

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

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The Honourable Myrna Driedger
Speaker*

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Second Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALTomARE, Nello	Transcona	NDP
ASAGWARA, Uzoma	Union Station	NDP
BRAR, Diljeet	Burrows	NDP
BUSHIE, Ian	Keewatinook	NDP
CLARKE, Eileen, Hon.	Agassiz	PC
COX, Cathy	Kildonan-River East	PC
CULLEN, Cliff, Hon.	Spruce Woods	PC
DRIEDGER, Myrna, Hon.	Roblin	PC
EICHLER, Ralph	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FIELDING, Scott, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni	St. Johns	NDP
FRIESEN, Cameron, Hon.	Morden-Winkler	PC
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
GORDON, Audrey, Hon.	Southdale	PC
GUENTER, Josh	Borderland	PC
GUILLEMARD, Sarah, Hon.	Fort Richmond	PC
HELWER, Reg, Hon.	Brandon West	PC
ISLEIFSON, Len	Brandon East	PC
JOHNSON, Derek, Hon.	Interlake-Gimli	PC
JOHNSTON, Scott, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
KINEW, Wab	Fort Rouge	NDP
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAGIMODIERE, Alan, Hon.	Selkirk	PC
LAMONT, Dougald	St. Boniface	Lib.
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Tyndall Park	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas-Kameesak	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom	Flin Flon	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Malaya	Notre Dame	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	McPhillips	PC
MICHALESKI, Brad	Dauphin	PC
MICKLEFIELD, Andrew	Rossmere	PC
MORLEY-LECOMTE, Janice	Seine River	PC
MOSES, Jamie	St. Vital	NDP
NAYLOR, Lisa	Wolseley	NDP
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine	Midland	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle, Hon.	Turtle Mountain	PC
REYES, Jon, Hon.	Waverley	PC
SALA, Adrien	St. James	NDP
SANDHU, Mintu	The Maples	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield-Ritchot	PC
SMITH, Andrew, Hon.	Lagimodière	PC
SMITH, Bernadette	Point Douglas	NDP
SMOOK, Dennis	La Vérendrye	PC
SQUIRES, Rochelle, Hon.	Riel	PC
STEFANSON, Heather, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
TEITSMA, James	Radisson	PC
WASYLIW, Mark	Fort Garry	NDP
WHARTON, Jeff, Hon.	Red River North	PC
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WISHART, Ian	Portage la Prairie	PC
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
<i>Vacant</i>	Fort Whyte	
<i>Vacant</i>	Thompson	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, March 2, 2022

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.

We acknowledge we are gathered on Treaty 1 territory and that Manitoba is located on the treaty territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anishinewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk. We acknowledge Manitoba is located on the Homeland of the Red River Métis. We acknowledge northern Manitoba includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of the Inuit. We respect the spirit and intent of treaties and treaty making and remain committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in the spirit of truth, reconciliation and collaboration.

Please be seated. Good afternoon, everybody.

Speaker's Statement

Madam Speaker: I have a statement for the House.

I must inform the House that a vacancy exists in the representation in the Legislative Assembly of the electoral division of Thompson due to the death of Danielle Adams, the member elected for this electoral division.

Also, I am tabling a copy of the notification to the Lieutenant Governor in Council of the vacancy thus created in the membership of the House.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 10—An Act respecting Amendments to The Health Services Insurance Act, The Pharmaceutical Act and Various Corporate Statutes

Hon. Audrey Gordon (Minister of Health): I move, seconded by the Minister of Families (Ms. Squires), that Bill 10, An Act respecting Amendments to The Health Services Insurance Act, The Pharmaceutical

Act and Various Corporate Statutes, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Ms. Gordon: Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to introduce this bill, An Act respecting Amendments to The Health Services Insurance Act, The Pharmaceutical Act and Various Corporate Statutes. This bill will amend The Health Services Insurance Act and The Pharmaceutical Act to enable point-of-care testing by pharmacists to continue this testing where appropriate and permitted by regulation under The Regulated Health Professions Act.

It will also amend various corporate acts to allow required meetings to continue to be conducted virtually after Manitoba's COVID-related emergency order facilitating corporate virtual meetings expires.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

Bill 11—The Elections Amendment Act

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I move, seconded by the Minister of Education, that Bill 11, The Elections Amendment Act, be now read for a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Goertzen: Amendments contained within this bill are in response to proposals made by Elections Manitoba and considered by the Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs.

The committee endorsed these proposals and the government drafted a bill to make the changes on behalf of the committee. This bill fulfills those proposals by allowing for the use of electronic or—Elections Manitoba electronic strike-off system on election day and enabling the use of electronic vote tabulators at polling stations.

These changes will allow voters to go to any poll station within their constituency on election day and create efficiency for Elections Manitoba. In addition to other amendments, it also allows voters who have a disability or trouble reading or writing to use their own assistive device to help them vote.

These are consistent both with the committee recommendations and the recommendations of the Chief Electoral Officer for Manitoba, and what is happening in other Canadian jurisdictions.

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

Bill 217—The Fatality Inquiries Amendment Act (Overdose Death Reporting)

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): I move, seconded by the member from Union Station, that Bill 217, The Fatality Inquiries Amendment Act (Overdose Death Reporting), now be read for a first time.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Smith: While it saddens me that this bill is required, I am proud to introduce Bill 217, The Fatality Inquiries Amendment Act (Overdose Death Reporting).

Manitoba is expected to exceed over 400 overdoses—overdose deaths in 2021 alone. But these deaths are not being reported publicly. Bill 217 would require them to be reported on monthly while also identifying the type of drug causing or contributing to the death.

I look forward to unanimous support of this House.

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Standing Committee on Crown Corporations
First Report**

Ms. Janice Morley-Lecomte (Chairperson): I wish to present the first report of the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Your Standing Committee on Crown Corporations—

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

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

Meetings

Your Committee met on January 10, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

- *Annual Report of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021*

Committee Membership

As per the Sessional Order passed by the House on October 7, 2020, amended on November 19, 2020, December 3, 2020, May 18, 2021 and further amended on December 1, 2021, Rule 83(2) was waived for the January 10, 2022 meeting, reducing the membership to six Members (4 Government and 2 Official Opposition).

- *Mr. GUENTER*
- *Mr. KINEW*
- *Mr. MICKLEFIELD*
- *Ms. MORLEY-LECOMTE*
- *Mr. SANDHU*
- *Hon. Mr. WHARTON*

Your Committee elected Ms. MORLEY-LECOMTE as the Chairperson.

Your Committee elected Mr. GUENTER as the Vice-Chairperson.

Non-Committee Members Speaking on Record:

- *Mr. LAMONT*

Officials Speaking on Record

- *Eric Herbelin, President & Chief Executive Officer, Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation*
- *Dr. Michael Sullivan, Chair of the Board, Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation*

Reports Considered and Passed

Your Committee considered and passed the following report as presented:

- *Annual Report of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021*

Ms. Morley-Lecomte: I move, seconded by the honourable member for Borderland (Mr. Guenter), that the report of the committee be received. [*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order.

* (13:40)

Motion agreed to.

Standing Committee on Crown Corporations Second Report

Ms. Janice Morley-Lecomte (Chairperson): Madam Speaker, I wish to present the second report of the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations.

Clerk: Your Standing Committee on Crown Corporations—

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

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

Meetings

Your Committee met on January 11, 2022 at 1:00 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

- *Annual Report of Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021*

Committee Membership

As per the Sessional Order passed by the House on October 7, 2020, amended on November 19, 2020, December 3, 2020, May 18, 2021 and further amended on December 1, 2021, Rule 82(2) was waived for the January 11, 2022 meeting, reducing the membership to six Members (4 Government and 2 Official Opposition).

- Mr. KINEW
- Mr. MARTIN
- Ms. MORLEY-LECOMTE (Chairperson)
- Hon. Mr. REYES
- Mr. SALA
- Hon. Mr. WHARTON

Your Committee elected Mr. MARTIN as the Vice-Chairperson.

Non-Committee Members Speaking on Record:

- Mr. LAMONT

Officials Speaking on Record

- Manny Atwal, President & Chief Executive Officer, Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries
- Randy Williams, Chair of the Board, Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries

Reports Considered and Passed

Your Committee considered and passed the following report as presented:

- *Annual Report of Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021*

Ms. Morley-Lecomte: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for McPhillips (Mr. Martin), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

Standing Committee on Crown Corporations Third Report

Mr. Dennis Smook (Chairperson): I wish to present the third report of the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations.

Clerk: Your Standing Committee on Crown Corporations—

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

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

Meetings

Your Committee met on January 13, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

- *Annual Report of Efficiency Manitoba for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021*
- *Annual Report Supplement of Efficiency Manitoba for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021*

Committee Membership

As per the Sessional Order passed by the House on October 7, 2020, amended on November 19, 2020, December 3, 2020, May 18, 2021 and further amended on December 1, 2021, Rule 82(2) was waived for the January 13, 2022 meeting, reducing the membership to six Members (4 Government and 2 Official Opposition).

- Hon. Mrs. GUILLEMARD
- Mr. ISLEIFSON
- Ms. NAYLOR
- Mr. SALA
- Mr. SMOOK
- Mr. TEITSMA

Your Committee elected Mr. SMOOK as the Chairperson.

Your Committee elected Mr. TEITSMA as the Vice-Chairperson.

Non-Committee Members Speaking on Record:

- Mr. LAMONT

Officials Speaking on Record

- Colleen Kuruluk, Chief Executive Officer, Efficiency Manitoba
- Dr. Jeannette Montufar, Chair of the Board, Efficiency Manitoba

Reports Considered and Passed

Your Committee considered and passed the following report as presented:

- Annual Report of Efficiency Manitoba for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021
- Annual Report Supplement of Efficiency Manitoba for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021

Mr. Smook: I move, seconded by the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Isleifson), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

**Standing Committee on Crown Corporations
Fourth Report**

Mr. Dennis Smook (Chairperson): I wish to present the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations.

Clerk: Your Standing Committee on Crown Corporations—

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

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

Meetings

Your Committee met on January 13, 2022 at 1:30 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

- Annual Report of the Manitoba Centennial Centre Corporation for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021

Committee Membership

As per the Sessional Order passed by the House on October 7, 2020, amended on November 19, 2020, December 3, 2020, May 18, 2021 and further amended on December 1, 2021, Rule 82(2) was waived for the January 13, 2022 meeting, reducing the membership to six Members (4 Government and 2 Official Opposition).

- Mr. BRAR
- Hon. Mrs. COX
- Mr. MICKLEFIELD
- Mr. SALA
- Mr. SMOOK (Chairperson)
- Mr. TEITSMA (Vice-Chairperson)

Non-Committee Members Speaking on Record:

- Mr. LAMONT

Officials Speaking on Record

- Robert Olson, Chief Executive Officer, Manitoba Centennial Centre Corporation
- Karl Loepp, Chair of the Board, Manitoba Centennial Centre Corporation

Reports Considered and Passed

Your Committee considered and passed the following report as presented:

- Annual Report of the Manitoba Centennial Centre Corporation for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021

Mr. Smook: I move, seconded by the honourable member for Radisson (Mr. Teitsma), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

**Standing Committee on Crown Corporations
Fifth Report**

Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Chairperson): Madam Speaker, I wish to present the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations.

Clerk: Your Standing Committee on Crown Corporations—

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

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

Meetings

Your Committee met on January 14, 2022 at 1:00 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

- *Annual Report of the Manitoba Hydro-Electric Board for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021*

Committee Membership

As per the Sessional Order passed by the House on October 7, 2020, amended on November 19, 2020, December 3, 2020, May 18, 2021 and further amended on December 1, 2021, Rule 82(2) was waived for the January 14, 2022 meeting, reducing the membership to six Members (4 Government and 2 Official Opposition).

- *Mr. GUENTER*
- *Hon. Mrs. GUILLEMARD*
- *Mr. KINEW*
- *Mr. PEDERSEN*
- *Mr. SALA*
- *Hon. Mr. WHARTON*

Your Committee elected Mr. PEDERSEN as the Chairperson.

Your Committee elected Mr. GUENTER as the Vice-Chairperson.

Officials Speaking on Record

- *Jay Grewal, President & Chief Executive Officer, Manitoba Hydro-Electric Board*
- *Marina James, Chair of the Board, Manitoba Hydro-Electric Board*

Reports Considered and Passed

Your Committee considered and passed the following report as presented:

- *Annual Report of the Manitoba Hydro-Electric Board for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021*

Mr. Pedersen: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Borderland (Mr. Guenter), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

Standing Committee on Public Accounts First Report

Mr. Jim Maloway (Chairperson): Madam Speaker, I wish to present the first report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

Clerk: Your Standing Committee on Public Accounts—

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on Public Accounts presents the following as its First Report.

Meetings

Your Committee met on February 17, 2022 at 1:00 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

- *Election of a Vice-Chairperson*

Committee Membership

- *Mr. LAMONT*
- *Mr. LINDSEY*
- *Mr. MALOWAY (Chairperson)*
- *Mr. MARTIN*
- *Mr. MICHALESKI*
- *Ms. NAYLOR*
- *Mr. NESBITT*
- *Mr. SMOOK*
- *Mr. TEITSMA*
- *Mr. WASYLIW*
- *Mr. WISHART*

Your Committee elected Mr. NESBITT as the Vice-Chairperson.

Mr. Maloway: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

Madam Speaker: Tabling of reports?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Madam Speaker: The honourable First Minister—and I would indicate that the required 90 minutes notice prior to routine proceedings was provided in accordance with our rule 26(2).

Would the honourable First Minister please proceed with her statement.

Support for Ukrainian Community

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Premier): On Saturday, I had the honour of joining many of our colleagues on both sides of the House, as well as many Manitobans from across our province, to rally in support of Ukrainian people and to stand with Manitoba's Ukrainian community.

It was incredible to see so many Manitobans from all political stripes and all backgrounds in a sea of blue and yellow, rallying in support of peace. Together, we sent Vladimir Putin a strong message: that Manitoba stands with the people of Ukraine and against this unjust invasion.

Madam Speaker, Putin's heinous attack on a free nation with a proud history is a shameful violation of international law. Here on the Legislative grounds, there is a monument recognizing the horrors of the 1932 Holodomor, Joseph Stalin's forced famine that killed millions of Ukrainians by starvation. The Ukrainian people have suffered under the rule of an evil dictator before, and, Madam Speaker, Manitobans—and all Canadians—must do everything we can to make sure that never happens again.

Manitoba supports the democratically elected government of Ukraine. Manitoba supports Canadian efforts to impose crippling economic sanctions on Russia. We must aid in bringing this conflict to an end.

The cost of war and its impacts on the citizens of a country cannot be measured. This conflict is destroying families and cities and neighbourhoods. The citizens of Ukraine, and their relatives and friends here in Manitoba, need our help and support in their hour of need—people like Kateryna Ryshschykovets here in Winnipeg, whose family is in the battle zone of Nova Kakhovka, Kherson Oblast. Her family are able to keep in touch with her, but there is a war going on in the streets surrounding their house. They have heard of neighbours shot as they attempt to flee their house—as they attempt to flee.

These are the atrocities that many Ukrainians are witnessing right now. These are the freedom-loving people who may be coming to Manitoba in the very near future. They will need our help.

I've informed the federal government that we will take Ukrainian refugees looking for a safe haven, and we are working with Canada to expedite over 100 Ukrainian immigration applications through our Provincial Nominee Program.

We have contributed \$150,000 to the Ukrainian Canadian Congress for humanitarian aid to displaced families and refugees, with more to come as needed.

And last week, Manitoba Liquor Marts pulled all Russian products from their shelves.

Manitoba is the home of over 180,000 people of Ukrainian descent. That is one in almost every seven Manitobans, all of whom contributed to building a democratic and peaceful province. On Saturday, we raised the Ukrainian flag in Memorial Park in solidarity with them and with all Ukrainians who are fighting to save their country.

Madam Speaker, the invasion of Ukraine has united people around the world in support of freedom, democracy and peace. Let us stay united and continue to pray for peace in Ukraine.

Madam Speaker, once other members have spoken to the statement, I ask that we have a moment of silence for all those who have lost their lives in Ukraine, and for all those who are fighting for their lives as we speak.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Last night, my son and I joined thousands of other Manitobans to watch with pride as the Hoosli choir sang the national anthems of both Ukraine and Canada before the Jets game. My heart was full to see the amount of people wearing yellow and blue in the stands last night and to hear the tremendous cheer that rose up. That, along with the rally that was held here on Saturday, shows me that the people of Manitoba are united in support and solidarity for the people of Ukraine and for the Ukrainian community both here in Manitoba and around the world.

* (13:50)

I think we've all been extremely moved by the bravery and the heroism of Ukrainians at this historic moment: regular men, women and civilians who are taking up arms to defend their homeland, to defend their language and culture and independence. Not just scientists and grocery clerks but elected officials are in the streets as we speak right now.

We're moved by the selflessness of the 13 guards on Snake Island, who took on a Russian warship in words that will be immortalized, I'm sure. They are true heroes. I think we've all also been impressed and seen President Zelensky in a new light over these past number of weeks. He has been a leader to stand up to

Vladimir Putin, and he has refused to capitulate and he stood strong for his nation's values.

Now, in the last few years, Manitobans have been divided by political issues, by social issues, what have you. But now is the time to come together, and it's important that we come together right now to support Ukraine and to support Ukrainians here on these lands as well.

We must unite against a common enemy, and that common enemy is Vladimir Putin. We know that the common enemy is not necessarily the people of Russia, because there are many good Russians who are speaking out against this war and are speaking out against Vladimir Putin and are pushing for peace. But being where we are in the world and given the size of the Ukrainian community here in Manitoba, which is one of the largest amongst any province—the largest per capita, in fact—we know that we have to do more. We can do more. We must do more.

So, of course, we are calling on the Province to dramatically increase the amount of financial assistance provided to the UCC. We also ask the Province to set up a matching donation program, so that every donation that a Manitoban makes is matched by provincial coffers. We propose starting that program with \$5 million.

The MPNP program—we could admit more Ukrainians through that stream. We should be talking about thousands of more Ukrainians, and we need to staff up that department to ensure that those applications can be expedited and to support it with settlement services once people arrive here. Of course, the refugee stream will be important and settlement services can assist that. But again, when we're talking about refugees from Ukraine, we should be talking about numbers in the thousands.

And, of course, we may—we must take steps against the financial interests which support Vladimir Putin and enable his unjust war.

I think back to visiting Ukraine in 2014. One of the things that I did was I visited the Maidan square, where people fought for their independence. I visited the shrines to the people who were martyred there, and reflecting on that, I know that the people of Ukraine will never give up.

With that in mind, we should ask ourselves at this historic moment if we are doing everything that we can to bring about an end to this war and to support those people.

Slava Ukraini.

Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface): I ask for leave to speak in response to the ministerial statement.

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

Mr. Lamont: I'll start by saying that what we've seen in the last weeks is truly extraordinary, and the leadership and tenacity of Ukraine's President Zelensky has been nothing short of heroic. That spirit of resistance and incredible toughness is part of what has always defined the Ukrainian people, whose courage and defiance in the face of bombing and threats of nuclear annihilation is mind-boggling.

Whether it is a farmer stealing and towing a Russian tank, to the woman telling a soldier to put sunflower seeds in his pockets, to the brave people who've been stepping up and putting themselves in harm's way, they have been beyond inspiring.

Now, I remember the threat of nuclear war and bombs dropping on our heads in the 1980s. We didn't know in junior high whether there'd be a world to grow—for us to grow up into, but there was. We did see a different future. I remember the fall of the Berlin Wall. I remember Ukraine becoming a sovereign country, and the invasion of Ukraine is not the action of a strongman, but the action of a weak man, a desperate attempt to disrupt, divide and undermine our allies and ourselves. It is truly a threat not just to Ukraine but to the world.

But democracy has greater strength than any tyrant can shake. It doesn't mean that democracy is perfect or that we won't falter sometimes. But democracy has a capacity for reinvention without destruction, and without the rule of law we have nothing.

And our disagreement is not with the Russian people, because if Putin and the oligarchs who back him really believed in what is best for Russia, they wouldn't be hiding their money away in some offshore account in Panama or Malta. They wouldn't be backing Putin's invasion; they'd be reinvesting in Russia. They'd be building factories. But they're not. They're backing the invasion of a sovereign and independent democratic state, and that's something we have to oppose.

Ukrainians survived and outlasted oppression. Ukrainians have survived and outlasted famine. They survived and outlasted war. And they will all survive

and outlast Putin and this unwarranted act of aggression

We say in this House, with a single voice, that we stand with Ukraine. You are not alone in your struggle, and your struggle and identity will not be denied, because your struggle is our struggle. And all of our struggle is to repair this world, to make it more free, to make it more democratic, to make it more just.

We did not create this world that we live in, we inherited it, but we do not have to leave it to our children.

Slava Ukraini. Thank you. Merci.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave for a moment of silence? *[Agreed]*

Please stand.

A moment of silence was observed.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

J.H. Bruns Girls Volleyball Champions

Hon. Audrey Gordon (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, for many years, my constituency of Southdale has been a training ground for talented athletes within our schools. The J.H. Bruns Collegiate Broncos girls varsity volleyball team have continued this tradition by winning the 2021 Boston Pizza AAAA provincial championship against the St. Mary's Academy Flames on December 4th, 2021. During their climb to victory, they defeated rival top team, the Vincent Massey Trojans, in the semi-finals.

This is the first time in history that the Southdale team has captured the varsity championship title, but it won't be the last. This win is a turning point for the J.H. Bruns volleyball team, and I know they will be training very hard during the off-season to defend their title in 2023 and bring home a back-to-back provincial championship.

Among the many talented coaching staff and players, head coach Kris Funk won this year's AAAA Girls Coach of the Year award for leading the team to victory. Team members Jenna Dyck and Mia Caronte were named tournament all-stars, and Raya Surinx was named the tournament MVP. Raya was also chosen to be featured in the 2021 Girls All-Manitoba Team.

Congratulations to all of you on these special recognitions.

It was a long wait to get back onto the court due to the pandemic, but once they found their rhythm,

they knew 2021 would be like no other year for the team. This team shows that when you work hard and put in the time and dedication, dreams really do come true.

Please join me in congratulating the 2021 J.H. Bruns Collegiate Broncos coaches and players on an exemplary season.

* (14:00)

Madam Speaker, I ask for leave to add the names of the coaches and players into Hansard.

Madam Speaker: Order. The honourable Minister of Health, I would just indicate that the minister does not need leave to approve those names any longer with the new rules.

J. H. Bruns Collegiate Broncos: Mia Caronte, Jenna Dyck, Madeline Gordon, Callie Lane, Karalize Loewen, Jill Paukovic, Kate Paukovic, Raya Surinx, Brinna Thiessen, players; Kyra Dyck, Allie Moffatt, Summer Sabourin, Ashley Seminuk, assistant coaches; Kris Funk, head coach.

CommUNITY.204

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): This PC government is letting down Point Douglas and its residents. But, thankfully, organizations like CommUNITY.204 are picking up that slack left by this Stefanson administration. I'm honoured to stand here today and acknowledge the work and impact commUNITY.204 does.

CommUNITY.204 performs a variety of tasks in Point Douglas and the wider North End of Winnipeg, including helping Drag the Red efforts, advocacy to advance the Every Child Matters movement and providing basic necessities like soup and clothing to hundreds of residents in Manitoba every day.

One of the ways in which CommUNITY.204 stands out from other groups is that a majority of its team grew up in the child-welfare system. They know the challenges and barriers faced by Manitoba youth in the system today and they are, therefore, better equipped than most to empathize and address the needs of these children. We would do well to listen to these voices here at the Legislature as we grapple with how to reform a system that has so often failed to provide a safe and healthy environment for our children.

My friend Daniel Hidalgo told me to pass along one of the mantras of CommUNITY.204, and I quote:

that the team believes in lateral love, lateral empathy and lateral unity. End of quote.

I repeat his words both so that they're memorialized in Hansard and as a reminder to all of us in this Chamber as MLAs that we need to reconsider our reliance on top-down approaches to poverty reduction. Instead, we must equip grassroots organizations like CommUNITY.204 to continue acting in—engaging in acts of lateral love, empathy and unity.

CommUNITY.204, we thank you for your hard work in uplifting our youth, and most importantly, we thank you for spreading love, empathy and unity across Manitoba.

Madam Speaker: I would just point out to the member and all members of the House, when referring to a government, it would be by the Stefanson government and not Stefanson administration. So for future use, if people choose to do that, that is our rule.

Jack Beaudry

Mr. Bob Lagassé (Dawson Trail): It is my pleasure today to present Jack Beaudry.

Jack is a 15-year-old motorcycle racer from Lorette, Manitoba. Jack has been ranked one of the top road racers in the province.

Being the rider that Jack is, he attained a spot in the US racing series called the North American talent cup. This series includes some of the top young racers on the continent.

Jack Beaudry began riding motorcycles five years ago. He started small with mini-bikes and quickly became confident and a sharp rider. As a result of his confidence, he upgraded to a 250 cc road bike this past summer. Jack was brought up in the lifestyle of racing, as his dad was also a road racer when he was younger.

It is no surprise that Jack became the youngest winner ever last fall in the 40-year history of Manitoba road racing, competing with racers much older than himself.

It is easy to understand why Jack has earned these titles. Jack has accomplished so much in a short time period while being a 15-year-old grade 10 student. Away from studying, his biggest priority is racing. His hard work has paid off and he is now one of the only two Canadian riders who will be racing in the North American talent cup.

Please join me in wishing him all the best in his upcoming races and congratulating him—congratulating yet another remarkable Dawson Trail resident.

Michael Monk

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): So many of us have had good times and fond memories at the Toad over the years. It's an iconic Osborne Village pub; an institution, really. And many of those memories included Michael Monk, known to family, friends and Toad regulars simply as Mic. I'm very sad to say that this pillar of Osborne Village left us far too soon very recently.

Now, Mic had family roots in Osborne Village and, in 2004, he purchased the Toad. He and his twin brother, Kevin, actually also launched the Cavern and, eventually, the Whiskey Bar. So they did a lot for the scene here in Winnipeg, if you will. And, of course, we all know that, in 2020, the Toad moved from its iconic location to the more recent location at 155 Osborne.

Through it all, he gave many of my friends jobs. And I'd stop in to visit with him, perhaps most memorably during the Canada Day street festivals each year. He was also a huge contributor to the music scene, a musician himself. And on holidays like Easter and Christmas, Mic would close the pub to host dinners for expats and other people who were living here in Winnipeg who might not have had family to take them in for those special occasions—a truly generous soul.

He was also very proud of his family. I can say, you know, we watched him with great pride at the Fort Rouge grade 6 graduation, when he was there to celebrate one of his daughters.

Michael received a terminal diagnosis of lung cancer just two weeks after the death of his father in December 2020. Mic passed away on January 16th, 2022, surrounded by loved ones.

My sincere condolences to Mic's family, his wife, his daughters Bijou and Parinda, his daughter Bijou's mom, and all of his relatives. My condolences also to the family at the Toad, and I encourage all of my colleagues to stop in sometime for a pint or to contribute to the fundraiser to renovate the building.

Thank you so much, Mic.

Courtney Czezowski

Hon. Scott Johnston (Minister of Seniors and Long-Term Care): Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize the strong commitment and community connection that—exemplified by one of Assiniboia's most outstanding constituents.

Courtney Czezowski is the current president of the Assiniboia west recreational centre and has served on their board for multiple roles under the—for many years.

What is unique about this instance is that this association represents two of three community clubs in Assiniboia that serves the whole Assiniboia constituency area.

The Buchanan site is situated between John Taylor Collegiate, Hedges Middle School and Buchanan elementary school, while the Morgan site is situated along Crestview School.

Many Assiniboia families have utilized these clubhouses for over 50 years for all their local youth sports and social activities such as socials, skating, hockey, dance, baseball, soccer—just to name a few. A significant challenge occurred when a fire destroyed a part of the Buchanan site clubhouse. The community rallied under the leadership of president Courtney Czezowski.

Today, Madam Speaker, I am pleased to say that with a renovation grant and community fundraising, this clubhouse has received many new upgrades. My constituents can now enjoy a fully modernized canteen, kitchen area, change area, meeting rooms and washrooms.

But Courtney, Madam Speaker, tells me that their work is not done yet.

So, Madam Speaker, I would like to recognize Courtney Czezowski for her outstanding contribution to our community of Assiniboia.

Thank you.

* * *

Madam Speaker: It's my pleasure right now to introduce you to somebody new at the table.

I would like to draw members' attention to the table today, as I am pleased to introduce our new clerk assistant-Journals clerk, Vanessa Gregg.

Members would know Vanessa, of course, as she has served as the manager of the Assembly's Visitor Tour program since 2007. Prior to that, Vanessa

worked as a tour guide in the building as she finished her bachelor of arts degree in philosophy, political studies and French from the Université de Saint-Boniface.

We are excited to have Vanessa join the procedural team and we are pleased to welcome her to the table here in the House today. She brings to the challenging Journals position a wealth of knowledge and experience, a strong work ethic, great respect for this institution and also boundless enthusiasm. We are confident that she will adapt well to her new role and excel in this position.

Vanessa's first day as Journals clerk was on November 17, 2021, and since that time she has been hard at work learning all there is to know about the Journals branch and serving as a clerk at the table.

*(14:10)

Vanessa, on behalf of all honourable members and all Assembly staff, I welcome you to your new role in the Assembly. We're very happy to have you here.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Canada-Ukraine Foundation Financial Assistance

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): On behalf of our team, I want to say, welcome, Vanessa. Big shoes to fill, but I've also heard remarkable compliments directed to you already, and you have a great team to mentor and to help support you, so we wish you the best.

The illegal invasion of Ukraine by Russia threatens the futures of millions of people in Ukraine, across Europe, and it is indeed an ominous sign for the democratic world.

We stand in absolute solidarity with the people of Ukraine and the Ukrainian community here. Given the importance of the community to Manitoba, we know that our province should be a leader. That's why it's so important for Manitoba to step up and show support.

The Manitoba government should dramatically increase the amount of financial assistance provided to the Canadian-Ukrainian foundation.

Will the Premier do so today?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Premier): I think it goes without saying that what is happening in Ukraine is absolutely heartbreaking. This is affecting all of those families—and there's 180,000 Manitobans who are

affected by this, who have loved ones back in Ukraine. We need to stand by them today, and that's exactly what we are doing, Madam Speaker.

And it's important that we be united on this front and not divided on this front. We need to stand with people from Ukraine. And that's exactly what we are doing.

We have made a contribution to the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, for humanitarian relief, of \$150,000, Madam Speaker.

We have reached out to the federal government. We're working closely with them to ensure that we can expedite the immigration process. And we have made it very clear to the federal government that we will help by taking refugees right here in Manitoba.

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

Donations to Support Ukraine Matching Government Program

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Madam Speaker, Manitobans look after each other during times of need. Well, most do, actually. And we've seen that time and time again throughout the pandemic.

We're seeing it again as Manitobans step up to assist the people of Ukraine. Many people are giving generous donations. We've seen the contributions to the UCCA increase dramatically. We've also seen people gathering supplies: one Winnipegger picking up radios, first aid kits, even drones to send to the Ukrainian people to help with their fight.

We know that this benevolence, this generosity, should be matched by the government. The government should match this commitment. And we need to see further action from the Province.

Will the Premier create a matching program where cash donations from the people of Manitoba are matched by contributions from this provincial government?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Premier): Madam Speaker, as a government, we have been very clear that we stand with our friends in Ukraine. We stand—we have clearly indicated to the federal government that we support them in their efforts to impose sanctions against Russia because of this horrific act of international law that is breaking that law.

We will continue to stand with Ukraine. We will continue to ensure that we do what we can on our part

to support them. We have already indicated how we're going to do that. We will continue to do that.

It's our part to stand—and the most important thing we can do is stand with Ukraine in their time of need, and that's exactly what we're doing, Madam Speaker.

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

Conflict in Ukraine PNP Fee Waiver

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Well, we know that the illegal invasion of Ukraine has forced hundreds of thousands of people to flee. We know that there are hundreds of thousands displaced, and soon that number could reach millions.

We know Manitoba can be a safe haven, and we should do everything that we can to assist people in their time of need. We know that that can happen through a refugee stream, but we also know that there's the Provincial Nominee Program.

Currently, there's a \$500 fee in place, which could be an additional barrier for people trying to come to Manitoba from the Ukraine, to say nothing of the delays in processing applications. We should take further steps to support settlement services offered by organizations like the Ukrainian Canadian Congress.

Are these actions going to be followed up with by this Premier? Will she waive the \$500 fee for provincial nominees coming from the Ukraine?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Premier): Madam Speaker, I want to thank—on Saturday—all of the thousands of Manitobans that showed up at the Manitoba Legislature in support of Ukraine. There were some incredibly heartbreaking stories that were told at that rally, and I just want to thank those for coming forward for their strength and their courage to come forward to tell their stories.

And our message to them is that we stand united with them. I just hope the members opposite will stand united with us. We're better in numbers; strength in numbers, Madam Speaker. And it's very important that members opposite stay united and do not divide us as they are suggesting right now.

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

Health-Care System Hospital Staffing Concerns

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Remember when the Premier said Manitobans have to learn to look after themselves? We were the ones who continued to maintain unity and to unite Manitobans around a common objective at that time, and so we'll continue to do so at this time.

These have been tough times for people in the province: they've watched the continuous disaster in our health-care system unfold; they've seen the staffing crisis in health care; and today, with rising interest rates, we also know that the cost of living is such an impact on the people of Manitoba.

Now, of course, those in the Pallister-Stefanson governments want you to forget about the harm that they've caused to this province. But we know that nothing has changed; these are the same old PCs. And just like Brian Pallister, when families need them most, they will abdicate their responsibilities.

Why did the Premier refuse to show support for Manitobans during their time of need?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Premier): Madam Speaker, we will continue to stand by Manitobans in their time of need. We never abandoned Manitobans during that time. We have been with Manitobans, standing side by side Manitobans. Whether they're Ukrainians, whether they're, you know, other Manitobans who have suffered hardships throughout the COVID pandemic, we will continue to work with them to ensure their safety and to ensure that their well-being is respected.

We will continue to stand side by side Manitobans. We've been doing that from the very beginning, Madam Speaker, and we will continue to do that in the future.

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

Mr. Kinew: Madam Speaker, do you remember when the Premier said Manitobans have to learn to look after themselves? We remember, and I'm sure the people of Manitoba remember too.

We're very concerned about the federal government being forced to bail out Manitoba's health-care system with the assistance of nurses from the Red Cross. Let's be clear—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew:—Madam Speaker, you only call the Red Cross when it's an emergency. When the Red Cross shows up, things are not going well. And so, here we are with our health-care system in a crisis, in a staffing—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew:—emergency. The people—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew:—of Manitoba are very disillusioned with the PC's approach to health care, and with good reason.

And the fact that we see the continued cries for help from those on their front line further speaks to the crisis that we're seeing right now. We know the Red Cross only comes when things are in a crisis situation.

Will the Premier admit that there is a crisis in Manitoba's hospitals?

Mrs. Stefanson: Madam Speaker, we will continue to make the investments in our Manitoba—in our health-care system to ensure that the system is there for Manitobans when they need it. That is our commitment, and we will continue to work along those lines.

What I will say is that these were not new nurses that were called upon for Manitoba. What was, was a—just—they are nurses that are already here and it's just simply an extension for a couple of weeks—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Stefanson:—to allow for a transition process to take place so that—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Stefanson:—there is a continuum of care there for Manitobans when they need it.

* (14:20)

I hope the member opposite is not suggesting that Manitobans don't need and deserve that continuum of care. *[interjection]*

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

Mr. Kinew: The Premier's argument seems to be, well, the house was already on fire before while I was Premier, and so now the house is still on fire, so don't get upset over that situation.

The people of Manitoba are extremely concerned over the state of the health-care system. The fact that

the health-care staffing crisis was at an emergency point in December does not excuse the Premier's responsibility to take action now in February.

Again, the Red Cross only shows up when you are in crisis, Madam Speaker, and we see that there is a continued emergency situation—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —in Manitoba's health-care system. But note the one thing the Premier would not say: the Premier would not admit that there is a crisis in our hospitals.

So I'll ask again: Can the Premier admit that there is a crisis in hospitals in Manitoba right now?

Mrs. Stefanson: Madam Speaker, the member opposite will know that we have been facing a world-wide pandemic for the last two years, and obviously, within our health-care system, people needed to be 'remployed'—deployed—redeployed within the system to help increase the capacity for ICU, make sure that we're dealing with—'appropally' with those who are being hospitalized as a result of COVID. People had to be redeployed.

Now we're in a transition phase to ensuring that those people return back to their jobs—their original jobs, Madam Speaker. This is a transition period. We want to ensure that we have that continuum of care. This is why we've asked for these three individuals—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Stefanson: —just to extend their stay—they're already here working at the Health Sciences Centre—just to extend their work for two weeks here, Madam Speaker, during that transition period, to ensure the continuity of care for Manitoba patients. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

State of the Health-Care System Hospital Staffing and Funding

MLA Uzoma Asagwara (Union Station): Madam Speaker, a number of public health measures were dropped today, but the demands on our health-care system remain: patients are being transferred around the province, nurses, doctors and other health-care professionals are still very much under strain, 2,300 nursing positions are vacant.

On February 24th, the province requested exceptional support from the federal government to deploy nurses into Manitoba hospitals.

Will the minister admit if you have to call in the Red Cross, that means there's a crisis in our health-care system?

Hon. Audrey Gordon (Minister of Health): I thank the member for—from Union Station for the question, because it gives me an opportunity to set the record straight.

Last fall, the members opposite stood on the rooftop and screamed, send in the army; call for the army. Unbeknownst to them, we had already started discussions with the federal government around the round table that was created by—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Gordon: —the federal minister, and the federal government—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Gordon: —stepped up and Red Cross nurses were assigned to Manitoba. And I want to take this opportunity to thank all of our nurses for stepping up and helping Manitobans during the fourth wave. And to the Red Cross nurses, we thank you for your stay here in our province—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Whoa. This is going off the rails kind of early.

I would ask for everybody's co-operation, please. I couldn't hear some of those words because of the heckling from all sides of the House. So please, let's show some consideration here, show that we can demonstrate the kind of leadership that the world is expecting of politicians these days, and respectfully listen to the questions and answers.

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

MLA Asagwara: Madam Speaker, funding to acute care was cut in this year's budget by \$13 million. Regions which run our hospitals saw their funding cut below the level of inflation: less than one half of 1 per cent.

Our nurses and doctors did not have and do not have what they need to sustain the overwhelming burden of this pandemic. That's obvious, as federal assistance is being requested even now.

Will the minister admit when you have to call in the Red Cross, there's a crisis in our hospitals?

Ms. Gordon: Madam Speaker, in Budget 2021 this government, members on this side of the House,

committed \$1.18 billion–\$6.98 billion overall funding, an increase of \$156 million from last year, the largest health budget in Manitoba history.

Madam Speaker, we're going to continue to fund health care and provide supports to Manitobans when they need it.

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

MLA Asagwara: Madam Speaker, we're all hopeful that this fourth wave of the pandemic might be the last, but hope is not enough.

Announced today were a number of public health measures that are being dropped, yet the reality is our hospitals are still under tremendous strain: 2,300 nursing positions are vacant. There are now 124 less hospital beds in our health-care system than four years ago.

Public health restrictions are being removed, but Manitoba's calling for federal assistance to shore up capacity that this government cut. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

MLA Asagwara: Why can't the minister just admit when the Red Cross is being called in, that means there's a crisis—an ongoing crisis—in our Manitoba hospitals? Will she just admit this today?

Ms. Gordon: Madam Speaker, I want to state again that the army that the member opposite was crying from the rooftop to come to Manitoba didn't come, but the nurses did, from the Red Cross. They have been here since December. The three nurses that we are extending for two additional weeks have been here for—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Gordon: —over a month. This is an extension of three nurses at the Health Sciences Centre for two weeks.

Are the members opposite stating that we should ask them to return home, send them back and not have them continue to provide the invaluable supports they have been providing to Manitobans?

Please, tell Manitobans if they—if the Red Cross nurses should stay or if you'd like us to send them home. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

U of M Faculty Association Cost of Labour Dispute

Mr. Jamie Moses (St. Vital): Madam Speaker, \$19 million—that's \$19 million—is the bill that Brian Pallister left Manitobans for his interference in the University of Manitoba's negotiations back in 2016. That's money now that each and every Manitoban will have to pay if the Premier (Mrs. Stefanson) doesn't do what's right and hand that bill over to those who it rightfully belongs to.

Will the Premier do what's right and send the bill for Pallister's interference with the U of M to Brian Pallister himself, instead of Manitobans? *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Hon. Reg Helwer (Minister of Labour, Consumer Protection and Government Services): Sounds like the member's already cashing the cheque.

But I'm sure the member will understand, appreciate that this matter remains before the courts. We have to respect that process, as we always do, and obviously, we're thoroughly reviewing the decision with our legal advisors and will review that advice, that legal advice, and will determine what the next path is.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

* (14:30)

Mr. Moses: Well, Madam Speaker, if the Premier doesn't want to send the bill to Brian Pallister, then maybe she could use part of the \$31 million that she neglected to disclose to cover the government's cost of this interference.

Manitobans shouldn't be the ones left to foot the bill—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Moses: —for her mentor, Brian Pallister's interference, which has led to \$3 million of strike costs and \$16 million of lost 'wage' due to this unconstitutional wage mandate.

So will the Premier take responsibility for her party's interference and perhaps send the bill to the PC Party of Manitoba instead of to Manitobans?

Mr. Helwer: Thank you, Madam Speaker—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Helwer: Well, the member seems to be feeling that he's the judge in the process here, Madam.

This matter is before the courts. We will take advice from our legal counsel and see what that advice is, and we'll determine what the next path is, what the best path is, for Manitoba.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

Mr. Moses: Now, it's clear that, had the Premier's government not interfered with the U of M negotiations back in 2016, there wouldn't be no \$19-million bill today.

Now, Madam Speaker, this is the compensation that rightfully belongs to the faculty at U of M, and that's why it's so concerning to hear that they're considering appealing this decision. The Premier (Mrs. Stefanson) should do what's right and cover the bill herself or send it to her 'melntor', Brian Pallister—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Moses: —because it shouldn't be up to Manitobans to cover the cost of this government's interference and court battles.

Will the Premier commit today for her party paying the bill of that \$19 million?

Mr. Helwer: Well, now apparently the member opposite is a lawyer. I'm not sure that that was in his history, but perhaps it is.

We have not actually received the court judgment, Madam Speaker. Once we receive it, we will talk to our legal advisors and we will determine what the path is, the best path is, for Manitobans. The member opposite is giving us advice to appeal it. We'll look at that option, but we'll listen to our legal advisors.

Correctional Service of Canada Out-of-Province Transfer of Women

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): Citizens in conflict with the law need community supports and need to be close to family and friends. This is crucial to citizens' healing and to reducing recidivism.

That's why it's concerning to learn that the Minister of Justice has not continued an agreement with Correctional Service Canada to keep women

entering federal justice systems for short federal sentences in Manitoba correctional facilities. Indeed, women are going to be sent out of province, Madam Speaker, far from their supports and community.

Will the minister reverse his decision and re-enter into an agreement with correction services Canada to keep women close to home today?

Miigwech.

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I thank the member for the question.

We do provide significant resources when it comes to support, whether it's in community or in facility, Madam Speaker. I would name just one example of the therapeutic drug support that we provide within the women's centre, a unique program in Manitoba which provides wrap-around service.

We've extended wrap-around service into communities as well, Madam Speaker, because we know that for those who are either in facility or outside a facility, that support is important and we'll continue to provide additional support through our government.

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

Ms. Fontaine: As a result of the minister's failure to continue the agreement, if a woman enters the federal system with a short sentence, she will now be forced to leave the province for facilities in Edmonton, Kingston or elsewhere, Madam Speaker.

This is a step backwards, particularly when you consider what women incarcerated have had to live with under the conditions of COVID. The minister is shipping women away, putting them further away from their loved ones and the community supports that they need to be successful when they leave these facilities. It doesn't have to be this way, though, Madam Speaker.

Will the minister commit to reassigning that agreement with correction services Canada today?

Mr. Goertzen: The member opposite knows well the distinction between federal sentencing and provincial sentencing.

Certainly, within our provincial correctional institutions, whether it's those facilities that house men or whether it's those facilities that house women, we continue to provide additional support—additional support to ensure that those who are leaving—in the community after leaving a provincial facility have not

only transitional support into the community, but have a better opportunity because of what they were provided within that facility.

Yes, it's true that COVID has interrupted some of those programs, but I'm pleased to say that many of those programs are restarting now and enhancing, Madam Speaker.

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

Ms. Fontaine: Women with short federal sentences are now being forced to leave their family, their friends, their support systems behind. They're forced to leave their children behind when it is already so difficult to be able to have access or visitation with their children. This decision does not take into consideration what is in the best interest of these women when they leave these facilities.

This is a decision that's isolating women in conflict with the law and making it harder for them after their sentence is completed.

Again, Madam Speaker, will the minister enter into an agreement with correction services Canada to keep women with short federal sentences here at home in Manitoba?

Mr. Goertzen: I am grateful for the question from the member opposite. She's well aware of the distinction between federal and provincial sentences, Madam Speaker, and federal and provincial facilities.

Within the provincial facilities in Manitoba, Madam Speaker, we continue to provide support for women in the Women's Correctional Centre. We continue to provide support for men in the various provincial correctional centres. We understand and we recognize that that support is important for successful reintegration into the community after a sentence is served, and we'll continue to provide those supports and look at ways at enhancing those supports.

Northern Manitoba Roads Request for Improvements

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): As we all know, our friend and colleague Danielle Adams passed away as a result of a collision on Highway 6, December 9th, just south of Thompson.

We should commit ourselves to ensuring highway conditions on Highway 6 and other northern roadways are improved. Winter conditions make travel difficult at the best of times. Now, with the added pressure of more heavy vehicles headed for winter roads and also

headed for northern mines, the situation is just getting worse.

Will the minister bring forward a plan to address concerns regarding Highway 6 and other northern highways, and will the minister commit to that today?

Hon. Doyle Pivniuk (Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure): Madam Speaker, I want to thank the member for the question—from Flin Flon.

On behalf of all Manitobans, I offer my deepest condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of Danielle Adams, the MLA for Thompson. We will mourn her loss and she has been greatly—going to be greatly missed by her colleagues, her family, her friends, her constituents and everyone in this Chamber.

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

Maintenance Staff Concerns

Mr. Lindsey: Madam Speaker, mourning her loss and the other Manitobans who've lost their lives travelling on treacherous roads that aren't maintained properly simply isn't enough.

Madam Speaker, dozens of positions in highway maintenance are vacant. It doesn't matter what the budget is for snow clearing, there's no people to do the work. Northern roads and highways like No. 6 are not being cleared quickly enough and are not being cleared properly. In some instances, travellers in both directions are forced to travel a narrow lane down the middle of the highway.

Will the minister commit to filling those vacant positions today—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Lindsey: —and ensure roadways are maintained?

* (14:40)

Mr. Pivniuk: Madam Speaker, again, I want to thank the member for the question.

Our—this winter has been one of the most unusual winters we had. We had the third largest amount of snow in Manitoba, after 1923 and 1952, and this is kind of the—I would have to 'combend' our staff who've worked really hard around the clock, soon as it's safe for them to go out and actually plow. And if the conditions aren't great—they will be out there and within four hours they'll be plowing the priority routes.

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

Mr. Lindsey: Well, Madam Speaker, I certainly want to commend the few workers that are left to maintain those highways, as well. They go above and beyond to do their job.

Now it's time for the minister to go above and beyond and do his job.

Will you commit today, Mr. Minister, to properly funding, properly hiring enough workers—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Lindsey: —to properly maintain those roads in northern Manitoba so that they're safe to travel on?

Mr. Piwniuk: Madam Speaker, that's misinformation that the member from Flin Flon is sharing.

Our staff have been working hard around the clock to make sure that our highways are safe for drivers in Manitoba. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Piwniuk: That's a disgrace that the member from—talks about our staff like that. They've been working really hard this winter.

Shame on you. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Donations to Support Ukraine Matching Government Program

Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface): Ukraine is in desperate need of humanitarian supplies, both food and fuel.

It was certainly a step in the right direction when the PCs responded to our call last week to make a donation for humanitarian supplies, but they need to do more.

This week, Manitoba Liberal MLAs met with members of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress and Manitoba Provincial Council and we spoke with other organizations who say they have networks and the capacity to deliver food and supplies to Ukraine through Poland.

We need to ensure these necessities are there to ensure that Ukrainians can withstand the Russian siege, and we know this government can do more.

Will the Premier commit to, dollar-for-dollar, matching donations from Manitobans to the U-C-C-C-U-F fund, and, if not, why not?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Premier): Madam Speaker, we will continue to work with the Ukrainian Canadian Congress. We have already—and I want to thank Joan Lewandowsky *[phonetic]* for the incredible work that she and her team at the Ukrainian Canadian Congress do.

We've been in dialogue about these issues. We know, as we move forward, if there is more of a need then, absolutely, we will work with them towards that end.

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

Tax Havens and Money Laundering Beneficial Ownership Registry

Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface): Tax havens aren't just for folks who are feeling overtaxed, they're also for people who are hiding money from illicit drugs, corruption and kleptocrats who use money to finance more crime, terrorism and invasions of Ukraine.

We know that three oligarchs with ties to Putin have financial interests in Manitoba, but we don't know if there are any more.

Canada has signed agreements to fight money laundering, but without provincial co-operation, it's toothless.

In 2019, the PC's bill on beneficial ownership offered no real transparency at all. Beneficial ownership is still a black box in this province.

Will this government do its part to stand with Ukraine and cut off Putin's financial neighbours by creating a public, searchable registry of beneficial ownership in Manitoba, as we called for in 2019?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Premier): Madam Speaker, we will continue to work and support the federal government as they impose sanctions on Vladimir Putin and Russia. Throughout this very difficult time in Ukraine, we will stand with your—our Ukrainian friends, allies, cousins, family members. We will continue to support them in their need.

Assistance for Refugees Aid to Community Groups

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, war crimes and human rights abuses have led

to a crisis with large numbers of refugees fleeing the dire situation in Ukraine, as well as many refugees fleeing or attempting to flee from Afghanistan.

The Premier 'shez' she favours immigration, but what are the government's plans to help refugees? What additional funding allocations will be made? Is the government working with local community groups in Winnipeg to address the needs of immigrants? Will the government provide funding to local community groups to help with settlement in Manitoba? Will the government hire additional staff for the stressed provincial nominee system?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Premier): I heard loud and clear from Manitobans as I travelled throughout our province about the importance of our Provincial Nominee Program, and I also heard from Manitobans with lived experience that there's ways that we can improve that program, and we are committed to improving that program for Manitobans, Madam Speaker.

And what I'd say is that we have announced the immigration advisory council, and I want to thank Dr. Lloyd Axworthy, who has agreed to co-chair that along with our minister, and I thank them. And there's lots of work to do ahead of us, Madam Speaker, that will address many of the issues that this member has brought forward.

Conflict in Ukraine Government Support for Refugees

Mrs. Cathy Cox (Kildonan-River East): Last week, our Premier (Mrs. Stefanson) offered Manitoba's support to the democratically elected government of Ukraine, noting that moves by Russia to send troops into eastern Ukraine are a violation of Ukraine's territory and sovereignty.

Can the Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Immigration further expand on its actions to welcome Ukrainians to our Manitoba?

Hon. Jon Reyes (Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Immigration): My colleague is entirely correct. When democracy is under assault, we all have a responsibility to act. As part of our support for the people of Ukraine, we have authorized a prioritization review of Ukrainian applicant files for the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program, including Ukrainian families.

In addition, we have flagged for the federal government additional nominations that Manitoba has

reviewed, endorsed and nominated for review and approval.

Madam Speaker, we are committed to expediting Ukrainian immigration applications through our Provincial Nominee Program and as initial measure, we have already contributed \$150,000 to the Ukrainian Canadian Congress for humanitarian aid to displaced families, refugees.

Madam Speaker, today and every day we stand with the people of Ukraine. Slava Ukraini.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

York Factory First Nation Keeyask Agreement Manitoba Hydro Long-term Financial Forecast

Mr. Ian Bushie (Keewatinook): York Factory is a partner to the Keeyask agreement, and they reached out to Manitoba Hydro and the Province this fall to meet. They are asking for a true partnership and disclosure from the Province and Manitoba Hydro. They deserve an update on the financial position of their agreement. They deserve to be treated as true partners.

Will the minister responsible for Hydro ensure he and Manitoba Hydro meet with York Factory and the Keeyask partners as soon as possible?

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro): I thank the member for the question. The member should know that a meeting has taken place in December between the leadership for the Keeyask Cree Nations and Manitoba Hydro. That correspondence has occurred back and forth and continues to happen.

There are indications that a follow-up meeting will happen soon and both sides have additional work that they are preparing and working on in the meantime. We're—these are positive steps forward. We're pleased to hear that discussions have been initiated. We are pleased to know that discussions are ongoing.

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

Mr. Bushie: The partners to the Keeyask agreement deserve a fair accounting of Manitoba Hydro's financial position, yet in its most recent order, the PUB said it was, quote, unacceptable that Manitoba Hydro no longer generates a long-term financial forecast nor did it fulfill its own commitment to file one in 2019.

Under the PC government, Manitoba Hydro has shielded a true picture of its financial position. That is unacceptable to the partners in the Keeyask agreement.

When will the minister of Manitoba Hydro meet with York Factory and the Keeyask partners with a clear, long-term forecast?

Mr. Friesen: Well, Madam Speaker, I've already answered the member's question and indicated that, in fact, a meeting has taken place and there's a commitment for more meetings to go on.

But let's be clear that, when it comes to the Tataskweyak Cree Nation, the War Lake First Nation, Fox Lake Cree Nation and York Factory First Nation, those communities entered into a deal with the former NDP government and expected there to be a truthful and straightforward and transparent deal, a sharing of revenue in respect of this Keeyask generating station.

And what is coming to light now is—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Friesen: —that these communities were sold down the river by the NDP. There seems to be major concerns emerging about what were in those deals. We are concerned about that. That member doesn't talk about the fact that those concerns come from his own government.

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

Mr. Bushie: Madam Speaker, 2016, this has been the government now, and it's nothing but blame and deflect for their inaccuracies to be able to come to the table here.

* (14:50)

The Keeyask partners deserve to be treated as true partners, but they—can't happen if this PC government hide or are shielding their long-term financial forecast. Hydro has now been ordered to produce one at their next filing. It needs to be provided to the Keeyask partners and the minister must meet with them in good faith.

Will the minister commit to meeting with York Factory and the Keeyask partners with Hydro today?

Mr. Friesen: I will reiterate for the member that the commitment is there for Manitoba Hydro to continue to engage with the KCN partners. That meeting has taken place. More meetings will continue to take place.

What is clear, Madam Speaker, is there is a gulf, a real delta, between what the K-N-C partners heard first from an NDP government some years ago, and now what is coming to light in terms of the true nature of the kinds of revenues that those K-N-C partners can expect.

And so we're concerned about that, and that is why these meetings will continue to take place.

Madam Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

PETITIONS

Foot-care Services

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Madam Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The population of those aged 55-plus has grown to approximately 2,500 in the city of Thompson.

(2) A large percentage of people in this age group require necessary medical foot care and treatment.

(3) A large percentage of those who are elderly and/or diabetic are also living on low incomes.

(4) The northern regional health authority previously provided essential medical foot-care services to seniors and those living with diabetes until 2019, then subsequently cut the program after the last two nurses filling those positions retired.

(5) The number of seniors and those with diabetes has only continued to grow in Thompson and surrounding areas.

(6) There is no adequate medical care available in the city and region, whereas the city of Winnipeg has 14 medical foot-care centres.

(7) The implications of inadequate or lack of podiatric care can lead to amputations.

(8) The city of Thompson also serves as a regional health-care service provider, and the need for foot care extends beyond just those served in the capital city of the province.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to provide the services of two nurses to restore essential medical

foot care treatment to the city of Thompson effective April 1st, 2022.

And this petition has been signed by many Manitobans.

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

Are there any further—

An Honourable Member: Point of order.

Point of Order

Madam Speaker: Oh. The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a point of order.

Mr. Kinew: On a point of order, I just want to share with the House that these petitions on foot care are being presented as part of the ongoing constituency work to the people of Thompson in the memory of our dear departed MLA colleague, Danielle Adams.

Madam Speaker: I would thank the member for making that comment, but—

The honourable Government House Leader.

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, while it's not a point of order, we respectfully accept the fact that the member opposite is doing.

Madam Speaker: And just for the record, the—we thank the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Kinew) for his comments, but that is not a point of order.

* * *

Madam Speaker: Are there any further petitions?

If not, then we will move to—I'll move to recognize the honourable Government House Leader.

House Business

Mr. Goertzen: On House Business, could you please canvass the House for leave to allow the transfer of sponsorship of Bill 205, The Filipino Heritage Month Act, currently sponsored by the honourable Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage (Mr. Smith), to be transferred to the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Isleifson)?

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to allow the transfer of sponsorship of Bill 205, The Filipino Heritage Month Act, currently sponsored by the honourable Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage, to be

transferred to the honourable member for Brandon East?

Is there leave? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Goertzen: I thank the House for that.

Another leave request: Could you please canvass the House for leave to set aside the usual business for the consideration of a matter of urgent public importance, as identified in rule 38, and allow the House to consider a MUPI regarding the situation in Ukraine under the following provisions: (1) once the motion is moved, the debate may begin immediately; (2) no member may speak for more than 10 minutes; (3) the debate may continue for the balance of the afternoon, but shall not without leave go past 5 p.m., shall not carry over to another sitting day and shall end after the last speaker concludes their contribution to the debate; and (4) if the debate ends before 5, the House shall rise.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to set aside the usual process for the consideration of a matter of urgent public importance, as identified in rule 38, and allow the House to consider a MUPI regarding the situation in Ukraine under the following provisions: (1) once the motion is moved, the debate may begin immediately; (2) no member may speak for more than 10 minutes; (3) the debate may continue for the balance of the afternoon, but shall not without leave go past 5 o'clock, shall not carry over to another sitting day and shall end after the last speaker concludes their contribution to the debate; and (4) if the debate ends before 5 p.m., the House shall rise?

Is there leave? *[Agreed]*

MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Economic Development, Investment and Trade (Mr. Cullen), that the ordinary business of the House be set aside to discuss a matter of urgent public importance, namely, the situation in Ukraine, with moves by Russia to send troops into Ukraine in violation of Ukraine's territory and sovereignty.

Motion presented.

Mr. Goertzen: I want to thank members of the opposition, both for the NDP and the Liberals, for their co-operation in seeing this MUPI move forward.

On Saturday, there were thousands of people on the front steps in the—not the lawn, but the snow of the

Legislature out front, Madam Speaker. I believe that those thousands of people who were here to speak out against the invasion of Ukraine largely broke into three separate groups.

There were the groups of individuals who simply believe that the invasion of Ukraine was unjust and unjustifiable. They came to express their views of the importance of a free and democratic Ukraine. They came to express their views and their concerns about the undemocratic, the horrific invasion of Ukraine by President Vladimir Putin, Madam Speaker. They came, I think, also, to express their view of the heroic efforts of Ukraine President Zelensky. But overall, they were concerned about a free and democratic state in today's world being invaded by another country.

There was another group there, I think, as well, represented in the thousands of people, and they also believe that the invasion by Russia was unjust and unjustifiable, but those would have been Manitobans who had some sort of not ancestral connection to Ukraine, but have grown to love the people of Ukraine. And in Manitoba, there are lots of different reasons to grow in that love for the people of Ukraine. It can be as simple as attending the Spirit of Ukraine during Folklorama—and we've certainly missed that over the last couple of years. Perhaps they saw a performance by Rusalka, the dance troupe, Madam Speaker, and they've grown to appreciate the heritage of Ukraine in that way.

Hoosli performed yesterday at the Winnipeg Jets game, as already mentioned in the House by the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Kinew), and certainly, that stirred the hearts of many for those who were there in person, or for myself, who watched it on TV.

Many different reasons why Manitobans would feel a connection to Ukraine, even if they themselves don't have a personal family connection.

I personally was very honoured, when I was the minister of Education, to be able to start an international high school in Ukraine, one of the few international schools that Manitoba supports to allow students there to graduate with a Manitoba high school diploma and a Ukraine high school diploma. At that time—and it was a particular project of the ambassador from Ukraine to Canada, who very much advocated for this international school to be set up and established in Ukraine.

* (15:00)

It is operating today in Kyiv. It is called the Novopecherskie [*phonetic*] school, Madam Speaker, and I went onto the website a couple of days ago, and you can go onto the site of the school, and they have a free tour you can take of the school. And I was proud when I saw not only do they have a link to the announcement that happened by the provincial government on this school website in Ukraine, but when you take the virtual tour and go to the entrance of the school, on the one side they have a Ukraine flag, on the other side they have a flag of Canada, representing the fact that there is Canadian education happening in that school and, of course, it's Manitoba education happening in the school. It was a significant event, and I know former MLA Blair Yakimoski was part of the announcement, as well.

So there are many reasons why Manitobans can have a connection to Ukraine, even if they personally don't have a family history there. But, of course, there are thousands—as has already been discussed by the Premier (Mrs. Stefanson)—thousands of Manitobans who do have a personal connection to Ukraine, who either have family that have come from Ukraine, or who have family who are still in Ukraine, or they themselves may have come to Manitoba from Ukraine.

And they were represented on Saturday as well, Madam Speaker, equally concerned about an unjust and unjustifiable war by Russia in Ukraine, but they had a special connection, and you could see it in their eyes. You could see the emotion as they were living in real time the invasion of their country, but of their communities, of their hometowns. And as members opposite and members on this side had the opportunity to speak to some of those individuals, you heard about their personal connections in their communities, and the fear and the concern that they had for their loved ones.

And so those three groups of people, those who simply are concerned about the loss of freedom of a free and democratic country, those who have grown to love the people of Ukraine through connections in Manitoba, or those who have an ancestral or a family history in Ukraine were all represented in the thousands of people in the front of the Legislature on Saturday. And it is a testament about how Manitobans have come together, how political parties should be coming together, how all of us should be coming together to stand with Ukraine.

Sometimes it often feels like it's—you know, we'd like to do more. We wish we could, you know, have a

more tangible effect sometimes in this place. Of course, we're thousands of miles away from Ukraine and I—you know, I hear some partisan bickering across the way, Madam Speaker, and, of course, I would hope—and I actually know that most MLAs in this House will 'rives' above that. There will be a few who can't bring themselves to that, but I do believe that most MLAs in this House will rise above that partisan bickering, because that is what is being asked of us.

And we will rise above that partisan bickering and we will stand with Ukraine in the the efforts that we've so far, and more efforts to come, Madam Speaker. And we'll do so on behalf of those thousands of people who gathered in front of the Assembly, in front of this Legislature on Saturday who chanted glory to Ukraine—slava Ukraini. We all feel that. We stand with the people of Ukraine. We stand united as a Legislature. We stand united as Manitobans for a free, democratic Ukraine that can live in peace with their neighbours and with the world.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

I'm going to ask that if members wish to have any conversations at their desks, I would ask that you please take those conversations outside of the Chamber so that everybody can be focused on this very important debate that is happening here right now.

Mr. Mark Wasyliw (Fort Garry): I am a proud member of the Ukrainian-Canadian community here, and my mother and three of my grandparents were born in the Ukraine. I've been to Ukraine. I visited relatives there and I certainly have them in my heart and know that they're very much in danger.

This may be happening a world away. But Manitobans of Ukrainian heritage—this is an assault on our person and this an attack on all of us.

We are feeling despair right now, dread, anger and a sense of helplessness and need and demand that something be done. And we collectively look to our province, which is our expression as a community, for a response. And, sadly, what I've heard today from our Premier (Mrs. Stefanson) and from the Minister of Justice (Mr. Goertzen)—I'm embarrassed, as an MLA, and as a Ukrainian-Canadian, I'm offended.

I'm actually insulted that this government does not get a sense of the urgency of this situation and feels no responsibility to act and is so out of touch with the mood in Manitoba and what Ukrainians here are demanding from their government that they're trying to dismiss this and say, well, you know, we

wrote a \$150,000 cheque. That is absolutely offensive, and I'm going to try to convince this government in the few minutes that I have today why they need to change course.

Mr. Andrew Micklefield, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

Now, I want to share, as a member of the Ukrainian-Canadian family, that this is personal to us. When we came to Canada, it was part of this conflict. This conflict didn't start a week ago. This conflict started 300 years ago and this conflict has been a historical event where a Russian empire has been trying to snuff the life out of the Ukrainian people.

Over 300 years—it didn't matter what czar or what government or what they called themselves during the day—their policies were the same. They did not accept Ukrainians. They did not accept as a people, as a language, as a culture and they instituted policies, government official policies meant to destroy the Ukrainian language. People on the streets of Kyiv could get shot for speaking Ukrainian. Our language was banned from schools and, during the Holodomor, you saw the Russian Soviet government round up our cultural leaders, our priests, our politicians and either kill them or send them off to a gulag. It was all meant to destroy the spirit and—of the Ukrainian people.

The Ukrainian anthem—which has only been legal to sing in the Ukraine for the last 30 years since they gained independence in 1991, is *Shche ne vmerla Ukraina*, which literally translates: Ukraine has not yet perished.

This is a country under siege. This is a people under siege and why this should matter to this government, why this should matter to everybody in this Chamber is that there is a direct line in history from what is happening over there to here in Manitoba. Ukrainians are here in Manitoba because of events over there, over multiple generations over the last 100 plus-odd years.

The first group came here not only to escape poverty but to escape repression. They weren't even allowed to call themselves Ukrainians back then. They called themselves Ruthenians. They had their country split in half between the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Russian Empire, and part of coming to Canada was to be themselves, to live peacefully and to honour the traditions and heritage of their culture.

My family came from that generation on my father's side. On my mother's side, we came as refugees after World War II—again, escaping Soviet and Nazi oppression; again, coming to Canada in

order to leave peacefully and honour our relatives and how we lived our life.

And when I grew up in Winnipeg, in the Ukrainian community in the '70s and '80s, we had no country. I don't know if anybody looking back at their own heritage can fathom that. We had no country. We had no place that we could go to where there was official policies for Ukrainian in schools or, you know, official maintenance of our culture and our language.

Those things were under attack. Those things were being Russified and snuffed out by, you know, the Soviet-Russian empire. Ukrainian Canadians, Ukrainian Manitobans know this: that when you grew up in the community here in Manitoba, it was your duty when you went to Ukrainian dancing, when you went to Ukrainian Saturday school, you were there protecting and preserving a language and culture because you didn't know if that was ever going to exist in your homeland.

* (15:10)

And every Manitoban with Ukrainian heritage understands that on a visceral, gut-level—Vladimir Putin came out a week ago and said something that's been said for 300 years by Russian tyrants: Ukraine doesn't exist; your language doesn't exist; your people doesn't exist; and we say, you don't exist. This is something Ukrainians in Manitoba and Canada have been fighting—their existence here.

So when this government just callously says, well, you know, we gave you \$150,000. Why aren't you happy? That's insulting.

And I hope—and I look to the members of Ukrainian heritage on the other side, and I ask you to explain your out-of-touch Premier (Mrs. Stefanson) what this means to Ukrainians. They want action. They want response and they want partnership with this government.

To that end, what the—Manitoba's NDP is calling is we don't want this to be a partisan issue. *[interjection]* Well, no. Let's talk about that.

The Premier says, you know, we're being partisan about it. Let's have a joint committee of the Legislature with all parties there, including the Ukrainian Canadian Congress. Let's see you do that. If you can do that, then you have 'departinized' this issue and we can deal with a constructive plan to how Manitoba's going to respond to this. But you won't, and we'll see who's the partisan then.

The second thing is the humanitarian aid that's being offered here is insulting. I spoke with Ukrainian Canadian Congress the other day, and believe me, they expressed how grateful they were for the Province giving the \$150,000 and in the next breath said, it's not enough. It is not enough. Nobody thinks this is enough. We have 180,000 Ukrainians in Manitoba. That's not even a dollar for every Ukrainian in Manitoba. We have the Manitoba Métis Federation—bless their hearts—give \$100,000, almost two-thirds of this government's commitment. They don't have a \$19-billion budget.

It—this is a humanitarian crisis where there's almost, I think, a million women and children of refugees on the move right now. It is going to take billions of dollars to make this right, and Manitoba, given its history and who is here, given the hundreds of millions of dollars Ukrainian Manitobans pay into provincial tax every year, we have to do more.

I spoke to them about refugee settlement. Again, you know, this government has no idea what they can do. Well, it turns out there's two people that are processing immigration papers for all of Manitoba; one's a director and one is the person that actually does the work. How are you going to respond to a refugee crisis when you have gotten rid of all your immigration employees except for two? There needs to be an immediate ramping up of employment in that sector.

Ukrainian Canadian Congress tells us that they are prepared to do the hard work of resettlement. But they need resources. They need money from this 'gover' to hire a—permanent, full-time resettlement workers.

So there is a lot this government can do. We're learning also that Manitoba may be a place where Russian oligarchs have stashed some of their ill-gotten gains. We can bring in a provincial beneficial ownership registry to ferret them out. We can find out whose money is here, whether it's clean or not, and press the Federal Government to seize ill-gotten gains and make sure that money goes back to the Ukraine to defend its people.

So I hope that this government will change course, and to my fellow Ukrainians, my goal today was to make sure your voice was heard in this Chamber. Slava Ukraini, heroyam slava.

Mr. Brad Michaleski (Dauphin): It's a real honour for me to stand up and represent a very diverse

Dauphin constituency, and as someone who represents one of the largest Ukrainian-Canadian communities in Manitoba, I speak sincerely from the bottom of my heart when I say I stand with Ukraine.

Our government stands in solidarity with Ukraine and we strongly condemn the Russian invasion. Unlawful moves by Russia to send troops into eastern Ukraine are a clear violation of Ukraine's sovereignty.

Our thoughts are with Ukraine and Manitobans with Ukrainian family and friends. We stand with you, and we will do what we can to support the federal government's efforts to support Ukraine.

There are many, many strong, deep, interpersonal, cultural and historic ties between Canada and the Ukraine. Living and growing up in the Dauphin constituency and being a fourth generation Ukrainian immigrant from 1897, I had the particular blessing, I would say, to grow up in that area where there was a huge settlement of immigration—Ukrainian immigrants into the Dauphin region, into the agriculture regions of that area.

And I just recall so many stories and so many important things that the immigration and the Ukrainian immigrants had done for this region. I've witnessed it. I've experienced the strong faith, the strong work ethic, the strong bonds of family and community building, and the strong will to help build, contribute and develop a better life for everyone in a free, peaceful and democratic world.

I'm very—again, I'm very proud of the Ukrainian immigrants, and again, I have personal experience working and seeing this development in Manitoba for many, many years. And I'm proud that our government has recognized and supports many organizations, many of them up in our area, that reflect and recognize the importance of the Ukrainian heritage and culture in Manitoba.

We have the Trembowla Cross of Freedom, which is a very, very important symbol in—at the Dauphin's Ukrainian festival; every Sunday at the Ukrainian festival, there's a church service there, and it is a very, very strong image of faith. And, of course, that it—that goes along with a lot of the European immigrants and Ukrainian immigrants that came into that area, that they had a very strong faith, and at very tough times, and that still remains today.

But there is also—you know, we've helped support the Canada's National Ukrainian Festival, which is a national festival recognizing Ukrainian heritage in this country. I know at the site they have a version of

a heritage village, which is a fantastic venue to see. They also have a number of memorials there that—and, even, in fact, the Holodomor, a number of significant memorials at that site. And of course the Ukrainian festival is a very rich and exciting cultural celebration and, again, is one of the highlights in our region.

But, again, Madam Speaker—or, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we live in a great province and a great country, and I know Ukrainian immigrants contributed significantly to the growth and development of Manitoba and Canada. And I know Manitoba is proud of its long-shared ties in history with Ukraine.

We support the efforts of the Canadian government and our NATO allies to resolve this crisis in support of Ukrainian independence and territorial integrity. Our caucus and government support all Canadian actions on sending military equipment and financial loans to Ukraine.

Manitoba will support the federal government in everything it can to pressure Russia to end its aggression and restore peace in the region.

Just to give a bit of background, some of the things that are going on on the ground there right now, since February 24th, the invasion has only escalated in ferocity. There was a hit by a Russian missile strike in Kharkiv's historic Freedom Square. There is a convoy headed towards Kyiv, 60 kilometres from there. There's been targeted bombings of Ukrainian hospitals, residential areas, orphanages, malls and shops, and it's only increased since the invasion began. These are atrocities of a tyrant to be sure, and no way is this acceptable.

* (15:20)

We live in extraordinary times, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where we're coming out of a period of a global pandemic, where there's a lot of changes that are going on affecting supply chains, volatility in markets, inflation, competition, a lot of issues regarding transparency and accountability, security and sovereignty. These are just a few of the issues facing everybody around the world today like never before.

Madam Speaker, there is no room, no should—nor should there be tolerance for any of the Russian aggression and attacks on a sovereign Ukraine. And today and every day, we must all stand with Ukraine.

Manitoba is home to thousands of people from Ukraine descent and throughout Manitoba's history, our province has established an extensive and active

relationship with Ukraine. Manitoba has supported Ukraine's independence and has participated in technical-assistance activities in Ukraine for nearly two years—or, two decades, I'm sorry.

Our government stands ready to assist, again, with the federal government, with immigration and refugee programming. We urge Russia to de-escalate its military presence and stop its attack on Ukraine.

Thank you.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): As a global community, we unite in denouncing Putin's unprovoked, heinous and criminal invasion of the sovereign nation of Ukraine, an act which threatens to engulf Europe and the world over into a global humanitarian crisis we have not witnessed in decades.

This morning, we woke up to news that over 2,000 civilians have died. As of March 1st, the UN refugee agency reports that more than 600,000 people have now fled Ukraine into neighbouring countries, while others elsewhere say that as many as 900,000 people have now fled and at least 160,000 more have been internally displaced by fighting. This, together with the countless numbers of young Russian men who have effectively been sentenced to death in war as soldiers in a cause of a dictator's ego.

United States predicts that there could be as many as 5 million refugees resulting from Putin's aggression, adding to the already 31 million refugees and asylum seekers around the world.

We know that Putin is far from acting with the unilateral support of the Russian people, and I laud the great number of courageous Russians protesting against Putin, among whom thousands have been arrested, including children.

We know there are many countries and peoples facing illegal occupation and armed conflicts right now. We also know this war started by Putin is a global threat that risks all of civilization, given the implied threat of Putin's nuclear capacity and frightening, maddening resolve. A dictator who falsely alleges a prolific movement of neo-Nazism in Ukraine as a justification for war, but who launches air strikes destroying the site of a Holocaust memorial while killing scores of people with impunity.

Last weekend, thousands of Manitobans of all walks of life and ethnicities gathered on the steps of our provincial Legislature to denounce Putin's criminal invasion of Ukraine in a show of solidarity

with its people. As we know, Manitoba has been home to Ukrainian settlers since the late 1800s. Many Ukrainians, in fact, settled in the North End of Winnipeg and in the constituency of St. Johns, of which I am honoured to represent.

Perhaps unknown to most, Indigenous peoples helped early Ukrainian settlers in our territories by sharing traditional land-based knowledge and practices, including food gathering, environmental teachings and healing medicines. Much of these stories have survived only by the oral history shared by our elders.

Indigenous peoples also share a common love and pride of our cultures with Ukrainians such as beading and arts and dancing, food, and the love of our families. I was pleased to recently meet with the Manitoba chapter of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress alongside my colleagues and offer our continued support, especially during this time of crisis, chaos and worry. The Ukrainian people of Manitoba are not alone.

In recent years, UN Women—the United Nations entity for gender equity and the empowerment of women—have repeatedly documented that women and children are disproportionately impacted by acts of war and as refugees. While we are seeing some women take up arms in Ukraine, we also know women and children comprise the bulk of Ukrainian refugees who have had to flee on foot to cross the borders. Hundreds of thousands have left Ukraine, and the sight of women pushing strollers as they attempt to cross borders remains all too common.

We are also seeing the experiences of Black and LBGTQ2S refugees are also facing discrimination and unique challenges due to gender, racism and identity.

No one wants to leave their homes. No one seeks out to be a refugee by choice. Women will be the head of their families and seek to ensure their children are safe, have shelter, are fed, acquire any medications that are needed, try to continue a child's access to education, if possible, try to assure their children that they are safe and secure, and the list goes on and on what mothers do for their children.

Meanwhile, we also know that there is a need for women to have a more prominent role in formal peace talks that take place globally.

An often forgotten victim of war are our beloved animals, from farm animals to domestic pets. We have seen people carrying their dogs and cats to borders

and, gratefully, the animals are able to cross, given these neighbouring countries are now relaxing restrictions on border crossing movements of animals. We also know it is not always possible for families to take their pets. Families are often left with the impossible decision of having to leave a beloved pet behind or their animals. Compassionately and caringly, PETA Germany is arranging for the delivery of pet food as well as blankets and other items needed for pet owners who find themselves as refugees, as well for animals left behind in Ukraine.

We must all denounce the actions of Putin and stand together in solidarity with the common goal of ensuring Ukraine remains a free and democratic country. We must ensure the besieged and brave people of Ukraine fleeing horrific violence and confronting terror and displacement receive humanitarian aid, supports and refugee reception equal to the measure of this crisis. We must continue—commit to continue to the economic and political sanctions against Putin's Russia.

And, finally, we must strive for peace and justice and humanity always and in the face of tyranny. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, and I quote, when I despair, I remember that all throughout history, the way of truth and love has always won. There have been tyrants and murderers, and for a time they can seem invincible, but in the end, they always fall. Think of it. Always. End quote.

* (15:30)

Miigwech, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: If I could just remind members of the Speaker's earlier request that ongoing conversations should perhaps be taken outside the Chamber in light of what we are discussing this afternoon.

Mrs. Cathy Cox (Kildonan-River East): I am honoured and humbled to rise in this Chamber today to express my support and solidarity for my family's homeland, Ukraine.

I'm a proud Ukrainian and Canadian, and the atrocities occurring in Ukraine over the past number of weeks have weighed very heavy on my heart. To witness the unprovoked attack and invasion of our peaceful Ukraine is heart-wrenching.

My heart breaks as I see the children of Ukraine crying, clutching and tarrying at their father's, their uncle's, or their gigi's arms, holding onto them with all their might, knowing that it might be their final goodbye. I see the tears in the eyes of these—those

brave men who have courageously answered the call to defend their precious Ukraine and its boundaries. They are not tears of fear, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but tears that show their resolve to defend their country and freedom.

There have been so many acts of bravery that will forever be etched in our minds. Stories like that of the young Ukrainian marine and hero Vitaly Skakun who gave his life to stop the Russians from advancing into Ukraine by blowing up the Henichesk bridge together with himself.

I ask myself why, Mr. Deputy Speaker, has our peaceful Ukraine been forced to fight for its freedom and its sovereignty. Ukrainians are passive, hard-working people who have always wanted nothing more than to live in peace. The power and the might of arms should not control and rule a weaker country like Ukraine.

Putin and his regime are tyrants. Their actions defy democracy and violate Ukraine's sovereignty. This senseless and unprovoked attack serves only one purpose, Mr. Deputy Speaker: to satisfy Putin's insatiable greed for power.

I ask that all members of the Chamber pray for the families of Ukraine, and that as we did earlier today, take a moment on your own, of silence, to remember those lives already lost to this senseless war and invasion. Prayer is the most powerful tool, and a pray—and I pray that God will protect Ukraine from the evil Putin's invasion.

I carry with me my baba Marie Sawula's prayer book that she used to worship during her darkest times in her life. She was a proud, strong woman who came to Canada with nothing, only herself. She worked hard. She plucked chickens for a living until she met my gigi.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, my connection to Ukraine runs deep. On my mother's side, my great-grandmother and great-grandfather Sam Scoran and his wife Sadie Scoran departed Lviv and arrived in Halifax, Canada, in 1905 together with their children John, Myrtle, Helen and Kathleen. They then boarded a train for Winnipeg, which became their forever home.

They arrived in Manitoba, like most Ukrainians, with nothing, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Nothing more than a hope and a dream of a better future for their family. Nothing but their pride.

Helen Scoran later married my grandfather, Peter Swistun, and they, too, worked hard raising their family, and eventually became entrepreneurs, opening a small grocery store on Watt Street which provided them with living quarters in the back of the store. They attended Holy Eucharist Church where my grandfather helped with the church's construction.

On my father's side, my gigi, Nicholas Sawula, was born in Stanislavchik, Ukraine, on February 16th, 1883. And my baba, Marie Palsat, was born in Bodry [*phonetic*], Austria, on May 3rd, 1887.

Gigi landed in Canada on April 3rd, 1908, and my baba arrived soon after. They married on June 12th, 1911, at St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church—the same church that my husband and I were married in—and they settled in Winnipeg's North End.

My gigi was fortunate to procure a job with the Canadian Pacific Railway without having to anglicize his name. Unfortunately, many Ukrainians experienced bullying, taunting and name-calling as new immigrants. I remember my gigi as a quiet man who had a deep love for his Ukrainian heritage. He was an active and founding member of St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church, the Ukrainian mutual St. Nicholas benefit society, the Ukrainian Institute Prosvita, the Ukrainian reading hall and helped to establish the Assiniboine lodge No. 35.

Madam Speaker, I have such fond memories of my younger years making khrustyky—and I know the member opposite will know what those are—with my baba. For those of you, though, who don't know, they're little rectangular pieces of sweet dough tied in a knot, deep-fried and then coated with icing sugar. Those are such delicious memories.

My baba was a Ukrainian baba in the true spirit. She was a quiet woman and loved my brother Greg and me unconditionally. She never learned to speak English, and she cared for my brother while my parents owned a little grocery store in the North End. When my brother entered school in kindergarten, he couldn't speak a word of English.

As I said, she never learned to speak English, but she always understood what we were saying to her, and we, in turn, understood every word that she said. She taught me to make pyrohy, or perogies as they are commonly known, and I remember standing by her side as she smoked homemade kolbassa in a barrel in her back yard. I will forever remember the aroma and the sight of those plump sausages as she lovingly tended to them.

Ukrainian traditions are deeply engrained in my past and remain a large part of our family heritage. As a family we loved celebrating, and usually those get-togethers resulted in my brother serenading us on his accordion while I accompanied him with my Ukrainian dancing.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was immensely proud to stand together in solidarity just last week on the grounds of the Manitoba Legislature with the over 5,000 families and our caucus members in support of Ukraine. That sea of blue and yellow flags proudly waving in our province's skies was a proud and historic moment for me.

Our government has long welcomed Ukrainians, Ukrainian immigrants like my baba and gigi and grandma and grandpa to our province. And we are committed as a government to again helping them. By expediting Ukrainian immigration and the application process, we have also contributed \$150,000 to Ukrainian-Canadian council.

I, too, spoke to Joan Lewandosky, for we have developed a friendship over these last few years, and she is grateful for our contribution.

In closing, I would like to thank the families of Poland, as well, for so generously welcoming those Ukrainians forced to flee their homes because of Vladimir Putin's invasion of their homeland. We stand with Ukraine, and I pray for a peaceful resolution.

Slava Ukraini.

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): Mr. Deputy Speaker, all over the world, people are coming together to show support and do whatever it is we can and need to do for Ukraine because we support a free, democratic and independent Ukraine, and this has been amplified since Russian president, Vladimir Putin, sent Russian soldiers into Ukraine in an unprovoked invasion.

* (15:40)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this war does not just affect Ukraine; it affects everyone, all of us. According to Stats Canada, over 180,000 Manitobans, or 14.5 per cent of Canadians with Ukrainian heritage have roots in Ukraine and call Manitoba home. Hundreds and thousands of families and community groups are watching with grave concern and wanting to do more.

This was evident just this past Saturday when an estimated of—thousands of people, Mr. Deputy Speaker, here in Manitoba on short notice came to the

Manitoba Legislature on a colder day to rally and demonstrate support for Ukraine.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I stood with my colleagues on the stairs at this rally and I really want to paint a picture of the surrealness of that moment. The atmosphere was filled with heartbreak and distress, pain and so much hurt for Ukraine, but in 'dition' to this hurt, there was strength and power and motivation. Feeling this atmosphere and looking at the crowd, reading the signs and you're reading people's faces and their expression and body language, it was not something I would have missed, but I am struck with overwhelming sadness that war is happening and people's lives are being taken as Russia attempts to create genocide on Ukraine and its culture.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Ukraine needs our help and what has been done so far is a great first step because every single dollar raised and every single defence weapon or piece of non-lethal equipment shared goes a long way, but we need to do more. Given Russia's attack on Ukraine and the ever so quickly changing situation, there is much more we need to be doing and we can be doing that now.

Our caucus has requested that the Canadian government send more non-lethal weapons and fuel. They need to place sanctions on a wider circle of Russian elite. They need to develop a special relationship with NATO, expedite refugee Ukrainians coming to Canada, look at making changes to immigration standards and donate more humanitarian aid.

At a Manitoba level, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we could match funds for additional humanitarian aid. The Ukrainian Canadian Congress, UCC, and the Canadian Ukrainian foundation, CUF, have established a humanitarian relief committee and funds that aim to co-ordinate and deliver humanitarian aid and relief in Ukraine. Perhaps every dollar donated to the fund, the provincial government could match.

It is also my understanding that we should be hiring additional staff to help process and handle the anticipated applications for family reunification under the Provincial Nominee Program. We could take these tangible steps to ensure that we have resources in place for the resettlement of Ukrainians to Manitoba.

It's inevitable that newcomers to Manitoba will need assistance with documents and finding places to reside and we could be doing a better job today to prepare for this.

In closing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Ukrainians have survived and outlasted oppression, famine and war,

and Ukrainians will beat Putin in this unwarranted act of aggression.

Thank you.

Hon. Sarah Guillemard (Minister of Mental Health and Community Wellness): It is with heavy heart and a flood of emotions that I do stand to put a few words on the record in support of Ukraine and her citizens.

There are no winners in war; there are only survivors and non-survivors. My grandfather was a decorated fire-fighter pilot in World War II. He never spoke to me about his war experiences, but he did share some of those stories with my grandmother.

He talked about as he awaited deployment in England that he had decided to stay back at the hotel while others went to socialize. A buddy of his encouraged him to go out, to enjoy a night before they were deployed and his buddy was going to stay behind in the room to get some rest. That night, the hotel was bombed. His friend did not survive.

He never glorified his actions during the war. He always remembered every plane he shot down. He always remembered in prayer the lives that his actions may have taken. He lived with the horrors of what he had to do in order to fight an evil. He had nightmares throughout his entire life. These are the costs of war on the human spirit.

The war that Russia's Vladimir Putin has inflicted in Ukraine, a sovereign nation, is unjustified evil. The sole purpose and motivation is for power and control by using deadly force. The Ukrainian people have faced many attempts to wipe them out or to bend to a tyrant's will, and every single time they have triumphed by sheer will and courage.

We are witnessing this again with Putin's murderous advances on innocent lives. The entire world has firmly chosen a side of peace by standing with Ukraine. Manitoba stands with Ukraine and its government and its people. Many of us here in this Chamber have Ukrainian blood surging through our veins; that blood now boils with rage at the actions of Russia's Putin and his military.

I am myself a proud descendent of Ukrainian immigrants. My baba was born and raised in Rava-Ruska, a village near Lviv, Ukraine. I never met my grandmother; she died far before I was born. But I visited my baba in Dauphin, Manitoba. I remember her taking me through her garden. She was an avid gardener, she grew sugar-snap peas and beans that

were well over my head and we got to pick those fresh off the vine. She loved us deeply.

I remember she would always greet my—she only spoke Ukrainian. She never spoke English to us. I understood her as a child, but I can't say that I could still understand Ukrainian today. She would greet my parents and have them sit down with an appetizer beverage, I'll say. My mother was not a drinker, but she complied because of the Ukrainian urge. Anyone who has relatives who are Ukrainian can understand that. She never let us leave the house as her grandchildren without letting us dip our hands into her penny jar at the end of the hallway. She never wanted us to experience what she had experienced in the oppression that she left.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Manitobans will do what we do best: we will organize and support those who seek refuge from violence and we will do everything in our power as individuals and collectively as a community to help Ukraine stand strong and return to peaceful times.

My mother told me stories of growing up in Ontario, in Hamilton, and there was a call put out for assistance for families coming from Hungary. They were arriving with nothing but the clothes they were wearing on their backs. My mother's family answered that call and brought a family to stay with them for a short time.

Manitobans will be called to assist as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I know that Manitobans will open their arms and their homes to the people who are fleeing violence.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, my grandfather, although he never spoke of specific war stories with me, he did share one powerful message. He told me that everybody should work hard to avoid war at all costs, but if an evil the likes of Hitler were to ever rise again, he shouldn't hesitate to fight. There is no option to negotiate with liars and those who use deadly force to achieve power.

Russia's dictator has brought hardships upon his own people with his actions. He will face consequences in this life, and in the next, equal to the horrors and evils that he has perpetrated on innocent lives.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): I rise today—again—today to recommit our absolute support to the people of Ukraine and to

reiterate our calls today for the Province of Manitoba to take action to help Ukrainians in their homeland and Ukrainians here in Manitoba and across Canada.

We have called on the provincial government to dramatically increase the amount of support offered to the Ukrainian Canadian Congress's fundraising efforts. They should increase by an order of magnitude, very likely. And we should also see a matching program that would match the financial contributions of the people of Manitoba who are already showing their generosity. And we propose that this sort of matching program begin with a \$5 million commitment.

We also know that actions need to be taken in Manitoba to lift the veil of secrecy which shrouds the financial interests of those who enable Vladimir Putin here in Manitoba and across Canada.

* (15:50)

On the immigration front, the \$500 application fee for provincial nominees should be waived at this time. Investments into the Provincial Nominee Program itself to expedite processing and support for settlement services should also be made.

I also want to state the importance of an all-party committee at this time. What we have seen from Putin's invasion and war suggests that the situation in Ukraine will require a concerted, well-thought-out but expedited response in the coming weeks and months. And as a result, an all-party committee could bring forward, and should bring forward, the future direction for the province of Manitoba's actions in response to what is unfolding in Ukraine as a result of Putin's aggression.

I wanted to share briefly today just two observations from the visit that I had to Kyiv in 2014.

You know, one I referenced earlier today, just before question period, which is that I took some time in visiting that ancient city to see where the Maidan revolution took place. So, this is a large, independent square in downtown Kyiv where, I think just a few months before I was there, there had been huge, huge outpouring of many, many Ukrainians into the streets to push back against Russian influence and capitulation to Putin. And lives were lost in 2014 during that time. Many, many people perished fighting for their freedom at the Euromaidan.

And, when I was there, we had a chance to visit and stop and contemplate the shrines and listen to the translation of the people relating the life stories and

biographies of these people who had died in the name of freedom and in the name of a strong, independent Ukraine.

And I share that today because I know that push for independence, the push for a sovereign Ukrainian homeland to protect the language and culture that was articulated by my colleague for Fort Garry will never perish, much as the Ukrainian national anthem tells us. But we, as residents in a territory which has been so influenced by Ukraine and Ukrainians owe a duty to help support those folks in their time of need and help support those folks by showing solidarity and by taking action.

I also wanted to relate a story from the same visit, where I had an opportunity to speak to some representatives of the Crimean tatars [*phonetic*]. You will probably know from your knowledge of recent history that, of course, you know, Crimea was annexed, you know, around the same time, and, you know, the situation in eastern Ukraine was, you know, devolving into the war.

But what this gentleman shared—and the tatars [*phonetic*] are an indigenous group, I should say, which is why there was the interest in setting up this meeting with us, because they're looking for international recognition of their indigeneity. What this gentleman shared is that with his people being annexed by Russia, he was very fatalistic that, in the coming years, he expected that the long-term influences of Putin would seek to erode and effectively wash away some of that quest for independence. And I can only wonder how that gentleman and his people are currently faring given the terrible onslaught, which we know is being launched through one of the main fronts from Crimea.

And so that man's words stick with me as a warning sign, not just that war is evil, and not just that the actions of Putin are unjust, but also the realpolitik calculation of how the systematic dismantling of Ukraine into separate regions along ethnic and religious and linguistic divides, some of which, you know, may have been, I guess, put into place by Putin himself, is a real, enduring and clear and present danger. And it is a clear and present danger not only to the people of Ukraine and to their independence but, really, we should all recognize this for what it is, which is a threat to the democratic order of the world.

And I believe we're at an inflection point in our history, right? Just as I'm reflecting back on the experience of that Crimean tatar [*phonetic*] group that I had an opportunity to speak to, and wondering what

became of them. What will we reflect on this moment five years from now, 10 years from now? Will we say that we saw the beginning of the break up of Ukraine? Or will we say that we saw the beginning of Ukraine pushing back and pushing out Putin from the sovereign and independent territories?

So these are the historic questions that I think we need to be prepared to answer for our kids, for our grandkids. We should do so with the full knowledge and weight of the responsibility of how a severe escalation here could impact politics around the globe. But we must also weigh seriously the impact of human rights and human lives which are currently being threatened and lost as we debate in this Chamber, in the streets of Kyiv, Kharkiv and other cities across Ukraine at this time.

So this is a call to action. This is a call to take strong steps and to do more—all of us together across party lines—so that we can answer that question: What did you do? We did everything we could.

Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield-Ritchot): On August 17th, 1928, my father, Reinhold Schuler, was born in the town of Swojczowka, Oblast Voylin, Ukraine—very short, 11 years later, December 23rd, 1939, the family had to flee Ukraine due to the Hitler-Stalin pact. As ethnic Germans, they were forced to leave. Ukraine was no longer independent.

The village of Swojczowka was burnt down and razed by the Russian Army. It no longer exists. In fact, I was there in 2014, 75 years later after we were expelled, and the most I could find was a couple of pieces of stones which I brought home for the family, and that's all that remains of Swojczowka.

It took until August 24th, 1991, for Ukraine parliament to declare independence once again, and how joyous that was that Canada was the first country to recognize Ukraine independence.

But, unfortunately, this was not a peaceful time. There were continuous tensions. By 2013, President Viktor Yanukovich first indicated Ukraine would join the European Union, but reversed himself suddenly and signed a economic deal with Russia.

On November 21st, 2013, was the first start of protests in Ukraine in the plaza called Maidan, which is not far from the Ukrainian parliament—and I'd point out to the Legislature, it was by and large students. November 30th, 2013, feeling they'd had enough, violent suppression of protestors began, and it grew. As the armed forces beat up the students, the parents got involved. As the students and parents were beaten,

the families got involved. It finally culminated—and many of us will remember those pictures of burning pyres and huge piles of wood and tires.

On February 22nd, 2014, President Viktor Yanukovich fled to Russia. Russia retaliated, and just weeks after the Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia invaded the Ukrainian territory of Crimea and annexed it into Russia.

Further, on April 16th, 2014, the Donbas region consisting of Oblast Donetsk and Oblast Luhansk rebelled by Russian instigation, funded and supplied with weapons and resources. This was to further try and destabilize Ukraine, and the seeds of Russian intentions were sown. We should have seen this coming.

* (16:00)

On May 2014, new presidential elections were held. May 26th, 2014, a new Ukrainian parliament was elected. Canada sent hundreds of election observers because Ukrainians wanted to have a true and free democratic election. I was chosen to go. And we would do audits and we would go in, and at one station they had made some mistakes on the voting and they had whited things out and, through a translator, we indicated somehow whiteout and democracy aren't a good combination.

And they wept. It was unbelievable how these people who were in charge of running the elections, they would cry and say, thank you, thank you, we didn't know. We want to make this the most fair and the best election ever, because they hadn't had them before.

We were in one place and it was a dance studio and it had huge windows on the one side, and the booths, because they didn't have good lighting, were lined up by the windows so you could actually stand outside and look into the booths and see how people were voting. So we indicated that probably wasn't a very fair approach. Another place, the booths were against the mirrors in the dance studio and you could just look into the mirrors and see how people were voting.

They would rectify all of those. They wanted these elections so badly. They wanted them to be fair and free. We found many mistakes; they corrected them.

I had the opportunity to tour, in May of 2014, with Mirosława Pidhirnyj. We were as a team.

In October 26th, 2014, with Oksana Bondarchuk as a team, they arranged for us to get into a military

hospital in Kyiv. It was primitive. It was very plain. And there was a young man in a bed that I spoke to. And through a translator, he said to me, do you want to see my wounds? And I don't do that very well, and for some reason I said yes. And he promptly pulled back the sheet and he showed me where the bullet had hit his thigh and it had damaged the thigh bone, had splintered it. And he had been hit four or five times.

And he showed me his wounds and I kept feeling incredibly nauseous, but he was really determined to show me what had happened. And he told me he was dating a wonderful young woman back home and he was very much in love, and so I thought I would encourage him. I'd said, you know, you're going to get healthy, you're going to get out of here, you'll be able to go home, hopefully get married, maybe start a family. And he looked at me and he said, oh, no. As soon as I am done here and I am healthy, I'm going back to fight.

That is the heroic strength of Ukraine. I was very impressed.

There was one man who was in a bed in the room. He had been in a tank that had been struck by a Russian shell in the Donbas region, and he—his nervous system was probably done. It was shot. And he, too, wanted to go back, and we had small gifts that we gave them, and I knew in my heart he was never going back. He could never again withstand the battle. But they were not to be deterred, and from what I see today, I think the Russians picked a fight with the wrong people.

We have, as a province, stood by with the—and encourage our federal government further economic sanctions. We've agreed to take Ukrainian refugees \$150,000 for immediate commitment to help the people of Ukraine. And our Premier (Mrs. Stefanson) has said there is more to come, because I don't even think in a week, I don't even think in two weeks, we know what the needs are going to be. They are changing daily and they may be great.

I'm fortunate to represent a community called Cooks Creek. It's got the iconic church of immaculate conception, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and accompanying grotto. I represent many Ukrainians proudly.

We stand with Ukraine. We stand and send a message—all of us. Five thousand people in front of the Manitoba Legislature on Saturday; today, in this Chamber, the matter of urgent public importance; questions in question period; and I know there's more

to come. I understand there's going to be a resolution coming soon.

It sends a message to Manitobans, to Canadians, North Americans and the world, that we are not going to stand by idly, and it says to Putin and his brass and his advisors and the oligarchs that we are not going to stand by idly. It sends a message all around the world, if you're following their protests and demonstrations against what Putin is doing with his military.

So I close, and I say to the people of Ukraine, who I have many friends there, and we've been staying in touch. They've been messaging me back and forth, and they say to this Chamber, they say to all of us, thank you. They appreciate it—and they see it and they know what we're doing. This is not for nothing. This is important, what we're doing. So I say to them, that beautiful salutation, glory to Ukraine, glory to the heroes: slava Ukraini, heroyam slava.

Mr. Nello Altomare (Transcona): Well, thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's always an honour to stand in this House, and especially today; another emotional, important, deeply personal day for everybody here.

I want to thank the member for Fort Garry (Mr. Wasyliv) for sharing his family's story. Also, the member for Kildonan-River East (Mrs. Cox), Mr. Deputy Speaker, who talk from a deeply personal family background. We all know that this is personal because of the deep, deep roots that the Ukrainian community has here in Manitoba, in the city of Winnipeg, and in my constituency of Transcona.

On Saturday, I was speaking to the member from La Vérendrye, many of which—we have some very—we have common friendships. I want to put some names in the record. These are people that deeply influenced me as I was growing up in Transcona, these are Transcona people: Jarvis and Elsie Korchak; Don and Lloyd Lefteruk; Ken Chura; important people in my background that influenced me as a student when I was in school in Transcona.

I also had the honour of having the member for Fort Garry's father as my guidance counsellor, the very Reverend Bill Wasyliv; the reverend of All Saints Ukrainian Orthodox Church, All Saints Ukrainian Orthodox Church on the corner of Day and McMeans—important people, people that established deep roots in the community of Transcona.

I will say that in the late 1890s, the first families of Ukrainian descent showed up in that part of the world, and by 1916 there were 180 Ukrainian families in Transcona. And, of course, with the language,

and heritage come a desire to put an imprint on a community, and how do you put an imprint on a community? You do that by establishing places of worship like St. Michael's Ukrainian Catholic church and like All Saints Ukrainian Orthodox. These are important community pillars that allow for the expression of language, culture, and heritage. And what we're seeing right now and what we've seen from people like Putin is the systematic elimination of language, culture and heritage.

To give you an example, we used to call Kyiv Kiev. Kiev was the Russian, done on purpose to eliminate language. Now we're learning that it's Kyiv. It always has been Kyiv. Now we talk about the influence of disinformation. That disinformation was in our textbooks. The teachers that are in this House will know that because that is what we were taught and that is what we taught in our classrooms.

We have to remember that this systematic elimination of culture, heritage and language is done on purpose because that goes to the root, the very basis not only of a people, but also of personal identity.

I can tell you too, that my own family has a very close and personal connection to the Ukrainian community in Transcona. First, learned by my father who, as a young immigrant in 1950, arrived here and began work at CN in Transcona, learning English and Ukrainian simultaneously because he had to. So, my father of Italian descent understood the power of language, culture and heritage and he did the honour of the people that he worked with by learning their language. How important is that.

* (16:10)

We saw that last Saturday on the steps of the Legislature when we saw the diaspora, the people of Ukraine, people of Ukrainian descent at the front of the steps because they know how important it is to maintain language, culture, heritage. And they look to the leaders to do that. They look to us. What a privilege it was to stand on those stairs, to see that, to feel the power of that.

I had a former colleague of mine—when I was hired in 1986 in the legacy school division of Transcona-Springfield, I had the honour of working with people and I'll put their names on the record: Larisa Prodan, Ihor Pawlyshyn, part of the Ukrainian education language program at John W. Gunn school, at the time.

Madam Speaker in the Chair

And when we were on those stairs, those steps on Saturday, Larisa came up to me, saw me—now, you need to remember, this is some thirty years later; I mean, obviously, we've seen each other in between. But the emotion that that person spoke with, the gratefulness that she had to see us on the steps with them, sending a message that language, culture and heritage are important, the power of elected officials in a democratic country that serves—that Canada serves as a beacon to.

And just like the member for Springfield-Ritchot (Mr. Schuler) described, when they—he was able to be at their first elections, how powerful that is. How powerful the message that we sent on Saturday is. And we need to remember the power of that language, of that message.

And there are things that we can do because I will tell you, when I was speaking with Larisa, she was saying that we need to do some more concrete actions, things that will have an impact because there are 1.4 million Manitobans that understand the importance of culture, language and heritage. And they know that we can, even our 1.4 million people, send a powerful message.

The message can come from this province right here, Manitoba. We can be leaders in this country because of our significant Ukrainian population here, and we have to take advantage of that. And we do that by ensuring that we put in place an all-party committee to make recommendations that come from this House to the government of Canada of what we believe would be very effective strategies to get the message across.

And I just want to close by saying that, for people like Larisa, for people like Ihor, for people like my constituents, we have to do everything—and I know we say this—everything we can. But there are strategies, there are actions that we can take to ensure that Ukraine remains free and that their culture, language and heritage remain intact into the future.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Andrew Smith (Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage): For generations, Manitoba has been the home of hope for those who sought refuge from tyranny, war and oppression. People from around the world have come to our great province to call this place home. Whether it's from Asia, Africa, South America or Europe, all came with a common goal of finding a better life for their families, and in doing so

they've also made a—better lives for Manitobans by sharing their rich cultural heritage.

We have all too often seen people arrive in Manitoba with nothing more than clothes on their backs, a tragic yet hopeful story shared by many newcomers to our province. And over the years of all the many groups that have arrived here our Ukrainian community has become an integral part of Manitoba's cultural mosaic.

The arrival of Ukrainians has been a long and storied history starting with the first Ukrainian family that settled here in 1891; and Ukrainians continued to immigrate to Manitoba in different waves, including those who came in the second half of the 20th century, fleeing either World War II or to escape the tyrannical and oppressive Soviet regime.

Madam Speaker, I stand here today not as an MLA, but as a proud Manitoban and proud Canadian showing my support for an independent Ukraine. It's times like these that I reflect on the fact that I was born here in this country at—through no action of my own.

However, I do credit me being here to two incredibly brave individuals, John and Mary Hnutecky. They were among the many Ukrainian immigrants who came to this country after becoming refugees and being displaced from the Ukrainian homeland following World War II. After the war, they decided that it was not safe to return to Ukraine, which was then under the oppressive rule of the Soviet Union. Through a series of events, they found themselves immigrating to Manitoba, the heartland of our great country.

Who are John and Mary Hnutecky? Well, Madam Speaker, they are my grandparents and, in fact, they used to be constituents of yours. Growing up they would tell me the many stories about Ukraine and the struggles they faced under Russian occupation at the time. My grandmother was also a Holodomor survivor. Sadly, she passed in 2020, but it's my understanding at that time she was one of the few remaining Holodomor survivors in Manitoba.

Some of my most fond memories of my grandparents was them taking me to Orthodox—or rather, the Ukrainian-Orthodox Holy Trinity on Orthodox Easter for Easter celebration. It would start sometime around 6 in the morning and go through until about noon, and quite often we would have Easter baskets set out to be blessed by the priest; whether it was our Easter bunnies, it was our Easter eggs and, of course, paska, perishky, holopchi, just to name a few.

But, sadly, not all the memories that my grandparents have were fond and, unfortunately, many Ukrainians share that common history and experience, and many of them continued to immigrate here to Manitoba until 1991 after the fall of the Soviet Union.

Unfortunately, 31 years later, we are witnessing Ukraine facing an assault on their freedom, an assault on their dignity and on their sovereignty. Today, we also know that Ukrainian people are strong and have an unshakable resolve. And while the battle is not over, I believe that history is on Ukraine's side.

My mom has actually been in contact with family members in Ukraine right now, many of whom live in Melitopol in southeast Ukraine; and since the occupation, unfortunately, we have not heard from them. While I worry for their 'safety', I am encouraged by their tenacity and their resolve.

And if I did my family tree correctly—I believe it's my second cousin who is around my age and actually shares my first name—his name is Andrei [*phonetic*]. He's in Ukraine right now and we can no longer be in contact with him, so it's our assumption that either he and his family have fled to Poland or given his military background, he's staying and fighting.

Madam Speaker, this city, the same city where you see on social media and mainstream media where people are literally throwing themselves at armoured cars and tanks to prevent the onslaught of the Russian invasion.

The Ukrainian community here in Manitoba share this tenacity, as evidenced by the Herculean effort to help the homeland. It is evidenced by the number of rallies organized around Manitoba, particularly the one here at the Manitoba Legislature just last week, bringing some 5,000 Manitobans from all walks of life and from all different ethnicities.

* (16:20)

I am very thankful to our Premier (Mrs. Stefanson) for showing leadership on this ongoing crisis by strongly condemning the illegal, unethical, inexcusable occupation of Ukraine. To date, our government has provided a joint \$150,000 contribution to the Ukrainian Canadian Congress for humanitarian aid to displaced families and refugees, and more to come, as needed.

Ukraine remains a top 10 source of immigration to Manitoba, primarily through our Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program, and our government will do its part to taking Ukrainian refugees looking

for safe haven, and expedite Ukrainian immigration applications through this provincial nominee program.

And of course, Madam Speaker, you're aware that Liquor Marts have pulled all Russian products from their shelves. I know that we, as a province, are joined by majority of people around the world in condemning Vladimir Putin and his corrupt oligarchs. And I know that I speak on behalf of all Manitobans when I say long live a free and sovereign Ukraine.

Slava Ukraini. Glory to Ukraine. Dyakuyu.

Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface): I want to thank all parties and all members for agreeing to this emergency debate. I'll start by saying that what we've seen in the last weeks is absolutely extraordinary, and I want to start by remembering, for a moment, the incredible joy that Ukrainians have brought to our province.

I remember a Liberal MP from Quebec saying he didn't realize Anglo-Canadians could be any fun at all, because he'd spent his time in Ontario, until he got to Manitoba and met Ukrainians. And I'm proud to say I have a long family history with the Ukrainian community.

My grandfather was the first lawyer of Anglo background to have Jewish and Ukrainian law partners: Lamont, Buriak and Zivot. And my grandfather—I don't know that he specialized in it, but he did it a fair bit—defended Ukrainian moonshiners when they were unjustly accused, and when he found—they were found innocent, they would show their gratitude with a gift of some extremely high-proof alcohol, which he used to make his famous punch that he served to judges at the Court of Appeal at Christmas parties in his home in Wolseley. And we also have a farm at Olha, which is one of the first places that many Ukrainians settled.

And there's no doubt Ukrainians have made an indelible mark, a positive mark, an incredible contribution on our character as a province. But when it comes to this crisis: this is not just a Ukrainian fight, this is not just a Canadian fight, this is a global struggle, because the suffering that is taken—in place—in Ukraine is shocking, but it is not new. It stretches back centuries, and some of those atrocities took place within living memory, including the Holodomor, occupation by Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, Chernobyl, Russian puppet governments, kleptocrats and now an unprovoked attack on a democratically elected government.

It has been in the works for years, and it is the culmination of an attempt to destabilize not just Ukraine, but Europe, Canada, the United States and the world, through propaganda, infiltration, online radicalization and armies of paid trolls and bots spreading poisonous 'minformation' in order to divide us from one another. And I will say it's not just Russian propaganda outlets, like Russia Today, but echoed by far right politicians and pundits around the world, including America.

In December, Tucker Carlson was telling his viewers on Fox that Putin was just defending his western border. Against what? Against who? And we saw praise from far right politicians around the world who've suddenly had to retreat, including in Brazil.

And there's a bigger narrative, here. Why is it that people who've had no problem with the invasion of Ukraine and who were praising and defending Putin—a despotic authoritarian whose critics keep up ending being poisoned or being thrown out of windows—have also been referring to the Prime Minister of Canada as an extremist—the democratically elected leader of a centrist political party in a liberal democracy, whose pandemic measures have been found by the courts to be constitutional?

That government is being painted as extreme and radical by extremists because this is a real attempt—the invasion of Ukraine is not just about Ukraine alone, it is an attempt to undermine not just Canadian democracy, but the liberal democracy as a system, to crush social democracy in the welfare state, because Putin wants Ukraine, and Canada, and the United States and Europe to collapse the way the Soviet Union did.

That's not going to happen. But Russia has been able to find plenty of credulous people—on the far left and the far right—to fuel division among people who, let's be honest, feel left behind, and have been left behind. Why would Russia align itself with far-right libertarian policies around the world? Because they lead so effectively and so naturally to societal breakdown and bitter division.

We also saw and continue to see doubt from the left who have suggested Canada supporting Ukraine was making a mistake and repeated what is essentially Kremlin propaganda that Ukrainians are right-wing extremists and Nazis when the president and prime minister are Jewish and the descendants of Holocaust survivors.

Now, one of my favourite authors is Josef Skvorecky, a Canadian Czech writer and essayist

who, like Ukrainians, lived under communist and Nazi occupation. His works are incredibly important. He was as perceptive as George Orwell in detecting and prying apart the lies, deception and propaganda of totalitarian regimes because he had to live under them. And he detailed exactly how supposedly politically opposite regimes enforced their ideologically—their ideology in identical ways with the same people serving as bureaucrats in communist and Nazi regimes. And the reason the far left and the far right are similar is not because of what they are for, but because of what they oppose and have always opposed, which is liberal democracy, which is to say democracy and the rule of law with an independent judicial system.

And now it may be that the scales have fallen from their eyes because we see what real tyranny looks like and what a protest over something that is worth protesting looks like.

It's encouraging because we've seen that the actions have galvanized Manitobans, Canadians and people all around the world to respond to this threat. But Canada can only freeze the assets of oligarchs if they can find them. And Manitoba, beneficial ownership is still a black box. Unless the government of Manitoba unearths these assets, they cannot be frozen. And it's alarming—incredibly alarming—because Putin is implying that he might unleash nuclear weapons, the effect of which would be beyond devastating.

One of the reasons we were able to reduce the risk of global nuclear devastation is because there were always reasonable people on both sides who did not want to be the—responsible for the deaths of millions of people. In 1983, a false alarm suggested to the Soviets that the US had launched a nuclear attack. Three weeks earlier, the Soviet military had shot down a Korean commercial airliner, and the duty officer at the Soviet command centre was named Stanislav Petrov. He was pressured to push the button, but he didn't, and so he saved the world.

And we got past it, in part, through leadership. In fact, Eugene Whelan, a Liberal MP for Ontario, played an astonishing role when he met Mikhail Gorbachev, who was in charge of agriculture for the entire Soviet Union, and showed him how Canadian farms worked. That massively contributed to the collapse and reforms of the Soviet Union.

To underline, the goal of this invasion has been to undermine our ties and our alliances to sow distrust between Canadians within our societies and between our allies. But democracy is stronger than that. The

rule of law is stronger than that. They're not perfect. We all know times that democracy and the rule of law have failed and faltered, but we have recovered and we have rebuilt and that is what we have to commit to. We have to defend and promote liberal democracy and the rule of law, and that means free and fair elections. It means independent judiciary that can justify and enforce the rule of law and we have to push back against the extremes that are dominating our discourse because this is the fight of our time.

I—again, I want to salute the leadership and steely tenacity of President Zelensky, whose leadership has been nothing short of heroic. And he leads a Ukraine that is defined not by ethnic nationalism, but by civic nationalism. Ukraine, like any country, has always been home to many peoples, as has every country on earth, and the idea that anybody can be Canadian or anyone can be Manitoban while still maintaining their culture is one of the founding principles of this province and this country, and it is part of a long tradition of toughness and defiance that defines Ukrainians, but it also defines Canadians. And throughout this crisis, Zelensky has taken a stand for his people while still pointing to a path for peace.

I do want to thank the federal government for their leadership. I want to thank the provincial government for what they've done. And I also want to quote Pierre Trudeau from a speech that he made to the Ukrainian congress in October 1971 that defined the kind of country we can all hope for. He said: There's no such thing as a model or ideal Canadian. A society which emphasizes uniformity is one which creates intolerance and hate. What the world should be seeking and in—what in Canada we must continue to cherish are not concepts of uniformity but human values: compassion, love and understanding.

* (16:30)

Ecclesiastes says there is a time for peace, a time for war. In this time of war, we must still plan for peace. Ukraine will endure, democracy will endure, freedom will endure. Not without a fight, but I know that despite our divisions, Manitobans are united in standing with Ukraine.

Manitoba Liberals stand for democracy, we stand for the rule of law, we stand with Ukraine and together, we will build a better world.

Slava Ukraini.

Hon. Jon Reyes (Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Immigration): Our thoughts are with

Ukraine and Manitobans with Ukrainian family and friends. This is a stressful and uncertain time for you.

Madam Speaker, I represent the diverse constituency of Waverley here in Manitoba, which is home to many Ukrainian-Canadian families in Manitoba. Today and every day, we stand with people of Ukraine. Manitoba has established an extensive and active relationship with Ukraine. Manitoba has long supported Ukraine's independence and has participated in technical assistance activities in Ukraine for nearly 20 years.

Russia needs to de-escalate its military presence near Ukraine's borders immediately to reduce tensions. We support the efforts of the Canadian government and our NATO allies to resolve this crisis in support of Ukrainian independence and territorial integrity.

Manitoba is proud of its long-shared ties and history shared with Ukraine. Madam Speaker, Manitoba has strong interpersonal and cultural connections with Ukraine. 15 per cent of Manitobans report that they are of Ukrainian descent, which represents the greatest proportion of Ukrainian-Canadians in any province in Canada. In the last five years, Ukraine remains a top-ten source country of immigration for Manitoba, primarily through the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program.

Madam Speaker, our government is working closely with the federal government and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, IRCC, to implement recently and now special measures for Ukrainian citizens and develop additional new and enhanced measures that will facilitate the movement of Ukrainians who want to leave their country temporarily or permanently.

Madam Speaker, our government has been in touch with local Ukrainian and regional communities and employers with expressed interest in working with us. I know our Premier (Mrs. Stefanson) is in constant contact with the Prime Minister about the Ukrainian situation and the steps undertaken by the federal government to support the Ukrainian refugees.

Earlier this week, I had a virtual meeting with the federal immigration minister to discuss the future steps that need to be undertaken by the Manitoba government and the federal government to ensure Ukrainians who need help gets help sooner.

As part of our support of the people of Ukraine, our government has authorized a prioritization review of Ukrainian applicant files for the Manitoba

Provincial Nominee Program including Ukrainian families. These files are currently with Manitoba for review through the PNP.

In addition, we have flagged for the federal government an additional nomination, again including some families, that Manitoba has 'refiewed'—sorry, reviewed, endorsed and nominated through the nominee program that could be prioritized for review and approval.

Our government is authorizing our Immigration Pathways Divisions to ensure additional Ukrainian applicants who are just starting the process to be invited to apply to the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program as soon as possible where they will be prioritized. This will result in that applicants are able to submit their application and have it reviewed quicker.

Madam Speaker, we are committed to expediting Ukrainian immigration applications through our Provincial Nominee Program and as an initial measure, we have already contributed \$150,000 to the Ukrainian Canadian Congress for humanitarian aid to displaced families and refugees.

Collaboration between our governments is continuing and we have confirmed our commitment to taking in Ukrainian refugees displaced by this unprovoked and brutal war of aggression. These national humanitarian efforts by the Canadian government continue to develop, but Manitoba's support will be multifaceted as we fully do our part.

Canada has a long—has been—long been one of the top international aid donors to Ukraine and has provided approximately 200 troops to Ukraine to assist in providing military training. Manitoba will support their fellow government in everything it can do to pressure Russia to end its aggression and restore peace in the region.

Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries has removed two Russian liquor products from the shelves of all Manitoba Liquor & Lottery stores in Canada.

Manitoba and Ukraine are connected through culture, history, friendships and education. Novopecherska School is a K-to-12 model for Ukrainian educational reform located in Kyiv, Ukraine. In addition to K-to-12 Ukrainian curriculum programming, the school also offers a Manitoba-Ukrainian blended high school diploma program, where students can graduate with a Ukrainian and Manitoba high school diploma. The blended high school program has been affiliated with Manitoba

since 2018. The agreement between Manitoba and Novopecherska School is the first Canadian-Ukraine bilateral agreement that supports a dual program of studies leading to a high school diploma. We will work with the school to support the continuity of education over the situation in Kyiv stabilizes.

Madam Speaker, the government of Manitoba support to the democratically elected government of Ukraine, noting moves by Russia to send troops into eastern Ukraine are a violation of Ukraine's territory and sovereignty. Manitoba will support the federal government in everything it can to pressure Russia to end this aggression and restore peace in the region.

As a former veteran, I also, along with many Canadians, pray for the safety of our Canadian troops and all NATO allies who are there protecting and defending democracy.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): Manitoba has the third highest population of Ukrainians anywhere in the world. The cultural ties between Manitoba and Ukraine are so deep that it's impossible to imagine Manitoba without Ukrainians.

There has always been extremely clear—it has always been extremely clear to me growing up in the North End and in Point Douglas, which was—had some of the highest concentrations of Ukrainians. My husband and my daughter are both of Ukrainian descent, as are many of my lifelong friends, mentors and teachers.

When the wave of immigration from Ukraine happened in the early and mid-20th century, Ukrainian immigrants were sadly not treated well in most of this province. The result is that they would often—they often lived in the same areas and occupied the same spaces as Indigenous people. We were also treated as second-class citizens. From that, a cultural connection grew which created deep kinship and solidarity between Ukrainians and Indigenous people. This is a profound thing to me and its significance has never been lost on me.

I grew up just blocks away from the Ukrainian Labour Temple, which served as one of the most important meeting places and basis of operation for working class people in our province.

During the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike, Ukrainians stood in unflinching solidarity with their fellow Manitoban workers of all cultural backgrounds against the brutal exploitation of the unchecked

capitalists who were trying to oppress them. They tried to break their resolve and solidarity with violence. We all know what happened in the end. We know that the bravery and solidarity of Ukrainians in that crucial time was instrumental in winning a better future for Manitobans. Since then, Ukrainians have made so many other vital contributions to what Manitoba is today. Ukrainian is here in Manitoba.

These roots are part of who I am, part of who every Manitoban is and part of what Manitoba has to offer. Every newcomer who moves here seeking to build a good life knows that they will meet a Ukrainian. That's why I am so passionately expressing my solidarity with the people of Ukraine just as a courageous Ukrainian stood with us during the 1919 labour dispute.

It is our duty in this House to condemn in the strongest possible terms the unprovoked imperialistic invasion of Ukraine by Vladimir Putin, a dictator who took and kept power in Russia with violent—violence and oppression.

Our focus as a province and as a country now should be the people of Ukraine. Here in Canada we should be doing whatever we can. Here in Manitoba we should be doing whatever we can. We should be taking as many Ukrainian refugees as we can, waiving the fees associated with immigration, and we must make whatever changes are necessary to allow all Ukrainians who are already here in Canada to remain here.

* (16:40)

Since 2018, the NDP has been calling on the government to provide visa-free access to Canada for Ukrainians. This is a humanitarian crisis and it's our moral duty to stand in solidarity by saving the lives of the Ukrainians as we accept them here in our home of Manitoba.

It takes a short amount of time to destroy and a long time to build. Much will happen in the coming weeks and the world is watching. We need to remember today, as it will be crucial for us to pay continued attention for the coming years, to provide all the necessary humanitarian aid and to offer whatever is needed to the people of Ukraine to rebuild.

New Democrats have also been calling on the government to automatically extend expiring documents for those that are here in Canada and in Manitoba. In light of the escalating crisis, it must be recognized that Ukrainians fleeing the dangers of their

homeland do have months—do not have months to spare. The most urgent action is needed now, today.

In the coming days Ukrainian people will need our support more than ever, and Canada and Manitoba need to have a plan for humanitarian aid. Manitobans must work together. We are allies. They stood with us; we must stand with them.

The NDP has always believed peace is achievable through democracy. New Democrats urge the Manitoba government to do its part to support the people of Ukraine by ensuring that anyone that wants to come through the Provincial Nominee Program can come and that their fees are waived.

We're also calling on the provincial government to remove all restrictions related to immigration in terms of fees and, again, visas. There should be an all-party committee struck to help direct—to direct Manitoba's response to Ukrainian—to the Ukrainian crisis.

And, lastly, the Manitoba NDP stands with the people of Ukraine and the Ukraine community in Manitoba and Canada, and we condemn the violence and imperialistic invasion and affirm that Ukraine's sovereignty and independence must be protected.

Miigwech.

Hon. Wayne Ewasko (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning): It's one of those times when you stand up in the House and you really wish that you didn't have to speak on a topic such as this. But, at the same time, taking this opportunity to stand and put some words on the record in such a horrific time that I don't think anybody in this Chamber, doesn't matter of what political stripe, would have thought that we would be talking about what is happening in the Ukraine today.

Of course, I am of Ukrainian and Polish descent and—on my dad's side, and I think back to many of the stories that my grandparents had told of their parents coming to this great province, this great country of ours, and looking for that hope.

Our thoughts and prayers are absolutely with all the Ukrainians right now, family and friends, those that are in Canada and those that have loved ones still across the way in the Ukraine and having to risk their lives, and the lack of communication, to a certain degree as well, with their loved ones here in Canada.

I remember, as a young boy—and I appreciate some of the words that were—that have been shared by our colleagues across the aisle as well, when we start

talking about when people are raised in a certain culture and some of their cultural identity is being—or attempted to be erased.

I remember stories of my dad sharing with me when he'd walk across the field—and I know this sounds like one of those stories where, you know, because he's an older gentleman, he would tell the story about walking to school uphill, both ways, in eight feet of snow-type of thing—but he would cross the field to go to that one-room school house about a mile from where I grew up, and he would share stories about him and a couple of the neighbours. They would be sitting in school and they'd be talking Ukrainian to one another and they'd always have to sort of be watching because, of course, that wasn't really allowed at school and so they'd get their knuckles rapped with a ruler or disciplined somehow for speaking their own language at school.

You know, it is—it's a tough go. It is a really tough go, and I know that my grandparents worked hard on the land, the small pieces of land that they received, I guess, when they came over, the tools that they had to, you know, earn and help to break the land wasn't easily accessible to them.

I remember when I was a young boy that we ended up—I ended up having to go to the bank with my grandfather about a couple of years before he passed, and he went to the bank and he was going to—forget exactly what he was going to purchase, but he needed to get some credit and they were—they always sort of grew up on a mixed farm where they had their own chickens and pigs and cows and—you know, small grain farm. And so they paid everything by cash, and so they sold dozens of eggs, you know, out of the back seat of the car or the truck or whatever else and stored those dollars and cents, I'm sure, in some kind of masonry jars or somewhere around the yard and then whenever it came time to purchase something, they went out and actually paid cash.

And so when it did come time to go to the bank, I think I ended up actually having more credit than my grandfather did at that time, as far as with the financial institutions. But I just—it takes a lot of us to keep those stories, those memories alive and to keep sharing those stories. And you know what? It was hardships for sure but it definitely wasn't all hardships because they had the love and the support of their loved ones around.

I remember here at the Leg. a few years after I was elected in 2011 and, you know, the bitter memories of the childhood monument that's on the

grounds of the Legislative Building grounds here, which was unveiled in September of 2014, and it commemorates the millions of victims of the enforced starvation in Ukraine, and during this period many survivors immigrated to Canada and settled right here in Manitoba.

And this is the first statue outside of Ukraine; this monument was initiated by Ukrainian Canadian Congress, and I have to give a lot of credit to Joanne Lewandoski and all of her supporters and Ukrainian fellowship individuals on the board and all the volunteers that continue to keep pushing and keeping our culture and heritage alive here in this great province.

And it was, of course, done with a partnership, a partnership with the Province of Manitoba and the government of the day, and I remember standing out there with Dave Chomiak, and there was many times where Dave and myself had spent some time together, not only here at the Legislature but also he came out to Beausejour on quite a few occasions and we shared many stories. And, of course, Dave's got a few years on me so he had a few more older stories than I did, and, of course, we would also—when he would come out to Beausejour, we'd also have the odd discussion with then—Mr. Ed Schreyer, of course, because, of course, he's from Beausejour. He's a long-time teacher and we all know the rest of Mr. Schreyer's history.

So with this—with the few short minutes that I had today, I just want to say that we all have to—this is not a partisan issue. This is something that we all have to stand in solidarity with Ukraine on. And I'd like to, you know, again, applaud my good friend and colleague, the Premier (Mrs. Stefanson) and, of course, my colleague, the new Minister for Advanced Education, Skills and Immigration, for working hard and partnering and having those conversations with the federal government on how can we make it easier for refugees and Ukrainians through the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program.

But it won't stop there. I know that there's a review and we've got a great committee struck to start taking a look at that Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program and see where we can strengthen it. We know we've been a leader throughout the country right here in Manitoba, but just because you're a leader doesn't mean you'd take your foot off the gas pedal. You have to make some tweaks along the way.

* (16:50)

So with that, Madam Speaker, I just want to, again, take a few seconds to absolutely say that we're—you know, we're in support of all the actions taken against Russia and condemning their actions on the Ukraine and all the people of Ukraine, and I wish all the best to all the friends, family and relatives that are suffering right now, and I'm really wishing that this war will come to an end and, hopefully, in favour of Ukraine.

So, thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Jamie Moses (St. Vital): War that Mr. Putin and his military forces has brought on Ukraine, the Ukrainian people and all the people living there is a real tragedy. It's a tragedy for the people and their country who are facing the violence, the evil violence of war, the people who are—it's a tragedy for the people around the world who are trying to now support the resilience effort by the Ukrainian people to defend themselves, defend our independent country.

And we here in Manitoba ought to be doing more to support not only the Ukrainian people, all the people in that country, but anyone who's fighting to protect democracy in these areas and fighting against a regime such as Mr. Putin and the military forces that he used to inflict violence on the people living in Ukraine. We call on this government to do more to support those people.

But I do want to take a few minutes, Madam Speaker, just to talk about some people who are living in Ukraine who might not have been spoken of that much so far during this debate, who might not make the headlines that we see in the national and international newspapers. And I'm speaking of the many Black, African and Indian descent people who are living in Ukraine. Of these people you might have seen some of these stories on the news. These people are attempting to flee the country of Ukraine because of the war and the violence brought on them by Mr. Putin's military forces.

Now, these people as they leave are facing the racism, the prejudice and the hate by people who are try—as they try to leave the country. They are being put to the back of the line, treated as second-class citizens just for trying to secure their freedom away from violence.

And I want to spend a couple of minutes just to share a couple of stories, a couple of examples that have been talked about in the news over the last few days.

And I'll share one story here of a woman, Nigerian born, who was studying as a first-year medical student in Ukraine. As violence started, like so many other people in the country, she attempted to flee. But officials told her to stand aside and they drove off the bus without her, stranding her in a border town.

Try to understand this: she's in a new country as a first-year medical student and the reason she's getting stranded in a border town is because of the colour of her skin. She said more than 10 buses came and were watching and she watched them leave. They took every other person with them, but they told her and the people who look like her that they had to walk. There were no more buses and they were told to walk.

This is wintertime. The winter in Ukraine is not so much different than the winter here, and they were told to walk because of the colour of their skin. She said that her body was numb from the cold. They hadn't slept in four days. And she said that there was simply no reason to ask why this was happening. She knew why this was happening. She knew it was because of the colour of her skin, and all she wanted to do was to get home.

Now, people like this and at times like these as we call for support in areas that are facing extreme violence and extreme conditions, we also must consider that we need to provide added support for people who are often and always even more marginalized as situations get worse.

I'll share one more story, Madam Speaker, of a man who's an African citizen living in Ukraine. He details the story of himself and his friends who are trying to board a train. They'd had a harrowing journey trying to get to Poland, to the Polish border. They tried to get on train after train and failed, were not allowed to by officials until finally a train was leaving, was literally rolling down the tracks, and this man jumped on, holding the door open as the train pulled away. And he had to tell the official, you either open the door or I will die on the road. And fortunately for this man, the official finally opened the door to let him on the train, and himself and his friends of African descent were saved.

But either shockingly or perhaps unshockingly, as they walked on that train they saw that it wasn't full. It wasn't full. There was room for them but they were not allowed on the train because of discrimination.

And so I call on the government today, like we all have here, to do more to support the people in

Ukraine, to allow them to come here more easily, to provide supports for them as they come here, settlement services to reduce the barriers for Ukrainian people to come here and have safety and freedom.

We call on you to do even more for the marginalized people in Ukraine, the people who face two wars—the people who face the war against Putin and his military regime and the people who face the war against racism and the war against hate.

And so we call—we make that call—we make that urgent call today to help support and save those lives for all of those people who are suffering in Ukraine.

Thank you.

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): On House business, Madam Speaker.

I know that there is a desire for members to—for some additional members to speak. I'm proposing that we allow two members of the opposition, one member for—one independent member and two members of the government to speak past 5 o'clock but for no more than five minutes each. So, five speakers, five minutes each: two government, two opposition, one independent member.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave of the House to do what the honourable Government House Leader—is there leave to allow the House to continue sitting 'til 5:30 p.m. with—*[interjection]*—oh, okay.

Is there leave to allow two opposition members, two government members and one independent member to speak for five minutes each, even if it goes beyond 5:30? Is there leave? *[interjection]*

Okay, the honourable Government House Leader.

Mr. Goertzen: I'm looking for leave to sit beyond 5 o'clock to allow for two members of the opposition—official opposition, two members of the government, one independent member to speak for no more than five minutes each.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to allow two opposition members, one independent member and two government members to speak for five minutes each beyond the 5 p.m. cut-off that we had previously agreed to? *[Agreed]*

Hon. Derek Johnson (Minister of Agriculture): As the Minister of Agriculture, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you today during this emergency debate on the impacts of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and its effects on the agriculture industry.

* (17:00)

As previously mentioned, our government supports the democratically elected government of Ukraine, and the actions of Russia to send troops into Ukraine are a violation of Ukraine's territory and sovereignty. We have a long history in Manitoba working with Ukrainian farmers and businesses, helping them build a sustainable agriculture system that provides nourishing, safe food to their people and many areas around the world. This unprovoked war on Ukraine threatens the safety of their citizens, and it threatens the entire world.

Ukraine is an agricultural breadbasket. They have more arable land than any other European country. They are the world's top exporter of sunflowers, sunflower oil, as well as one of the world's largest producers of barley and corn, and the global leader as a producer of potatoes. In fact, Ukraine is very similar to Manitoba when it comes to agriculture in terms of these crops.

Manitoba will be impacted by these actions, as well. Although Manitoba has limited direct trade in agriculture products with Ukraine and Russia, our agriculture equipment manufacturing sector will experience some negative impacts.

I've had the privilege in meeting with some of our major manufacturing to discuss these concerns. The producers in Manitoba will also see the effect of the situation as a result of increased input costs on items such as grain for livestock, fertilizer and potash.

Russia and Ukraine collectively account for 29 per cent of the global wheat production, and Ukraine ships corn and barley to global buyers competing with Russia and Canada as a major wheat exporter. Food and transportation costs will rise as pressures on the grain market affect baked goods. Eventually, this will affect feed costs for livestock producers and ultimately affect the price of meat, dairy and eggs.

These new challenges are in addition to the challenges our agriculture and agri-food sector have been facing as a result of the COVID-19 and the droughts of last summer. They have been dealing with supply chain issues, including the sourcing of ingredients and feed, that have negatively affected production.

These actions occurring in Ukraine will only compound these problems. As the situation continues to evolve, there is no clear way to determine the severity of the impacts of the Manitoba agriculture

industry, but the major concern is with the people of Ukraine. Their safety is paramount and the world must continue to take actions that will end this war.

The government and the department staff will partner with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Global Affairs Canada to closely monitor the situation and ensure that the lines of communication to affected parties remain open.

As the Minister to the Department of Agriculture, I am committed to support our government, the farmers and the food producers that feed our great province, and our country, and the world. Our commitment here, today, needs to be with Ukraine.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, my heart aches and bleeds with the devastation that is happening today in Ukraine. The unconscionable invasion by Russia breaks international rules and laws of behaviour. It is a fight for democracy, a fight for freedom and a fight for international law and order. The people of Ukraine are fighting against extraordinary odds. We must do whatever we can to help.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine involves rockets and bombs, which are falling indiscriminately, including on hospitals, and causing major 'civilian' casualties, including children. Reports today say more than 2,000 Ukrainian civilians have died.

An article in *The Economist* asks, has Vladimir Putin committed war crimes in Ukraine? The article continues, I quote, there is no serious doubt that Russia has broken international law in Ukraine. The International Criminal Court came into force in 2002 to prosecute four main crimes: genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and crimes of aggression. There is prima facie evidence that Russia has committed at least three of these. Clearly, Russia has committed crimes which are recognized internationally.

Let us put this in the context of the situation in Manitoba where we have a Criminal Property Forfeiture Act This 'applies' to property which was acquired, directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, as a result of unlawful activity where the property was acquired before or after the coming into force of this act. The act further states: If the director is satisfied that the property is proceeds of unlawful activity or an instrument of unlawful activity, he or she may commence proceedings in court forfeiting the property to government.

Consider a specific example. Buhler Industries is widely known to be operated by Russian interests. The owners are believed to be oligarchs who support the activities of Vladimir Putin, who's initiated the Russian war against Ukraine where these crimes have been committed.

There's discussion today of measures which might be taken with respect to Russian investment in Canada. Traditionally, products from businesses where there's specific concerns about the ownership of the business are boycotted or activities and funds are frozen. But a boycott of Buhler Industries would cause great harm to workers at Buhler Industries and to a major manufacturing industry in Winnipeg, which produces excellent products. There are alternative approaches which could be used.

Manitoba government could nationalize Buhler Industries or the Manitoba government could investigate whether the owners of Buhler Industries have been involved in supporting the crimes against the Ukrainian people. If the latter is true, the plant could be confiscated under the criminal forfeiture act in Manitoba. The 'plant'—plant could be taken over and operated by the Manitoba government to ensure the continuation of jobs in Manitoba and the continued production of products.

Let me now talk about the approach to refugees. The government has said it supports immigration in Manitoba. In both Ukraine and in Afghanistan there are individuals in great need who are fleeing their home country. Many are highly trained professionals and individuals who can contribute substantially to the growth of our province.

Manitoba needs to make a major effort to support immigration from Ukraine and, at the same time, Afghanistan. The government should immediately commit to specific targets of the number of immigrants to be supported and should work with Manitobans in the Ukrainian and Afghan communities to bring refugees here and to provide support to their settlement in our province.

The Province should commit to hiring additional staff in the Provincial Nominee Program and to having government-funded immigration settlement positions for local organizations. The government of Manitoba needs to immediately do much more to help the refugees who are fleeing situations which are dire and to enable them to settle in Manitoba and contribute to our province.

The Province can and must do much more. I call on the Manitoba government to act.

Thank you. Merci. Miigwech. Dyakuyu.

Hon. Doyle Piwniuk (Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure): Madam Speaker, I'm proud to stand here as a Ukrainian background and, of course, my last name, Piwniuk. My grandfather came to Canada when he was 17 years old.

His sister—he actually lent—who actually had a hairdressing shop, lent him some money to come to Canada, and I'm so glad that that all happened because I'm here today to stand here to talk about, you know, what's happening in Ukraine and about Russia, Putin. It's disgraceful.

I have to say that my grandmother also came from Ukraine on my dad's side. She came when she was two in 1900. My grandfather came here in 1911 to Canada. They settled north to Roblin, Manitoba. And then they settled once they got married and met. They moved around a few times, but they settled in the farmland that I was—my—born and raised, just between the town communities of Shellmouth and Dropmore.

And every night, I remember—my grandfather, unfortunately, I never met him—but my grandma would tell me a lot of different stories, and I was over—she actually—when my dad took over the farm, my uncle and my dad actually built them, my grandpa and grandma that—their house in the same yard.

* (17:10)

And so when my grandfather died a few years before I was born—the time that I grew up I remember going to listen to my grandmother tell stories about the old country and about my grandfather's experiences, and so I was always intrigued about what like my background was.

And I remember every supper—my grandmother would always come over to our place for supper—and the language of Ukraine was always spoken in—at supertime. And I didn't understand the words, but I knew that they were Ukrainian words.

And so years later, I one time was in Florida at a Starbucks and I was listening to two people talking. And I can actually—I actually recognized, I heard—with my hearing is that the one person, the female, was talking Ukrainian. But I wasn't quite sure what he was talking, the companion that she had, and I had to ask that question: so I just want to know, what language are you talking because I feel like you're talking Ukrainian? And you know what she said to me? I'm

talking Ukrainian and he's talking Russian, and we can actually understand each other.

So I thought to myself, boy, we came a long ways from, you know, Ukrainian and Russians in the same—like, as a couple. And I remember my niece, she was going out with a—her boyfriend from San Diego, and his dad was Ukrainian, his mom was Russian. They met in university in St. Petersburg. And this shows you that, you know, we've come a long ways of both cultures coming together and respecting each other.

But, unfortunately, now we have a leader who is now going to erase all this—where we all came from, from these 25, you know, years of, you know, when the Berlin Wall came down in 1989 and we're, you know, we as a—nations, we're growing together to become respectful of each other and, unfortunately, you know, now the—it seems like the Cold War is coming back all over again. The stuff that I tell my kids that, you know, we were feared of during the 1980s and 1970s of the Cold War, we're going to be seeing—we can be in the same situation, that whole—that—I always say that history doesn't repeat itself, but it does rhyme.

So what I'm—I would just—I just want to thank the opportunity to say that, you know, as a Ukrainian, I feel for the people. My dad still has relatives—on my dad's side there's still relatives that we know of that's in western Ukraine, and I feel for them. I'm hoping that they're safe and I'm hoping that this conflict will be resolved in—hopefully, in the next few months, anyways.

And as a province we do have to bring Ukrainian refugees. I think this is our obligation and this is how we populated the population over a hundred years ago, was when my ancestors came here at that time and around the 1900s.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): I want to begin by acknowledging the words of my colleagues. I think today is a day where we're all coming together and we're coming together to unequivocally condemn the illegal invasion of Ukraine by Russia and to call out President Putin for this egregious act of war in our time.

I also want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the pain, the very real pain in the Ukrainian community throughout our province and throughout the world, the diaspora as well as those who are still in Ukraine. This is a time that almost seems unbelievable

to us in our modern world, of a war of this scale and to this brutality and magnitude happening.

And so, to the members of the community who I'm sure are feeling powerless and who are feeling like there's nothing that we can do, I want to say that the actions that we are taking here today, the solidarity that we are showing here in this House is an important step, is an important action that we can take, even being so far away in this province, to show that we stand for peace in this world.

There are other steps that we can take, and I know that—and I want to acknowledge the Premier (Mrs. Stefanson) and her words, the steps that she is willing and able to take at this time to move against Russia, and to speak in not just in words, but in actions.

But I call on the government to do more, and I do think that this is still a way that we can stand together, but I think that we can all push for more action to be taken with regards to the situation happening right now.

We know that money is needed, and we know that the community here in Manitoba is willing to step up, is willing to donate, is willing to give their funds and their ability to support the people of Ukraine, and we believe that it's up to the government to match that commitment, dollar for dollar. And that would be an important way that we can not only leverage the support that we have within the community but also show that the Province of Manitoba, that this government values peace in the world, stands for democracy and stands with the people of Ukraine.

We also know that we have begun to take some steps with regards to sanctions, banning some products from Russian origin on our store shelves. We need to do more. There are many ties within this province to the people—or to the oligarchs, as they're called, in Russia. We can do more to root out exactly where those connections are and to make a strong stand that economic sanctions will be in place and will continue until Russia backs down and recognizes a free Ukraine.

We know that the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program is a program that all members have talked about and supported, but it is—can be a part now of a humanitarian crisis and a refugee crisis in a way that's never been done before. So I call on the government to do that, to fund the program, to get the right people working there, but also to waive the \$500 fee. And

there is room for an all-party task force, so I call on the government to do that.

Madam Speaker, as a member from Mennonite heritage, I join with others in the Chamber who come from Ukraine, who come from this place that is now being attacked, and still have ties back to that community, who are hearing from people on the ground, who are there to assist the people and have been there since Crimea was invaded and continue to do what they can to support the displaced people within Ukraine.

I just want to let those people in Manitoba know the Mennonite community stands shoulder to shoulder with our Ukrainian brothers and sisters, that we stand with you always for peace and that it is now time for us to put those words and that solidarity into action.

I call on all members to stand united, to stand in solidarity together, to ensure that Ukraine is supported for all time.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Adrien Sala (St. James): It's been really inspiring to hear members on all sides of this Chamber today stand united in support of the Ukraine.

We're currently living in a historic moment, and we've seen the amount of military equipment that's been mobilized by Russia, by land, by sea, by air, is arguably the largest military mobilization since World War II, and the world is facing great danger as a result; some are saying, the greatest danger we've faced since the Cuban Missile Crisis 60 years ago.

The decision by Putin to once again attack the Ukraine has resulted in the displacement of millions of people, and as of today, his most recent invasion has resulted in the deaths of over 2,000 Ukrainian citizens. It is clearly in violation of international law and the UN Charter, and it is fundamentally an attack on the sovereignty, the independence and the territorial integrity of the Ukraine.

Madam Speaker, the only people who should be determining the future of the Ukrainian state are the Ukrainian people themselves. And they're currently fighting to preserve this right to determine their own destiny, to preserve their democracy and to preserve their way of life.

Madam Speaker, the Ukrainian people are inspiring people the world over with their incredible courage in the face of a Goliath, and they need our support in this fight. Our country, our province must stand with them. And I know it's been inspiring to all in this Chamber to see countries around the world

come together to condemn this unprovoked attack. And we saw that just today: 141 UN member states voted to condemn Russia's actions, and Russia is being subjected now to some of the most severe economic sanctions that can possibly apply, thanks to that global co-operation.

* (17:20)

It's clear that Putin and his supporters didn't expect the degree to which the world would rise in opposition to his illegal attack and that he grossly underestimated the willingness of the Ukrainian people to fight to defend themselves from this invasion.

It's also clear that he massively underestimated the President of the Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky, whose courage and bravery in the face of this attack has helped to inspire his people to fight ferociously against Russian military aggression on Ukrainian soil.

Madam Speaker, this fight belongs to all of us the world over because it's not only about ensuring the protection of the Ukrainian people and their homeland, but more broadly, this is about protecting the world from Putin's larger goal of destabilizing democracies and an international order that has helped to preserve global peace for the last 75 years.

The question we have to ask ourselves as Manitoban legislators is, how can we help? And as everyone in this room knows, Manitoba has a deep and historic relationship to the Ukraine. Outside the Ukraine and Russia we have the highest density of Ukrainians anywhere in the world and, in fact, the huge number of Ukrainians who came to Manitoba historically were themselves fleeing forms of imperialist aggression in this very same region.

We can be incredibly proud of this deep historic connection, but we must honour these ties with action. Manitoba should be a Canadian leader in supporting the Ukrainian people as they engage in this fight, and to do this, there are several things we need to see from this government.

Firstly, we need to ensure that we make it clear that Manitoba is ready to welcome a significant number of Ukrainian immigrants and refugees with open arms and to support this, we have to ensure that our Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program is adequately staffed; we need to ensure that we remove the application fee for provincial nominee applicants; and we should ensure that the Ukrainian Canadian Congress has funding to hire settlement co-ordinators to help displaced families once they arrive so they can be settled into our province.

We should also ensure that Russian-owned business assets in Manitoba and the profits they earn are not indirectly helping to fund Russian aggression against the Ukraine. Creating a beneficial owner registry would be a good place to start in offering transparency.

We should also, among other actions, be setting up an all-party committee to direct Manitoba's response to the Ukraine crisis. Madam Speaker, we have a choice to stand by or to act, and it's clear that, as of yet, we have not seen the level of commitment that we should expect to reflect the level of support that would be commensurate with our deep historic relationship to the Ukraine.

This is a time of great risk and it's an inflection point in our world history, and years from now, when we look back at this conflict and the incredible suffering it's created, we need to ensure that we can say we were on the right side of history and that our Province, as distant as it seems from this conflict, was shown to have acted in a manner that reflects our commitment to protecting the Ukrainian people, to protecting democracy and to protecting the international rules-based order that has offered our world 75 years of relative global peace.

Thank you.

Madam Speaker: The hour being past 5 p.m., this debate is concluded and the House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, March 2, 2022

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