It is this minister. It is the Doer government. I'm asking the Doer government to do the honourable thing and to re-establish the program by committing \$140,000 today, Mr. Speaker, or he'll end up with the Homer Simpson award of the year.

Mr. Rondeau: I'm glad the member brought up hundreds of thousands of people. That is inaccurate. The member continually brings inappropriate material here. What had happened was Employment Manitoba along with the board of directors from this group has seen the numbers of people using this service decrease drastically.

We have a lot of employers looking for employment services, so what we are doing is we're

working with the service provider to transition the service, because unlike what the member said, which is inaccurate, there's not hundreds of thousands of seniors. The number of people getting services decreased dramatically. The board of directors has been working with my department to transition the services because there's not enough people being serviced out of this location. We're looking at the service—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Manitoba Housing Authority Government Initiatives

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): We went from thousands to hundreds to hundreds of thousands. I shouldn't be surprised he can't count.

Mr. Speaker, today is National Housing Day. National Housing Day, for those of you who didn't know that and, this morning, our ministers delivered some even more good news for the inner city, another place you probably didn't know about. Pay attention.

I'm wondering, Mr. Speaker, if the minister might be able to enlighten some members of this Chamber on a marvellous new program established by legislation recently under Manitoba Housing Renewal Corporation Bill 21.

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Family Services and Housing): Being National Housing Day, I expected a question.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to confirm to the House that, as a result of a decision made by the Legislature, at least the majority of the Legislature two weeks ago today, the new Manitoba Housing Development and Rehabilitation Fund was launched. We were able to make an announcement at the University of Winnipeg with Dr. Axworthy and Jim August, from the North Portage Development Corporation, to commit to \$1 million, a half a million each, to make sure that we were helping to build 238 new housing units in the inner city of Winnipeg as a result of suburban land profits from the Royalwood project. We were also able to advise Manitobans that, over the course of the next four years, we expect \$14.5 million to go into that fund. A transparent and accountable fund, and I'm pleased that we are able to make sure that we grow new communities while at the very same time, strengthen older communities in Winnipeg.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Time for Oral Questions has expired.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Metropolitan Ilarion

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, one of the most distinguished residents of Winnipeg's North End was Vladyka Ilarion, Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada. The Ilarion Centre at St. Mary the Protectress Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral was named after him and, in early November of this year, a three-day conference was held to honour his many accomplishments. The conference also marked this year, the 125th anniversary of his birth in Ukraine, and the 35th anniversary of his death in Winnipeg.

Metropolitan Ilarion, whose secular name is Ivan Ohienko, was a world-renowned Ukrainian linguist, historian, theologian, nation builder, ecclesiastical leader and translator of the Bible. He spent 25 years of his life in the North End of Winnipeg and continued his academic and religious work during this time. He held several prominent positions in Winnipeg, including the Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada, Dean and Professor of Theology at St. Andrew's College, and Adjunct Professor of Graduate Studies at the University of Manitoba in the Department of Slavic Studies.

Ms. Bonnie Korzeniowski, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

Ohienko was a prolific writer, whose contributions included some 1,500 monographs, articles, brochures and pamphlets, as well as the editorship of five journals, which were on religious history, Orthodox theology and Ukrainian philology and culture. One of the major accomplishments of his life was the translation of the entire Bible into modern Ukrainian, which eventually was published by the British and Foreign Bible Society in England in 1962.

During the conference, academics from around the world presented 12 papers on his remarkable life and accomplishments. Some of the topics included his establishment of a university in the city of Kaminets Podilsk, in southwestern Ukraine, Orthodox anthropology in the thought of Ilarion, the religious epistles of Ilarion in Canada and his teaching work at the University of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, Metropolitan Ilarion was an outstanding scholar, political figure and community

leader who has been recognized internationally for his work and devotion to his church and nation. He was truly a key figure in the history of Ukraine, and that of the Ukrainian-Canadian community in the 20th century. Thank you.

* (14:40)

Manitoba Housing Conditions

Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East): Madam Deputy Speaker, today is National Housing Day and the Minister of Family Services and Housing (Mr. Mackintosh) didn't stand up and make a ministerial statement because he must be hanging his head in shame for the homeless and the inadequate living conditions that are a reality for many Manitobans.

I'd like to take a moment to applaud the efforts of many housing organizations, such as Habitat for Humanity, who are working tirelessly to address this need by providing quality, affordable housing to families. I am, however, very concerned with the widespread mismanagement and instability plaguing the Department of Housing under the NDP. Low-income Manitobans who rely on Manitoba Housing are the ones who really lose out because of this government's incompetence. Individuals and families living in Manitoba Housing deserve the opportunity to raise their families in safe, clean homes. It's very troubling to know that under this NDP government, many Manitoba Housing tenants are forced to live in unsanitary and unsafe homes. Residents of many Manitoba Housing units live with mould, bedbugs and ant infestations. These conditions are below the dignity of all Manitobans. Yet, addressing this issue is clearly not a priority for the NDP government. If it were, it probably would have been in their Throne Speech.

Crime, violence, gang recruitment and drug activity continue to plague many public housing units unabated by this NDP government and its soft-on-crime policies. This is the environment in which many young families are forced to raise their children. Madam Deputy Speaker, this government has remained silent for far too long. It's time for them to address the deplorable conditions in so many Manitoba Housing units, to install the needed security measures, to get tough on tenants who are breaking the rules, and to finally ensure these units are properly maintained. It's unfortunate that this NDP government didn't think that the safety and well-being of Manitoba Housing tenants was worth including in their Throne Speech. Shame, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Winnipeg Blue Bombers

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): This Sunday, the Winnipeg Blue Bombers will take to the field at Rogers Centre in Toronto in the 95th Grey Cup game. The Blue Bombers earned the right to play in the Grey Cup by a thrilling last place semifinal victory over Montreal and a hard-fought eastern final win over Toronto last Sunday.

The Blue Bombers face a tough and worthy opponent in the Saskatchewan Rough Riders. As one of many Manitobans who makes a regular habit of travelling west for the Labour Day Classic, I know the activities both on and off the field will make this one of the most memorable Grey Cups in history.

The injury to quarterback Kevin Glenn is a blow to the big Blue; however, the Bombers have built a solid organization and have assembled a tremendous collection of players who will rise to the occasion and bring the cup home. The sight of Canada's greatest receiver of all time, Milt Stegall, lifting the Grey Cup on Sunday will be another great moment in Blue Bomber history.

The Winnipeg Blue Bombers are an important part of Manitoba's heritage. From their first Grey Cup win in 1935, which was the first time a western team won the national championship, to the dominant teams of the late '50s and early '60s, which won four cups under the legendary Bud Grant, to the Cal Murphy and Mike Riley years to the present, the Blue Bombers have proven the best football in Canada is played right here in the province of Manitoba.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I'm proud to be a long-time supporter and season ticket holder of the Winnipeg Blue Bombers. I lost my voice during the semifinal. I lost it again at the final in Toronto last Sunday, but I'll be proud to raise my voice again as all of Manitoba welcomes the Blue Bombers home after the Grey Cup Game. Go, Bombers, Go!

Ukrainian Famine Anniversary

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell): Madam Deputy Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Holodomor, the Ukrainian famine and genocide of 1932 and '33. I want to underline the premiere viewing of the video that was put together in commemoration of this event by the Canad Inns and Mr. Leo Ledohowski. In talking to Mr. Ledohowski this afternoon, he told me that when they had shown this film to those people who had participated in it and those who had put it

together, there wasn't a dry eye in the room. So it is one that is going to be moving and one that I would encourage all members of the Legislature to view at some point in time.

Madam Deputy Speaker, in talking to one of the survivors, one of the things that was mentioned to me was that they would eat anything that they could swallow. One of the best things that was recalled by one of the survivors, who was only four years old at the time, was that the sweetest thing that she could eat was scotch pine needles because they were soft and they would go down the throat easily. So this is the kind of forced, horrific starvation that was experienced by those people. Many of the women, children, the babies died simply because of this forced starvation by no one else but Joseph Stalin and the Soviet Union.

Madam Deputy Speaker, today I introduced the bill that would commemorate the day forever in Manitoba. It is my hope that all members of this Legislature will join together to ensure that this day is enshrined as a day of remembrance, a day to commemorate that horrific event.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

In talking to members of the government, I have been assured that, indeed, we will work toward speedy passage of this bill. So, as these celebrations unfold, we can then remember this as it should be remembered. With that, Mr. Speaker, I hope that members of this Legislature will indeed support this legislation.

University of Manitoba Bisons

Ms. Marilyn Brick (St. Norbert): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow night, our very own Manitoba Bisons men's football team will be kicking off against Saint Mary's Huskies in the Vanier Cup in Toronto. This is the first time that Manitoba has played for the Canadian Interuniversity Sport Championship since 2001.

By defeating the Western Ontario Mustangs 52-20 in the CIS semi-final, the Mitchell Bowl, last Saturday, the Bisons extended their winning streak to 11-0 for the 2007 season. The Bisons came out strong in the second quarter of the game, pulling ahead of the Mustangs by 24 unanswered points, a position from which the Mustangs could not recover.

The Bisons' defence was led by Mike Howard who tied for a game-high nine tackles, several on special teams, two forced fumbles, one breakup and

one blocked punt. For his effort, Howard was awarded the Maury L. Van Vliet Trophy which recognizes the Mitchell Bowl's most valuable player.

The Bisons' Mitchell Bowl victory put the final touches on a tremendous 2007 season. As a testament to their drive, passion and consistency, the Bisons have been honoured in Canada West football weekly awards for individual players in 8 of the 11 weeks they played this season. During their three playoff games this year, the No. 3 ranked Bisons have outscored opponents 63-0 in the second quarter. Their playoff performance this year has also earned them the title of scoring the most points in Bisons football playoff history.

This weekend, the Bisons aim to capture their first Vanier Cup title since the team's back-to-back wins in 1969 and 1970.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of all members of this House, I would like to extend our congratulations and best wishes to Brian Dobie and the rest of the coaching staff, the players and the fans of the University of Manitoba Bisons football team as they seek to bring home the Vanier Cup. Go, Bisons, Go! Thank you.

ORDERS OF THE DAY
GOVERNMENT BUSINESS
THRONE SPEECH
(Second Day of Debate)

Mr. Speaker: Resume debate on the proposed motion of the honourable Member for Rossmere (Ms. Braun)—

THAT the following address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor:

We, the members of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, thank Your Honour for the gracious speech addressed to us at this Second Session of the Thirty-Ninth Legislature of Manitoba.

Standing in the name of the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

*(14:50)

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today and make some comments in response to the Speech from the Throne and will in due course be introducing an amendment to that speech.

I want to just begin, Mr. Speaker, by welcoming you back after our brief break at the conclusion of the last session of this Legislature. We certainly appreciate your direction and guidance and look forward to working with you in the coming days and weeks during this short sitting and in the session sitting that will commence in the new year.

I also want to acknowledge and thank the table officers for their diligence during the session and their knowledge of proceedings. We rely on them greatly, especially those of us who are newer to this Chamber, very much appreciate the very good advice we get from them on a constant basis; the Sergeant-at-Arms and his staff for keeping with our important traditions in this parliament; *Hansard* staff that work so hard at getting our comments on the record with remarkable accuracy and speed; the gallery officers who ensure that the public is given every opportunity to participate in these proceedings in an orderly way.

I also want to thank His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor for all that he does to represent our province, both in communities around Manitoba as well as externally and on the world stage, Mr. Speaker. The important function of the Lieutenant-Governor within our British parliamentary democracy is one that needs to be acknowledged from time to time, and we certainly appreciate the ability and the grace shown by our current Lieutenant-Governor in that role.

Mr. Speaker, I want to welcome back our pages as well and hope that they will find this to be an enjoyable and enlightening learning experience here in the Legislature, with occasional moments of good entertainment in addition to absolutely sound debate and high quality exchanges between members of various parties.

Mr. Speaker, I want to just turn now to the content of the speech itself and our disappointment with the content of this speech. We know, as we speak to Manitobans across our province, whether it's in the south, the north, or any place in between, whether it's in our cities, our towns, on farms, in our communities, in First Nations communities around Manitoba, that they all want the same thing at the end of the day. They want a government that is open and accountable, a government that delivers concrete results, a government that has aligned its priorities with the priorities of the people of Manitoba and that sees Manitoba as a united province of people with common aspirations and a common vision, not simply a collection of special interest groups to be

pandered to by government from time to time as it suits the interests of that government.

Now they also want a government that's going to provide safety as well as support for those who need it. They've increasingly said to us, Mr. Speaker, particularly in the months following decisions with respect to Hydro, the ongoing disclosures around Crocus and other areas that the priorities of this NDP government are increasingly out of step with the priorities of Manitobans. The Speech from the Throne that we are addressing here today is further evidence of the fact that this government's priorities are out of line with the priorities of regular Manitobans.

There are significant omissions, Mr. Speaker. It's not just the content of the speech that we're concerned about, although there are various areas that we have great concern about, in Child and Family Services and other areas, the policy directions which have been enunciated by the government. We're just as concerned about the omissions from the speech. Some of the most significant things that are to take place in our province, some of the most significant projects that have been announced previously and which are either under way or being planned, failed to net even a single mention in this Speech from the Throne.

There was not a mention, Mr. Speaker, of bipole 3, the second largest capital project of our generation, not a single word about it in the Speech from the Throne, and Manitobans would want to wonder and would want to ask why it is that the government wouldn't make a single mention of that important project. Not a single reference to Conawapa, the largest project that we will see built in our generation, if it does get built and we very much hope that it will as we expand the reach of our markets and our ability to sell precious clean hydro power to people in places outside of our borders.

These two projects have a combined capital cost of over \$7 billion and not a single mention of either one of them in the Throne Speech. It's not a great mystery to us as to why the government would omit to mention these projects. Mr. Speaker, it has been a pattern, as we've indicated, of this government to put a lot of items on the buffet and then, as time goes along, to remove those items as they become mis-managed and increasingly politically embarrassing to the government.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the list of things that have been omitted is now longer than the list of

new initiatives contained in the speech. In fact, we could find only one reference to something new, and that was a commitment by the government to cover half of the wasted amount with respect to the upgrades in the city of Winnipeg waste-water project.

So we're very concerned about a lack of reference to Conawapa, mentioned seven times in last year's government documents of the Throne Speech time, not mentioned a single time this year, Mr. Speaker. We're concerned that the pattern of the government is to recycle items from one Throne Speech to the next, and once they become too embarrassing to raise, they go from the recycling bin into the garbage bin.

We're concerned about the fact that the Premier refused in Question Period to indicate one way or another whether Conawapa was still on the books, whether it's still part of the government's plans. He was given several opportunities to confirm that yesterday. He refused to take that opportunity and his silence on the issue, Mr. Speaker, is of great concern to members of our party and to Manitobans who have an expectation that Manitoba Hydro, as our province's most valuable Crown corporation, is going to continue to grow, to expand, to develop as it has through much of the history of our province going back to the early years of the last century, the evolution of Manitoba Hydro from a Winnipeg hydro-electric company that was designed to service our streetcars and other electrical installations here in Winnipeg.

It grew, in particular, under the leadership of former Premier Duff Roblin into an absolute powerhouse of a corporation. It was Duff Roblin that formed Manitoba Hydro as an amalgamation of various smaller power utilities around the province. It was Duff Roblin that led the way on the development and exploration of the great generating stations in northern Manitoba on the Nelson River, Churchill River and other major waterways in the north. There was the Kettle project and the Kelsey project as the first two envisioned and not just announced time after time by the Roblin government but actually built, Mr. Speaker, which is a remarkable difference between the Roblin years and what we see under this NDP government, which is pleased to announce things, the Throne Speech being the exception where they've now even stopped announcing hydro projects, but, until then, announcement after announcement but a failure to actually build and deliver. Manitobans are wise

people. They're not fooled by announcements and newspaper headlines. They actually look beyond that and look for actual concrete action and results which we have failed to see.

So we're concerned about the fact that the Speech from the Throne makes no reference to Conawapa, no reference to bipole 3, and the story there, Mr. Speaker, is an increasingly disturbing one when we consider the impact on future generations of Manitobans, unfortunately not in a position to vote today, not in a position to hold this Premier (Mr. Doer) and his government to account for decisions which they are going to pay the price for.

That is perhaps the most disconcerting part of this decision, is that we have a government today making decisions that will set in course actions that will leave a massive legacy of debt to future generations who are in no position to stand up today to this government, which is why it is incumbent on us in opposition to stand up to the government, to do the right thing for those future generations, to be a voice for our children and our grandchildren today in the public square to head off what will be one of the most catastrophic decisions for future generations that we have ever seen, arguably the worst policy decision, as other commentators have said, ever made in the history of our province in terms of its cost to Manitobans and, in particular, future generations.

We're very pleased, Mr. Speaker, to be joined in this cause by many eminent Manitobans who are now speaking up, including Mr. Harold Buchwald who wrote a passionate piece in this weekend's *Winnipeg Free Press* calling on Manitobans to become active, to become engaged on this debate and to express the outrage that many Manitobans are starting to feel over this appallingly reckless and damaging decision for future generations of Manitobans.

Those eminent Manitobans also include Professor Brian Schwartz, the leading constitutional scholar in Manitoba who has written extensively on matters including First Nations' rights and Aboriginal rights, constitutional issues, international law including United Nations laws and UNESCO laws and rules that are followed by the international community to ensure some degree of order, a respect for human rights and good decision making in terms of the management of our world's resources.

Dr. Schwartz has written books on the role of the United Nations and its various agencies including

UNESCO and others as they seek to provide a more peaceful world but also a world where a view is given and consideration is given to the impact of present decisions on future generations. It's that far-sighted thinking and that far-sighted commitment to future generations that I think distinguishes the United Nations and the many people who support it as well as the experts on these various issues.

* (15:00)

Professor Schwartz, as the Speaker, and members of this House know, has indicated that there is no incompatibility to be had between a UNESCO World Heritage Site in eastern Manitoba and a transmission line which could provide economic opportunity to some of the poorest communities in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker. I know that many members of this House, including myself and other members of the opposition as well as members of the government, have had the opportunity to travel through communities through eastern Manitoba and have an understanding of the crushing poverty that exists in many of those communities, the profoundly complex and destructive social problems which exist in many of those communities. There are issues with respect to high rates of unemployment, issues around addiction, a lack of appropriate housing, a lack of employment opportunities and economic opportunity for those citizens.

The starting point toward building a better, a fairer Manitoba is to provide opportunity for more Manitobans to participate fully in our work force, to have the opportunity to generate an income and to support a family, and to do all of the things that are important to one's sense of self-esteem and one's ability to contribute to our communities and to the families that we are responsible for.

I know from speaking to members within communities such as St. Theresa Point, Wasagamack, Garden Hill and others around eastern and northeastern Manitoba that there is a strong desire to have the opportunity to fully participate in our economy. They view the construction of the power transmission line and the opportunity to participate in the benefits of that line as an important and significant opportunity to take a step forward in terms of the ability to raise money, to pay for some of the most expensive food in our province. The cost of shipping is prohibitive of food and it has a tremendous, tremendously negative impact on members of that community, their ability to buy the basic necessities of life including milk, baby formula

and other things that are absolutely critical to ensuring that babies and children get life off to a good start, that young people have the opportunity to develop to their fullest potential, and that all citizens are enabled to ensure that they are fed, have the nutrients they require, a roof over their heads, clean running water, and the very many other amenities that most of us in Manitoba are privileged enough to be able to take for granted, Mr. Speaker.

So it is a tremendous opportunity lost when the government disregards those issues and decides because of concern about quote, unquote, international pressure, which is what the Premier (Mr. Doer) has referred to as the reason for this decision, to allow supposed international pressure, to allow them to disregard the interests of so many thousands of Manitobans who are looking simply for an opportunity to participate in this project and the benefits it will generate for current and future generations, Mr. Speaker.

It is well known now about the wasted money on the extra length of the line into the hundreds of millions of dollars. It's well known the fact that a minimum of 40 megawatts of power will be lost along the way because of the longer line, an amount of power equivalent to \$17 million a year if it had been harnessed and sold to markets outside of Manitoba, \$17 million a year over 40 years translating into roughly \$680 million flushed down the toilet, lost to future generations of Manitobans by this NDP government as a result of this decision, driven by, quote, unquote, international pressure. Where that pressure is coming from at this moment remains a mystery to members on this side of the House.

We know one organization which has gone on the record as being opposed to all hydro development; no matter what development we're talking about, they're opposed to any new dams. They're opposed to any new power lines. They're probably even opposed to the west-side line. They haven't actually indicated their position on the west-side line but because they're on the record as being opposed to all development, we have to assume that they're opposed to Conawapa, opposed to Wuskwatim, opposed to Gull, opposed to the west-side bipole line, Mr. Speaker, and therefore, not on the side of the people of Manitoba, quite clearly.

That same organization which is now spending millions of dollars fighting wind-power development on Cape Cod because it blights the view from the

family compound of the individual who leads that organization, Mr. Speaker, I just think speaks to the fact that that is an organization that is out of step with what's going on in the real world. I think it's unfortunate that the Premier (Mr. Doer) is allowing major policy decisions to be made, the second largest capital project in Manitoba, to be dictated by wealthy interests on Cape Cod and not to be dictated by those on the east side of the lake and those who have an interest in the future of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, the significance of this issue cannot be overlooked. The ability of us as a province to reduce our taxes, to become competitive with Saskatchewan, the ability of our province to fund hospitals, schools, roads, all those things that are important to us, public housing, all of the things that matter to Manitobans is compromised under a government that is prepared to throw away hundreds of millions of dollars just because they're afraid of so-called international pressure. Perhaps that's why the government failed to make any reference to the daffy detour in the Speech from the Throne.

Mr. Speaker, the speech was also notable for its lack of reference to Manitoba's capital markets. All economists, whether they come from the right or the left side of the spectrum, acknowledge that investment is what drives growth and what creates wealth in a society. It's what generates tax dollars to be used by governments, and there's often disagreement about the best use of those tax dollars, but there's no disagreement about the need for investment and expansion and growth. Investment starts with capital investment being made by individuals prepared to put money at risk in our capital markets, which money would then be used to expand companies, pay for new plants, pay for new technology, equipment, workers, all those things that go toward the establishment of the great enterprises that will power our province into the future.

To not make a single reference to Manitoba's capital markets is an astonishing omission. A Speech from the Throne, a speech riddled with spending priorities but without any acknowledgment that on the other side of the ledger there is a need for wealth and job creation and taxpayers to come to Manitoba wanting to invest here and generate the wealth that's going to be required to fund all of the initiatives that this government wants to proceed with in its Speech from the Throne.

Why did they fail to make reference to capital markets? Once again, Crown corporations, no

reference because of the mismanagement. Capital markets, no reference because of Crocus, the Crocus cover-up, which is now into its third year and running a shameful record of cover-up. It is a black cloud that continues to hang over our province, and the results of it are being felt as we see the TSX venture exchange pulling out of Manitoba, ENSIS having to be taken over by a Vancouver firm because they don't have the ability to have the reach into the retail market which has been damaged as a result of the Crocus scandal, and we see the ripple effects of this collapse happening in our province day in and day out.

The government had an opportunity to clear it up years ago. They failed to take that opportunity. The reasons, Mr. Speaker, we're left to speculate. Is it because fundraisers for the NDP were receiving money from Crocus? Is it because of the close relationship between government investments and Crocus investments? Is it because Crocus money was being used to prop up NDP government investments in companies? We are left to speculate why it is that this government won't get to the bottom of this scandal so that we can get beyond Crocus, which is where all Manitobans want to be and into a future where Manitobans can invest with confidence in our province, knowing, when they read a prospectus or when they get a pitch, that there's some connection in reality between what the prospectus says and what's actually happening in the company that they would like to invest in.

* (15:10)

Mr. Speaker, we also know that there is an ongoing serious concern about what is happening within our Child and Family Services system. We saw in the Speech from the Throne the government making a commitment, and this is one place where what's contained in the speech bothers us more than what was omitted. The government continuing to pursue a path and a policy of moving away from apprehension is what they say in the speech, which is just another way of saying, leaving children in dangerous situations. The fact that they would so brazenly commit to this failed policy in this speech is an absolutely astonishing decision to write this into a document, that they're going to continue to leave children in dangerous situations while they pursue what they call preventative measures, which any realistic person knows will take years, if not generations, to achieve.

We all are committed, Mr. Speaker, to preventative action in order to ensure that families don't find themselves in these situations or that fewer families find themselves in a situation of crisis, but in the meantime to leave the children to the wolves, which is what they've committed to in this Throne Speech, is a shocking statement of failure after eight years of failure in a system that has been characterized by high worker turnover and burnout, lives in jeopardy, no commitment to follow through on standards manuals, no clear directives to front-line workers.

There is only one criterion to apply in any given situation, safety first. There should not be any other criteria applied, Mr. Speaker. It's time to amend the legislation. It's time to send a clear message to workers in the system that safety is the one and only factor that overrides all others.

So these were all things that were omitted in the Speech from the Throne. There was a reference to moving away from apprehension and leaving children in dangerous situations which we think is a shameful policy, a failed policy, and which Manitobans would call on this government to repudiate or reject, to do a 180-degree turn and do the right thing for children in vulnerable situations in the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, the list of failures of this government continues to mount. We have a child poverty rate that remains unacceptably high. We have welfare numbers which are stagnant even as other provinces have decreased their welfare numbers through innovative programs and through growing economies that are providing opportunities for people to find work.

We find Manitobans with disabilities on wait lists to enter into assisted living facilities in both Winnipeg and rural Manitoba. We see deplorable conditions in Manitoba Housing units. We see ongoing problems in health care throughout our province, unacceptable waiting lists, 14 emergency rooms in rural Manitoba closed and counting, with rural communities across Manitoba wondering who's next on the NDP hit list.

That is absolutely the shameful record of closure, and we were and continue to be shocked when we hear the Minister of Health (Ms. Oswald) stand up and claim to have never closed an emergency room while they've been in government and then to go on and say, well, what we meant was no emergency rooms in Winnipeg.

I can tell you when I speak to rural Manitobans they are shocked to hear that this is what this Minister of Health says. They are shocked to know that this government is so out of touch with what goes on outside the Perimeter. They need to spend some time travelling around our province, travelling to places like Wawanesa and communities like it to understand what is happening in those communities and to understand what's happening as decisions are being made that have no connection, no sensitivity to what's happening within those rural communities. We have completely illogical decisions being made by a government that doesn't know and doesn't care. That is the difference between them and us. The Throne Speech does nothing to address these concerns, Mr. Speaker, and it is a continued admission that this NDP government is out of touch with rural Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that the announcements that we made on Monday, our vision for the future of Manitoba as it impacts the city of Brandon is dramatically better for the people of Brandon than the rehashed series of announcements contained within the Speech from the Throne. We are prepared to do something that would be a first for the city of Brandon, to give that city the power and the resources it needs to move into the future with confidence and strength and to fulfil its vision, the vision of the leaders of that city to turn it into Manitoba's second great city to compete with Winnipeg and provide a healthy balance between the city of Winnipeg and the city of Brandon to make sure that we've got what can be a great rivalry, a positive rivalry that will lead to greater and better things for both the city of Winnipeg and the city of Brandon. So we're prepared to grant the powers, to grant the authority, to grant the resources for the leaders of that community that come from a variety of sectors to move the city of Brandon into the future with confidence.

Mr. Speaker, we see very little in the way of serious commitment to deal with the issues of Manitoba's Aboriginal First Nations people and our Métis population, the founders, the first inhabitants of this land, the founders of our province, the Métis people, and those who have worked in many different ways to lead the way in the development of our province of Manitoba.

We've seen a government that doesn't acknowledge this is the fastest growing segment of our population. We've seen a government that allows and seems to proceed from one crisis to another. In

the case of Hollow Water, granting cottage lots to one group of people at the same time as it's creating expectations with another group of people about how that land would be managed. A complete mismanagement of this part of our province, Mr. Speaker, which has created blockades and other actions which are a function of NDP mismanagement more than they are a function of anything else.

We saw no mention in the speech of our province's brand. After all of the fanfare around the announcement of the Spirited Energy campaign, the fact that it was omitted from the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, is an admission, once again, of failure, total and complete failure. Nothing about Conawapa because of Hydro failure. Nothing about bipole because of failure at Hydro. Nothing about branding because of that failure. Nothing about a variety of other errors, including Crocus and our capital markets, again, another admission of failure, an admission-by-omission of failure in this Speech from the Throne. Over \$3 million down the drain and counting, and they don't even have the pride, they don't even have the courage, to make reference to our province's branding campaign within the Speech from the Throne. Another unbelievable admission and it's time to go back to the tried, tested and true, Friendly Manitoba.

We were, Mr. Speaker, pleased to see references by leaders of Manitoba's Filipino community to the fact that they were going to the Philippines and recruiting people because they really loved the Friendly Manitoba slogan. That was the quote from the leaders of the Filipino community just a couple of months ago. So members of our cultural communities are going abroad with the Friendly Manitoba slogan, the slogan that they have taken to heart. It's time just to listen to the common sense of Manitobans, regardless of whether they are new arrivals or whether they've been here for generations, who know that Friendly Manitoba is a great description for our province and has the added benefit of actually meaning something as opposed to Spirited Energy, which Manitobans cannot begin to understand.

So, Mr. Speaker, we're falling behind in competitiveness, even behind Saskatchewan. We're now falling behind Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and other provinces; 10 out of 11 categories on economic competitiveness behind Saskatchewan; the highest taxes west of Québec. There's an estimate that recently came out that 14,000 more of our young people will leave between now and the end of this

NDP government's term if they keep up where they're going. A conservative estimate and we are worried that with them, they take the ability to innovate, to generate ideas, and to empower our economy, support our social programs and do what's best.

The Throne Speech makes no reference to meaningful tax relief. We have a payroll tax in Manitoba, one of three in the country that drives investment to other places. We've got a disgraced capital market. We've got mismanaged Crown corporations, and then this government wonders why it is that young people are leaving in record numbers, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, on a non-partisan note, if I may for just a moment. We share the optimism of all Manitobans as our great Blue Bomber football club goes into the Grey Cup this weekend, and I wanted to say to the Member for Minto (Mr. Swan) that his comments were well received in his statement earlier today. I know that he has spent some time on the field himself—I think it was on the defensive line, if I recall correctly—and I think he caught the odd ball as well.

*(15:20)

We do share in the enthusiasm of Manitobans as our team goes into the Grey Cup, but we do look with some concern at the record of Grey Cups over the years. We note that the Winnipeg Blue Bombers have won 10 Grey Cups through the history of our great province. Seven of those Grey Cups won under Progressive Conservative governments, two of them won under the Liberal Progressive government headed by former Premier Bracken, who went on to become the first leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada. Sadly, Mr. Speaker, only one Grey Cup won under an NDP government to date.

Similarly, Mr. Speaker, we look at the record of Saskatchewan Grey Cup wins. Saskatchewan has won the Grey Cup on two occasions, once under a Liberal government, once under a Progressive Conservative government. Notwithstanding the fact that the NDP was in power in that province for 47 out of 60 years, they never won a Grey Cup under an NDP government in Saskatchewan. So we have many reasons to be optimistic about the Bombers this weekend. We know that, in spite of the loss of Kevin Glenn in this game, that Ryan Dinwiddie, who had a better efficiency rating than Peyton Manning when he played college football in the U.S., I know

is going to lead this team in spite of the odds, to victory on Sunday.

We do want to say, Mr. Speaker, that in addition to the various other challenges faced by the Blue Bombers going into this game, they face the reality of the NDP curse that teams don't win Grey Cups under NDP governments, but in spite of the NDP curse and the various other challenges that our team is facing going into this weekend, we know that they will overcome. We know that sometimes underdogs win. We cheer for underdogs. We're with the Blue Bombers, and we look forward to them overcoming the NDP curse when they get to Toronto this weekend.

So, Mr. Speaker, with all of these challenges facing our province, we remain optimistic, not just about the Blue Bombers, but about the future of our great province. We've overcome adversity in the past. We will overcome adversity into the future, and we very much look forward to encouraging this government to leave behind its failed policies, to disregard the Speech from the Throne, and to hopefully do what's right for the future of our province.

For all of those reasons, this Speech from the Throne fails to demonstrate a vision for our future and fails to address the need for investment and strong capital markets. It fails to show leadership on the issue of our most important Crown corporations. It continues to fail our children, Mr. Speaker, in vulnerable situations, and it continues to fail rural Manitoba. It fails Brandon. It fails Winnipeg by doing only one thing, which is to fund half of the wastage which they've imposed on the city of Winnipeg on its waste-water projects.

For all of these reasons, we cannot support this Speech from the Throne. Perhaps surprisingly to members opposite, we will be introducing an amendment to that speech, and that amendment, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move now.

I move, seconded by the Member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger),

THAT the Motion be amended by adding at the end the following words:

But this House regrets,

(a) the government's misguided directive to Manitoba Hydro to construct the bipole 3 transmission line on the west side of the province, resulting in more than \$500 million in added capital

costs, 40 megawatts of line loss and more than \$17 million annually in lost sale revenues; and

(b) the government's refusal to provide answers to the 34,000 Manitobans who lost over \$100 million of their savings in the Crocus Investment Fund scandal; and

(c) the government's failure to ensure the safety of children in the care of Child and Family Services is a paramount consideration; and

(d) the government's mismanagement of the health care system, resulting in a shortage of health care professionals, bloated bureaucracies, lengthy wait times for diagnostic tests and treatments, and the closure of 14 rural emergency rooms; and

(e) the government's wasteful expenditure of \$3 million on the ineffective Spirited Energy campaign; and

(f) the government's complacency toward making Manitoba competitive with other western provinces, particularly Saskatchewan; and

(g) the government's failure to make Manitoba an attractive place for our young people, resulting in the loss of 35,000 Manitobans who have left for greener pastures in other provinces; and

(h) the government's growing dependence on federal transfer payments; and

(i) the government's cancellation of the previous government's debt repayment plan and failure to apply some of the record federal transfer revenues to reduce debt, leaving a legacy of debt to our children and grandchildren; and

(j) the government's failure to address the unprecedented number of shootings and criminals in possession of illegal firearms; and

(k) the government's lack of efforts to develop strategies to help the agricultural sector dealing with challenges such as the effects of the rising Canadian dollar, high input costs, and the potential effects of country-of-origin labelling among others; and

(l) the government's inability to facilitate and promote the development of a strong and vibrant rural economy; and

(m) the government's ineffectiveness in addressing ongoing infrastructure challenges in key areas such as bridges, highways, roads, sewage and water

treatment, and telecommunications such as rural broadband; and

(n) the government's lack of a long-term strategy to address education infrastructure needs in rapidly growing communities; and

(o) the government's chronic underfunding of our post-secondary institutions for almost a decade; and

(p) the government's inaction on important environmental initiatives in spite of countless announcements and promises of action, including improving the health of Lake Winnipeg, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and moving forward on a Progressive Conservative proposal to implement a beverage container deposit return system; and

(q) the government's broken promises to end hallway medicine, put in place a privacy commissioner, and make our communities safer; and

(r) the government's lack of fairness and accountability in important areas of government such as the awarding of contracts, elections legislation, legislative committees and privacy legislation; and

(s) the government's demonstrated disrespect for the role of a provincial government by acting as a property developer, thereby putting taxpayers' dollars at risk; and

(t) the government's mismanagement of Manitoba Hydro and its failure to address the deplorable conditions that low-income Manitobans have been forced to endure such as bedbugs, mould and chronic violence and drug activity within public housing.

AND AS A CONSEQUENCE the government has thereby lost the trust and confidence of the people of Manitoba and this House.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

When the honourable member was reading his motion, there were a couple of changes here. I just wonder—[*interjection*]

Order.

I just wonder if the honourable member agrees to correct them for the record, where on the first (a) instead of using "additional," he used the word "added." Then in the last paragraph, under (t) he used Manitoba Hydro instead of Manitoba Housing.

Is that okay?

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, if we could, for the record, leave it as it was printed as opposed to how it was said.

Mr. Speaker: Exactly. So what we'll do, the motion will be as printed, and the motion is in order.

The motion has been moved by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, seconded by the honourable Member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger),

THAT the Motion be amended by adding—

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense.

THAT the Motion be amended by adding at the end the following words:

But this House regrets,

(a) the government's misguided directive to Manitoba Hydro to construct the bipole 3 transmission line on the west side of the province, resulting in more than \$500 million in additional capital costs, 40 megawatts of line loss and more than \$17 million annually in lost sale revenues; and

(b) the government's refusal to provide answers to the 34,000 Manitobans who lost over \$100 million of their savings in the Crocus Investment Fund scandal; and

(c) the government's failure to ensure the safety of children in the care of Child and Family Services is a paramount consideration; and

(d) the government's mismanagement of the health care system, resulting in a shortage of health care professionals, bloated bureaucracies, lengthy wait times for diagnostic tests and treatments, and the closure of 14 rural emergency rooms; and

(e) the government's wasteful expenditure of \$3 million on the ineffective Spirited Energy campaign; and

(f) the government's complacency toward making Manitoba competitive with other western provinces, particularly Saskatchewan; and

(g) the government's failure to make Manitoba an attractive place for our young people, resulting in the loss of 35,000 Manitobans who have left for greener pastures in other provinces; and

(h) the government's growing dependence on federal transfer payments; and

(i) the government's cancellation of the previous government's debt repayment plan and failure to apply some of the record federal transfer revenues to reduce debt, leaving a legacy of debt to our children and grandchildren; and

(j) the government's failure to address the unprecedented number of shootings and criminals in possession of illegal firearms; and

(k) the government's lack of efforts to develop strategies to help the agricultural sector dealing with challenges such as the effects of the rising Canadian dollar, high input costs, and the potential effects of country-of-origin labelling among others; and

(l) the government's inability to facilitate and promote the development of a strong and vibrant rural economy; and

(m) the government's ineffectiveness in addressing ongoing infrastructure challenges in key areas such as bridges, highways, roads, sewage and water treatment, and telecommunications such as rural broadband; and

(n) the government's lack of a long-term strategy to address education infrastructure needs in rapidly growing communities; and

(o) the government's chronic underfunding of our post-secondary institutions for almost a decade; and

(p) the government's inaction on important environmental initiatives in spite of countless announcements and promises of action, including improving the health of Lake Winnipeg, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and moving forward on a Progressive Conservative proposal to implement a beverage container deposit return system; and

(q) the government's broken promises to end hallway medicine, put in place a privacy commissioner, and make our communities safer; and

(r) the government's lack of fairness and accountability in important areas of government such as the awarding of contracts, elections legislation, legislative committees and privacy legislation; and

(s) the government's demonstrated disrespect for the role of a provincial government by acting as a property developer, thereby putting taxpayers' dollars at risk; and

(t) the government's mismanagement of Manitoba Housing and its failure to address the deplorable conditions that low-income Manitobans have been forced to endure such as bedbugs, mould and chronic violence and drug activity within public housing.

AND AS A CONSEQUENCE the government has thereby lost the trust and confidence of the people of Manitoba and this House.

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Well, Mr. Speaker, there we have it in the words of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. McFadyen): You run an economy based on how your football team does.

You know, I wondered why the Tories ran such a lousy campaign only six months ago. Six months ago, he went door-to-door meeting with Manitobans, and we saw ads about people being attacked in parking lots by guys with moustaches, and ads that said, Hugh will.

I don't know what Hugh will do, but Hugh—apparently, super-Hugh was going to come in and stop all the crime. We kept reminding members opposite that the federal government controls the Criminal Code. And every time I went to Ottawa to talk to the federal minister and say, criminal law is made by the federal government, even the Member for Brandon (Mr. Borotsik) knows that.

* (15:30)

Mr. Speaker, the Province doesn't have authority under the Constitution to make criminal law, but fortunately through co-operation, and that's what it was, co-operation with—it doesn't matter if it's a Conservative government. It doesn't matter if it's a Liberal government. If it's good for Canadians, if it's good for Manitobans, we will work on its behalf. That is the difference between that group of ideologues there who want to build swimming pools in Point Douglas and bring back hockey teams and a government here that represents the face of every Manitoban, every community, every ethnic group.

Mr. Speaker, we have met with hundreds and thousands of Aboriginal people and talked to them about how and where the environment should be developed. The members opposite, who have never travelled in the north, have never travelled to those communities, have never gone to sweat lodges, have never gone to meetings in those communities, have never met with the real people of Manitoba, can sit back at the Canadian Club and make pronunciations

like, oh, well, I think we should—oh, during this election campaign the NDP said they're going to go down the west side; well, we better go down the east side.

After 80 meetings, after discussions, 80 meetings with people in the community, 80 meetings, the drafting of a document, the drafting of protocols, Mr. Speaker, discussions with people from around the province, a decision was made in the interests—now, I ask members opposite, how's the Mackenzie pipeline going? How's that pipeline that was being built by the Tories going? Not very well. How many years is the Mackenzie pipeline being built, five years, 10 years, 15 years, 20 years, 25 years? Why have we not built the Mackenzie pipeline? Because people in the community have not agreed. There is no Mackenzie Valley pipeline.

There will be no east side unless the community agrees, Mr. Speaker. There will be no east side. You can talk to all of the prognosticators at the Canadian and Manitoba club you want. If you can't get the people to agree, you can't put it through. Members opposite can sit in Point Douglas and build the architectural drawings about their swim club. They can promise to bring back a professional hockey team. But that's not what Manitobans want. They want common sense. They want programs to protect their children. They want health care. They want teachers hired. They want doctors trained. They want nurses trained, all—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Chomiak: Now, Mr. Speaker, extremism of the kind we've seen in this House, the extremism—they're not even a Progressive Conservative party; they're a Conservative party. You know, if I had to listen to the member's speech, I don't even know if I'd leave my house in the morning. If you listen to the member's speech, you'd think that to leave your door, you're immediately going to be attacked by hordes of New Democrats wielding football cleats or something.

I want to read something to members opposite. It's a report. Let me just read this report: Crime has a serious impact on our quality of life. Crime touches far too many people. Drug and alcohol abuse takes a terrible toll, directly or indirectly. It is the heart of many crimes. The current criminal justice system is not working. There is a serious problem with repeat offenders. There isn't enough being done to prevent crime.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this report is from—where's this report from? Oh, Alberta. Alberta has done a report. Oh, good heavens. They made 29 recommendations. Do you know how many recommendations we've implemented in the Alberta report? The majority. Almost all of them are already under way in Manitoba.

To hear members opposite, you'd think that—the Premier (Mr. Doer) often says the sky is falling. The sky is falling everywhere except in the arena where you are going to bring back a professional hockey team and except over the solarium in Point Douglas where you're going to sun tan and where you're going to get your pedicures and your manicures.

Mr. Speaker, when I door-knocked, the average person on the door said: What are they talking about? That's not my Manitoba. That's not my extremism. They said: What is he talking about, bringing back a hockey team? What about nurses? What about doctors? What about teachers? They said: What about Hydro? These guys have done nothing. They didn't build anything. They sold Manitoba Telephone System and now they're talking about this line that they're going to put down the east side.

So it was an election issue. The members ran on putting the line down the east side. Boy, you did real well, didn't you? How's it going so far?

You know, Mr. Speaker, sometimes the public pays attention. They certainly pay attention during an election campaign. They certainly pay attention. You had all the air time you wanted. All of your ads—how many ads did you do about your proposal for the east side?

You know, Mr. Speaker, the real issue is what we have to do is pull together as a community and work for those undernourished, underrepresented people of this province, a lot of whom live outside of Winnipeg, a lot of whom live in northern communities, and try to deal with getting them the same opportunities as the rest of us in Manitoba. That's why I was so proud that not only has this government been recognized across the country as being a leader in terms of not just health care and education, but in terms of justice initiatives. I was very proud to hear of fellow ministers, all Justice ministers across the country, say that they look to Manitoba for leadership on gangs, for leadership on progressive legislation, for leadership on prevention programs.

That's what I want to focus on, Mr. Speaker, because the members opposite can take out all the ads they want with look-alikes of the member for Brandon or whatever they want to do in terms of their ad campaign, but the point is, we've got to get programs to prevent people from—as a member of the First Nations community said to me, the clan are the gang. If you're not attached to a community, if you're not attached to an organization, if you don't see hope in life, you either become extremists like members opposite or you belong to a gang.

The problem is, Mr. Speaker, that we have to get hope and programs to all Manitobans. That's what people told me in the communities. That's what they told me in my own community. That's what they told me in the many communities I door-knocked in. That's what they told me in rural Manitoba. Hope.

One thing that they said is, you know, this government, the NDP government, may not be perfect, but you sure have worked hard on health care and you sure have worked hard on education. And even though those guys across there talk a lot, we know, we know what it's like to have 11 lean years of Tory government. We know what mean-spirited government means. We know what the Monnin inquiry said. We know what it's like to be fired as a nurse. We know what it's like to have to leave the province as a doctor because they're closing beds. The largest closure in the history of Manitoba's health-care sector occurred when the members' closed an entire city hospital, the Misericordia hospital. In one swift signing of the pen, a hospital was closed. Hundreds of beds closed, hundreds of people out of work. Then they wondered why there was a lineup at the ERs after they had closed 13 ICUs.

I ask you, Mr. Speaker—and the public remembers, but it's not just the past; it's really about the future. It's about the economy. It's about being named by *BusinessWeek* magazine as the No. 1 jurisdiction in the world for climate change. It's about green energy. It's about tuition fees being the lowest, being frozen, having the largest number of students in post-secondary education in the history of the province. We're proud of that. That means a future. That means jobs for the future. Expanding apprenticeship means—do you know, around the world, there's actually a shortage of qualified tradespersons?

Mr. Speaker, we've got one of the largest demographics of young people in First Nations

communities in this province. Can we not match the two? Can we not use the magic of the Manitoba solution of putting those two things together so that we can have a dynamic growth here, a development here? Yes, we can, with hydro development in the north, with the floodway expansion, with the Manitoba Hydro tower, with the biotech expansion, we can do that, with our expansion of the northern College of the North bringing education and opportunity to people in the north.

* (15:40)

Now, there's no better example of the contrast between the doomsayers on the extreme party to the right and our own party. We brought in University College of the North; they are against it. We brought in a tuition freeze; they are against it. They cut doctor training; we expanded it. They fired nurses; we've redeployed nurses. They cut apprenticeship programs; we brought back apprenticeship programs. They increased property tax; we've cut property tax.

They believe in the market and the hard facts and Monnin said, I've never seen so many liars, Mr. Speaker. That's what the Monnin report said. That is the thrust of the extreme party. Now I have friends across all political boundaries, all political parties, and the Progressive Conservatives that I still know in other provinces are that. They're Progressive Conservatives. We don't see that any more. All we see is the right-wing, reactionary Conservatives.

Listen to the speech of the leader. Was there any hope? The only hope the member offered was if the Bombers win, it's likely to be a Conservative government. Boy, I really feel good about that, Mr. Speaker. I suggest to the member—and I'm a great Bombers supporter going all the way back to 1958—there's no correlation between the election of a provincial government and the win or loss of the Bombers.

I know it's news to the members opposite, particularly the Member for Fort Whyte (Mr. McFadyen). I know and I understand, you know, that sports analogy and that locker room thing. I get it. You know, I get it. I remember the election campaign. We're up talking about nurses and doctors and the member was on TV and radio saying, we're going to bring back the Jets, we're going to bring back the Jets.

Mr. Speaker, it was lovely door knocking that week. It was wonderful door knocking that week, and they still don't get it. Now their formula is, well,

if the football team can win, we're going to win. Aah no, there's no correlation between a football game and the success of the provincial economy, no correlation between a game that's played professionally by men on a field and training people, women, people who immigrate here, to get jobs. There's no correlation, but that was the only hope in the Member for Fort Whyte's speech and that's the problem.

People understand. They know. They have children to raise. They have grandparents to look after. They have moms and dads. They have all of these day-to-day activities, and they know they can count on the government to work with them to try to solve the problems, to not be sort of out in the vacuum just criticizing and just painting this bleak picture of life, this kind of Darwinian approach to life that you can have spas in Point Douglas and professional hockey teams in an arena and the rest of the province can go to hell in a handbasket. That, Mr. Speaker, is not a vision—[interjection]

They can go to heck in a handbasket. I apologize, Mr. Speaker. That's not a vision, and the vision that we offer in this Throne Speech of expanded education opportunities, of expanded health care opportunities, of working with First Nations communities, of working to develop a transmission line that can feed all of Canada green renewable energy and can be one of the megaprojects of green energy in the entire world, we can build that here in Manitoba just like we can stand with a federal Conservative government and say, yes, we're glad you're accepting our recommendations on changing the Criminal Code on gangs, we're glad you're accepting our recommendations on changing the Criminal Code on guns, we're glad you're going with our recommendation, and at the same time, we're glad you're putting money into our gang prevention program.

The federal government was going to give \$1.5 million to our initiatives. The members opposite said, it's awful, it's awful, it's awful, and Stockwell Day was here handing the cheque to Manitoba. Where's the disconnect? You know, I don't want to get a psychological—I'll say it's football, Mr. Speaker. Sometimes in football games you have a lot of concussions and you shouldn't play anymore and you don't make good judgments and good decisions.

If you want to talk about sports analogies, Mr. Speaker, that's the vision I see from the other side. On this side it's fresh, it's new, it's Manitoban, it's all

genders, it's all people, it's all ethnic backgrounds. It's all of Manitoba with a vision to build together an economy, a province that has hope, that has young people wanting to stay here, senior citizens feeling comfortable and safe, a green economy.

You know, I talked to a fellow who worked in Europe for one of the global companies, in fact worked for BP. He said there are two places in the world I want to live, two places that are really unique, he said where I think the people really work and try to make things better. He said California and Manitoba. He was a major executive of BP, and he knew about what we did in biotech, and he knew what we did about climate change, and he knew about our work on Churchill in the north, and he knew about our economic initiatives, Mr. Speaker, and he knew about hydro development, and he knew about working with our First Nations, which is hard work but has to be done.

You can't just pronounce things from above high anymore. You have to work with the population which we are trying to do. Mr. Speaker, there will be disagreements, but you're better off talking to them than yelling at them.

That's the Manitoba way, and that's the Manitoba experience. That's why when we had a meeting of ministers from 14 jurisdictions of Justice, we unanimously agreed to all of the recommendations to move forward. It didn't matter what the political stripe was. It was better for the country. Whether it was prevention programs, whether it was programs dealing with gang violence, which is one of the most significant issues facing the entire country, or whether it was public safety, we agreed unanimously, Mr. Speaker.

That's the Manitoba way, that's the New Democratic way; that's the way we've been operating for eight years, Mr. Speaker. I think that has something to do with the fact that last May the people of Manitoba again put their confidence in the men and women on this side of the House to work with them the next four years, not to go back. Not to go back. Forward, not back. Forward with the New Democrats, not backwards to the Paleolithic or—

An Honourable Member: Paleolithic.

Mr. Chomiak: Paleolithic age, Mr. Speaker. I don't know what predates, I don't know if it's BC or PC.

But the point is, members opposite have lost the compass. We don't have a virtue on correct answers

and decisions, but I will tell you one thing. We work with the public. We admit when we make a mistake. We work to make things better. The public understands that. We have done that and will continue to do that over the next three and a half years until again we go to the polls and again ask Manitobans: What and who do you think should represent you for the next four years? They said what they want to do in May. They'll get another chance in three and a half years, and then we will see again.

Mr. Cliff Cullen (Turtle Mountain): It's certainly a pleasure to be able to join in the spirited debate over the latest Speech from the Throne provided by this government earlier this week. I certainly take great pride in representing the fine constituents of Turtle Mountain.

I think, listening to the previous Minister of Justice in a lot of his rhetoric, it appears the government of the day bring forward these ideas and put them on the public record, and I think eventually they actually start to believe that some things are actually happening that are positive around Manitoba.

I want to give the government of the day a little bit of a perspective outside of the building, what actually does happen out in rural Manitoba and what's happening around the city of Winnipeg. So I think it's a real opportunity for us to maybe level the playing field a little here and put some common sense issues out on the record.

First of all, we certainly acknowledge what's happened in Saskatchewan over the last month with a new government taking office there. Certainly, it was a sign that the NDP have overstayed their welcome and were resoundingly kicked out of office, this leaving the NDP government here—I will give you credit, the only NDP government in the country left. Certainly, we will see three and a half years from now where that will go. We certainly look forward as Progressive Conservatives, as opposition, to putting ideas forward to the people of Manitoba. They will have an opportunity to evaluate where we want to go and take this province.

* (15:50)

Now, we do feel that there is plenty of opportunity in Manitoba, and there's tremendous potential here in Manitoba, but the government has to have a vision of how we're going to move forward in Manitoba. Quite frankly, we didn't see a lot of vision in the recent Speech from the Throne, Mr.

Speaker. So it's up to us as opposition to try and show some vision for Manitobans and what can happen. We're going to continue to put those ideas out there, let them think about it so when the next election does roll around they will have the confidence to make the change, which we would have hoped would have happened this time round.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to talk a little bit about something that's very significant in Turtle Mountain, and indeed a lot of areas in rural Manitoba, and that's the health care situation that has developed in Manitoba. We know there is certainly a considerable amount of money being invested in health care in Manitoba. In fact, we have the highest per capita investment in health care across the country. Now, the unfortunate part is that that investment doesn't necessarily reflect that well in terms of some of the services that are being provided to Manitobans. In fact, we have 14 emergency rooms closed in rural Manitoba, and I just received word earlier in the week that we have another facility closed. This one is the Rock Lake Hospital located in Crystal City. This particular facility is closed right now. It looks like it's going to be closed into the new year, and residents there are being warned to be on the lookout for continued and future closures there. So now we have 15 emergency rooms closed in rural Manitoba. Quite clearly, when you look at patient safety, there are certainly some issues out there.

Also, I want to talk about Turtle Mountain specifically. The hospital in Wawanesa has been closed for quite some time. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, there were, not very long ago, three doctors working in that particular facility. Now we don't have any doctors in that particular facility. So this particular government allowed three doctors to move outside of the province and they're not showing any sign of coming back.

The hospital is currently closed in Baldur, where we're facing a shortage of lab and X-ray technologists. The facility in Killarney has faced some serious issues in terms of staffing there. In fact, the personal care home is not fully operational. We should be having more patients in there, but we can't find staff to staff that facility. So, obviously, that's impacting our seniors in a very dramatic way. The facility just down the road in Carberry was almost slated for closure as well. We're facing, again, a shortage of nurses in that particular facility.

So the list goes on and on here. We know health care is very fragile in Manitoba, and we have to

reflect back on the promises, the very promises that this Premier (Mr. Doer) made a number of years ago to end hallway medicine in six months for \$15 million. Well, Mr. Speaker, that hasn't happened. Hallway medicine continues to exist, and we just have more broken promises day after day.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to talk a little bit about EMS services in rural Manitoba. Given that a lot of these emergency rooms are being closed, we're forcing Manitobans into the back of ambulances to transport them from hospital to hospital and, quite frankly, we're facing a shortage of staff to operate those ambulances as well. So it's something that the government should be taking very seriously, the chronic shortage of staff we have in all of our facilities throughout rural Manitoba.

I also want to talk a little bit about economic development in terms of rural Manitoba. You know, what we've seen here with the Crocus fiasco, 34,000 Manitobans have lost over a hundred million dollars and really don't have any answers to show for it. This particular government isn't willing to call an inquiry to set the record straight so that all Manitobans will understand what happened and what went wrong in that particular market. Now, as a result of that Crocus fiasco, this government's lack of interest in that whole area of equity markets, we're seeing companies exit the province for greener pastures, Mr. Speaker. So, clearly there's a real issue there brewing. There's this black cloud that's hanging over the investment market here in Manitoba. We certainly think, with the right vision, those sorts of things could be cleared up and we could actually move ahead.

I think there is a lot of opportunity for us in rural Manitoba in terms of the biofuel industry. The government is big on talking about these things being developed, but, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, we don't have anything in operation. Hopefully, the Husky/Mohawk plant will be up running fairly soon to full capacity. There has been talk about three other facilities being constructed. Again, there's talk about it, but we haven't seen any operating licences being issued for those particular facilities.

Mr. Speaker, I look back at 2003 when we rushed in a biofuels bill with the intent that we would have some biofuels established here in Manitoba. Quite frankly, nothing's happened in that regard. In fact, that particular piece of legislation, very little of it was even proclaimed into legislation. So what we did, we're now tinkering with that particular act this

time around. So we hope that by making those changes that we just made over the last couple of weeks, that the government will get on and move some things ahead.

We know there are a number of companies in Manitoba that want to do business. They want to set up ethanol and biodiesel plants, but for some reason this government seems to be stalling. They're not out there facilitating and working with those companies to get things done. I would certainly challenge the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Initiatives (Ms. Wowchuk) to take her lead role in moving some of these projects forward. I would love to take part in a ribbon-cutting in the Killarney area with the successful plant opening up in Killarney. So I would make sure that the minister takes note of that and is there to facilitate the development that we think should happen. I know there's work going on quite diligently and there's a lot of money being raised locally to develop those particular facilities. We just need the government to come to the table and say, how can we help you make this work?

That's really what it's all about, is being there as a government to help facilitate some development. It's not all about coming out with a bunch of money. It's more about just actually being there to help facilitate these companies because these companies are there, these individuals working diligently. They've raised money. They've got their plans in place, the business plans in place, but there seems to be a lack of assistance in moving forward from the government. So I challenge the government to come out there to rural Manitoba, talk with these entrepreneurs that are taking these initiatives and make sure things get done. It's quite clear that it's time to get outside the Perimeter and have a look around and see what's going on. There is a tremendous amount of potential in rural Manitoba.

Another issue where we think there's tremendous potential is in the wind farm and the wind farm expansion. The government has been dragging their feet here for two years now. For two years now, we've got close to 80 requests for proposals sitting somewhere in the government offices or with Manitoba Hydro. We're not sure where. It's always later, later, we'll get back to you later, although we don't know who's really responsible for all this. Like, there's a lot of finger-pointing going on as to which minister, which department is responsible for these things.

That's quite clear in this government. They're never really up to take responsibility for anything. It's always somebody else's fault. It's either another department's fault, it's the federal government's fault, or it's the city's fault. It's very unfortunate that this particular government would not take some responsibility for the decisions that they either have made or the decisions they're not making, Mr. Speaker.

So we think there's a tremendous opportunity in wind farm development here. We just heard this morning from some individuals involved in the industry. The state of Texas, alone, generates more electricity from wind farms than Manitoba Hydro itself generates in electricity. So there are some very substantial developments in wind energy going on around the world. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, there are companies willing to invest in wind production here in Manitoba, but there are also a lot of other jurisdictions that want to invest in wind production. So what happens is if this government does not come forward and make some decisions fairly quickly, that capital investment will go to other jurisdictions, other provinces and other states. So an opportunity is here. The government has to take notice and step up to the plate and get something done. We look forward to some initiatives coming forward very quickly.

In terms of some of the economics here, Mr. Speaker, we've been comparing ourselves to Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan was historically the other have-not province out here in western Canada. Well, it appears that times have changed and Saskatchewan's moving ahead quite quickly.

*(16:00)

Mr. Mohinder Saran, Acting Speaker, in the Chair.

Here we are in Manitoba, we're getting—we're lost in the dust, quite frankly. In fact, 10 out of 11 economic indicators say that Saskatchewan's ahead of Manitoba in terms of economic development, so we do have a lot of work to do to even stay caught up to what Saskatchewan is doing.

Another thing I should point out, too, which is very important in Manitoba is our infrastructure. Quite clearly, I reflect on the bridge on No. 2 highway, and I have to remind the Minister of Infrastructure (Mr. Lemieux) that that particular bridge on No. 2 highway is still closed. It was slated to be opened sometime in October, and here we are the end of November and it still hasn't been opened

and people have been rerouted around that particular project. There are a whole bunch of bridges in rural Manitoba that have been out of commission for quite some time, and we hope that they will work, they will get up and running fairly soon.

I did want to mention Highway 340 as well. Highway 340 is a very important road running between Wawanesa and Shilo, and certainly we've made this noted to the minister on several occasions. Both ends of that particular highway are paved, but there's a 13-kilometre stretch of that road that remains unpaved. Right in the middle of that 13 kilometre roads is a provincial park, so we hope that the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Struthers) will take note that his provincial park would probably be a lot better attended if the Minister of Infrastructure would commit to paving that last 13 kilometres of road there. In fact, the road was in such bad repair earlier this spring that motorists couldn't get through that particular road at all, so it was quite a shame to have that occur on a provincial road. We hope that the minister will have a look at that and take that particular issue quite seriously.

I know the people from Killarney have talked to the minister about 18 highway, too. It's a fairly significant highway. A lot of grain moves on that particular highway because they have three or four inland terminals situated in Killarney, so we know the minister hopefully will put that on his radar and have a look at that in his five-year plan.

The other fairly significant issue that's been brought forward here and, ironically, was not mentioned in the Speech from the Throne earlier this week, was the whole concept of the bipole 3. This particular project, it's a huge undertaking by the Province of Manitoba, and it's a very substantial amount of dollars. We're talking probably in the area of \$2 billion, and quite frankly, we're not sure why the Premier decided to overrule Manitoba Hydro and propose this line on the west, the extreme west, side of the province. We're not just sure why he did that and there is nobody lining up on his side to defend his position either, but there certainly are a lot of people lining up on the other side trying to get the line running down the common-sense side of the province, the east side of the province.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

Now we know by running the line on the west side of the province, we're looking at a 400-kilometre extra route that would have to be carved through the

forests and the farm land of Manitoba, and we know that it's going to add at least \$400 million to the constructions costs there as well, so that's a very substantial cost as well.

The other thing that you have to take into account when you have an extra 400 kilometres of line is the line loss that's incurred in that particular project as well. We know the minimum amount of line loss will be about 40 megawatts there, and that translates to about \$17 million a year. That's \$17 million every year that we could sell to other jurisdictions and recapture some dollars on that investment. So it's a very substantial decision that we'll have to make going forward, Mr. Speaker.

There was a reference in the Speech from the Throne to an east-west power grid, and I thought that was kind of interesting. This power grid keeps coming up from time to time, and, again, we're not really sure who should be taking the lead role on this. Manitoba should certainly be talking to our federal counterparts and probably the province of Ontario. We recognize that Ontario is going to need considerable amounts of energy over the next few years, so you would think the government would be taking an active role in looking at those markets to the east and then having a good, serious debate about adding an east-west power grid in there.

Now, we know the same thing exists going south, too. There's going to be a tremendous need for energy sources to the south as well. Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, we don't have the transmission capacity in Manitoba to get any sales either east or south. So that's something that this government is going to have to take a serious look at is how we're going to make an investment in the transmission lines, or are we going to move ahead with Manitoba Hydro? Are we going to actually allow them to build some dams or get involved in wind power so we have extra sources of energy to sell? Just what is the role of our favourite Crown corporation?

I think it's quite clear. It's very unfortunate the situation that Manitoba Hydro has got itself into. We haven't really done any major constructions for decades in terms of Manitoba Hydro development, but at the same time, the debt for Manitoba Hydro keeps going up. Manitoba Hydro alone has a \$9-billion debt. I think that's something we should have a substantial discussion about how we're going to turn that around. Even the Province of Manitoba has incurred a debt now of close to \$21 billion, or even over \$21 billion.

Mr. Speaker, these are really the good times, but we don't seem to be paying off our debt in the good times. The federal government is certainly doing what they can to address the debt situation and pay things off. So we think it's certainly incumbent on the Province of Manitoba to have a serious look at their finances as well.

Just a quick note. I think it's important that we provide the members opposite with some insight into what's happening in the rural economy. The current issues are fairly substantial when we talk about the livestock industry and, in particular, the hog and the beef industry. There's certainly some tough economic times there with the combination of high feed prices and the high Canadian dollar. It's certainly fairly traumatic for people in that business. I know the government keeps going back and saying the CAIS program is there for them. Well, we know for a fact that the CAIS program isn't working for a lot of producers. Their margins have been eroded away over time, and, quite frankly, the CAIS program isn't responding favourably to their needs at this current time.

So it is important that we have a serious dialogue with our federal counterparts in what the new system is going to look like. We certainly hope for some positive things to come forward in that regard. But we certainly want to make note of that for the government and look forward to having the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) talk to those various entities.

Mr. Speaker, those are some of the issues I think that I wanted to put on the record. I do want to wish both the Bisons football team and the Bombers football team all the best this weekend. We certainly hope that they will bring home the hardware to Manitoba. We wish them all the best. Thank you very much for your time.

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): I rise to speak on the amendment to the Speech from the Throne. I'd like to indicate that I will not be supporting the amendment to the Speech from the Throne. In fact, I think it would be fun to rebut everything that's in the amendment, but I would rather be positive than negative. So I will talk about all the good things in our Speech from the Throne.

Before I do that, I would like to congratulate our son Nathan on his 30th birthday today. Nathan is having a very good year. Before he finished his first term, his one-year contract with Winnipeg School Division, he was offered a permanent contract, and

also his candidate in the election won the election as well. So he's a happy young man. In fact, he was a terrific campaign manager. In addition to being campaign manager, he was volunteer recruiter and election day organizer and sign crew chair. He did this all half-time, between 3 p.m. and 10 p.m. every day. We spent less money and our vote went up. So kudos to our son Nathan.

* (16:10)

The other day he came home from work and he said: Dad, have you ever been on national TV? And I said: Yes. In fact, I think three times in 17 years. The most recent time I was interviewed by the *CTV National News* in Donetsk, Ukraine, when I was an international election observer. I thought it was kind of ironic that I had to go to Ukraine to get on Canadian TV, but so be it. So he said: Well, guess what, Dad? I'm going to be interviewed on *CBC Newsworld*. So this afternoon at 2:30, he was interviewed as a Bomber fan, on his birthday. And, as if life couldn't get any better, he's going to the Grey Cup game in Toronto on the weekend. Just to make things more interesting, his mother, my wife, Carol, is going to Toronto for the Grey Cup game, except that she grew up in Saskatchewan and she's going to be cheering for the Roughriders, which kind of gives the expression "sleeping with the enemy" new meaning. However, I cheer for the home team, and I will be cheering for the Winnipeg Blue Bombers. So I hope that Nathan and his beloved Blue Bombers continue to have a successful year, both of them.

Now I'd like to turn to the more serious matter at hand and that is—[*interjection*] The Minister of Conservation (Mr. Struthers) points out that Nathan has been to Dauphin. In fact, Nathan goes to the Dauphin Ukrainian Festival every year. I don't think he's missed for about a dozen years, and he looks forward to it. It's kind of odd having a son named Martindale who thinks he's Ukrainian, but he does, and he is. [*interjection*] Thanks for the prompting, Mr. Minister. What else do you know about my son? [*interjection*] Well, that's not for the record.

I'd like to begin with talking about healthy families because we're doing many good things there, beginning with the expansion of the child-care spaces by another 2,500 over the next two years. This is one of many areas where we are builders and the opposition are mothballers. In fact, they're the party of cutbacks because I well remember when the Member for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson) was the

Minister of Family Services in the former government, before 1999, when they cut \$10 million from the child-care budget. We add money; we add spaces; we improve wages. Mr. Speaker, what did the Conservative government do? They cut spaces. They cut money to child care.

We have new measures to further improve school retention rates, which is a very important issue, and I commend the Minister of Education (Mr. Bjornson) on that one.

There is a new partnership with First Nations and the federal government to improve graduation and retention rates.

A new Safe Child Care Charter to provide parents with further confidence that their children are being looked after in a safe environment.

We have brought in new legislation that builds on anti-bullying initiatives.

There will be mandatory physical education every year for students entering high school this year.

There will be new legislation introduced yesterday, I believe, to ban the sale of foods containing trans fats in school vending machines and cafeterias.

An Honourable Member: Today.

Mr. Martindale: It was introduced today. We are very up to date with our speaking notes here.

A new bicycle trail is to be built, to be named the Duff Roblin Trail, extending 40 kilometres from the floodway inlet to Birds Hill Park.

Under health care, we have new nurse-training spaces to be added at Manitoba's universities and colleges. So here's another area that we are building. What did the former government do? They laid off nurses. We train more nurses. We hire more nurses. We expand health care. The former government was making cuts to health care.

We have new training spaces to be added at the University of Manitoba school of medicine. So we're adding training spaces. What did the previous government do? They cut training spaces in the Faculty of Medicine.

We have a new primary-care paramedic program to be introduced at Red River College.

There will be additional nurses and aides to be hired in personal care homes. I happen to know a little bit about this because I'm the past chair of the Fred Douglas Foundation, and it's Fred Douglas Society that runs Fred Douglas Personal Care Home. I know that their budget is increasing on April 1 next year, and they are very happy with that because they'll be able to hire more staff.

Coincidentally, for the information of the members, Fred Douglas Lodge and Fred Douglas Society were named after the late Reverend Fred Douglas, and today, sadly, was the funeral for his widow, Marie Douglas. I was unable to attend the memorial service because the House is in session, but I'd like to pass on my condolences to their son, Peter, and all of the family.

I had met Marie Douglas on a number of occasions because every year the Fred Douglas Foundation has humanitarian awards for people that are volunteering and working with seniors. We always invited Marie Douglas and made her an important part of that occasion. So she will be missed around events that take place at Fred Douglas Lodge.

There will be more dieticians, respiratory therapists and occupational therapists to be added as part of the long-term strategy to improve the quality of care for seniors.

There will be additional dialysis treatment facilities to be added in Winnipeg and Gimli and on the First Nations communities of Berens River, Norway House, and Peguis.

Consultations will begin soon on constructing a new women's hospital at the Health Sciences Centre.

A new MRI and a cardiac catheterization lab will be built at the Children's Hospital. A new asthma and allergy clinic for children will be established at the Health Sciences Centre, and a new pediatric ophthalmology program will be at the Health Sciences Centre.

Going on now to safer communities, we are hiring more police officers as the first step in a new commitment to add 100 officers, and I would like to congratulate the new police chief for the city of Winnipeg. I have met him at a number of events in the community and I think it was a good choice. I think he'll do a good job and we're looking forward to working co-operatively with him.

We are expanding the Lighthouses program to provide more places for young people to play sports, study or go on-line in the evenings, and one of the newest sites is in Burrows constituency at Gilbert Park in Gilbert Park public housing. I'm not sure whether they're going to be using the gymnasium at Gilbert Park or the gym at Shaughnessy Park School but it will be run co-operatively with the Gilbert Park Resource Centre and also Winnipeg Boys and Girls Club, who are already doing an excellent job at Gilbert Park. So this is one more important opportunity for recreation for young people, and they will be kept busy evenings and weekends probably at Gilbert Park gym.

We are expanding the Turnabout program to provide more monitoring and alternative outings for children under 12 who have come into conflict with the law. This is a very good program that I think we should always be reminding our constituents about because, you know, we hear that when young people are picked up by the police and they have broken some law, that if they were over 12 they would have been charged but because they're under 12, they're not charged, that nothing happens to them.

In fact, that's not true because in Manitoba we brought in this Turnabout program whereby the police refer the individuals to this program, and the staff talk to the parents and they involve the parents with Child and Family Services, or with the school or with recreation or with counselling; for example, the anti-arson program, and it's been very effective. It's been evaluated and the evaluation that I read a number of years ago said that, I think it was 80 percent of the parents take it very seriously and get involved with the Turnabout program and it leads to a lower rate of recidivism or repeat offences. So we should be talking about this program and letting everybody know that it exists and that it's doing a good job.

We are adding two new investigative teams to assist communities in tackling organized crime and we know that the Public Safety Investigation Unit is being expanded. In fact there are going to be dedicated staff for Manitoba Housing Authority projects. We know from the statistics and from experience and also as members of the Legislature, especially those of us who represent the inner city, that The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act has been very effective in shutting down drug dens and houses of prostitution and booze cans and sniff houses. It's been used, I believe, over 200 times, including in places like Point Douglas and Burrows.

I just recently talked to Sel Burrows who lives in Point Douglas. He was telling me how effective this program is and how they are using it because, you know, one of the concerns is that when individuals know that criminal activities like drug dealing are taking place, they're afraid to report it to the police or to anyone because they're afraid of retribution, but we always tell people when they call our office that if they phone the Public Safety Investigation Unit in the Department of Justice, their complaints are kept confidential.

Sometimes people have been very afraid to complain to me because they may live in a suite in the same house. So I have phoned the Public Safety Investigation Unit and they have, as a result, initiated an investigation. Their staff is okay with accepting second-hand complaints or third-party complaints occasionally. They don't like to do it that way. They like to talk to the people who are affected and get as much information as they can from people who are close to the source of the problem, but in Point Douglas, I guess because of the community being organized and because of people like Sel Burrows, what they have done is they've sort of passed on the complaints to a second person or a third person to protect people's anonymity. We've been told that it's been very successful in getting people to complain, in getting the investigations, in getting the drug dens closed down, and in kicking the crack dealers out of the historic Point Douglas community.

* (16:20)

So that is good news indeed. We need to imitate or copy what's happening in the community that is working because some of these things are good ideas. They are not organized by the government. That wasn't initiated by us; that was organized by people in the community like Sel Burrows, and if the idea works, we need to recommend it to other communities.

We will be introducing new legislation to provide protection or security for witnesses who testify against gangs. There will be a dedicated Justice unit to enforce a new criminal property forfeiture law. We are dedicating a Crown attorney to work exclusively on child exploitation cases. There will be an increase in the minimum wage based on previous public consultations. This is under the title of Inclusion and Citizenship. There will be an increase in the child benefit to provide support to working families.

I was listening to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. McFadyen), and he was talking about some of the things that are happening in Manitoba, like child poverty, and we have a very good record on improving benefits and providing supports and transitions to help people get off employment income assistance and into the paid workforce by doing such things as improving the work incentive, providing more benefits for children and increasing the shelter benefit.

We are expanding the popular Safety Aid program to provide security to low-income seniors. We are introducing amendments to The Employment Services Act to protect workers who are not covered by existing labour protections. Under the heading of Urban Centres, we are constructing new affordable housing in urban centres across the province as part of the HOMEWorks! program, and at the same time we will revitalize over 13,000 public housing units.

Now, it was interesting to listen to the Leader of the Opposition talking about public housing because their government was in office for 11 years, and what did they do? Well, I remember in 1993 when the federal government cut out funding for social housing. What did the Filmon government do? They immediately cut out all funding for social housing in Manitoba. And we were also told, I think by former civil servants, that the Filmon government wanted to privatize Manitoba Housing Authority, but nobody wanted to buy the units.

Why was that? Because they were so run down under the previous government. And they have the audacity to stand up and say, oh, Manitoba Housing Authority is run down. Well, we know that there was a huge deficit like the capital budget in schools. We inherited a capital deficit in terms of new construction and renovation to schools. So what did we do? We increased the budget, and, thanks to a very good Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger), we've done the same thing with Manitoba Housing. We knew that there was a deficit that we inherited from the previous government so we've increased the funding for revitalization of public housing.

A lot of that is happening in my constituency, in fact, in a place that the Minister of Finance is very familiar with because he used to be a community development worker at Shaughnessy Park School where our son Nathan is teaching. It's a large-scale public housing project called Gilbert Park, and we're spending \$1.8 million, I believe it is, in retrofitting and improvements. It already looks better because

they put new insulation and new siding on the units on Burrows Avenue, and it's a huge improvement, believe me. Best of all, they're putting in play structures, and this is something that the community really supports, and I'm pleased that the community was consulted. We had meetings with the residents association and asked them what they wanted, and they were shown drawings and different options and colour charts. So they were involved in the decision making, which is very important. We're hoping to do that in a number of other areas that I think will be announced in the future, so I won't go into them in detail now.

We are beginning a plan of double funding for recreation facilities across the province, including support for proposed facilities in Winnipeg, Brandon, The Pas, Portage la Prairie and the Selkirk library. I'm not sure what is referred to by recreation facilities, but I do know that under one of the infrastructure programs \$6 million is going to go into improving and building new recreation facilities at Old Exhibition park in Burrows constituency and a million dollars to improvements at Sinclair Park Community Centre, and we look forward to those, especially the ones that are going to benefit our Aboriginal youth.

You know, we have an excellent program called the Winnipeg Aboriginal youth achievement program. I'm not sure if I got that exactly right. But it has an excellent executive director. His name is Kevin Chief. He's one of my constituents and a former basketball star at the University of Winnipeg, and he's also in charge of a program at the University of Winnipeg as well. They have a mentorship program so that they have paid jobs for youth so that they are gaining experience and something to put on their résumé and providing leadership. I commend Kevin Chief because he and his staff are doing a wonderful job.

I was very pleased. In fact, I wrote a letter of support. I don't often do this, but I wrote him a letter of support because he was asking the City of Winnipeg to give his organization the old sponge hockey clubhouse that used to be run by Mr. Babinsky out of what they called the North End community centre. Their lease expired and so now the Aboriginal Sport Achievement program is in that building for their administrative offices. They're going to have an official opening and he promised he would invite me and I look forward to that. It's also in Burrows constituency and it's close to one of the

two centres where they're running programs out of old Ex recreational facilities and Sargent Park, although I understand that Sargent Park is closed for renovations and they're also getting substantial amounts of infrastructure money, which is good.

We are providing funding to add four firefighting positions each in Brandon, Thompson and Portage la Prairie to increase public safety and fire response. We are providing \$3.8 million to the City of Winnipeg to support 20 new firefighting positions and other priorities of the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service.

We are finalizing agreements to be signed for the Museum for Human Rights that will trigger the establishment of the first national museum outside Ottawa. Mr. Speaker, I think recently I commended Gail Asper for her fundraising efforts and her passion and commitment to this cause. I know that the Asper family are receiving a human rights award in Toronto tonight and I congratulate them. I think it's well deserved.

Under Green and Growing, there are many, many items here on what we are doing to protect the environment and make improvements. I thought it was rather interesting that today in Question Period the environment critic for the official opposition was pushing us to do less. We want to do more and they were pushing us to do less, kind of ironic, you know. We want to take the phosphorus and the nitrogen out to improve the water quality in Lake Winnipeg, and the official opposition is saying, no, no, don't do anything about nitrogen; just do phosphorus and save money.

So, if they really want to be credible on the environment, I think they need to do a lot better. In fact, I was going to bring something to hold up, but I can't. That would be against the rules, but it was rather interesting that during the election—I'm sure this happened in Selkirk and every constituency in Manitoba—the Conservative Party had their literature in plastic bags. Well, guess what? In Winnipeg, you can't recycle plastic bags. I don't know if you can recycle them in Lakeside, but in Winnipeg you can't recycle plastic bags, and all their election literature was in plastic bags. Now, how good is that for the environment? How can you have an environment platform and distribute your election literature in plastic bags?

Not only that, we had two pieces of literature in every mailbox. I'm sure that my opponent had at

least seven pieces of literature in every mailbox. Talk about overkill. They spent I think two and a half times as much on literature as we did, and, well, there wasn't very much return on investment for that. Certainly, it wasn't very good for the environment. Also, one of the things—I mean, it wasn't all literature. It was blank note pads and fridge magnets. What happens to fridge magnets? Well, I don't think they can be recycled either, or reused. So I think they should think about things like that in election campaigns in the future, in four years and eight years.

So where was I? There are so many things here under Green and Growing. Oh, yes, a \$206-million investment for the upgrade of all three water-waste treatment plants in Winnipeg as part of tri-level negotiations to address the City of Winnipeg's capital requirements.

Now, this is a very long list, but there's 30 minutes left, so I think what I'd like to do is yield my floor before my time is up so that the next speaker can use the entire 30 minutes, because I can't possibly read all these things into the record about Green and Growing and still give somebody else 30 minutes to speak. So just to show what a gentleman I am and how conciliatory I am to give somebody on the other side the opportunity to use up their whole 30 minutes supporting the amendment since I'm opposed to it, I'll give them the chance to speak for it and get all their negative laundry list on the record so they can mail it out to their constituents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

*(16:30)

Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina): I found the speeches rather entertaining this afternoon. While the Member for Burrows goes out to find himself—I think that's what he was indicating. He wasn't sure where he was, so we'll give him the opportunity to go and find himself. But, added to some of the information that he put on the record here this afternoon, I do wish him well. He said that he was having a challenge at home with his wife cheering for Saskatchewan and he was cheering for the Bombers. I would suggest to him that he sleep with one eye open. That's probably the best suggestion that I could give to him this afternoon.

Talking about the Bombers, we certainly do wish them well this weekend as they go out and represent Manitoba, and the Bisons, of course, we wish them well. Certainly, they're going to represent us in a very proper manner this weekend so we wish

them well in the work that they have ahead of them. It will be a challenge for them, but we know that they are up to it.

I liked the comments that were made by our leader this afternoon in referring and relating it to the political successes that have taken place within the province of Manitoba and within the province of Saskatchewan. I'm not sure if this is indicative of, and we can carry this through to this weekend, but, I guess, on Monday we will know. We will know exactly what's taken place.

Mr. Speaker, at the outset of my few comments here, I want to thank the pages for the work that they do. I know I've had opportunity to talk to them, and, certainly, they continue to serve us well. We do appreciate that very much. Also, the table officers for the work that they continue to do, we do appreciate the guidance that they give us.

Specific to the Throne Speech, I just want to make a few comments on that one as well, and that is the fact that we need and we want a government that is open and accountable. Within the Throne Speech, I will show you within the next few minutes, by comments that I will make and illustrations that I'm going to be presenting, the fact that we do not have, in fact, a government that is open and accountable.

Mr. Speaker, the government continues to mislead Manitobans, which is something that I find disheartening. Again, I will give you a few examples of that one. From the comments that were made by the Member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), I would suggest to you that we have a government in place that is arrogant and is very self-serving in some of the comments that they are making, rather than representing Manitobans as a whole, and that brings me back to the election in 1999.

I will never forget the time when the Premier was standing at the Emerson, or rather, the Pembina customs office and was indicating. He had a great big cross—he put a cross on a sign and indicated that everything was closed now to Grafton, that should he be in government, of course, people would not be going across the line and getting some of their scans, the MRIs, taken. He would put an end to that. Well, we, of course, know what happened, what the result of that was.

At the same time, he indicated, and, again, that's why I indicate that it's hard to be able to believe the comments that were made in the Throne Speech, where he indicated that within six months and with

\$15 million, that he would solve the waiting lists and the ER problems within the province of Manitoba. Again, Mr. Speaker, sadly enough, we know what has resulted in that.

But, Mr. Speaker, I want to take it a little further, specific to the Throne Speech that we had. When I look at the area that I represent, the Pembina constituency, the Throne Speech made reference to the Boundary Trails Health Centre that they built, well, I want to put a correction on the record. The NDP government did not build Boundary Trails Health Centre. That was built by the former Conservative government, and that government put the regional hospital in place.

Next, the Throne Speech was talking about the CT scan that they had put in place. Well, I want to indicate to you that the CT scan was funded by the local Legion. It was not put in place by this government. What did happen, though, was that the government was shamed into at least funding the operations of it. Of course, if they would not fund the operations on the CT scan, it would not be public health care, would it?

Consequently, I need to go on with the MRI which was just opened last week. Yes, the Minister of Health (Ms. Oswald) was there, and I was very happy to see her there, but the initiation for the MRI, the funding, came from the local community.

I want to thank John and Bonnie Buhler for the money that they put into it and the seed that they planted in initializing this idea. The community went ahead and did fundraising. There, again, we shamed the government into putting money in to fund the operations of the MRI. But would they have gone on their own and put one out there? Absolutely not.

So, Mr. Speaker, that's why I would like to indicate that we have an arrogant—we have a government that is misleading Manitobans in the information that they are putting forward.

An Honourable Member: And they're lazy.

Mr. Dyck: The Member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Cullen) indicated to me that they were lazy. You know, I think I could expand on that one for a while, because they are using thoughts that come from the Conservatives and putting them in place.

But, Mr. Speaker, I must go on. I represent an area that is the fastest growing area in rural Manitoba. The Throne Speech said and actually gave no indication of any supports that are coming into the

Morden-Winkler and the Manitou areas regarding the growth that is taking place out there. I really truly do believe that the government does have a responsibility in giving supports to that region as well.

Now I don't begrudge areas in other parts of the province, whether they be Winnipeg, or whether they be up north, the west, or the east part of the province, whether they get resources, whether they get funding. I don't begrudge them that, but I do want to indicate very clearly that the fastest growing part, region in rural Manitoba was omitted totally within the Throne Speech.

There are no supports. We need houses. I see that the Minister of Education is here. We need facilities and housing for our students. They do not have timely access to washrooms. We have close to a thousand students in huts right now. I know that I have been given assurances that there might be, there might be, some fast-tracking taking place. I do wish that that would actually happen, because I believe it's important that the students that we have today, that we do provide a good education for them, that we do provide them with facilities that are proper, that are something that our students need and that we should be giving to them.

Added to that, I know that within the Throne Speech the education portion of it was talking about physical education programs that would be mandatory for high school students to graduate. Consequently, I looked at the area that I represent and the students don't have access to gymnasiums in order to be able to get the credits that they will need.

Mr. Speaker, again, I find that there were a lot of things lacking within the Throne Speech. We need to continue to give supports in areas where they are needed, in growth areas within the province.

Further, I heard nothing when we were looking at health care regarding the supports that we need to those people who have actually built this province. I'm talking about those in the personal care homes. These are the people who have put forward blood, sweat and tears in order to build the province. What do we give them? We give them substandard housing in their last years. I believe that this is something that needs to be corrected.

I know that for the last number of years we've had ministers of Health come to Tabor. They've come to Morden. They've looked at the facility. Yes, they have said it needs replacing, we need more

supports in that area, but so far nothing is happening. I am cautiously optimistic that, possibly, within the next little while, in fact, the minister is going to advocate for that area and will provide some of the necessary tools that we need in order to have that expansion take place.

* (16:40)

But, Mr. Speaker, further to that, I just want to indicate, too, that this is an area that continues to contribute tax-wise. The dollars continue to roll from southern Manitoba toward the provincial coffers, and that's fine. That needs to take place within the system that we have within the province of Manitoba.

I would also indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that the area I represent is not looking at getting more than their fair share. They are quite prepared to share with the rest of the province, but I would indicate to you that there is a need to bring some of those resources back into the area.

The other area I need to look at is infrastructure. I know that a number of times I've asked the minister of highways, in fact, asked the question regarding Highway 32, Highway 201. These are areas that, again, are arteries that lead toward the U.S. We need to four-lane the area through the city of Winkler. We have upward of 16,000 vehicles driving that highway every day. There are many accidents that are happening. Thank goodness because the speed limit is reduced in the area that there are not more fatalities. But the accidents continue to take place. As I've indicated to the minister, this is something that needs to be looked at. Again, nothing was said within the Throne Speech.

So, Mr. Speaker, we continue to pay taxes within the area. I know that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) is here, and he realizes that there's a good chunk of money coming from southern Manitoba. As I indicated to you before, it's not that we are looking for any more than our fair share, but we do feel, though, that as the province continues to—in fact, the immigration that is taking place within the area is one of the highest immigration areas within the province of Manitoba. I know that the government continues to use it as an example of a success story, and that, yes, we welcome those who are moving into the area and are contributing to the community and to the economy. But, with this, the growth is requiring that the infrastructure, that the resources that we get from the province continue to be brought to the area as well.

Mr. Speaker, the other area of concern that I have and that I want to just touch on briefly is the fact that the finances in the province of Manitoba continue to be of concern to the area that I represent. The fact that we are now in excess of \$21 billion in debt in the province of Manitoba is something that should be of concern to everyone. We are straddling the next generation, our children, our grandchildren, with a debt that they're going to have to live with and try and deal with as they progress. I know that there are very few people across the ways who are involved in business and possibly who understand the problems of debt and the way it can escalate over a period of time, but there is a real concern. We need to have it at a manageable rate, or have the debt of the province, rather, at a manageable level. We need to be able to continue to do the things that need to take place within the province, but it needs to be manageable.

The other thing that I find rather interesting when we talk about the debt of the province is something, that it seems to be of no concern to the present government as they continue to add the dollars, the indebtedness to the province and to the people who are paying it back. As we go through and as I watch this government, the NDP government, operate within the last number of years, it appears with that that every time there is a problem they just throw money at it. I would submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that that is not the way to fix the problem.

It was interesting that the Member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) just made mention of the question that was posed today regarding the solution and some of the concerns that we have regarding Lake Winnipeg. They said that, somehow, out of all of this, they gathered that we didn't want to spend money in order to clean up the lake. We realize that there are possibly problems in the lake, that there are nitrate problems in the lake, but the concern that we have is use a scientific base when you're going to be expending more money. Make sure that it's going to, in fact, be a resolution to the problem that has been created. Rather than just throwing more money at an issue, why not, rather, resolve it and do it in a proper and in a wise manner?

Now the Member for Burrows is indicating that—in fact, I think he had his opportunity to speak already, but he wants to put more on the record. But he's indicating that he wants, I heard him say and he's continuing to say he wants to do less. Well, Mr. Speaker, I find that interesting, because it's totally

contrary to what he just said. I am saying that we need to spend money. We need to spend money wisely.

Added to that, talking about the finances of this province, I am pleased to see that the finances, that the monies that are generated within the province are continuing to grow. But, Mr. Speaker, from the 1999 level to where we are at today, we have seen a growth from \$6 billion to in excess of \$9 billion. These are huge revenue increases. Yet it's amazing the percentage of money that is coming from the federal government through transfer payments. So we have created a dependency within this province on the federal government, whereas we should be able to stand alone and generate the dollars that we need in this province and not be dependent on the coffers from the federal government.

I would like to see this a province where we were actually net contributors toward the federal government, rather than taking back from them. But, no, somehow we are complacent. We are happy in the position that we are at today where federal monies are still being transferred to the province of Manitoba. We should be able to stand on our own. Our neighbours to the west, they have managed—Saskatchewan. We've always compared ourselves to the province of Saskatchewan. *[interjection]* Well, the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen) indicates that they have oil. I would submit to him that we have other resources. We have a good economic base where we would be able to stand alone. But, no, we don't have the management that we need through the NDP government. They are wasteful in the way they spend money. They do not resolve the issues out there as they come along. As I indicated to you before, all they do is they continue to throw more money at an issue.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on on the issues that are out there that I find are missing within the Throne Speech, but I know that there are also other members in the Chamber here who want to put a few comments on the record.

Again, I'm concerned about the fact of where the NDP are taking this province. We've seen eight years of this. It's sad to see that they have not taken the opportunity to build on the resources that we have within this province, to build on the economic vibrancy that is out there. I'm an optimistic person. I believe that we can do it, but, again, under the government, the regime that we are under, I find that

people are in fact being discouraged when they get out there.

I just need to make another comment of an e-mail that I got this past week. It was from a local businessman. He was very concerned about the fact of more legislation being put in place, which was something that was just stagnating the economy of this province. Rather than him getting out there and being able to create jobs for people, being able to give people a good livelihood, there were more impediments that were put in place, more legislation put in place that was a deterrent toward the growth of his own business.

It's unnecessary. Yes, we need to have guidelines. Everyone needs guidelines. But, Mr. Speaker, I submit to you that there are times when you need to let those who are entrepreneurs who have an idea, let them go with it, run with it and grow the economy of the province.

So, Mr. Speaker, with those few comments, thank you very much.

Ms. Jennifer Howard (Fort Rouge): Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to say a few things about the Throne Speech. I will not be supporting the amendment.

Some Honourable Members: Aw.

Ms. Howard: I know, it's a shock, but that's how I feel.

I just wanted also to welcome all members back to the Legislature, as well as you, Mr. Speaker. *[interjection]* Yes. It was a long, long break. No, it was a very short period of time that we were away from each other.

* (16:50)

I want to just remark a bit on the Remembrance Day services that I was privileged to attend at the HMCS Chippawa, which is in my constituency. It is probably the only naval outfit in my constituency, but it was a pleasure to attend there, and also to attend at the post-Remembrance Day time at the Fort Rouge Legion, which is not in my constituency but nearby.

Remembrance Day has always been important to me, and this year probably more so. I have a cousin who recently returned from serving in Afghanistan, and I have to tell you that when you have a family member or somebody that you know who is serving

overseas the news has a whole new meaning to you every time that you hear of our soldiers being lost. I always enjoy speaking to veterans on Remembrance Day or any other day, because I often find that they are the most passionate and the most powerful advocates for us to do everything we can to ensure peace in our world, because they know more than any of us the true cost of war.

The week that we spent away from the House was also a good time for me to continue to meet with my constituents. I'm privileged that I actually get to work every day in my constituency here in the Legislature. I spent a great afternoon at the Villa Cabrini. Today, on National Housing Day, I do want to single them out for their achievements in creating a vibrant community of seniors and others who live together at the Villa Cabrini. They had their annual celebration of their patron saint, Mother Cabrini. I did not know the story of Mother Cabrini, and I learned it at this celebration, that she was a nun who had come to New York, had wanted to go to China, but the Pope had told her she had to go to New York, went to New York and worked with newly arrived immigrants and helped keep many of them alive, in fact, built hospitals, built schools. It was a good reminder to me of the contribution of people from many religions and many religious orders that really did build the health-care system, the social-service system and the education system in our province and throughout Canada.

The day before the Throne Speech, I was very privileged to be in attendance at the opening of the ramp outside this building. I'm sure all members will agree and join me in thanking the workers who put that ramp in front of the Legislature for us. They not only did it in a very timely manner, but it is a beautiful, beautiful construction. It was just very proud for me to share with my constituents as they—*[interjection]* Well, maybe members opposite feel that accessibility isn't something we should spend money on. I think it is a priority and it is a priority for my constituents.

I was pleased to be joined there by many of my constituents who live around here who require ramps to get into buildings. Not only is that ramp going to be used by people who use wheelchairs and scooters to get around, but it's also going to be used for people who have small children and who need to use strollers. It's also going to be used by people like myself who find stairs challenging, especially in wintertime when there is snow and ice on them. So I'm very thankful that now we have a Legislature, the

first in Canada, where everybody can come in through the front door. I think that was an important, important initiative of this government.

There are many other ways that we support people with disabilities, and I want to reflect on some of those that were also mentioned. One of these, of course, is through some of our changes to the Employment and Income Assistance system, where we now allow people with disabilities to participate more extensively in training programs, we allow them to retain more of their earned income, and we also allow them to build assets. These are very positive steps in helping to reduce the poverty that many people with disabilities live in.

We also know that investing in education and training, and some of the investments that were outlined in the Speech from the Throne, is key if we want to reduce poverty in this province. I was very pleased to hear of our 4,000 apprenticeship spaces. I often talk to young friends of mine and the sons and daughters of friends of mine who are now completing high school about looking at the skilled trades as an option as they leave high school. Certainly, when I was going to high school it was not something that was highlighted or talked about as an option. The only options that were given much discussion were university, and perhaps college. But going into apprenticeships and skilled trades is not something that was promoted extensively. So I am pleased that we are creating more spaces. Anybody, I think, who owns a home or has needed somebody in the skilled trades knows how scarce those people are. So if we can train more of them I think that is a good step for all of us in the province.

I also was very pleased to hear in the Speech from the Throne about our commitment to increase high school graduation rates, particularly of Aboriginal people. The more that I learn about the poverty that affects our Aboriginal communities the more I am convinced that finding ways to increase high school graduation rates and to increase Aboriginal participation in post-secondary education, in apprenticeships, in colleges, the better that that community is going to be in terms of grappling with poverty and building their own communities. So I'm very pleased that we're taking that extremely seriously.

I also want to touch on the qualifications recognition strategy that was discussed in the Throne Speech. Many of us, I think, as we travelled throughout our constituency, and as we spent time on

the doorsteps in the election campaign saw that the face of Manitoba is, indeed, changing. There are a great deal more people arriving here from other countries. We need to do everything we can to make sure that those people can work in the fields for which they are trained. We need them here as Manitobans. We need nurses and doctors and engineers, but, also, I think, fundamental fairness, that people who are trained in a profession are able to practise that profession when they move to another country. So I know that we are working very hard to increase and to speed up the qualifications recognition.

I know that we are quickly running out of time for today, so I will, of course, continue my speech another time perhaps, but I would be remiss if I did not touch for a moment on some of the cultural institutions that Fort Rouge is blessed to be the home of. We've many artists in my constituency, as well as galleries and performance spaces. Tonight I will be happily attending the opening night of *The Importance of Being Earnest* at MTC which is celebrating its 50th anniversary. I had a great tour of the Manitoba Theatre for Young People at The Forks as they were preparing to take their production *Comet in Moominland* to Broadway. They had a sold-out run there, one of the first ever sold-out runs at that theatre, and, certainly, Manitoba is the home of that production.

I was also pleased to be part of the Manito Ahbee festivities which many other members of this House took part in. It was just such a remarkable show of Aboriginal culture and cultural unity in the province. I think we all owe a debt of gratitude to the Minister of Culture (Mr. Robinson) for pioneering that festival.

Now, another cultural institution that I am coming to appreciate under the gentle tutelage of my honourable friend from Minto is, of course, the Winnipeg Blue Bomber football team. Now, I'm not going to pretend to know a lot about football, but I do enjoy the honourable Member for Minto's (Mr. Swan) frequent use of football analogies to illustrate various parts of House strategy for me and the other new members. We don't always understand what he's saying, but we do always appreciate his use of those analogies. It's always entertaining. I have challenged him to try to start using figure-skating analogies just to be a little more inclusive of all sports and cultures, and I am assured that, as soon as the Bombers win the Grey Cup, he will move on and will start using figure-skating analogies to help us all understand

what we are about in this House. So I did want to certainly recognize him for that.

Other aspects of the Throne Speech that I think will be very important to my constituency are those that have to deal with improving the environment of Manitoba, continuing to ensure that we leave our children and our grandchildren a province that has wonderful clean water, that has beautiful forests, and that can sustain the life of all creatures that live here.

I was proud to be a member of the Crown Corporations committee when Bob Brennan, the CEO of Hydro, came to present. I learned an awful lot that night about Hydro. Even though the Member for Fort Whyte (Mr. McFadyen) did ask the same

question in about 40 different ways, I did find out a lot more about Hydro by being in attendance that night. The new Hydro building that many of us have watched go up is also in the constituency of Fort Rouge, and I will be pleased to take a tour of that in a couple of weeks. This new building, as many people will know, is being built—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have 19 minutes remaining.

The time being 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow (Friday).

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, November 22, 2007

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS			
Introduction of Bills		Shellmouth-Boulton Cottage Lot Development Derkach; Struthers	38
Bill 2—The Public Schools Amendment Act (Trans Fats and Nutrition) Bjornson	29	Economy—Manitoba Borotsik; Selinger	38, 39
Bill 217—The Ukrainian Famine and Genocide Memorial Day Act Derkach	29	Agriculture Industry Eichler; Wowchuk	39
Bill 201—The Phosphorus-Free Dishwashing Detergent Act Gerrard	30	Seniors' Job Bank Lamoureux; Rondeau	40
Petitions		Manitoba Housing Authority Altemeyer; Mackintosh	41
Crocus Investment Fund—Public Inquiry Lamoureux	30	Members' Statements	
Dividing of Trans-Canada Highway Taillieu	30	Metropolitan Ilarion Martindale	42
Committee Reports		Manitoba Housing Conditions Mitchelson	42
Standing Committee on Crown Corporations First Report Jha	31	Winnipeg Blue Bombers Swan	42
Ministerial Statements		Ukrainian Famine Anniversary Derkach	43
Ukrainian Famine Anniversary Wowchuk	32	University of Manitoba Bisons Brick	43
Derkach	33	ORDERS OF THE DAY	
Gerrard	33	GOVERNMENT BUSINESS	
Oral Questions		Throne Speech (Second Day of Debate)	
City of Winnipeg McFadyen; Doer	34	McFadyen	44
Mitchelson; Ashton	36	Chomiak	53
Phosphorus Treatment Stefanson; Struthers	37	Cullen	56
		Martindale	60
		Dyck	64
		Howard	68

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