

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

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authority of
The Honourable Myrna Driedger
Speaker*

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-First Legislature

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, March 15, 2017

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

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

Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 23—The Fisheries Amendment Act

Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sustainable Development): I move, seconded by the Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade (Mr. Cullen), that Bill 23, The Fisheries Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la pêche, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Cox: I am pleased to rise in the House today to introduce for first reading Bill 23, The Fisheries Amendment Act. Bill 23 will make a number of amendments to The Fisheries Act by providing alternative marketing options to sell commercially caught freshwater fish here in Manitoba. This change will remove the monopoly that Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation has had for almost 50 years and provide flexible market choices for fishers and value-added processors.

I am pleased to present this bill to the House for its consideration.

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

Bill 218—The Red Tape Reduction Day Act

Mr. Jeff Wharton (Gimli): I move, seconded by the member from Interlake, that Bill 218, The Red Tape Reduction Day Act; Loi sur la Journée de la réduction du fardeau administratif, be now read for the first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Wharton: I'm pleased today to rise in the House to introduce Bill 218. The Red Tape Reduction Day will be an important day to highlight the annual progress made in our ongoing efforts to reduce red tape in Manitoba.

Efforts towards red tape reduction will ease the financial burden on businesses, non-profits and governments, foster job creation, energize our economy and finally unleash Manitoba's true economic potential.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

Bill 217—The Labour Relations Amendment Act
(Right to Collective Bargaining)

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): I introduce, seconded by the member from Wolseley, Bill 217, The Labour Relations Amendment Act (Right—

An Honourable Member: It has to be I move.

Mr. Lindsey: I apologize, Madam Speaker.

I move, seconded by the member from Wolseley, that Bill 217, The Labour Relations Amendment Act (Right to Collective Bargaining), be introduced and read for a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Lindsey: Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce Bill 217, The Labour Relations Amendment Act (Right to Collective Bargaining).

The bill amends The Labour Relations Act to reflect the recognition that section 2 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees all Canadians the fundamental charter right to organize and join a union of their choice, to engage in meaningful collective bargaining in good faith, to have their collective voice heard by all employers, including government.

What's more, the bill affirms the right outlined in the Charter by emphasizing the important role unions play for employees by giving them a strong mechanism to rectify the power imbalances in the

workplace and to realize their own collective workplace goal.

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

Committee reports? Tabling of reports? Ministerial statements?

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

ANAVETS Assiniboia Unit 283

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Families): Madam Speaker, I am pleased today to rise today to recognize ANAVETS Assiniboia Unit 283, the Army, Navy, Air Force Veterans in Canada, the largest and the oldest veterans association in North America, located right in the heart of St. James, in Kirkfield Park.

Many of the members are here today, who have—right in the gallery, and I would like to welcome and introduce: Bill Sadler, first vice-president; Rae Roberts, second vice-president; Ken Cade, secretary-treasurer; Lynn Lyons *[phonetic]*, entertainment; Barb Sadler, Donna Hartlie *[phonetic]*, Gord Watt and Barry Burns.

ANAVETS derives its name from the British and French colonial regiments, which were left over in Canada when the regiments returned to Britain and to France following the tours of overseas duties protecting their respective colonies. These men gathered to exchange information, service benefits that might be available to them, as well as to fraternize in social environments.

Today, members comprise of the veterans of Canadians' world wars, the Korean War, the veterans war, Gulf War, peacekeepers, the regular and militia forces, military cadets, the Royal Canadian military—Mounted Police, veterans forces of allied nations.

ANAVETS Assiniboia Unit 283 is, really, a hub of activity within our community and hosts many important events within the City of Winnipeg, including things like Remembrance Day, which is very well attended by the local community. Members come together to socialize and to participate in many activities, such as the ladies auxiliary, the 55 and retired, meat and bake draws and events and activities that really support veterans across—really, across the country, across Manitoba, across Winnipeg.

I'd like to take this moment to thank ANAVETS Assiniboia 283 for coming here today, and for your

sacrifices that many have made over the years. Thank you very much.

* (13:40)

Daughters of the Vote

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): While the lack of human rights for women and girls manifests itself differently across the globe, I'm sure that we can all agree on the importance of equitable space for women and girls, notably within predominantly male political space.

In honour of the 100-year anniversary of some women getting the vote, Equal Voice established the Daughters of the Vote, which saw a national competition for young women, ages 18 to 23, to represent 338 parliamentary ridings across Canada in the House of Commons.

Equal Voice sought to advance the number of women elected to political office by creating physical space for them within Canada's political institutions. On International Women's Day, Daughters of the Vote saw 338 young women fill every single seat in the House of Commons for the first time in Canadian history.

Manitoba was represented by 14 extraordinary young women from across the province, including six indigenous women. One of Manitoba's delegates, Brielle Beardy, made history by being the first-ever transgendered woman to take a seat in Parliament. Three of the Manitoba delegates had the opportunity to present to the Standing Committee on the Status of Women. Shania Pruden even got the opportunity to ask a question to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, which he didn't really answer.

I was invited by Equal Voice to render a keynote speech and participate on a panel with other women elected officials and was honoured to be able to spend time not only with our Manitoba delegates, but also with phenomenal young women from across Canada.

Madam Speaker, I rise in the House to simply say how proud I am of all of the young women and that I lift up each and every one of them for their strength, intelligence, brilliance and determination.

Please help me in welcoming Manitoba's next generation of leaders.

Mennonite Central Committee

Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute

to the Mennonite Central Committee, a charitable organization with worldwide impact and deep roots in our city.

Since providing famine relief for Mennonites in the Ukraine in 1920, MCC has continued to bring compassionate help in numerous situations and now has over 50 worldwide offices. Mennonite Disaster Service teams have helped Manitobans respond to floods at home and abroad. Two Manitoban MCC facilities co-ordinate relief and development funded by MCC relief sales.

MCC has also developed several local initiatives: Aboriginal neighbours, journey to justice, Voices for Non-Violence and the International Volunteer Exchange Program. Other local MCC ventures include Sam's Place café and bookstore on Henderson Highway and Ten Thousand Villages, the largest Fair Trade organization in North America, which has a store in my constituency of Rossmere at 963 Henderson Highway.

MCC's newest initiative is also in the heart of Rossmere: Kildonan MCC Thrift Shop at the corner of Rothesay and Edison. This new location is the first clearance centre in Winnipeg and sells clothes and other goods by the pound. It is accessible by bus, close to apartments and is being well received by lifetime residents and newcomers alike.

In particular, I'd like to acknowledge Robin Searle, chief operating officer, and Brenda Sawatzky, board chair for the MCC Kildonan Mennonite thrift shop. Both are fine Manitobans who have helped develop this new thrift store in Rossmere. I ask that members join me in applauding their efforts and the Kildonan MCC Mennonite thrift shop for serving our community locally while benefiting the efforts of the Mennonite Central Committee worldwide.

Helen Prieston

Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River): It gives me great pleasure to rise in the House today to recognize Helen Prieston.

At 86 years young, Helen has been a volunteer campground hostess at Whitefish Lake since 1990, dedicating 27 years of her life to serving the public. Helen looks forward to serving the public every summer. From May long weekend until September long weekend, she is available so families can enjoy the many recreational opportunities our province has to offer.

Her role as camp hostess is to greet and welcome campers and visitors and inform them of numerous activities and programs available to them. As well, she assists campers in setting up their site, locating the firewood, et cetera. If any issues or concerns arrive after work hours, Helen notifies the park supervisors and she submits a weekly report to these supervisors.

Helen is one of the founding members of the Whitefish Lake association, established in 1990. The association has made many improvements to the campground over the years. Some achievements include building or acquiring donations for 18 benches for the campground, a brand new floatable dock, playground structure, a covered kitchenette, renewing sand for the playground and installing solar lights for the washrooms.

Her passion for providing inviting atmosphere for the public is recognized throughout the area and her dedication is unmatched. Helen even pays out-of-pocket expenses in order to travel out of the campground to get cell service to contact park staff when concerns or emergencies arise after hours. Her love for green space is evident, as she has donated, planted numerous trees around the campground office.

Due to the distance, Helen is watching today from my office in Swan. And I say, Helen, you're an amazing and caring volunteer that goes above and beyond to serve the public. Thank you, Helen, for all you do for the people of Whitefish Lake. It doesn't go unnoticed.

Thank you.

Winnipeg Airports Authority

Mr. Scott Johnston (St. James): I rise today to recognize the Winnipeg Airports Authority for their substantial contribution to the province of Manitoba's economy.

Under the direction of president and CEO Barry Rempel, our airport has had much success. The WAA has existed servicing our province and country since 1997.

The WAA is recognized as an industry leader. They continue to enhance our airport—or air transport services and facilities. The WAA continues to increase Manitoba's access to global partnerships and growth within the Canadian marketplace.

Recently, the Winnipeg Airports Authority was honoured with a third place finish for North America

airports in the Airport Service Quality Awards. This award recognizes the WAA's excellence in customer service provided to all Manitobans and international travellers.

The WAA has received numerous awards and distinctions: one of Manitoba's Top 25 Employers six years in a row; one of Canada's Top 100 Employers; recognized in 2016 as only one of six airports in Canada, and one in 20 in North America, to be certified under the airport accreditation program for level 1 mapping; the first airport in Canada to be Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certified; first airport in Canada awarded a free trade workplace designation by Fairtrade Canada; Winnipeg Tourism Business of the Year.

The Winnipeg Airports Authority has recognized that Manitoba is a province of growth and opportunity. As Winnipeg is located in the heart of the North America continent, we are a multi-model trade hub. The WAA has responded by satisfying cargo and passenger needs. We can feel safe, secure and confident in our environmentally sound facilities and services.

We thank the WAA for their dedicated service to Manitoba.

I would ask the House to recognize Mr. Barry Rempel, president and CEO of the Winnipeg Airports Authority.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for St. James.

Mr. Johnston: Madam Speaker, I would ask that Hansard include the names as read.

Madam Speaker: I believe that that will be the case. Thank you.

* (13:50)

Introduction of Guests

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

We have seated in the public gallery, from HBNI-ITV system out of Fairholme school, 22 grade 9 students under the direction of Ms. Evelyn Maendel. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Wishart).

On behalf of all members here, we welcome you to the Manitoba Legislature.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Premier's Salary Refund Request

Ms. Flor Marcelino (Leader of the Official Opposition): Madam Speaker, Manitobans want to see a Premier working for them.

While the Premier has been off away in Costa Rica for two months, there is actual work to get done. But the Premier seems unaware. The only priority of the Premier is cuts and protecting his own salary.

The legislation introduced on Monday locks in his 20 per cent salary raise. They should not have taken that salary increase in the first place and they are now legislating themselves permission to keep it.

Will the Premier do the right thing: Will he give back his salary increase?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, I appreciate the member raising the question about salaries.

The NDP gave themselves a million-dollar bonus, Madam Speaker, a million-dollar bonus while they were doubling the Province's debt.

Think of the irony of that: doubling the Province's debt on the backs of us when we're older and our children and grandchildren, while, at the same time, giving themselves a million-dollar-plus bonus in salary, Madam Speaker.

And not only that: during that same time period, while they were doubling the debt they were raising taxes on Manitobans. They were jacking up taxes on people's homes, on their cottages and cars, on their benefits at work. And then they went ahead and did all this after they had promised they would not do so.

Madam Speaker, that is not integrity. It's not a demonstration of a proper tone at the top.

This government demonstrates that proper tone in everything it does, and it'll continue to.

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

Ms. Marcelino: Looks like the Premier will keep his salary raise.

Madam Speaker, the Tory caucus must be panicked by the reckless approach of their leader. While the Premier was away in Costa Rica, there was real work to be done for Manitoba.

I can only hope that the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko) is telling the Premier that it's not right to cancel personal-care-home-care beds in Lac du Bonnet while the Premier takes a 20 per cent pay raise.

And I certainly hope the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Mayer) is telling the Premier that cancelling the expansion of the Dakota recreational field, while the Premier takes a 20 per cent raise, is not right.

Will the Premier listen? Will he give back his 20 per cent raise?

Mr. Pallister: Madam Speaker, I appreciate any comments from the member opposite in reference to a panicked caucus.

When the previous premier was asked about his intentions—when the previous premier was asked of his intentions in the 2011 election in respect of raising the PST, he said it was ridiculous. He said it was nonsense.

And, Madam Speaker, he was right in that. It was ridiculous to raise the PST after promising not to and it was nonsense to take away the right—the right to vote, the right that veterans in this gallery today fought for us to have and to preserve.

The NDP decided that 35 of them could take it away from a million Manitobans. That, Madam Speaker, is why they have such a panicked rump of a caucus right now.

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

Health-Care Services Funding Cut Concerns

Ms. Flor Marcelino (Leader of the Official Opposition): If the Premier thinks the GST hike is so detestable, why is he keeping it?

Madam Speaker, we need to be clear. It is unfortunate that both Liberal and Conservative governments have decided to reduce the rate of transfer to the provinces for health care, but the smoke and mirrors you continue to see from the Premier masks the fact that the Premier has already made up his mind. Weeks, if not months ago the Premier decided to cut \$130 million from the regional health authority and cancel \$1 billion for projects like CancerCare.

Will the Premier admit that he has already made up his mind, that his agenda will be cuts for health care no matter what?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): As much as I appreciate the member's preamble in reference to panicked caucuses, Madam Speaker, I doubly appreciate her reference to smoke and mirrors.

It was the members opposite who went around the city of Winnipeg and throughout the province of Manitoba, who knocked on the doors of the people of this province, who looked them right in the eye and said to them, we promise we will not raise your taxes.

That's smoke and mirrors, Madam Speaker. And that kind of lack of integrity—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: We see that kind of lack of integrity from the few remaining members—*[interjection]*—in that party every day—

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —when they speak about, falsely, pay increases to this government when, in fact, it was they who gave themselves a million-dollar pay raise at the time, Madam Speaker, when they were doubling the debt of our province and giving Manitobans record tax hikes. Think of the damage they've caused.

So, it took them 17 years to do that amount of damage and it's going to take us a couple of years to clean it up. But, Madam Speaker, clean it up is what we're all about.

Ministers' Salaries Refund Request

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): The government finds itself in a terrible double standard. On the one hand, the Minister of Finance introduces legislation that locks in a guaranteed big, fat pay raise for the Premier and his Cabinet colleagues and, at the same time, threatens to break contracts, threatens to roll back wages, threatens to cut pensions, threatens our employees to take forced, unpaid days off. This will all truly hurt Manitobans.

Will the Finance Minister do the right thing today and return his 20 per cent raise?

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, in 2010 the NDP government failed to make progress on deficit targets. They actually clocked a larger deficit. The rules said at the time that, as a result, all ministers of the NDP would have to take a 40 per cent pay cut.

What they did 'instead' is change the rules, broke the rules, gave themselves a raise, held the raise for six years, netting more than \$1 million of payments to themselves while they raised taxes on Manitobans.

What is that member talking about?

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Fort Garry-Riverview, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Allum: Oh, Madam Speaker, the Finance Minister knows exactly what we're talking about; he just doesn't like the question, that's all.

Now, the truth of the matter is the Finance Minister introduced a phony, loophole-laden bill on Monday, pretending to talk about balanced budgets when, in fact, the objective of that bill was to lock in a big, fat raise for the Premier (Mr. Pallister) and every member of that Cabinet.

So I'll ask, because the Finance Minister refuses to answer the question, I'll ask the Minister of Infrastructure (Mr. Pedersen): Will he give back his 20 per cent raise? After all, he's done absolutely nothing to earn it. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

* (14:00)

Mr. Friesen: In a way, I'm actually pleased to hear the member for Fort river-Garry-Riverview actually talk about the debate of bills, because, of course, we can't proceed to bill debate in this House while he continues, every day, to rag the puck and have an intolerable discussion on nothing, on Interim Supply, a *[interjection]*-routine bill that is supposed to achieve *[interjection]*-the ability of-

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Friesen: -government to pay civil servants.

When they were on the other side, they said it was important to have all party consensus to pass that bill. Why is it that they will not give that unity right now to support civil servants, to pay those bills? Let's debate these bills that they're holding up.

Madam Speaker: Order.

The honourable member for Fort Garry-Riverview, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Allum: Well, Madam Speaker, that's a remarkable admission from the Finance Minister. He brings in an interim supply 'brill' worth \$4.7 billion, and he wants us to blink and say it's okay. I think

he'd be very comfortable in a 'dictatorship', but we actually live in a parliamentary democracy here in Manitoba.

Well, the Health Minister thinks it's okay to cut \$1 billion in health infrastructure. He thinks it's okay to pull the rug out from under a CancerCare facility that serves all of our families.

Since he's taking these measures, doing these terrible things to Manitoba, will the Health Minister get up in his place today and say he's not going to take that 20 per cent raise because he hasn't earned it either?

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Friesen: To be accurate, I think it was actually members of the NDP caucus who called their former leader a dictator, Madam Speaker.

But, in any case, we're very proud of the bill that we have brought that will introduce real measures for accountability, ensure that there are measures by which ministers are responsible to stay on track.

That party could never stay on track when it came to reducing the deficit.

Why does it matter? Because the more money we spend on debt service charges and servicing debt is less money than can go for the front-line services. We are standing up for front-line services, and that is exactly what this bill accomplishes.

Dakota Sports Complex Funding Cabinet Ministers' Salary Refund

Mr. Wab Kinew (Fort Rouge): The Dakota Collegiate LRSD sports complex is an important project, but this government has cut it. That cut is hurting people and students in the community. We know it's hurting people because the community around Dakota Collegiate has sent, as of this morning, more than 200 emails to the members of St. Vital, Riel and Seine River.

What stands out even more is that, if the Premier and his Cabinet gave back their 20 per cent raise, they would be able to match the amount of money that the community has fundraised towards this project.

Will the Premier explain to the members from Riel, Seine River and St. Vital, but, more importantly, to the community around Dakota Collegiate, why their 20 per cent raise is more important than the LRSD sports complex?

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): When the previous government didn't like the law that legislated accountability, Madam Speaker, and provided for pay reductions when they ran deficits year after year, they decided to change the law. They changed the law and they gave themselves over \$1 million in increased pay. They did this while they raised the taxes on Manitobans at a record level. They did this while they also gave their party a half a million dollar vote tax, which this party refused to accept on principle.

They did this and they raised taxes at the cost of considerable integrity, as evidenced by their record losses in last April's election. Yet, they continue to put—knowingly put false information on the record concerning our actions as a government.

Madam Speaker, we are abiding by the very legislation which the NDP put in place. We are obeying the law which they themselves gutted in order to serve their personal income needs. We are abiding by the law which they themselves broke and, when they couldn't get everything they wanted out of Manitobans, they went to court to take away the right of Manitobans to vote on the tax hikes.

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

Kelvin Active Living Centre Funding Cabinet Ministers' Salary Refund

Mr. Wab Kinew (Fort Rouge): Madam Speaker, the Premier is mistaken. He repealed the balanced budget legislation so he could keep his 20 per cent raise, and then he turns around and cuts important projects in the community, projects like the Kelvin High School Active Living Centre. This will help students get their gym credits at a gym in their own school, will also help them to be healthier and more successful, and we know that that cut will hurt them.

The whole community around Kelvin High is committed to this project. That's why students have been knocking on doors in the community, raising money towards this project. They got \$20,000 at their last social and have raised over \$1 million in total.

Will the Premier give back his 20 per cent raise and use it towards the cost of funding the Kelvin Active Living Centre?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Perhaps the member's failure to be able to grab even the most

basic facts and run with them, Madam Speaker, is attributed to his excessive partisanship or his absence from this Chamber in the times when his colleagues were actually gutting the balanced budget law and keeping the money for themselves.

But, nevertheless, the member needs to return to the land of truth, and truth town can be found if he simply does the research to understand that his own colleagues ranked 10th of 10 when it came to investing in educational infrastructure over the last decade. Tenth of 10 provinces in Canada, Madam Speaker. We have a lot of cleaning up to do, a lot of electrical works—*[interjection]*—to repair, a lot of—

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —plumbing to fix, a lot of roofs to patch. We have a lot of work to do, Madam Speaker, and we're going to do it.

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

Small Class Size Initiative Funding Cabinet Ministers' Salary Refund

Mr. Wab Kinew (Fort Rouge): And the Premier is cutting the funding levels to which he refers, so perhaps he's on track to be 11th out of 10.

Research shows that small class sizes are a good idea.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: The government keeps throwing up distractions in front of the media—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —but never will you hear this government deny the fact that small class sizes are a good idea. Because they know that if you ask any parent, do you want your child to have more—*[interjection]*—one-on-one time with their teacher—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Kinew: —they know most parents will say yes. And yet, this government has chosen to cut the small class sizes initiative and instead take a 20 per cent raise.

Will the Premier do the right thing, give back the 20 per cent raise and reinstate funding for the small class sizes initiative?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, let's look at the record of the previous government for a second, Madam Speaker, on education: dead last when it came to investing in our schools and in the infrastructure that supports our children, dead last in educational outcomes and first in giving themselves extra bonus pay raises and first in raising taxes on everybody else. That's the record that we have followed on, Madam Speaker.

Manitobans decided to change, and they decided after a decade—a decade of decay—that they wanted a government to repair the services, and that is exactly what we're going to do, Madam Speaker.

Northern Health Care Funding Cut Concerns

Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas): The government has already made up its mind on funding for health care in northern Manitoba. The Health Minister has already cancelled the health clinic in The Pas and in Thompson, health services that my family and I and my community were really looking forward to.

The Premier has already cut the northern regional health authority and other RHAs by \$130 million. This government has already signalled that it will cut non-insured services in the northern RHA.

Will the Premier stop this game of smoke and mirrors and explain why they are making such deep cuts in health care for northern people?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): Madam Speaker, there are record investments in health this year under this government, more than was ever provided under the former NDP government. I would expect there will continue to be record investments in health after the next budget, more than was ever provided under the NDP government.

The reality is we do need to look for ways of make sure that health care is sustainable now and to the future. We know that there is a declining share of health-care funding from the federal government; that is an increased challenge, and we are up to that challenge, and we're working with the RHAs to make sure we meet those goals, Madam Speaker.

* (14:10)

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

Ms. Lathlin: The Premier has already directed that RHAs make deep cuts. Cutting non-insured services means cutting services like mental health supports for northerners where rates of substance abuse and mental health issues are much higher in our northern communities.

Communities like Shamattawa and Cross Lake have required direct interventions during suicide crisis.

Will this government reverse damaging cuts and invest in northern health-care services?

Mr. Goertzen: Madam Speaker, we recognize that there are challenges in many areas of health care in the province of Manitoba that have been left after 17 years of neglect by the previous NDP government, 17 years of increased spending but not actually getting results.

Madam Speaker, we continue to ensure that there are supports, but also look for ways to make sure the system is better, not just for finding savings, although savings is important for sustainability, but also with an eye to how can we ensure that there's innovation and improvement in the health-care system.

That is the direction that's been given to the RHAs, and I would say that they are complying in bringing forward ideas to improve the health-care system.

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

Ms. Lathlin: This government has already made up its mind about health funding for northern people.

Cutting non-insured services in the North means an immediate reduction in services for people in my community and in communities across the North. These cuts to services like mental health supports and home-care services will hit the most vulnerable communities the hardest.

Will this government acknowledge the damage being done and reverse these cuts today?

Mr. Goertzen: When we came into government we discovered that the former NDP government had put in place a capital cap of \$189 million by which you couldn't go over it, that there couldn't be more principal interest payments for health-care capital more than \$189 million.

My officials advised me at that time that they are essentially already at the cap, even though there were \$1 billion more of promises made by the NDP.

I wasn't sure how they could meet that, but, of course, there's one way they could have done that. They could have increased the PST by 3 and a half per cent to 11 and a half per cent.

Will the member acknowledge that that's what the NDP was planning to do? *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Crime Rate Increase Yearly Comparison

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): Yesterday I asked the Minister of Justice if she believes that crime rates are a useful measure of success or failure, but she just couldn't seem to answer the question.

She's had 24 hours to think it over, so can the Minister of Justice today agree that crime rates are a useful indication of public safety?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I, first off, want to thank all of those front-line services, all of the police, the RCMP, all of those people that help make our communities a safer place here in Manitoba.

We recognize that we have inherited a bit of a mess from members opposite. The member opposite who has asked the question today was, in fact, the minister of Justice at a time when we had among the highest crime rates across this country.

We have come some way, Madam Speaker, but there's much more that we need to do. And we need to work with members of our community, law enforcement and so on to ensure that our communities are safer for all Manitobans.

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

Mr. Swan: Well, still can't answer the question.

If she would respect what the police are saying, she would go to the City of Winnipeg Police Service CrimeStat website, which shows that reported crimes are way up, in fact, by more than 15 per cent since last May 1st over the similar period the year before.

Has the Minister of Justice now collected her thoughts, and can she explain to this House and to the people of Winnipeg why, under her watch, the crime rate, as reported by the police, is up 15 per cent from one year ago?

Mrs. Stefanson: Well, in fact, Madam Speaker, the incarceration rates in the last 10 years are up 86 per cent in Manitoba, and that was as a result of the mismanagement of the NDP government.

So I will take no lessons from members opposite.

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

Mr. Swan: Still no answers.

Yesterday, I pointed out to the Justice Minister that so far in 2017 the crimes reported by the Winnipeg police are up 27 per cent over the same period last year. In this time, there's been no action taken by this minister or her government to improve public safety.

After sustained work by the government, police, MPI, communities and vehicle owners, Winnipeg was able to shed the title of car-theft capital of Canada, which was earned in the 1990s, and, in fact, drop out of the top 10.

I want to ask the Premier (Mr. Pallister): Is a 42 per cent increase in car theft and getting back on the path to being the car-theft capital of Canada aiming higher?

Mrs. Stefanson: I want to thank the member for the question.

In fact, it was under his watch that the number of people on remand in our province increased to 70 per cent of those who are in our provincial correctional facilities. That is not something to be proud of. It's something that we have inherited as a government, and it's something that we commit to be the most improved province in Canada on.

Thank you.

Federal-Provincial Agreements Timeline for Signing

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): The Manitoba Liberals are standing up for all Manitobans. What is clear is that this Premier is not and is not getting things done. There is no climate change deal. There is no health-care agreement and now we learn the critical Factory of the Future centre, which will create important manufacturing jobs, is being risked.

Why is this Premier not standing up for Manitobans? Why is this Premier not getting things done?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, Madam Speaker, I appreciate the question. I really do, because it allows me to say to the member that, while she and her colleagues have been clapping on behalf of Ottawa here in this Chamber and the NDP members have been sitting on their hands, we've been standing up for Manitobans. We've been standing up for health care and we've been doing our best to negotiate with a federal government that has decided to threaten Manitoba with the loss of previously made promises with the taking away of previously committed investments that have nothing to do with health care and everything to do with our aerospace industry.

So, while the member may want to criticize, I would encourage her to criticize where it is justifiable and right, and criticize Ottawa for that kind of a tactic. Manitobans—Manitoba may be a small province and Manitobans may not be many people, but we will stand up for ourselves and we will be heard. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

The honourable member for Kewatinook, on a supplementary question.

Ms. Klassen: Ottawa does not run this province, Premier. This government does.

Manitoba Liberals are standing strong for our province, but it's a sad day for Manitobans when the Premier cannot learn to work together with the federal government. It's time to quit playing the blame game. It is time that the Premier switch his focus and start getting things done for all Manitobans.

Will the Premier act today to finalize deals on the health-care agreement, the climate change agreement, and secure the Factory of the Future?

Mr. Pallister: I, again, very much appreciate the member raising these questions. In a general sense, of course she is right. It is important to work with others. But when one is threatened or bullied, the member, of all people in this Chamber, should understand that it is very important never to give in to threats or bullying tactics. That would be wrong. That would be absolutely a sacrifice of character and principle that Manitobans would not want their Premier or government to make and we will not make that.

Madam Speaker: Prior to proceeding, I would just like to caution the member that all questions should

be directly put through the Chair to members on the other side. I'd appreciate the co-operation of all members, please.

The honourable member for Kewatinook, on a final supplementary.

Ms. Klassen: When it comes to blaming Ottawa: NDP, Tory, same old story.

* (14:20)

Mental health and home care are not token categories, as the Premier has previously stated. They are critically important. While this government delays, it is Manitobans who suffer.

The fact is, the federal government is asking this government to produce results.

Is the Premier afraid he can't deliver on results? Is that the real problem?

Mr. Pallister: After years of failure, Madam Speaker, by the previous administration, we are focused on attaining results for Manitobans.

Madam Speaker, we stood up for Manitobans on the CPP when members opposite were advocating we go Ottawa's way. When Ottawa-west was telling us to do exactly what Ottawa-east wanted, we were standing up for Manitoba seniors. When the members opposite were sitting on their hands, or worse, clapping them and applauding Ottawa's every move of reducing health transfers by 50 per cent—the increase in health transfers by 50 per cent and exposing already-vulnerable Manitobans, including a significant number—Canada's highest percentage of indigenous people, who deserve to have health care and have not been well served in their communities, as the member opposite should know, we stood up on behalf of those people and we will continue to.

But we will not give in to bullying or intimidation tactics. And threats of breaking previous promises, including a threat to withdraw a \$60 million investment critical to our aerospace industry in this province, will never work with this Premier, will never work with this government, Madam Speaker.

Freshwater Fisheries New Marketing Legislation

Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River): Madam Speaker, marketing freedom for fishers is upon us. The government promised fishers a flexible marketing environment, and we're on the way to keeping that promise.

My question is for the Minister of Sustainable Development. Can you tell all the legislation tabled in the House today will provide marketing freedom for Manitoba's commercial fisheries? *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sustainable Development): Thank you for this excellent question on this exciting piece of legislation I had the privilege of tabling today.

In August 2016, our government announced our plan to allow fishers out from under the monopoly of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation and served notice to the federal government that we are withdrawing our participation in the Freshwater Fish Marketing Act.

Madam Speaker, this is an important day for fishers and an important day for the economy of Manitoba. Marketing freedom for Manitoban fishers is here.

Under the legislation I tabled today, commercial fishers will be able to sell and market their legally caught fish interprovincially and internationally. The option will also remain for all of those that wish to continue working for the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation. It is a win-win for all Manitoba fishers. Manitoba is open for business, Madam—

Madam Speaker: The member's time—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: The honourable—*[interjection]*

Order, please.

Input on the Environment Consultations with Manitobans

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): If the minister is so interested in hearing the views of Manitobans, why has her government waited 11 months, two throne speeches, one budget speech and 421 news releases before asking Manitobans to provide input on the environment, and why has she limited the consultation period to only two and a half weeks rather than usual minimum six-week period for something this important?

Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sustainable Development): Like to thank the member opposite for that question considering that the members opposite failed to even ever have a climate action plan.

They had no intention of ever developing a climate action plan, and never, ever met any emission targets, Madam Speaker.

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

Agriculture Emissions Carbon Pricing

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): Well, I'm sure I'm not the only Manitoban who's a little disappointed that answer costs me 20 per cent more than it used to.

Let's try someone else over there and see if we can get something closer to an answer. There's a certain minister who likes to complain he doesn't get many questions from us, so here's his chance to shine.

Would the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Eichler) please tell the House: Is he in favour of the carbon tax being applied to some, all or none of the emissions coming out of the ag sector in Manitoba?

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

Madam Speaker, of course we have had consultations. We've had consultations with stakeholders, with non-government organizations and with, actually, KAP. We've talked to many individuals and Manitobans with regard to our climate action plan. We're working hard to ensure that they guide our plan, not like the former government opposite who didn't care at all about listening to Manitobans, never consulted with them, never talked to them and never, ever met an emission target.

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

Climate Change Government Position

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): Well, the Ag Minister missed the chance to actually share his views with Manitobans. I don't know why he's still complaining that he doesn't get that opportunity.

You know, there is a possibility, Madam Speaker, that I may have found the source of the government's problem when it comes to their complete inaction on climate change. I have a document here to table, if the pages would be kind enough to take it. It's a recent news article where

someone is quoted as saying: I don't think it's helpful to link this to unrelated files. We're generally trying to keep the debate here focused on what's the best thing to do and not bring a bunch of tangential issues that make that dialogue tougher.

Now, the person who said that was the Premier, and wouldn't you know it, this is the same person who has linked health care and climate change together.

Will he do the right thing and separate those two, finally, and start taking action on the climate?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, Madam Speaker, it may be puzzling to the member, but it's not puzzling to any thinking Manitoban to realize that if you get gutted on your health-care transfers, there's less money to do matching programs on environmental projects with the federal government. It's just common sense. The member should look it up.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Spring Flood Concerns Drainage from Saskatchewan

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): In much of Manitoba the ground is saturated, many rivers full, the Red River Basin Commission is warning that another severe flood season could be on its way.

The Premier has publicly stated that it will be difficult to control flooding if he can't convince Saskatchewan to stop draining water into Manitoba.

I'd like to know today, Madam Speaker, what progress the Premier has made on this issue with Mr. Wall, and can he assure Manitobans that he will be prepared for spring flooding?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

Hon. Blaine Pedersen (Minister of Infrastructure): Our department is working hard to work with all our municipalities across the province. In fact, there was a meeting happening in Brandon—I believe it's today—with all the municipalities there, in terms of flood preparation. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pedersen: We're working hard all across the province to make sure that we are prepared should there be any flood events.

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

Mr. Lindsey: In January, the Premier met with Brad Wall to discuss drainage issues. The Premier reported at that time that Saskatchewan had not to this point partnered as he would like them to do.

Madam Speaker, it looks like the Premier has not proven to be a good negotiator after all.

* (14:30)

Saskatchewan just approved a permit to drain 18,000 acres into the Souris River, and it has plans for a further 250 square miles to be drained.

Madam Speaker, is the Premier using the same negotiating tactics with our neighbours to the west as he's been using with Ottawa? *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): When I first had the opportunity to meet Premier Wall in my capacity as Opposition Leader, I had a very good discussion with him on a number of fronts, and one of the topics I raised, first of all, was the issue of—the member raises, and quite rightly raises, and that's the concern that we have because we share water basins, we share river basins, that we take a more co-operative approach. I said that growing up on the farm—a small farm as I had, we didn't solve our water problems on the backs of our neighbours. I said that I was sure the NDP government must have raised this issue with him numerous times, and he said, never.

We're going to continue to raise it. We're going to work with our neighbours. We're going to do everything we can to make sure that we do co-operative strategies, flood mapping jointly, that we work together on preventative aspects of this issue. It wasn't done before, Madam Speaker. While Saskatchewan proceeded to drain massive amounts of farmland over the last number of years, the NDP sat quietly by and said nothing and did nothing.

Madam Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

Petitions? *[interjection]*

Order, please.

PETITIONS

Neighbourhood Renewal Corporations Funding

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly. The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Since 2001, the Neighbourhoods Alive! program has supported stronger neighbourhoods and communities in Manitoba.

(2) Neighbourhoods Alive! uses a community-led development model that partners with neighbourhood renewal corporations on projects that aim to revitalize communities.

(3) Neighbourhoods Alive! and the neighbourhood renewal corporations it supports have played a vital and important role in revitalizing many neighbourhoods in Manitoba through community-driven solutions including: employment and training, education and recreation, safety and crime prevention, and housing and physical improvements.

(4) Neighbourhoods Alive! now serves 13 neighbourhood renewal corporations across Manitoba which have developed expertise in engaging with their local residents and determining the priorities of their communities.

(5) The provincial government's previous investments into Neighbourhoods Alive! have been bolstered by community and corporate donations as well as essential support from community volunteers, small businesses and local agencies.

(6) Late in 2016, the minister responsible for the Neighbourhoods Alive! program said new funding for initiatives was paused and that the future of the Neighbourhoods Alive! program was being reviewed, bringing hundreds of community projects to a standstill.

(7) Neighbourhood renewal corporations and their communities are concerned this funding freeze is the first step in a slow phase-out of the Neighbourhoods Alive! grant program, which would have severe negative impacts on families and communities.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

That the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba be urged to support the Neighbourhoods Alive! program and the communities served by neighbourhood renewal corporations by continuing to provide consistent core funding for existing neighbourhood

renewal corporations and enhancing the public funding available for specific initiatives.

This petition is signed by many Manitobans, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: In accordance with our rule 133(6), when petitions are read they are deemed to be received by the House.

Grievances?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, we would like to continue Interim Supply.

Madam Speaker: It has been announced by the honourable Government House Leader that the House will consider Interim Supply this afternoon.

We will now resolve into Committee of the Whole to consider and report on Bill 8, The Interim Appropriation Act, 2017, for concurrence and third reading.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, please take the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill 8—The Interim Appropriation Act, 2017

Mr. Chairperson (Doyle Piwniuk): Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

We have before us—for us continuing consideration of Bill 8, The Interim Appropriation Act, 2017. Yesterday, we left on—during the consideration of clause 2.

The floor is open for any questions.

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): Yesterday, we ended off asking about capital investments under section 2(2) of the Interim Supply bill. And, at that point, we'd asked the Finance Minister if he would be able to supply a list. He read a partial list of some kind; it wasn't quite clear to us.

We'd ask him today: Is he prepared to table that list as I think he committed to yesterday?

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): The member is correct that we're in that second appropriation of the interim appropriation act, and he had asked for a list of capital programs that this interim appropriation request would refer to. And I had been in the middle of delivering for him an indication of community-based child-care spaces, a

list released on March the 9th to the public. And that would be a set of projects that would also take funding authority from this appropriation request.

I had read for him a list of Winnipeg projects, I read for him a list of projects outside of Winnipeg, and I don't think I got a chance to finish. There were a few more at the end, including Niverville Heritage Holdings Inc., with community partner, up to 90 spaces in St. Adolphe; Riverside Day Care Incorporated, up to 10 spaces in Thompson; and Springfield Learning Centres, up to 21 spaces in Anola.

Taken all together, that in itself is \$6.181 million dollars for 15 community-based capital projects that would create a new—739 new, licensed child-care spaces.

Mr. Allum: You know, we could speed this process up, Mr. Deputy Chair, if the minister would just table the list for us. After all, this section calls for \$528-million appropriation. The list he read there probably leaves the vast majority of that sum of money left.

Would he make a commitment to table the list today?

Mr. Friesen: The member for Fort Garry-Riverview (Mr. Allum) asks for detail from that second clause in the appropriation, and I can give him more information pertaining to health projects.

*(14:40)

I see here there's a list of projects that was released just recently and it's a very long list of projects, but I would want to make clear that the member's comments seem to reflect that somehow that investment in child care was insignificant or nominal. And I would certainly say for the record he is mistaken and there's no member on this side of the House that would call that level of investment for almost 750 new spaces a nominal or marginal investment, and I would really caution the member to make clear if that is his opinion on the matter.

Nevertheless, when it comes to Health capital projects, as the Minister of Health was saying earlier today, we have in front of us a list here. There is, in the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority, a recent announcement having to do with improvements and building equipment replacement and safety upgrades in hospitals and health centres, including Eriksdale, Pinawa, Gimli and Teulon in Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority.

In northern regional health authority there is a brand new EMS facility in Gillam that—takes its authority—its capital authority from this act.

In Thompson there's work that's being done to scope out and do mitigation work in terms of mould mitigation. In Thompson there's also an HVAC system—heating, ventilation system, air-conditioning system, in the hospital that would be repaired and upgraded. Also in Thompson, air-conditioning systems for the lab at the hospital and heating, lighting, and ventilation upgrades, and in The Pas, re-installing alternate water supply to the health complex.

Prairie Mountain Health centre capital requests that would be included in this bill—in this bill's provisions, should it be passed, would be a reheat system piping; in Brandon, replacing parts of the roof at Brandon Regional Health Centre; replacing the nurse call system at Fairview Home in Brandon; in Rivers, replacing the roof on the health-care personal care home; in Hartney—sprinkler lines at the health-care centre; in Russell, installing a sprinkler system at the 'rusner'—Russell Personal Care Home.

And I know you know this area, Mr. Chair, because parts of this go into areas near what you represent, in Southern Health-Santé Sud there is a new patient wandering security system at Portage hospital.

In Notre Dame there is a replacement of a nurse call system. In St. Claude there's repairing of the roof at the PCH. In Carman they're replacing the air unit at the laboratory in the hospital.

Grunthal is replacing a sprinkler system at the Menno Home. I know those replacements of sprinkler systems can be very expensive. As a matter of fact, when there was one done in my community a few years ago, it was \$1 million to do the sprinkler system in the personal care home.

In Steinbach installing a new sprinkler system at Rest Haven Nursing Home, and for the Manitoba renal centre program, also in Santé Sud, replacing the dialysis reverse osmosis system at BTHC—that's Boundary Trails Health Centre.

CancerCare Manitoba lists emergency power backup upgrades and upgrades to anchors and railings for fall protection systems, and then in the WRHA there's a longer list again, including Deer Lodge, Golden West Centennial Lodge, Actionmarguerite in St. Boniface and St. Boniface

General Hospital, Actionmarguerite on the St. Vital campus. The first one was at St. Boniface campus.

Fred Douglas Lodge, Misericordia Health Centre, Health Sciences Centre and Concordia Hospital—those amounts are for things like elevator replacement, fire panel replacement, replacing flooring, structural repairs, roof replacements, all those kind of very essential pieces of equipment. That alone is more than \$20 million in WRHA alone.

There's—this list is actually separated into projects that go major and medium and then minor repair but, if the member would like, I can continue to provide additional detail that he seeks on capital expenditure from the RHAs.

I didn't get a chance to talk about some other of the bigger repairs in some of those health authorities, including Cadham labs or in CancerCare Manitoba.

Mr. Allum: Mr. Deputy Speaker, let the record show that the Finance Minister doesn't have the decency to table a list. We asked him.

We have no more questions on this section.

Mr. Chairperson: Clause 2—pass; clause 3—pass; clause 4—pass; clause 5—pass; clause 6—pass; enacting clause—pass; title—pass. Bill be reported.

That concludes this business for the committee.

The committee rises. Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Committee Report

Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Chairperson): Madam Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has considered Bill 8, The Interim Appropriation Act, 2017, and the reports be the same without 'remendment'.

I move, second by the honoured member for Morris (Mr. Martin), that the report of the committee be received.

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

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

An Honourable Member: No.

Madam Speaker: No?

Voice Vote

Madam Speaker: All those in favour of the motion, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Speaker: In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

Recorded Vote

Mr. Jim Maloway (Official Opposition House Leader): Madam Speaker, I request a recorded vote.

Madam Speaker: A recorded vote having been called, call in the members.

The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 8, The Interim Appropriation Act, 2017.

Division

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

Yeas

Bindle, Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Curry, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Fletcher, Friesen, Goertzen, Graydon, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Martin, Mayer, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pedersen, Piwniuk, Reyes, Schuler, Smith, Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Wowchuk.

Nays

Allum, Altemeyer, Fontaine, Gerrard, Klassen, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Marcelino (Tyndall Park), Saran, Selinger, Swan, Wiebe.

Deputy Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish): Yeas 37, Nays 15.

Madam Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* (15:50)

CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS

Bill 8—The Interim Appropriation Act, 2017

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister for Growth, Enterprise and Trade (Mr. Cullen), that Bill 8, The Interim Appropriation Act, 2017, reported from the Committee of the Whole, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Friesen: It has been some considerable time it's taken this House to get to third reading but we are here now and so I live in hope that the opposition

party will support these measures: measures that are conventional, that are routine, that are based on the previous years' total appropriation and reflect that; measures that allow civil servants to be paid; measures that allow capital amounts to be expended for the new and coming year; measures that allow us to see to things, like our environmental liabilities.

But, Madam Speaker, for the purposes of this discussion and debate at third reading, certainly, what I would like to do again is underscore that those members just now stood and indicated in a vote that they were opposed to the interim appropriation. Yet, when they were recently in government before their ill-timed and quick departure from that role, I note that the former House leader remarked, in 2013, that the government could run out of money if the opposition would not end their efforts to slow up the agenda.

And, at that time, the former premier, the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger), agreed that an Interim Supply bill was necessary but only works if there is co-operation from the opposition side. And I note that at the time the member for St. Boniface said that he was optimistic that a solution would be found that would allow core services to continue but it depends on all parties co-operating and there's no guarantee of that, he said.

And I would say that, Madam Speaker, I would just also want to add that, in 2015, it was the former member for Thompson who pointed out in—on June 24th, 2015, that the members opposite vote against supplying anything in government. They voted against Interim Supply, all of it. They voted against it all.

And, Madam Speaker, I note here, that that member seems to have taken a tremendous, you know, discomfort in the fact at the time—that they couldn't get agreement.

I think where we land today is that both sides have recognized that this bill is necessary, it is routine, it is conventional. It does not authorize new expenditure for '17-18, it does not pertain to the budget that will come to this Chamber in just a few short days. And, certainly, we would invite the co-operation of all members of the Legislature to support a passage at third reading and the proclamation of this bill.

We have a robust legislative agenda on this side of the House; we have bills that members of the opposition said today they wanted to debate. They

themselves stand in the way of the debate that they are calling for on those members. What could be more ironic?

We basically have to say at the outset, though, that when it comes to the member for Fort Garry-Riverview (Mr. Allum), while he may choose another filibuster routine in respect of the third reading, we would—we find that what he lacks for in quality, he makes up for in quantity, and perhaps he could see fit to perhaps leaning more towards accuracy and less towards verbose delivery.

And in—on that note, Madam Speaker, I will cede the floor and offer it to those who would make remarks on third reading on this important bill.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): It's always a pleasure to stand up in this House and see familiar faces, especially the member from St. Paul. And I know that he's still hurting from the questions that were coming from this side of the Chamber.

And to talk about the interim appropriation act is to talk about the seeming incompetence—

An Honourable Member: Four point six billion.

Mr. Marcelino: It's \$4.7 billion that the government is asking for and will get, but this government, the—especially the Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen), has shown, has betrayed his amateur approach. It's not him who's amateur, because he's been here for so long but it is his approach to the way that government is supposed to behave. The behaviour that we have is that he's trying to find a way to blame the opposition for every single thing that he finds difficult.

Well, I must confess that I have a very vantaged point of view, considering that when I got elected in 2011, I became the 37th member for the New Democratic Party, and it was that party that governed. And the economy at that time, in 2011, especially during the floods, was really a government that was trying to cope with a disaster that was happening right before our very eyes. And we went sandbagging, even in St. Paul—

An Honourable Member: Did you wear rubber boots?

Mr. Marcelino: Yes, and the member from Brandon West knows that I have my own pair of boots.

And we sandbagged in St. Norbert, and we prepared ourselves for what was supposed to be a disaster that could be prevented, because there were ways of preventing it. Thanks to the floodway, the floodway that was built by a Conservative, who was maligned—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

* (16:00)

Mr. Marcelino: —that was—who was maligned while it was being built and who was told that it was unnecessary. And he brought in a new tax at that time in order to finance that same new floodway. That floodway was a saviour for our city. Our city was saved from \$30 billion worth of damage. And we were very thankful. And now we find ourselves under the same threat.

And the question that was not asked by the member from Flin Flon was: If the flooding happens again, where will the Premier (Mr. Pallister) be? And it is something that really gets to me, because I usually find myself dealing with friends and relatives who are threatened by flood waters, and I usually come to their aid and assistance.

And it is not really easy for all of us to understand the nature of our concern. The authority for capital investments that was being asked for in the 2017-2018 fiscal year, up to \$528 million, there was a list that we were asking the Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen) to provide. And, of course, we know for a fact that he will never give us a list, because I don't think it will include any projects that will mitigate the flooding that could occur.

And, you know, we have to think about it, because these capital investments that the honourable Minister of Finance has so easily concocted is a mere percentage of what might be needed in order to protect our people. And there's nothing that the Minister of Finance has included in any of his summations, in any of his debating points, he never said anything about the threat that's coming from the flood waters that will come from Saskatchewan and from Fargo, North Dakota.

It is something that maybe this government should prepare itself, and of course with our help, to confront this threat. There's nothing in this supply—Interim Supply bill—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Order.

Mr. Marcelino: There's nothing that says we are preparing ourselves for flooding. I know that some of

our friends from across the way care. I know. And they care enough, and I know it. I could feel it, except that this Minister of Finance seems not to care. I don't know why. It will affect Morden and Winkler, too. And it will affect West St. Paul, too, and East St. Paul and also St. Clements and also Portage la Prairie.

And sometimes, you know, we have to think of the people who are living there. My son lives in your area.

An Honourable Member: Very conservative.

Mr. Marcelino: He is. Very conservative.

And the capital investments portion of this Interim Supply does not make any mention about it.

Now, in—when we try to at least justify in our minds why this is being done by the Minister of Finance, we try to find a way to like what he is proposing. He proposes to have at least 75 per cent of the total amount authorized by the appropriation act, and then he says there's a budget that's coming in. And it is with ease—or is it I'm ill at ease—about the budget that he will propose because maybe this interim appropriation act is even better than his budget, because I know that this budget, the budget from the Minister of Finance, will involve hundreds of millions of cuts—hundreds of millions of cuts—and those hundreds of millions of cuts will hurt those who are most vulnerable—the most vulnerable from Lac du Bonnet, and the most vulnerable from Portage la Prairie, and the most vulnerable from the city of Winnipeg.

Now, in an answer that was given by the honourable Minister of Finance regarding the list of infrastructure that he has included in his subsection 2(2) Authority for capital investments, he bragged about 739 daycare spaces that are being financed, and, of course, it represents a token—a token response to the outcry from those who need it, from those parents who need the daycare spaces. We need more than 739 spaces. We need more than 739 spaces, and I'll say it for the third time: we need more than 739 spaces.

And I'm just wondering why the tokenism. The approach that this Conservative government has taken in governing has been token. They are trying to slow down what you call governing. What we hear mostly is, well, we'll try to do what we did before as in declare holidays for people working in government and let them take long weekends and Fridays for free. Nobody gets paid. Nobody gets paid

because the government is trying to balance its budget on the backs of those who are working for the government.

And my wife—I might suggest I have a vested interest in this because at that time my wife was working for the provincial government. She has since retired, thank God. And during those days she was saying, how come my paycheques have suddenly shrunk? The two-week pay suddenly does not have more than \$200, and it was a cut among a thousand cuts that were imposed by a government that didn't care.

An Honourable Member: Conservative government.

Mr. Marcelino: It was a Conservative government. And we fear—the fear that is in the mind of those who voted, even for the Conservatives, is that here comes the Conservatives again, and they will do the same thing and they'll do the same cuts and they'll do the same reductions and finding efficiencies.

* (16:10)

And, when the Minister of Education declared that Kelvin High School does not deserve the funding, it really baffled me. I was asking myself, if I knew the Minister of Education personally, I think he's one of the most kind-hearted persons you'll ever find in this Chamber—bar none. But then, when he said that Kelvin High will not get the provincial funding for space that had been, well, planned for so long and funded for so long that it is not—it is so way out there that it should have been finished, except that, you know, during the time that the previous government was in—was the one who was funding, there was that election on April 19th.

And it was—well, people know and people appreciate that the arrogance of those who won is unfettered, but it should be—the arrogance should not be exercised too much for too long. You know, we appreciate that the NDP lost. And it's not really that easy for me to even admit that we lost, but we did. But then, for the victor are the spoils. And the victor now—the first spoils of the war was 20 per cent—20 per cent was granted to the members of Cabinet as a spoil of war. And it's as if they deserve it even without having served a year in office, without any merit.

And I pity the backbenchers, the backbenchers of the Conservative Party. And there are—there's a lot of them. And the backbenchers of the Conservative government will soon feel that there is that thing

called loyalty. But then there's also that feeling of being left out. The feeling of being left—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Order, please. Order.

I am having some considerable difficulty hearing the member in his debate. I am also very, very conscientious that we have students in the gallery who are watching the members debate important legislation here. And I am sure that they, too, would like to be hearing what is happening on the floor of this House.

So I would urge all members to please show some courtesy to the member that is speaking in debate. I'm sure everybody else would appreciate that when it is their turn to speak on the debate. And I'm sure we all want to be seen to be good role models for the students that are here in the gallery. So I would please ask your—I guess I would ask that everybody please do pay attention to the person that is given the floor right now. Thank you.

Mr. Marcelino: The only way that—well, I will apologize on behalf of the members of every—to those who are in attendance. We don't misbehave like this every time; it's only when I speak. I usually bring out the worst in them and also the best.

Let me continue the debate. Let me put on the record that it is, from my point of view, that I will say the Premier (Mr. Pallister) is out of touch with Manitobans. He's more concerned about himself. When the 20 per cent increase in Cabinet pay was approved, not one member of the Cabinet would say, no, please, don't, it will not look good. Everybody was applauding, and everybody was saying, yes, I like it.

And the 20 per cent pay increase that members of Cabinet—and the Premier—took for themselves is in juxtaposition to the freeze of the minimum wage. The minimum wage that was supposed to take effect in October of 2016 did not happen. And I don't know if it was made by order-in-council. I don't think so. It was by means of a press release, I think. And, if I got it right, it was the increase that some of those folks who are working nights and days in order to make ends meet that have been hurt by the freeze.

And it's—I have spoken about me, myself, working for minimum wage. And when I was working for minimum wage, every single cent that I could make working either overtime or extra hours, I

would. I would want to have that to put food on the table, especially when I know for a fact that my wife was always looking for a paycheque from me because she was gainfully employed with the provincial government. But then, even then, money was really, really tight. Even then, things that we wanted to buy, we cannot. Even then, things that we ought to pay, like, Visa or MasterCard, we had to pay only the minimum.

So it's a difficult situation that I could feel for, especially for those who only make minimum wage. And most of those who are making minimum wage are the same students, women, single moms and single dads who do not have too many choices by way of employment. Most of them were only making at—during my time—\$3.15. And then it became \$4 and then \$4.50. And, when the New Democratic Party came on board and it started going up until it became \$11, it was just to keep up with the dollar amount, not really the purchasing power because \$11 today does not really buy much anyway.

But then, an extra 50 cents in that paycheque per hour might mean that there's more bread on the table and more eggs in the refrigerator and maybe just a bottle, not a two-litre one, but a one-litre bottle of Coke and maybe a bag of chips.

*(16:20)

And for those who do not know the difference between—and I'm sorry if I've made you hungry—but the difference is that during those days and during those times 50 cents made a difference. Fifty cents per hour makes a lot of difference for those who are making less.

Now, when I juxtapose that with the 20 per cent increase that the members of Cabinet and the Premier (Mr. Pallister) got, I say, why would they do that? Why can't they wait until such time that the economy is doing a little bit better? Why can't they wait until such time that they have earned their keep? Why did they grant themselves such an increase? Because, well, I think they did because they can, only because they can. Which means that it was some sort of self-entitlement for the select few and, to top it all with, was that free car. Free—the use of an automobile and, of course, there are some allowances that go with being a member of Cabinet, doesn't it?

And, during those days when I was still working minimum wage, 50 cents per hour would have made a lot of difference, but now there's none. There's no 50 cents per hour. It has been frozen out. In the

meantime, my brain still does not want to accept that, that the minimum wage earners of our province are frozen out of the 50 cents per hour. And I'll keep on talking about it and I'll keep on debating about it and I'll keep on mentioning the 50 cents per hour that those minimum wage earners never got, and when I keep on mentioning that, maybe some of those in the backbench of the Conservative government might prod and might argue for that 50 cents per hour. It's so simple. It's only 50 cents, you know, two quarters. And it is amazing how, by withholding that, it means that some folks cannot afford to eat. Some folks cannot afford to pay the rent. Some folks cannot even pay their hydro bill; some folks cannot even pay for their kids' clothing or Pampers. It's so simple. It's only 50 cents. But, then, I will argue this a little bit more on later days.

The cuts that we saw from this government when health services were cut from the cancellation of important health-care projects from Lac du Bonnet to Thompson to St. Vital to The Pas, and then, my favourite one, this is the one that really cut and bled me that—so much that I still have nightmares about it, CancerCare. The expansion of CancerCare was supposed to provide enough space for those who are suffering from the most dreaded disease. And, when you are told that you have cancer, it is one of those warnings and those statements that you don't want to hear. When my mom was told that she had cancer of the liver, my mom said: Does that mean I'm going to die? I said, yes, you're going to die, but then we will make your life a little bit easier. You know how? Through CancerCare Manitoba.

And CancerCare Manitoba, if you're not familiar with it, is right—right—there on McDermot and Sherbrook, and it's only a block away from the rehab, and I used to volunteer as a driver of cancer patients. I stopped doing it when I lost two patients, because it affects you emotionally. And it's very difficult, especially when you lose patients whom you do not know but you're driving for them, and then you develop a kind of relationship that you have with them and then you lose them.

But, people, we have to take a closer look at what we cut, because CancerCare Manitoba will just grin and bear it. They'll say, well, we'll try our best.

Well, this government must reconsider the cut that it did for CancerCare Manitoba, and somebody tell me that it is right. Somebody should tell me that it is something that ought to be done.

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): Madam Speaker, I know the students have left, but I will try to behave as well, your honour. *[interjection]* Well, yes, and as I get up to speak, of course, I notice that there are 39 members of the Conservative caucus who could speak. The minister spoke and they all remain in their seats and they're unprepared to speak. But that's all right. There are some people that are interested in the \$4.7-billion item contained in Bill 8, and I am proud to stand up and debate Bill 8.

And I realize that the Finance Minister may not understand it, and, from some of the questions, I'm not sure that every member of the Conservative caucus understands it. I'm not sure the House Leader for the Conservatives understands it, but we're debating bills as we've been doing each and every single day in this House. And I know the House Leader has been frustrated. The Finance Minister has been frustrated, because they would like us just to accept this government's view of the world without asking questions, without putting comments on the record. It was up to the House Leader. If he wanted to listen to his backbenchers, he could have called other bills for a debate. But, no; he chose to bring on Bill 8 again.

So here we are and, certainly, I do have a lot of things to say about it, as do all of my colleagues on this side of the House. And I really stop to think, Madam Speaker, why—why—is the Finance Minister so agitated and why is the Government House Leader (Mr. Micklefield) so agitated?

Well, I've got some sympathy for the Government House Leader. I used to practise law, and there was nothing worse than having an unreasonable client, because you could try and be the most reasonable lawyer you wanted to be. But, if you had an unreasonable client, you had to go into court and you had to take some difficult positions.

And we all know who his unreasonable client is and, frankly, sir, I appreciate the difficult nature of your job. And I truly do wish you well as we go.

But what—why was the Finance Minister so agitated, telling us that he was impatient, telling us that he didn't like the questions, because they were too general? Then he didn't like the questions because they were too specific. Then he didn't like the questions because he didn't like the tone. He didn't like the questions because he didn't like the content. And why was the Finance Minister, who, I think more than one of us on this side of the House

have said, in normal times we generally tend to enjoy the company of, why is he so agitated?

Well, even as we've been debating Bill 8, that's become very, very clear, because even as members of the New Democrat caucus have stood in this House to talk about Bill 8, the cuts have just kept coming day after day after day. And I'm going to start with three of the cuts that this mean-spirited, hard-hearted government has made since I was able to stand up and speak to this bill on second reading.

* (16:30)

And those three things in particular are the decision by this government to axe the planned expansion to Kelvin High School for a gym and wellness centre; to kill the Dakota Collegiate Field of Dreams; and the most recent pronouncement, which would effectively put the end to the smaller class-size initiative that the previous government had been working on for some time, which was providing great benefits for children, for parents and for educators in our school system.

And, you know, the Dakota Collegiate one is something which is a real shame. And I've had a look back at the history of this and, of course, Dakota Collegiate and the community have been working for years to build a state-of-the-art sports complex to serve its community for this generation but also for future generations. And we think, perhaps those of us in the inner city, we think, well, Dakota Collegiate, that's out in the suburbs.

You know, I don't know if you've ever driven by that school and seen that field in the summer; it's pretty rough and the community thought that they could and they should do better. I've had emails from constituents in my own area who know that school and also from other Manitobans who knew that school, who say it was frustrating that, actually, for outdoor sports, they had to ship their students elsewhere to play sports. They couldn't even play home games on that field.

So the community, which has some progressive people, some big thinkers, came up with a great plan; the Alumni Field Capital Campaign was struck. They've held fundraising dinners, of course, including Coach Carter, fundraising dinners including Jon Montgomery, of course, the native of Russell, Manitoba, who won the gold in men's skeleton at the 2010 Winter Olympics, broadcaster Jay Onrait. They've had a series of dinners; they've had a series of other fundraising events. They have

got the entire community excited about this project and not just for students at that particular time who may be going to Dakota Collegiate but for the entire community.

And the—I know the staff, the administration at Dakota Collegiate, has been very, very supportive and very active. And now, of course, they had the rug pulled from out from under their feet when this provincial government said, yes, we know you've been doing all this work. We know that you've been out in the community raising this money. We know that you have these expectations. But you know what? This provincial government is not here for you. We're not actually going to give you a cent for this project. You do whatever you want to do.

And that has left the community scrambling. They're now trying to decide what to do. They have city money which is on the table, which is going to expire this calendar year. So now they're faced with a difficult decision: Do they go ahead with a severely scaled-down proposal? No longer will it be field turf, no longer will there be a scoreboard, no longer will be other amenities, it'll be scaled down—[interjection]

Well, and I hear members opposite that are prepared to criticize what the community at Dakota Collegiate has had to say, and I think that's a shame. And I think if they turn around and speak to members like the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Mayer), the member for Seine River (Ms. Morley-Lecomte), the member for Riel (Ms. Squires), they will tell you the reaction they're getting within their own communities. This was something the community was working hard for and, in one sad day, the Minister of Education, on direction from that same difficult client that the House leader has to work with, had to tell them that their Field of Dreams is going to be a much smaller dream than they had hoped.

So they're still hopeful that they can make their case. And, as New Democrats, we've pledged to the people at Dakota Collegiate that we stand with them, that we will do what we can to help them raise their voice and put their best-case scenario across to this government in the hope that they can see the error of their ways, that this government will support the community fundraising which has been going on, and this government will actually stand up and support people in that part of the city. And I'm, I suppose, not hopeful, but I always have to be an optimist, and I'm hoping that the Finance Minister will listen. I know that the members elected

in southeast Winnipeg will be listening to their constituents not just because they have for the past couple of days, but for a lot of long, long days for them if they don't raise their voices and try to change this.

And what else happened since I had the chance to stand and debate this bill in second reading? Well, Kelvin High School received the same treatment from this Minister of Education. And, of course, in this case, Kelvin High School had been approved for a gymnasium. The—our previous government had told Kelvin, which is one of the largest high schools in the entire province, with an outdated gym, that they would have the opportunity to get a new gym, and the community said, well, wait a second, we know what we're going to get under provincial funding. We would actually like something bigger than that for Kelvin High School and for the community.

And, of course, being a government which consulted, which listened to communities, the question was asked: Well, what is it that the community wants? And they wanted a larger gym with a track, with a wellness centre that'd be a benefit not just the 1,200 or so students at Kelvin High School, but also to the greater community. And the government said, well, that's fine, but there's a lot of needs out there. We will support the gymnasium. If you want to have additional amenities as part of this, then you'll have to raise the balance of the money. And so that's what the Kelvin community set to work doing.

And back in February of 2015 they announced that they hoped to raise \$1 million for a new community active living centre. And, at that time, students, staff, alumni were joined by politicians from all levels of government for a campaign tipoff on Thursday. And the school and community confirmed they wanted to raise money to expand the addition to include that track and the active living centre.

And that's exactly what they did. And, in fact, that community was able to raise \$1.2 million, the exact kind of community involvement that this Progressive Conservative government claim that they respect, that they claim they want communities to engage in. And, unfortunately, for the Kelvin community, like the Dakota community, they've had those dreams dashed by this Progressive Conservative government. And, as I quote the CBC news story, "shock has turned to determina-

tion for residents of Winnipeg's Crescentwood neighbourhood after the Manitoba government abruptly cut millions of dollars in promised funding for a gymnasium upgrade at Kelvin High School."

And their goal was to raise \$1 million. In fact, the students and staff and community were able to raise \$1.2 million in community fundraising. But now this hard-hearted government has said, yes, thanks for raising the money, but, you know what, the money we pledged for the gym, that's now not there. And now we have a community that's in shock. They raised \$1.2 million; that is now left not only not being able to use that money to add amenities to that gymnasium, but to have that entire gymnasium out the window when they had done exactly what they should have done, which was to go out and raise money in the community. And that is a great disappointment.

And I may be biased in terms of Kelvin, given that I have a very proud graduate of Kelvin High School who's now in first-year university at the University of Manitoba. I also have a younger daughter who's in grade 11 at Kelvin High School. And, you know, my children already understand that elections matter. But it would be hard to find a more clear and, frankly, sad example of why elections matter than having this government go and slam the door on the faces of students and staff and the community at Kelvin High School and also at Dakota Collegiate.

And again, we pledge to the folks at Kelvin that we'll do our best to help them raise their voices to try and convince the provincial government this has been a terrible decision on their part. They can easily fix it, go back to the commitment to get the new gym to Kelvin, go back to the commitment to work with the community to provide Dakota Collegiate with their Field of Dreams, and do what we want governments to do, which is to invest in local communities.

And, of course, it was not the holy trinity. It was the exact opposite: the third announcement that was made by the Minister of Education since I last got up to debate Bill 8, was the announcement that the class size initiative is now a thing of the past. And over several years, the New Democratic government, believing in communities, respecting teachers, getting better outcomes in education, went ahead and worked with school divisions and schools across the province to try to reduce the number of students in classrooms from K to 3, from kindergarten to

grade 3. And the benefits of that have been proven in study after study after study across Canada, internationally. It is entirely obvious to everybody except this government that smaller class sizes are good for learning. When a teacher has more opportunity to have one-on-one time with students, that's a benefit. When students are better able to connect with their teachers and their other classmates, that is a benefit. When students have the support of a provincial government to continue to invest in their classrooms, that is a benefit.

* (16:40)

And, you know, there's numbers that I know the Progressive Conservative Party does not want to talk about. I will throw one number out there as the best example of the kinds of results we were getting. In 1999, when the NDP formed government, only about 71 per cent of all students were completing high school. In other words, 29 per cent of students were not even getting their high school diploma, which was a—which we all know is a basic building block to being able to advance in our society.

By 2016, that graduation rate had risen to slightly over 87 per cent. In other words, the dropout rate was more than cut in half. And, yes, more work to do. We want to go after that last 13 per cent. But, apparently, the Progressive Conservative government doesn't. And I fear that not only are we going to see the progress come to a halt, we're going to see that progress actually be reversed as we're already starting to see in other areas under his government's control. And I will talk about that in just a few minutes as well.

And what was the reason given? Well, the government tried to pull out their own version of facts. They had a study, which was unscientific, which was a tiny sample size, and tried to use that as justification. And it was fascinating. Just a couple of days ago, of course, the president of the Manitoba Teacher's Society, Norm Gould, was up in the gallery. And, of course, the Premier (Mr. Pallister) made a big deal of welcoming Norm Gould to the building and congratulating him on being brought into the Manitoba sports hall of fame—something which I can hardly endorse. It wasn't quite the same way on Monday when Norm Gould, on behalf of teachers, on behalf of students and on behalf of parents across this province, said that the justification that this Progressive Conservative government had put forward for ending the class size

initiative made no sense, was not based on evidence and was going to hurt education in the classroom.

So that's just where—that's just touching the surface. And I've used half my time already just talking about the cuts that have happened since I got up to speak on second reading.

An Honourable Member: You can have unlimited time.

Mr. Swan: There—no, we want to give the member for Fort Garry-Riverview (Mr. Allum) unlimited time again to make sure that he can finish all of the things he started to put on the record, because I know there were some members of the government caucus already having doubts.

And I think they're not starting to see what it's like when bad decisions start to affect the people that elected them. The people that put up their lawn signs, the people that they thought were supporting them are all of a sudden going to turn around and say: Where were you when Dakota Collegiate was cheated out of the field it dreams? Where were you when Kelvin High School didn't get the gym that it was promised? Where were you when my kid's class, all of a sudden, instead of having 20 students, now has 28 or 30 students, and I'm not sure that my child has enough time with the student? Well, we're going to see what happens over the weeks and the months to come.

You know, I was glad my friend the member for Tyndall Park (Mr. Marcelino) talked a little bit about flooding. And I know we had an excellent question today on flooding. And it was fascinating. The member for Infrastructure—the Minister of Infrastructure (Mr. Pedersen) got up and, questioned about flooding and water coming from Saskatchewan, and couldn't even expand his horizons beyond what was happening in the local, rural municipalities. If the member—or the minister doesn't know where Saskatchewan is, I think it's going to be a very, very long and difficult flood season in the period covered by this Interim Appropriation bill.

And, you know—of course, the worry always is that—of course, when flooding happens, like, when the water starts rising, the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Pallister) starts flying. And you don't know where he's going to wind up. We know back in 1997, as a record amount of water was coming down the Red River, as we saw the scenes of devastation in Fargo and in Grand Forks—well, the member for Fort Whyte—then the member for Portage la Prairie—was

out the door. That's when he resigned, and he took off to run for office in Ottawa.

And, you know, if that was the only time this had happened, maybe that would be a one-off. But, in fact, we know there was serious summer flooding just a couple of summers ago—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Order.

The honourable member for Minto (Mr. Swan).

Mr. Swan: I know the facts are painful for the other members opposite, so I'm not surprised they'd be trying to make some noise and do other things.

But, of course, it was just a couple of summers ago, when we had serious summer flooding in Manitoba, that the member for Fort Whyte went down to Costa Rica. And that was bad. But, again, you know, he has—I guess he can do what he wants. But, even worse, is that he told the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation that he was in Alberta at a family wedding. And, in fact, the now-Premier (Mr. Pallister) was in Costa Rica just hanging out, I guess, swimming in an infinity pool. He was—*[interjection]* Do you know the way to San José, asks the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway). Well, apparently, the Premier does.

So I'm hopeful, in the period covered by the interim appropriation bill over the next couple of months, that as the flood waters come down the Red River and down the Assiniboine River and down the Winnipeg River and flow across from Saskatchewan where the Premier and the Minister of Infrastructure seem to be asleep at the switch, that we will actually have a Premier and a minister and a government that's prepared to stand up for Manitobans.

And, of course, do we know, is there any money in the interim appropriation bill to cover flooding? The answer's no. We asked the questions and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen) didn't want to answer. I'm not sure if those questions were too specific or if those questions were too general or he didn't like the tone or he didn't like what—the kind of tie that the member for Fort Garry-Riverview wearing, but we were not able to get answers.

And what else do we have? Well, we know that funding for new projects through Neighbourhoods Alive! has been frozen by this government, and they are reviewing the entire Neighbourhoods Alive! program. Neighbourhoods Alive! has a great track record in communities like mine with the

Spence Neighbourhood Association and the Daniel McIntyre-St. Matthews Community Association. I know the member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe) has an experience with Neighbourhoods Alive!, and now his local community association is working. The member for Tyndall Park (Mr. Marcelino) is also well aware of that. I know the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) is well aware of that.

But I know there's members on the other side of the House that also have Neighbourhoods Alive! working in their communities. And I look at the member for Dauphin (Mr. Michaleski), and, of course, he has a strong neighbourhood community organization. The member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Wishart) has Neighbourhoods Alive! in his community. The member for Selkirk (Mr. Lagimodiere) has that in his community. But, unfortunately, those great community associations, they've been tied up for months now. They've been unable to have any new initiatives approved, any at all.

And, of course, what are we starting to see? We're starting to see the price that's paid when a government doesn't invest in those things and a government doesn't listen to the community. And I've been asking the Justice Minister the last two days if she could put on the record some reason why crime is increasing in this province, at least in the city of Winnipeg on the stats we've seen, in a way that we have not seen in this province for decades and decades, if ever.

And, you know, I'm glad the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Stefanson) is now engaged, because she's certainly—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order. Order, please.

It's again becoming very difficult to hear the member that has the floor for debate. I'm sure everybody's going to have ample time to get up and make their own comments, and I would just urge all honourable members to show the courtesy, please, to the member that is in debate and allow them to finish their time. With all the heckling that is going on in the House right now, it is very difficult for me to hear the member, so I would encourage if everybody could please do that.

Mr. Swan: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'm pleased that maybe we'll hear the Minister of Justice stand up, and she'll be able to put on the record the reason why auto theft is up 42 per cent so far in the year 2017 over the year 2016. She can put

on the record why crime, overall, as reported by CrimeStat is up 27 per cent in 2017 over the same period in 2016.

And I know it's like she's driving along looking in the rear-view mirror, and she's going to crash right into an obstacle if she doesn't get a hold of this.

And today, as I pointed out, we inherited a horrible rate of auto theft from the previous government, and it wasn't easy. I want to be very clear that bringing that number down and taking Winnipeg off the list from No. 1 as the auto-theft capital, getting it out of the top 10 and moving it down was not easy. And it took work. It took co-operation with Manitoba Public Insurance. It took co-operation with the police. It took co-operation with community organizations, and it also took education so that Manitobans could do whatever they could to reduce the risk of their vehicles being stolen.

* (16:50)

And what's frustrating is that in just one year of inaction, which, of course, we see in the lack of anything new that's been brought forward, anything new in the interim appropriation act, we see how quickly things go the wrong way when you don't do anything. And now we're seeing a huge increase in crime. And why is that? Well, if the Minister of Justice has any better ideas, she has the ability to get that information, I'm sure. Maybe, if I ask her a third day in this House, she'll come up with some kind of reason.

Was she there at Cabinet to say: Don't freeze the funding for Neighbourhoods Alive! Don't do that because almost every community association has ideas on safety, on keeping people engaged in their communities, on keeping people out of criminal activity. I'm hoping the Minister of Justice her voice and said something. If she didn't, then I think that's a great problem. Maybe she can stand up in this House when we're continuing the debate on Bill 8 and we can talk about that, because that is a great concern. And we know that it doesn't take much slippage and enough annoying issues for some of the things which have plagued Winnipeg to come back and be an issue for people.

And, you know, unlike the members opposite, I don't stand up and ask a question every time there's a murder, but I sure could. You know, just the last couple of days we had an individual that was stabbed on Isabel Street on March the 10th. He died on

March the 12th. Just Sunday there was a shooting on Spence Street. Like, are these murders the fault of the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Stefanson)? No, no, they are not. But can the Minister of Justice stand by and do nothing while crime returns, while organized crime returns to the province of Manitoba after being suppressed for years and years and years? I hope that she would think the answer is no.

But I haven't seen one piece of evidence in the legislative agenda they brought forward. I haven't seen one piece of evidence in any of the budget spending last year. And I haven't seen any evidence so far, including answers to all but part of one of the questions that I asked the Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen) when I had a chance to ask these questions of him. And what did the Minister of Finance say? Oh, well, those questions that's easy to find answers.

And the Minister of Finance knows he put all this in Hansard and people can read this forever. He said, if you want an answer, just talk to the Minister of Justice in the hall, she'll tell you the answers. So I said that was a little bit informal. I know the Minister of Justice and again, like the Minister of Finance, I like the Minister of Justice. But I thought that's a little bit informal. I'll just write her a letter. I'll write her a letter and I'll deliver it to her office in the middle of debating Bill 8, and I'm going to ask some questions about the number of people in the adult jail system and the breakdown of what jails they're in. I'll ask her about the overtime rates, because I think that's something the Minister of Finance would be very, very concerned about and want to get a handle on.

And I dropped off the letter. She did answer one of the questions in part. It was when she wouldn't answer another question that I had in question period. But that's, you know, one part out of five isn't bad. I'm still waiting for the other answers and we're still debating Bill 8.

And I don't know if the Minister of Finance is again frustrated because I asked the question. It was too specific. I couldn't ask the Minister of Justice the question, so I asked him to undertake, and he wouldn't. I write the letter, still couldn't get the answer.

So, for a government that tries to run around saying that they are transparent, this has been a very, very opaque week in the Manitoba Legislature, one of increasingly opaque weeks. Every time this government stands up and says something, except, of

course, when they cut things, which is crystal clear to Manitobans.

There is so many things to talk about, so many things to talk about that I can't even get to in the small amount of remaining time that I have. I am concerned, as are all of my colleagues on this side of the Legislature, as I believe the Liberals are as well, but, most importantly, Manitobans are concerned about from all parts of this province, and those are the cuts being made in our health-care system. And even as we debate Bill 8 more and more details on the mean-spirited, deep nature of these cuts continues to come out.

My friend the member for Tyndall Park (Mr. Marcelino) talked about cuts to cancer care. That \$300-million expansion, which has been worked on by CancerCare with a strong CancerCare foundation, which, frankly, includes a number of prominent board members who are long-time Progressive Conservative members who we worked with as a government. They got a lot more accomplished with us than apparently they are ever going to with this hard-hearted Progressive Conservative government. And I think my friend the member for Tyndall Park spoke emotionally about the importance of cancer care.

And it is true that just about every family in Manitoba is going to be touched by cancer at some point, and not building the CancerCare clinic expansion is not going to prevent one person in Manitoba from getting cancer, people are still going to get cancer. But what's going to happen? They're going to be scrambling to find space in our community hospitals, in their local hospitals, perhaps trying at home with home-care services which are stretched and may be actually threatened depending what we hear in this government's budget. And what's going to happen? We're actually going to be spending more money. We're going to be providing worse care to people in worse circumstances and spending more money, than this government would go ahead—listen to the strong voices on the CancerCare Manitoba Foundation who came to government with their vision and their ideas on how to help people through the cancer journey. And it's these government members that are then going to have to look those people in the eyes and say: No, no, we cut that. We weren't interested. You stay in your community hospital. You don't have the access to the best care providers you can get; you don't have the right to be the most comfortable in this difficult time. And, to the families, you don't have the right to

the best care that we know we can provide in the province of Manitoba, and that's going to be very, very difficult to do.

Of course, we've heard about the cuts to personal-care homes and I feel for the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko), and I like the member for Lac du Bonnet, too, because he's a curler and he's way better than I am. And I felt for him. There he was at the provincial championships, there he was at the select—the very day that they announced that his personal-care home in Lac du Bonnet was not going to be built by this government. And that's a shame. And I know it was the same for the people in Transcona who had raised money, who had worked as a community, and they were again told by this government: You know, you raised money, but we don't care. You're not going to get a personal-care home.

So what's going to happen? Either people are going to remain in their homes and we're going to have to have more home-care services or, worst of all, they're going to be taking up a bed in a hospital, which is going to be twice as costly as having them in a personal-care-home bed; it's going to be twice as uncomfortable for people to be in those circumstances. And here we go again down the rabbit hole that Manitobans had to live through in the 1990s.

So there is a lot to talk about in Bill 8. I barely—I got through only one page of my notes. I'm very hopeful that other members will convince this government to reverse course—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): It is quite ironic that now this government wants to pass a bill, openly stating that the opposition are dragging their heels. I'm—I hope they see the irony as they are doing the same exact thing in respect of the federal government. These poor tactics of revenge must end.

Let's get to helping Manitobans, especially our most vulnerable. And, if the members would read the comments in the newspapers regarding the threats—it wasn't the federal Liberals that started the first kind of threat. So I would caution the members—please implore them not to use that kind of word. *[interjection]* And I would really like to put some words on the record without being interrupted. It's a very—sign of disrespect, and that's not what I come here for.

I have a—I have so many issues of suicides to deal with. So many issues of mental and, you know, mental—

An Honourable Member: Breakdowns.

Ms. Klassen: Yes. Thank you. Mental breakdowns that I'm dealing with, and I'm getting letters from all over Manitoba and the, you know, the continuation of not addressing Manitobans has to stop. Even if you just say—send them a letter saying, you know what, sir, or ma'am, I got your letter, we are working on it, goes a long way in showing respect to Manitobans. They all voted for us equally to be in this, and that's why we represent the ridings we represent. And so I would really appreciate a means of somehow for us to start talking with Manitobans.

There's so many forums that have supposedly taken place in my own riding. There was five economic development forums and not one of the chief and councils that I've spoke to were even aware that there was those economic development forums taking place in my First Nation. And so that has to stop. We have to get the definition of consultation in place and firm and—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have 28 minutes remaining.

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, March 15, 2017

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