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of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Ninth Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, April 9, 2010

The House met at 10 a.m.

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

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 18—The Communities Economic Development Fund Amendment Act

Hon. Eric Robinson (Minister charged with the administration of The Communities Economic Development Fund Act): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Ms. Wowchuk), that Bill 18, The Communities Economic Development Fund Amendment Act, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Robinson: Very briefly, Mr. Speaker, this bill simply gives greater powers to the Crown corporation to provide financial and technical assistance to businesses and modernizes administrative aspects of the act.

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

PETITIONS

Bipole III

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And the background of this petition is as follows:

Manitoba Hydro has been forced by the NDP government to construct its next high-voltage direct transmission line, Bipole III, down the west side of Manitoba, a decision for which the NDP government has not been able to provide any logical justification.

Since this will cost Manitoba taxpayers at least \$640 million more than an east-side route, and given that the Province of Manitoba is facing its largest deficit on record, the burden of this extra cost could not come at a worse time.

Between 2002 and 2009 electricity rates increased by 16 percent, and Manitoba Hydro has filed a request to further rate increases totalling 6 percent over the next two years.

A western Bipole III route will invariably lead to more rate increases.

In addition to being cheaper, an east-side route would be hundreds of kilometres shorter and would be more reliable than a west-side route.

West-side residents have not been adequately consulted and have identified serious concerns with the proposed line.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to consider proceeding with the cheaper, shorter and more logical east-side route, subject to necessary regulatory approvals, to save ratepayers hundreds of millions of dollars during these challenging economic times.

And this petition, Mr. Speaker, is signed by K. Bauereiss, C. Marzoff, A. Zimmer and many, many other Manitobans.

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

Long-Term Care Facilities—Morden and Winkler

Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

Many seniors from the Morden and Winkler area are currently patients in Boundary Trails Health Centre while they wait for placement in local personal care homes.

There are presently no beds available for these patients in Salem Home and Tabor Home. To make more beds in the hospital available, the regional

health authority is planning to move these patients to personal care homes in outlying regions.

These patients have lived, worked and raised their families in this area for most of their lives. They receive care and support from their family and friends who live in the community, and they will lose this support if they are forced to move to distant communities.

These seniors and their families should not have to bear the consequences of the provincial government's failure to ensure there are adequate personal care home beds in the region.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Minister of Health to ensure that patients who are awaiting placement in the personal care home are not moved to distant communities.

And to urge the Minister of Health to consider working with the RHA and the community to speed construction and expansion of long-term care facilities in the region.

And this petition is signed by C.J. Janzen, I. Klassen, Y. Demke and many, many others.

PTH 15—Traffic Signals

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

These are the reasons for this petition:

In August 2008, the Minister of Transportation stated that traffic volumes at the intersection of PTH 15 and Highway 206 in Dugald exceeded those needed to warrant the installation of traffic signals.

Every school day, up to a thousand students travel through this intersection in Dugald where the lack of traffic signals puts their safety at risk.

Thousands of vehicles travel daily through this intersection in Dugald where the lack of traffic signals puts at risk the safety of these citizens.

In 2008, there was a 300 percent increase in accidents at this intersection.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Minister of Transportation consider the immediate installation of traffic signals at the intersection of PTH 15 and Highway 206 in Dugald.

To request that the Minister of Transportation recognize the value of the lives and well-being of the students and citizens of Manitoba.

Signed by R. Rogers, J. Aitken, G. Godfredsen and many, many other Manitobans.

Manitoba Liquor Control Commission— Liquor Licences

Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And these are the reasons for the petition:

Manitoba Liquor Control Commission has substantially raised the cost of annual liquor licences for restaurants, cocktail lounges and other Manitoba businesses.

The MLCC justifies this increase by stating that the cost of an annual licence is being increased to better reflect rising administration costs.

For some small business owners, the cost of an annual liquor licence has more than doubled. These fee hikes are a significant burden for business owners.

The decision to increase the annual licence fee, while at the same time eliminating the 2 percent supplementary licence fee payable on the purchase of spirits, wines and coolers, has the effect of greatly disadvantaging smaller businesses. Small businesses which do not purchase liquor from the MLCC in large volumes will not receive the same benefit from the elimination of this supplementary fee. Instead, they're facing substantially increased costs simply to keep their doors open.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Minister responsible for the administration of The Liquor Control Act to consider working with MLCC to find an alternate means of addressing rising administrative costs.

And to request the Minister responsible for the administration of The Liquor Control Act to consider working with MLCC to revise the decision to implement a significant annual licence fee increase.

And to urge the Minister responsible for the administration of The Liquor Control Act to consider ensuring that the unique challenges faced by small businesses are better taken into account in the future.

And this petition is signed by R. Tylot, J. Frias and M. Preston and many, many more fine Manitobans.

*(10:10)

Ophthalmology Services—Swan River

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

These are the reasons for this petition:

The Swan Valley region has a high population of seniors and a very high incidence of diabetes. Every year, hundreds of patients from the Swan Valley region must travel to distant communities for cataract surgery and additional pre-operative and post-operative appointments.

These patients, many of whom are sent as far away as Saskatchewan, need to travel with an escort who must take time off work to drive the patient to his or her appointments without any compensation. Patients who cannot endure this expense and hardship are unable to have the necessary treatment.

The community has located an ophthalmologist who would like to practise in Swan River. The local Lions Club has provided funds for the necessary equipment, and the Swan River Valley hospital has space to accommodate this service.

The Minister of Health has told the Town of Swan River that it has insufficient infrastructure and patient volumes to support a cataract surgery program; however, residents of the region strongly disagree.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Minister of Health to consider rethinking her refusal to allow an ophthalmologist to practise in Swan River and to consider working with the community to provide this service without further delay.

And this is signed by A. Cottyn, J. Cottyn, M. Leslie and many, many others, Mr. Speaker.

Medical Clinic in Weston and Brooklands Area

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

Community-based medical clinics provide a valuable health-care service.

The closure of the Westbrook Medical Clinic has left both Weston and Brooklands without a community-based medical clinic.

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

To urge the provincial government to consider how important it is to have a medical clinic located in the Weston-Brooklands area.

Mr. Speaker, this is signed by M. Comber, C. Ross and K. Ho and many, many other fine Manitobans. Thank you.

Bipole III

Mr. Stuart Briese (Ste. Rose): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

This is the background to this petition:

Manitoba Hydro has been forced by the NDP government to construct its next high-voltage direct transmission line, Bipole III, down the west side of Manitoba, a decision for which the NDP government has not been able to provide any logical justification.

Since this will cost Manitoba ratepayers at least \$640 million more than the east-side route, and given that the Province of Manitoba is facing the largest deficit on record, the burden of this extra cost could not come at a worse time.

Between 2002 and 2009 electricity rates increased by 16 percent, and Manitoba Hydro has filed a request for further rate increases totalling 6 percent over the next two years.

A western Bipole III route will invariably lead to more rate increases.

In addition to being cheaper, an east-side route would be hundreds of kilometres shorter and would be more reliable than a west-side route.

West-side residents have not been adequately consulted and have identified serious concerns with the proposed line.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to consider proceeding with the cheaper, shorter and more logical east-side route, subject to necessary regulatory approvals, to save ratepayers hundreds of millions of dollars during these challenging economic times.

This petition is signed by R. Scott, M. Port, L. Kostenchuk and many, many other fine Manitobans.

Waste-Water Ejector Systems

Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to this Legislative Assembly.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

Manitobans are deeply committed to protecting the environment, and they want to be assured that provincial environmental policies are based on sound science.

In early 2009 the provincial government announced that it was reviewing the on-site waste-water management systems regulation under The Environment Act.

Affected Manitobans, including property owners and municipal governments, provided considerable feedback to the provincial government on the impact of the proposed changes, only to have their input ignored.

The updated regulation includes a prohibition on the installation of new waste-water ejectors and the elimination of existing waste-water ejectors at the time of any property transfer.

Questions have been raised about the lack of scientific basis for these changes, as a Manitoba Conservation official stated in the October 8th, 2009 edition of the *Manitoba Co-operator*, quote, "Have we done a specific study? No." End quote.

These regulatory changes will have a significant financial impact on all affected Manitobans.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Minister of Conservation to consider immediately placing the recent changes to the on-site waste-water management systems regulation under The Environment Act on hold until such time that a review can take place to ensure that they are based on sound science.

To request the Minister of Conservation to consider implementing the prohibition on waste-water ejector systems on a case-by-case basis as determined by environmental need in ecologically sensitive areas.

To request the Minister of Conservation to consider offering financial incentives to help affected Manitoban property owners adapt to these regulatory changes.

And, Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by S. Isaac, C. Porter, N.E. Grant and many, many other Manitobans.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Vimy Ridge Day

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to make a ministerial statement.

Mr. Speaker, I solemnly rise today, on Vimy Ridge Day, to speak to an important historical moment recently shared by all Canadians: the death of Canada's last known First World War veteran, John "Jack" Babcock, on February 18th.

In the dedication and stoicism he displayed in his life, John Babcock represented the sacrifices made by many fellow men and women during World War I. Mr. Babcock was Canada's last surviving link to the more than 650,000 Canadians and Newfoundlanders who served during the First World War, and his death marks the end of an era.

Remembering John on this day is a special duty, as April 9th marks Vimy Ridge Day. Canada suffered severe casualties at Vimy Ridge. Yet, in this battle, the Canadian Corps captured more ground, prisoners and guns than any previous allied offensive in the war. It was a battle that marked the start of a proud tradition that continues today.

Many Manitobans enlisted for service during the First World War, with over 18,000 Manitobans volunteering by the end of the first year. Fourteen Manitobans were awarded the Victoria Cross for their gallantry in the face of the enemy. Three Victoria Cross winners came from Pine Street in West End Winnipeg, which we later renamed Valour Road in their honour.

I encourage all Manitobans to take a moment today to remember the sacrifices our veterans have made on our behalf. Many brave men and women have laid down their lives so that we can have the freedoms we enjoy today.

On behalf of the members of this Chamber and all the citizens of Manitoba, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to all of Canada's veterans. We will never forget the sacrifices you have made, nor will we ever relinquish the freedoms you have fought to preserve.

After my colleagues have had the opportunity to reply, I would ask that all members stand for a moment of silence in the Chamber to honour John Babcock and all of the veterans who have bravely served our country.

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, and I want to thank the Premier for his statement, and wholeheartedly support his request for a moment of silence today in commemoration of the 93rd anniversary of the Vimy Ridge battle.

I'm very honoured to recognize those who made such great sacrifices on the part of our country and those who believed in freedom, and still do. Vimy Ridge was a defining moment in Canada's history, and the anniversary provides an opportunity to remember the sacrifices of the thousands of soldiers who were killed or injured.

This year's anniversary is especially poignant, as it comes less than two months after the passing of John Babcock, Canada's last World War I veteran. Today we are truly commemorating the end of an era, the passing of a great generation of dedicated Canadian soldiers who gave their lives to end the worst conflict the world had ever seen.

* (10:20)

I was pleased that this morning I had the opportunity, along with the Premier and the Leader of the Liberal Party, to honour the sacrifice of Canada's World War I soldiers in the signing of the Book of Reflection here in our Legislature. Our ceremony was part of a national effort to recognize the importance of this day in Canada's history, and all of us were honoured to be joined by members—current members of Canada's Armed Forces who have joined us in the gallery today from the Army, Navy and Air Force branches of our great Canadian Armed Forces. We join with Canadians across the country, as well as in France and England, to pay tribute to the service of the men and women who served in the First World War.

Vimy Ridge has always been a moment that Canadians remember with pride. The Canadian victory at Vimy Ridge is—was considered to be a

turning point in that war, as well as a key moment in the definition of the Canadian nation. The united Canadian effort to accomplish what no others had been able to do earned Canada its signature on the peace treaty at Versailles.

However, taking Vimy Ridge required an incredible sacrifice: 3,598 Canadians died and over 7,000 were injured. Their sacrifices are commemorated at the memorial overlooking Douai Plain from the highest point of Vimy Ridge. One of those young men was my great-grandfather Allen Hopper, who, at the age of 19, returned from Vimy Ridge severely injured. And I remember, as a young child, prior to his passing, the tremendous hardship that he suffered through the rest of his life as a result of those injuries.

As a Canadian, I am thankful for his sacrifices, as well as the sacrifices of those thousands of others who did such a great thing on behalf of our country. I also want to thank those who, today, work daily to protect the same liberties as those soldiers in the First World War. With the passing of John Babcock, we've seen the end of an era of brave men and women who fought to protect the freedom that we hold so close to our hearts. And for their sacrifice, we are deeply grateful.

Thank you.

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

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member have leave?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave has been granted.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, I join the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition and other members of the Legislature in marking today the end of an era, the recent passing of Jack Babcock, the last World War I Canadian veteran and the occasion, at the same time, of the 93rd anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge.

The Battle of Vimy Ridge, of course, was highly celebrated in Canada because it marked a major developmental point in our capacity and our ability as a nation. It was from the 9th of April to the 12th of April in 1917, and, in the battle, the Canadian Corps, including all four divisions of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, took control of the German high ground along an escarpment at the northernmost

end of the Arras offensive. And this was, as has already been mentioned, a rather key event and a rather key turning point in the First World War.

I think it's notable that the success of the Canadian Corps in capturing the ridge has been attributed to a mixture of technical and tactical innovation, meticulous planning, a powerful artillery support and extensive training, all attributes which I think not only pay a tribute to the—our soldiers in World War I, but to the development of the capacity we have as a nation. And, of course, we remember today not only all Canadians, but particularly those from Manitoba.

And I want to salute and mention the members of the Armed Forces who are here in the gallery today, and who joined us earlier on, under the leadership of Lieutenant-Colonel Takeuchi and including members of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force, and representatives of the Armed Forces who have served in the former Yugoslavia, in Afghanistan, in the Sudan, in Sierra Leone and, in fact, in many other places around the world.

So, we are pleased that you are here. We salute your efforts on behalf of all Canadians and we thank you as we remember this important occasion, the end of an era, the passing of John Babcock. And I just close on one interesting note and that is that John Babcock, you know, is an example not only of long life, but he was a life-long learner. His high school was interrupted by his going to war and, finally, at age 95, he graduated from high school. He didn't give up. He stayed there. He's an example to all of us.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is there agreement for a moment of silence? *[Agreed]*

Okay. Please rise for a moment of silence.

A moment of silence was observed.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, I'd like to draw the attention of honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us today, we have representatives of 17 Wing and 38 Brigade here in Winnipeg, who are the guests of the honourable First Minister.

On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you all here today.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Addictions Treatment Centre Project Status

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): I think it's recognized by all Manitobans that the issue of addictions is a very serious one within our province and our society. It is a matter that is a matter of life and death for many individuals who are struggling to deal with it. It has an incredible impact on families of those who are suffering from addiction, and as we know, Mr. Speaker, our justice system is impacted very directly and taxed very heavily as a result of issues with addictions within our society.

I just want to ask the Premier, as it was recorded in the media this morning that they have put on hold the construction of a new addictions treatment centre as a result of funding cutbacks, if the Premier can indicate whether the announcement made in 2008 by his then-Minister of Healthy Living continues to be a promise of the government or whether they intend to break that promise today as a result of budget problems.

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the government still remains committed to the project. There is further work going on on the exact nature of the programming that would be most appropriate there, and I want the member to know that the government remains committed to finding ways to increase the opportunities for people with addictions issues to receive appropriate treatment and service throughout Manitoba.

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, the announcement made on June 26th, 2008, says—and the headline is: First-class centre will strengthen addictions services and reduce waits, according to the member for Fort Garry (Ms. Irvin-Ross). It goes on to describe the project. It's endorsed by Senator Michael Kirby and includes on its board both former Senator Kirby and Bob Brennan, and others. We've learned that the CEO who had been hired to help shepherd this project along has now been terminated as a result of the government's decision to not proceed with the project and that the board is in a status-quo mode right now because the—they have been advised by government that Treasury Board can't come up with the money to fund this treatment centre.

I want to ask the Premier: Where does this treatment centre, that was announced two years ago, rank next to the stadium in terms of his priorities?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, as I said in my first response, we remain committed to this project. We have been expanding addictions treatment service throughout Manitoba, and what is going on right now is work is going on to identify the specific nature of the programming that would be most appropriate in this centre given the other services we have developed around Manitoba, including expanding addictions treatment in Thompson, Manitoba, with a new centre there. So what we are doing is we are going to follow through on this project, but we're going to do it in a way that the services offered there fit in with all the other things we're doing around Manitoba.

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, the—what they're doing with the layoff of the CEO is not at all consistent with what the Premier is today saying in the House. It's not consistent with the promise that was made two years ago to the people of Manitoba and the families who are dealing with addictions issues.

* (10:30)

Out of nowhere, Mr. Speaker, last week, he found \$115 million for a football stadium that wasn't mentioned in the budget. We've now learned that sod-turning on that project is going to happen next month, moving forward at record, breakneck, incredible speed, with his foot on the gas pedal on the stadium and yet two years after the commitment to the addictions centre, the CEO is being laid off and the board is being told that they don't have the funds to proceed with the project.

Will the Premier, today, if he's serious about dealing with addictions in Manitoba, commit that the sod-turning on the new Magnus Centre addictions centre will happen before the sod-turning on the new stadium?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, what we will commit to is continuing to expand and improve on addictions services in Manitoba.

Since '08-09, the funding in '08-09 was \$22.9 million for addictions services. This is an increase of 89 percent since 1999.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Selinger: That's an 89 percent increase in funding for addictions services in Manitoba. Some of the enhancements to the addictions system include the introduction of the youth addictions stabilization act which allows parents or guardians to have their

youths involuntary detained for a brief period of drug stabilization. There's a youth addictions centralized intake system. There's a youth addictions stabilization system with both voluntary and involuntary admissions that has been put in place for \$1.5 million. And there's a one-time funding of 40,000 for a paramedic at the Main Street project. And we brought in an additional 20 beds to the addictions system bringing in the number of beds to 449 across the province. And we have put in place one-time, additional funding for methadone intervention.

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

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, and you know, the Premier seems to be suggesting today that it's mission accomplished in terms of addictions treatment in Manitoba, and I think families and individuals dealing with addictions would dispute that.

Clearly, they haven't solved the problem to date, and this is a promise they made less than two years ago. They brought stakeholders together, the community members involved, Reg Toews, somebody I have great respect for, was involved in the strategic planning on this project and now we've learned that the CEO who had been hired to move this project forward has been terminated because of budget cuts. As they're cutting adult education programs in Portage la Prairie, as they're cutting other front-line programs around the province, they're now cutting this project that they committed themselves two years ago, Mr. Speaker.

Will the Premier indicate today, yes or no, will the sod-turning of this new addictions treatment centre happen before he runs out to the university and does the sod-turning on his new stadium?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, what we have committed to in this budget is an increase of 9.4 percent to the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba.

And, let's be clear, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite have already indicated they will be voting against that increase in addictions funding here in Manitoba. So we will increase our support for addictions services in Manitoba by 9.4 percent.

It will include—continue to work to go forward on this project, it will include expanding services across the province including in Thompson, Manitoba, including increasing the number of beds

that are available for people that need addictions treatment in facilities appropriate to the needs of the clientele. All of those things we will proceed with and, Mr. Speaker, let's be clear. The members opposite will vote against that. We know they will vote against that.

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, there's clearly a reason why this announcement was made by the former Minister of Healthy Living under two years ago. The need is there, there was going to be an additional 60 beds for adult residential addictions treatment.

And I want to just ask the Premier, given that there are 60 lives that, at any given moment, could've—could be saved or protected as a result of this, what he says to those individuals and their families and our community about his priorities, when he's rushing at breakneck speed to get shovels in the ground on a stadium, Mr. Speaker, but less than two years later, after this promise, and this commitment, he still can't bring himself to get this project done.

Mr. Speaker, where are his priorities? Will he get this done or is he going to focus on his top priority, the stadium?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, the clearest indication of what a government's priorities are is the indication of where they put their resources. There's nine—there are 9.4—and as I indicated earlier, there will be an increase for Addictions Foundation of Manitoba of 9.4 percent this year. The members opposite have already said they will be voting against that.

We will continue to expand the number of beds for addictions treatments in Manitoba. The board of this centre will continue to plan and go forward position on operating the centre. We will work with them to do that as part of a total—that's part of a total package of services that we are making available to Manitobans with addictions.

And let's be clear, Mr. Speaker, we have expanded the number of beds. We've expanded methadone treatment. We have expanded a stabilization unit for youth that have addictions problems. We have brought in special legislation to allow youth that need special care to be provided that care, even in some very specific circumstances where they may not be completely ready to accept that care.

We have done these things in order to ensure Manitobans with addictions have the protection and

services they need. And in every instance, the members opposite have voted against it.

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, that would all be well and good if they hadn't closed, over the holidays, the addictions treatment centre currently being run by the AFM.

And the fact is, we know that they provide huge budget increases year over year, and those monies go into bureaucracy and they go into unions. So bureaucracy and unions get the money. Front-line care gets cut. Bureaucracy and unions get the money. Front-line care gets cut. We know where his priorities are. We agree that priorities are a reflection of where the money goes.

Mr. Speaker, will this Premier, today, pull the stakeholders together—will he, today, pull them together, sign an MOU, set a date for the sod turning on a new addictions treatment centre in the way that he was able to get Mr. Asper to the table last week for a new stadium?

Mr. Selinger: The stakeholders have come together. That's why we have a board for this centre that are working diligently to find the best way to move this project forward. And yes, Mr. Speaker, where you put your—where you put resources does indicate your priorities. Sixty percent of all the new resources in this budget are going to health care, including addictions treatment services: 9.4 percent increase to the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba; 90 percent of all the additional resources in this budget are going to family services, health, education, justice and infrastructure. That's where we've put our priorities.

Let's not forget, the members are—have said they will vote against those things. They believe that we are spending too much money on health. They believe we are spending too much money on addiction services. They believe we are spending too much money on education. They believe we are spending too much money on services to families.

Let the public not be fooled, Mr. Speaker. We have the priorities of Manitobans uppermost, including protecting front-line services in this budget.

Addictions Treatment Centre Project Status

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Minnedosa): Let me be clear that, when you are taking resources that should be

allocated to addictions and putting them into a stadium, I have some serious concerns, Mr. Speaker.

We have a Premier that is so focussed on football that he has fumbled and dropped the ball on addictions treatment, Mr. Speaker. Sixty new beds were promised two years ago by this government. Manitoba is light-years behind other provinces in this issue.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister guarantee that these 60 beds will be operational before ground is broken for this new stadium?

Hon. Jim Rondeau (Minister of Healthy Living, Youth and Seniors): And I am pleased to see that they're finally looking at addiction, because they didn't do it when they were in government in the '90s.

We have been working on building the system. The money has doubled. The funding for addiction—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I can't even hear what you're saying. Order. Let's have some co-operation here, please. You might not agree with the questions and the answers. Order. But I need to hear the words that are spoken in case there's a breach of a rule. So I'm asking for co-operation, please.

The honourable minister has the floor.

Mr. Rondeau: We have, actually, in 10 years, basically doubled the amount of money that's going to addiction treatment. And it's neat to see because the treatment goes on whether it's youth, whether it's outreach, whether it's working on prevention in the communities, whether it's going to addiction foundation, the Behavioural Health Foundation, the Native Addiction Council of Manitoba and programs like Rosaire House, Anchorage, St. Raphael Wellness Centre—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

*(10:40)

Mrs. Rowat: Mr. Speaker, this NDP government has turned its back on front-line experts who have put their time, their energy and their expertise into the Magnus Centre project. Now they've put their plans on hold waiting for this government to get its act together.

Mr. Speaker, we don't even know how much money this government has spent on this initiative at this point. When is this government going to stop

talking and do something meaningful and concrete for addictions?

Mr. Rondeau: Mr. Speaker, the interesting part is we are investing and working with the different groups on addiction treatment. Just last week we worked with a group to expand the transition funding and space for women on addictions.

We continue to work with groups around the province to expand service. And, Mr. Speaker, when we're expanding service we're not just picking one small group, we're picking across the province. I was pleased to see that we opened another addiction treatment centre in Thompson, Manitoba.

So it's across the province. We continue to enhance service. And, Mr. Speaker, when we've doubled the funding and doubled the support for addiction services, the members opposite continue to vote against it.

Mrs. Rowat: Mr. Speaker, my question is very simple and very quick. This government promised 16 new treatment beds two years ago. If addictions is a priority for this government where are the beds?

Mr. Rondeau: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to tell her where the beds are. The Behavioural Health Foundation now has 127 beds, which is an increase. The Native Addiction Council has 20 new beds, which is again improved. Rosaire House is 20 beds. Anchorage has 32 beds. We have the AFM residential treatment for second stage, six beds. We have Addiction Recovery that has 14 beds. Esther House has six beds. Tamarack has 12 beds. Two Ten has 15 beds, that has just been expanded to 25.

Mr. Speaker, we're continuing to create space. We have outreach programs. We have residential programs. We have prevention programs, and they've all been enhanced by this government, not by the members when they were in government.

Addictions Treatment Centre Project Status

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, we raised the issue of the Magnus Centre back in March because at that time we had heard that the project might be doomed.

This government denied at the time that that would be happening. Many years have gone into this, including thousands and thousands of dollars have been spent on this Magnus Centre already in terms of business plans, somebody looking at it, a lot of hours.

I'd like to ask the Minister of Healthy Living: How much money have they spent so far to develop the Magnus Centre to this point?

Hon. Jim Rondeau (Minister of Healthy Living, Youth and Seniors): Mr. Speaker, we have spent some money on planning the facility, and the interesting part is the member opposite said we should be talking to all groups, bringing them together to make sure that we enhance facilities.

The groups have said that what we should do is look at the entire spectrum of services and enhance services that are necessary, enhance services to increase the capacity for under-serviced population. That, Mr. Speaker, we have done. And I'd like to congratulate the former minister because she brought the whole community together. We've been working with that community to make sure that we move forward with a cost-effective project that meets the needs of under-serviced populations and that is what we're doing.

Mrs. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, he's congratulating himself for doing nothing. Years have been lost and there is such a desperate need out there for addiction treatment beds, and this is nothing but further mismanagement by this government.

I'd like to ask the Minister of Healthy Living: How much money did they pay the executive director for a year to sit in that empty building?

Mr. Rondeau: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the executive director for taking this project, bringing all sorts of different groups together and moving forward with a plan. And the plan is to enhance services to addiction, to look at the entire spectrum, not just AFM but the other organizations in the community, see what's underutilized, see what services we need to do and enhance the services.

I would like to congratulate the executive director for doing that work. I would like to congratulate him for bringing it together and coming up with a plan, and I'd like to thank all the members in the addiction services for working in the enhanced services to work with people.

But I'd like to say to the member opposite: It makes sense to plan, it makes sense to bring people together, and it makes sense to focus on areas where we need to enhance. And that's what this executive

director did and I'd like to congratulate him for his hard work.

Mrs. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, the executive director sat in there for a year in an empty building chasing ghosts—

An Honourable Member: And then got canned.

Mrs. Driedger: —and then he got canned. That's right.

Mr. Speaker, this government has lost valuable, valuable time, and instead of addressing the issues, they've wasted years now because they can't manage a Popsicle stand.

Mr. Speaker, the patients are waiting very, very long for treatment here. Dr. Lindy Lee has said there are patients that are dying on waiting lists in this province.

Mr. Speaker, there is a desperate need out there. We see OxyContin use soaring in this province.

I'd ask—like to ask the Minister of Healthy Living: How could he have made such a mess of this project when there is such a desperate need for addiction treatment in Manitoba?

Mr. Rondeau: I'd like to thank the member for the question because it lets us announce again that we have worked on a very comprehensive strategy on OxyContin to limit the supply, to create more focus, create more awareness so that the program's done. And we made that announcement, Mr. Speaker, about three weeks ago.

We've also enhanced more residential treatment and—

An Honourable Member: You made this announcement two years ago.

Mr. Rondeau: —exactly what we're doing. We are not standing still.

We've moved forward on enhancing treatment. We continue to do that, Mr. Speaker. We continue to look at prevention with youth. We continue to work on enhancing services that we require.

And that's why the executive director did a very good job in polling all the agencies out there, finding out which services need to be enhanced, coming up with recommendations, and now as we move forward with the program we know that we're filling a need. And that, Mr. Speaker, is good management.

**Health-Care Services
Out-of-Province Patient Care**

Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Carman): Jenaya Hawkins is a 34-year-old constituent of mine. From September through December 8th of last year, Jenaya was in hospital in consultation for a cancerous growth on her leg. On December 22nd, Jenaya met with a surgeon whose only recommendation was radical surgery on her leg. She asked for a second opinion and was promised a referral to Calgary, but this appointment had still not been made by January 4th.

On January 12th, with her health records in hand, Jenaya attended the Mayo Clinic. The NDP medical system had missed two malignant tumours in her lungs. She came back to Manitoba and is now in the middle of chemo treatments.

Can the Minister of Health (Ms. Oswald) explain why Manitobans, like my constituent Jenaya Hawkins, have to go elsewhere to get the health care they deserve here in Manitoba?

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Acting Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, of course the particulars—I'd appreciate if the member would provide the particulars to the minister so that we could look at the particular circumstances.

Having said that, I'm very happy and pleased that so far the outcome appears to be favourable to the patient, and that's what we all care about in this Legislature, Mr. Speaker.

I'm also proud to be part of the government, Mr. Speaker, that, when the waiting lists on breast cancer and prostate cancer were longer than were safe, we had no hesitation putting in place a program to send those patients out of country because, for this government and, I think, all members of the Legislature, the health care and the provision of health care in Manitobans is the No. 1 priority.

Mr. Pedersen: Mr. Speaker, Jenaya Hawkins paid the Mayo Clinic \$6,492 from her savings account, only to discover the NDP medical system had discovered that—diagnosis in her lungs, pardon me. She told me in January she only had a 30 percent chance of recovery.

Can the Minister of Health explain why she refused to pay Jenaya \$6,492 which may have saved her life?

* (10:50)

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, I'd be quite pleased if the member would provide the specifics for the minister to look at.

I do want to remind members opposite that in terms of patients coming to and from Manitoba with respect to treatment, far more patients come in to receive treatment than go out of the province, Mr. Speaker, which, if you look at the way the system is now constructed, for example, we send our pediatric cardiac patients to Edmonton, because they do more there. They send their Gamma Knife patients here. That is an arrangement we've made in order to make a more effective use of the health-care system in the country, and I think that makes sense.

I know members opposite are opposed and have voted against every single health-care initiative, including the additional 2,000 nurses, the additional 354 doctors we added in Manitoba, including a hundred outside of Winnipeg.

Notwithstanding that, Mr. Speaker, I think that people of Manitoba know that we are working our best—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pedersen: Mr. Speaker, Jenaya Hawkins paid for a diagnosis missed by the Manitoba NDP health-care system. She believed in the Manitoba health-care system to start with. That's why she tried to get the diagnosis here at home first, but the Manitoba health-care system failed her, and she had to go to the Mayo Clinic and pay out of her savings account for this.

Surely, the least this government can do is refund her back her \$6,492. At least that'd be the very least you can do on this.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, I understand that the department is looking at this case and are in the process of reviewing the protocols and reviewing the issue with her.

But, Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you that we have the shortest—according to CIHI, we have the shortest waiting lists for cancer treatment and wait times of any time in the provincial history.

And, Mr. Speaker, I know of patients that were not diagnosed in British Columbia that came to Manitoba for *[inaudible]* diagnosis and treatment.

No one is perfect. I'm glad that we work together, Mr. Speaker, but we have the shorter waiting lists now than we did when we come into

office. We're not perfect, but every single day we're hiring more, providing more equipment. That's why we increased health-care funding by 60 percent this budget, and I'm very, very upset that members opposite are going to vote against a 60 percent increase in health care, which is the No. 1 priority of Manitobans.

Health-Care Services Out-of-Province Patient Care

Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris): Mr. Speaker, on April 1st, Mr. Bergen, a constituent of mine, suffered a heart attack while vacationing in Las Vegas. The family was advised to drive home and Mr. Bergen would be airlifted back to Manitoba.

But, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Bergen is still in Las Vegas. The reason he's still there is because there are no beds for him here in Manitoba. Contrary to what the minister has just said about patients coming into Manitoba, Mr. Bergen cannot come because there is not a bed for him.

Will the minister commit today to finding a bed for Mr. Bergen so he can have his surgery here, Mr. Speaker?

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Acting Minister of Health): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I certainly—the Health Department—there is more to the story, I think, than the member has provided us and, obviously, because of privacy concerns, we can't talk about it. We will, and we will discuss it.

But what I do know, Mr. Speaker, is the modus operandi in United States, as soon as a Canadian gets ill, to get them on a plane as soon as possible so that the U.S. health-care system, which costs so much more, the insurance company can decrease their costs. So the No. 1 priority for U.S. insurers and U.S. health-care system is get them on a plane and get them back to Canada, because it's cheaper here and it's faster here.

Mrs. Taillieu: Mr. Speaker, that is an appalling answer to a family who's waiting here, and the husband and father is in Las Vegas. Mrs. Bergen is afraid that Mr. Bergen may suffer another attack. Is that attack going to be fatal while he's waiting for a bed here?

I want—and I'd like to say to this minister that she has contacted the Minister of Health's office, and they've done nothing, Mr. Speaker.

I want to ask this minister to commit today to ensure that Mr. Bergen gets home and gets the

life-sustaining surgery that he needs before he suffers another heart attack, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, the member ought to—I don't think it's appropriate to—and it's not fair to both the family and the patients to debate—to raise issues and debate issues about a particular patient on the floor. We—for a long time—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The honourable minister has the floor.

Mr. Chomiak: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. There's a normal protocol that's—and I understand the RHA is looking into this. There's a normal protocol that's followed where people are repatriated within days, and all of these cases, on an individual basis, that are raised in this Chamber, are looked at directly. In most cases, the circumstances that come out after—particularly the member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger), who puts more inaccurate information on the record—most of this information is resolved and, as I understand, the Bergens have been contacted and the response is—

An Honourable Member: Point of order.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Point of Order

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

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): Just on a point of order.

The minister, in impugning motives of a member of the House, these are all to be treated as honourable members, and it was, in fact, the Minister of Health (Ms. Oswald) who said that Brian Sinclair didn't approach the triage desk. In this House, we know that wasn't true and I think that if we want to get into these sorts of useless exchanges that impugn the honour of members of the House, that's out of order, and I'd ask you, Mr. Speaker, to call him to order.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Minister of Innovation, Energy and Mines, on the same point of order.

Mr. Chomiak: Yes, on the same point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The comment that I made was that the information put on by the member for Charleswood is usually inaccurate and, Mr. Speaker, that's well known, that is well known around this Chamber and

amongst the community. And the information put on is usually rhetorical and is usually out of touch, and the member never can raise a question in this House without talking about death.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. It is not a point of order. It's a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: The honourable minister's time had expired. We will now go to the next question.

Mrs. Taillieu: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to remind the minister that Rodmond Huska died alone in Las Vegas waiting because there was no bed available for him in Manitoba.

Mrs. Bergen works as a health-care professional and she knows that it is not the case of no beds, more likely it's a case of no staff, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to ask the minister: Will she ensure that Mr. Bergen is returned home to get the lifesaving surgery that he needs? Will he contact the family and give them a surgery date today, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, I already indicated that the department will talk to and work as quickly as possible to look at the facts, and I—you can't—we—it's not appropriate to talk about the facts of the case and nor can the minister because of privacy.

But, I might add, the member opposite has already cited three different things. First, she said there was no bed. Then, she said there was no health-care providers. Now, she says there's surgery. So from the first point of the question, it is exactly why those kind of matters—we can't—I can't talk about any of those matters because of privacy, but the member is trying to make a political matter out of something that is very important to the family and ought to be treated very importantly, not turned into political football. She's already changed the facts herself three times.

Addictions Treatment Government Strategy

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister for Healthy Living—and his failure in the area of addictions—clearly, if the government was doing its job there would be fewer people with addictions and there wouldn't be as

many requirements for increasing beds, and, yet, the minister himself says that he's constantly been increasing beds even though he can't do the Magnus Centre, and the problem seems to be that the minister has not been addressing the fundamental issue.

* (11:00)

Why is the number of people with addictions going up? Why is the need for treatment going up? Why is the minister not doing his job to make sure that there's more prevention and there's less addiction?

Hon. Jim Rondeau (Minister of Healthy Living, Youth and Seniors): Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to point to the recent OxyContin announcement, where what we did was we moved OxyContin from part 2 to part 3, which meant that prescriptions are discussed between the department and the prescribing doctor. We believe, because of this and taking it off the part 2, there will be less prescriptions. There will be less people who are addicted to OxyContin, and it will be prescribed appropriately.

The—and by the way, then we also did treatment. We also did education. So I point to that announcement. I can send the member opposite that whole announcement to show that it was a comprehensive announcement which dealt with education, prevention, treatment, the whole supply of OxyContin. And, Mr. Speaker, that was applauded by a lot of the members in the community and the medical community, and that was appropriate.

Mr. Gerrard: The minister has not been able to deliver on the primary outcome, and that is decreasing the number of people in Manitoba with addictions. The huge, long waiting list for people with addictions is outrageous. When people have an addiction and they need treatment, they need to be able to get in quickly so that they can be helped, and the addiction can be treated, and they can be more likely cured and moved on to better things.

The fact is that this minister has not been doing his job for 10 years. For 10 years the problems with addictions in this province have been going up, not down. Why has the minister and this government failed to do their fundamental job of better reducing the number of people with addictions problems in this province?

Mr. Rondeau: Mr. Speaker, and I'm surprised at the member's attitude as a physician, because what we have done, also, is done a whole bunch of out-patient

services. So, when a person comes with an addiction, what we do is we offer them service immediately. We start working with them right away where we then provide services.

It might not be an immediate residential bed, because some people need faster service than others. So they come in, they could continue to work, they could get out-patient service, and that's an enhancement to the service. Mr. Speaker, that member over there voted against a doubling of services on prevention, on working with youth. And the member opposite cut money to health care when he was in the federal Tory—sorry, Liberal Cabinet, and so he should not be speaking of addiction services.

Mr. Gerrard: I note that this minister has trouble getting his facts straight, that this minister has failed, along with the rest of his government. In fact, the NDP need to be educated on what the goal here is. The goal here should be to reduce the number of people with addictions. The goal should be to make sure that there's much better education in our schools to reduce addictions. But what is happening is that this is not happening adequately in the schools; this is not happening adequately in the Minister of Healthy Living.

The NDP need to learn what needs to be done in this province, that is, reduce the number of people with addictions to prevent the problems in the first place, and then we'd be much better off in this province.

Why is the Minister of Education (Ms. Allan) not doing her job in the schools and making sure we've got much better preventive programs?

Mr. Rondeau: Mr. Speaker, and I think that the member opposite should look at the Healthy Child budget. He should look at the money that we're spending in the Stop FASD program, and that's been enhanced drastically, and the member opposite votes against it. We look at the programs that we're offering in the schools on prevention that we have expanded, and the member opposite votes against it.

And when we're looking at the home visitor program, when we're looking at the investments in the families that we have done, we continue to make those investments in spite of the members opposite voting against it. We believe in Healthy Child program, we believe in the Stop FASD program, we believe in the programs in schools, and the member

opposite has voted against it. So you can't have it both ways, Mr. Speaker. You can't vote against it—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Labour Market Statistics Canada Report

Ms. Erna Braun (Rossmere): Mr. Speaker, while Manitoba is not immune to the effects of the global recession, the provincial labour market continues to show relative stability.

Could the Minister of Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade inform the House if Stats Canada Labour Force Survey is showing how Manitoba's labour market is performing?

Hon. Peter Bjornson (Minister of Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank my colleague for the question.

The labour market in the first quarter of 2010 shows stability and strength with our employment growth, since December of 2009, at 1.4 percent per 8,200 more jobs, which, Mr. Speaker, is well above Canada's growth of 0.5 percent and the strongest provincial performance.

And private sector employment appears to be feeling this growth, Mr. Speaker. There's a lot of optimism for the province of Manitoba, and since the start of the economic downturn in October of 2008 Manitoba continues to be a strong performer. We're in the top three on provincial performance basis when it comes to total job performance and private sector growth.

And, Mr. Speaker, Manitoba Bureau of Statistics also reported that there will be unprecedented growth in this province over the next 10 years, and that's why our budget's committed to providing training and support services for those people that will be calling Manitoba home.

Agriculture Industry Supply Management Sector Producers Levy

Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson): Mr. Speaker, due to this government's inability to manage its finances, it's picking the pockets of producers and supply management sector.

Budget 2010 contains a new levy for producers on exchange and transfer of value of quotas. David Wiens, the chairman of the Dairy Farmers of Manitoba, said in April 1st edition of the *Manitoba Co-operator*, and I quote: It's an extra cost that

comes out of nowhere. It simply comes down to an added cost on the farm and that makes things more difficult. End of quote.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Agriculture explain why he's punishing producers because he can't balance his books?

Hon. Stan Struthers (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives): What a sweet position they have over there, Mr. Speaker.

You know, they get up and they talk three years—for three years—for more than three years they've been telling us to do like Saskatchewan and do a great big tax cut for corporations in their province. And we kept saying, no, we're not going to blow our brains out like they're doing across the way, Mr. Speaker. We didn't get suckered into that. Saskatchewan did. They gave a big tax break and you know how they're paying for it? Farmers are paying for it, \$97 million cut out of the budget. Go tell that to your Saskatchewan buddies.

Mr. Graydon: Mr. Speaker, the minister can spew all the baffle-gab he wants. The levy caught the supply management sector completely off guard. They weren't even consulted.

Another dairy farmer of Manitoba's official was quoted about the levy in the *Manitoba Co-operator* article, he said, and I quote: I can't see how I'd be able to characterize that as a good thing. It's revenue that's leaving the industry. End quote.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister again: How can he have justified taking thousands of dollars annually out of the hands and the supply management sector, especially when they won't get any benefit from this new tax?

Mr. Struthers: Mr. Speaker, this is the same group that tells us to get rid of supply management. Are we going to take that kind of advice seriously? I say no. We're going to stand up for farmers in Manitoba, unlike their cousins in Saskatchewan.

He calls it baffle-gab. What do you call it when you turn to 23 people in the Department of Agriculture in Saskatchewan and tell them they don't have a job? Is that baffle-gab or is that just being mean? That's the advice you're giving us.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Time for oral questions has expired.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: I'd like to draw the attention of honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us—we have Mr. Padma Shri from India, who is the guest of the honourable Member for The Maples (Mr. Saran).

On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you here today.

Also I see in the public gallery we have Mr. Glen Murray, who was former mayor and now an MPP in Ontario. Also on behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you here today.

* (11:10)

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Gladstone Postage Stamp

Mr. Stuart Briese (Ste. Rose): Mr. Speaker, the people of Gladstone, Manitoba, have always been proud of their mascot, the 25-foot-high Happy Rock. Now people all across the world are going to have the opportunity to enjoy the jubilant Happy Rock as its cheerful smile and inviting wave makes its way onto a new Canada Post stamp this July.

The community is very excited about this and an unveiling ceremony is being planned for July the 5th.

Gladstone Happy Rock stamp was one of the four in the upcoming Canada Post series depicting unique roadside attractions in rural Canada. This is a great opportunity for Gladstone and other rural communities to show the world the unique landmarks throughout rural Canada.

Happy Rock, which is visible from Highway 16, has become a symbol of Gladstone since 1993, also serving as a tourist information centre during the summer months. Visitors can stop at the centre for road information, purchase promotional material or see what events are going on in the town and the surrounding area. The Happy Rock tourism centre, which is run by the local chamber of commerce, also provides great summer employment for younger—for young students every year.

People always want to come and see the Happy Rock. It's a real tourist attraction, providing an important service which generates revenue for the town. The Happy Rock is more than simply an eccentric landmark. It has helped shape the identity of the town of Gladstone.

I am very pleased to again congratulate the town of Gladstone for the upcoming Canada Post Happy Rock stamp. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Brandon University Healthy Living Centre

Mr. Drew Caldwell (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to advise the Manitoba Legislature of another important investment by our government in Brandon and the western—and in western Manitoba. On March 19th, I was in the company of the Prime Minister and Premier (Mr. Selinger) in Brandon University's gymnasium, as the Province announced a contribution of \$5.31 million towards the construction of Brandon University's visionary Healthy Living Centre.

The centre will be a shining example of the sort of infrastructure that communities need in order to attract our country's top talent. The Brandon University Healthy Living Centre is designed to be energy efficient and will be built using sustainable and recycled resources in accordance with LEED's Silver standard. It will include multiple gymnasiums, state-of-the-art weight training equipment, an indoor walking track and an athletic therapy centre. As a bridge between communities within a community, the Brandon University Healthy Living Centre will be accessible to the wider public, as well as to students and staff at the university.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see that our government is ensuring that this era of increased fiscal prudence does not inhibit the vital capital investments necessary for building the cities and towns of tomorrow. Budget 2010 pledges almost \$2 billion in provincial infrastructure projects over the next five years. In the short term, this investment will result in 29,000 jobs. In the long term, our province will boast world-class facilities in which to live, learn, work and play.

The Brandon University Healthy Living Centre is another step forward for the university, the city of Brandon, the Westman region and the province of Manitoba. I look forward to working with all parties as the project is realized. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Tribute to First World War Veterans

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Minnedosa): Today, on the anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, I rise in the House to pay tribute to the brave Canadians who died during the First World War and those that have recently passed. On Sunday, November 8th of last year, I had the honour of participating in the

Remembrance Day ceremony held at Vimy Ridge National Historic Site of Canada. It was a privilege to pay tribute to those who served in the First World War and provided me an opportunity to extend my sincere appreciation to all Canadians who have made sacrifices in times of conflict and peace alike.

The Vimy Ridge National Historic Site is an overwhelming symbol of peace and remembrance. Grand statues stand over the continuous wall of names of soldiers who lost their lives during the conflict at Vimy. The site in itself is mostly untouched. Tunnels and gunner bunkers remain, and huge craters show the significant damage the bombing would have inflicted upon the brave soldiers.

Over 3,600 Canadian soldiers lost their lives at this battle alone. I will never forget Vimy Ridge and how, even with a heavy heart, how very proud I was to represent Manitoba in laying a wreath of remembrance. The anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge serves to remind us of the sacrifices that were made over 90 years ago. Lest we forget.

Spence Neighbourhood Association

Hon. Andrew Swan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): It's a pleasure to work with organizations devoted to community revitalization like the Spence Neighbourhood Association. The association held its 10th annual general meeting this year and I would like to congratulate the SNA on this momentous achievement, on all of its successes in the community throughout the years.

The Spence Neighbourhood Association developed from a small 1997 initiative by a group of local residents and business owners to clean up back lanes and renovate a boarded-up house in the area. Three years later, the group officially took on the larger mandate of the Spence Neighbourhood Association, setting its goals in improving safety, health, housing, image and employment in their community, supported by the Neighbourhoods Alive! program.

Ten years after the first meeting as the Spence Neighbourhood Association, this group has much to be proud of. SNA supports grass-roots community initiatives through small grants for projects like creating public art, supporting local sports teams and allowing residents to improve their homes. SNA is working to improve literacy and provide academic assistance through its youth and literacy programs.

Spence residents feel safer in no small part due to the association's presence in the neighbourhood and projects at the Rental Safety Program, which provides advice to and installs free security devices for renters in the area. The SNA is also helping all of us work towards a greener province by operating a number of community gardens, a pilot greenhouse project and a composting program. They have many more projects on the go, focussed on empowering residents and improving our community.

Mr. Speaker, the Spence Neighbourhood Association is an exemplary association. Its work is instrumental in creating meaningful change in our thriving inner-city community.

Thank you, Spence Neighbourhood Association, for your dedication to community renewal for these past 10 years. I'm certain many more years of success will follow. Thank you.

House Business

Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Official Opposition House Leader): House business, Mr. Speaker.

For the information of the House, one official opposition public member's statement today will be provided to a Liberal member, and the Liberal private member's statement scheduled for next Tuesday will be provided to the official opposition.

Mr. Speaker: Okay, I'm going to announce the trade.

So the member—the opposition member speaking today—it is under the official opposition but it will be the honourable member for Inkster and the independent member's private member's statement for Tuesday will be taken by the official opposition member. Is that—that's what you agreed to? Okay.

Vaisakhi Festival

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and to the Official Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Speaker, you know, it is—India is a beautiful country. Members from all sides of this House, from the Conservatives to the Liberals, the member from Charleswood, the member from Radisson, Maples, myself, have all had the privilege of visiting India. Myself, personally, have had the opportunity to visit the Golden Temple, and I know we have Nirmal Singh, one of the priests over at the Golden Temple.

And on behalf of all members of this Legislature, we do extend our warmth and hospitality, and this is a very important time of the year to the Sikh community. This is the time of the year which is known as Vaisakhi and Vaisakhi is a wonderful celebration.

This is a celebration, Mr. Speaker, that we have recognized in the past inside the Legislature. In fact, back in 1999, the Manitoba Legislature passed a resolution in acknowledgement of Sikhism, and I just want to read the last whereas—I mean the last therefore be it resolved. And it stated that, be it further resolved that the Legislative Assembly also recognize the importance of the five K's: the kirpan, a sword representing indomitable spirit; the kesh, unshorn hair, representing a simple life, 'saintlessness' and devotion to God; kara, a steel bangle worn by the sign of the eternity of God; kanga, a wooden comb worn to represent a clean mind and body; and the kaccha, a short breeches representing hygienic living.

Mr. Speaker, I, and I'm sure many, have been touched by this Sikh community over the years. I've had the privilege of representing a wonderful community since 1988, when I was first elected, and it's nice to see celebrations of all sorts, and Vaisakhi is a wonderful celebration. I would encourage all members to visit temples over the weekend. April the 14th, I believe, is the actual celebration date and you'll find that there's activities on that particular day; just check in with your local temple.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

* (11:20)

ORDERS OF THE DAY GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

House Business

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Government House Leader, on House business.

Hon. Bill Blaikie (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I think if you canvass the House, you would see that there would be leave to have the debate on the budget remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Assiniboine, and we could proceed with that agreement.

Mr. Speaker: Is there agreement for when we get to debating the budget debate, because it's standing in the name of the honourable Minister for Healthy Living (Mr. Rondeau), who has 25 minutes

remaining—it has been requested that I ask if there is leave for it to remain standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Healthy Living. Is that agreed to? *[Agreed]*

Okay, so that will remain standing in the name of the honourable Minister for Healthy Living.

**BUDGET DEBATE
(Fifth Day of Debate)**

Mr. Speaker: Okay, I am going to resume adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Ms. Wowchuk) that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, and the proposed motion of the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. McFadyen) in amendment thereto, and the proposed motion of the honourable member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) in subamendment thereto, and, as previously agreed to, it will remain standing in the name of the honourable Minister for Healthy Living (Mr. Rondeau). So that's the government's side. So now I will go to the opposition's side for a speaker, please.

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Minnedosa): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I believe it's an honour to be able to speak to the budget today on behalf of my constituents within the Minnedosa constituency.

But, before I do so, I'd like to just welcome our newest member to the Chamber—the member for Concordia, Matt Wiebe. I want to welcome you to the Chamber. It's an honour for all of us to be elected and to represent our people, our constituents, within this building.

And I've learned lots and I enjoy the process, for the most part, so I want to welcome you to the Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say that I've had the opportunity to speak to many of my constituents within the Minnedosa constituency over the past few weeks with regard to the budget that's been presented, and the concerns and the disappointment shared by many of them has been consistent. And in my critic role for Healthy Living, Youth and Seniors, I'm finding that that general consensus is also followed. There seems to be some very serious concerns about the priorities of this government and where this government tends to be focussing their energy and their time.

Budget 2010 was an opportunity for the NDP to reverse their wasteful decisions. And while I want to

touch on today many of the topics relating to mismanagement by this government, I would like to start with the issue that has been bubbling in the Westman area and that's the Manitoba Hydro's Bipole III line being decided by this government to go down the west side of the province. And that extra cost of \$640 million is something that many people are concerned about.

Another issue: Making the City of Winnipeg remove nitrogen from its waste water instead of focussing on removing phosphorus will cost Winnipeggers \$350 million. And I have family and friends living in—within the city limits, and they have indicated that this is a very serious concern for them and very concerned that this government doesn't seem to have its ducks in a row on an issue such as this.

Forcing unwanted enhanced driver's licences on Manitoba is costing \$14 million and recently learning of additional \$50 million being spent on fixing invalid issued licences—you know, it's interesting that there seems to be more and more issues coming out about these types of irregularities or issues within government. I know my son has just completed his driver's education. He's 15, going to be 16 in a—I guess next week and has just recently completed his driver's ed. And it was really interesting when we, as parents, met with the instructor and we were told, okay, this is one handbook that your son will be using, but there's been some errors in the publication of the book. They used Ontario's information or another provincial government's information, so you're going to have to use this little booklet that they had to print, and it was nicely bound and presented to my child.

But you also have to give a cheque for 25 or 30 dollars to cover the potential loss of one or two of these books, and people were looking at the instructor and questioning him on this. And, you know, he just said, well, that's the way, you know, it seems to be going with the continually bumbling of things that are happening within the government.

So, you know, I just find that everywhere—every time you turn there seems to be another bumble, another mistake being done by this government, and it seems to be costing taxpayers more and more money to be dealing with these issues, Mr. Speaker.

So I just wanted to share that issue, because I think it's important to note that there are big problems, like the \$640-million extra being spent on bipole and the \$350 million on the City of

Winnipeg's removing of nitrogen. But there are also little mistakes that are adding up, Mr. Speaker, and are causing some really serious problems.

What is this budget mean to my constituents? Well, let's start with the total personal taxes and the costs of the following for individuals and families.

We looked at the costs for a single person making \$30,000. They're going to be having to pay an additional \$207, and that's an increase that would cover—and I'm looking at a single person with \$30,000. That could easily cover their registration costs for their—help cover some of the registration costs on their car and other things that could be used, you know, taking a trip to rural Manitoba or taking a trip into Winnipeg. You know, those types of things are going to have to be reconsidered when you have to put out an extra \$200 out of your income.

The cost of a single-earner family of four making \$40,000 went up to \$775. An example: This would cover the grocery costs for possibly a month or help pay for sports activities such as hockey or soccer or volleyball, and we all know that those things do cost money and do take a hit on the pocketbook. A lot of us do travel around the province making sure that our children have the opportunities to enjoy activities, and \$775 would definitely help in that area.

Costs for a single-earner family of four making \$60,000 went up to \$781. Well, this money could easily take away the stress of coming up with the monthly day care fees or after- or before-school programs for a family who are dealing with that. I know that when I was utilizing the day care system when my children were little, that was a major, major expense for our family, and knowing that we could have easily had an extra two to 700 dollars to help us deal with those costs would have been greatly appreciated.

Costs for the two-earner family of four with an income of \$60,000 went up to \$797, and what \$797 could do for a family with a child in university: Well, this could assist in covering the costs associated with two university courses. We all know that university costs money, and we also know that with that, a lot of people who have to travel out of their community to go to university, \$797 could easily cover their rent and some of the costs of living associated with that.

So, you know, costs for the single person making \$50,000 went up \$744, and that would

actually be a great way to help pay down a mortgage or help with the—pay for rent.

So all of these things do have a toll, do take a toll on families and individuals who are trying to make ends meet and are balancing their books and sharpening their pencils and making sure that they can live within their means.

But what this budget also does, it talks about the future, but it also talks—shows broken promises. This budget isn't following through on the NDP's promised tax cuts. The government is failing to deliver on the promises it made in the '08-09 budget about its five-year plan to reduce personal income taxes by 2011: specifically, the first rate to 10.5 percent by 2011, and to increase the cutoff to \$35,000 by 2011, among other commitments.

What the NDP call Manitoba's five-year economic plan is what I've been calling and I think people can relate to, we're calling it a generational theft—a generational theft—Mr. Speaker, because it's going to be a debt that my children and my grandchildren are going to have to deal with because it's so huge and so out of control.

*(11:30)

Running a deficit of over \$500 million, increasing the debt by \$2.53 billion, not planning to return to the balanced budgets until 2014 and re-writing the balanced budget legislation are all misguided actions that our children and grandchildren will be forced to pay for.

The NDP had 12—or 10 years of high transfer payments and a strong economy, but didn't plan for more challenging times. Budget 2010 paves the way for another year of NDP waste and mismanagement, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, one out of every nine jobs in Manitoba is tied in some way to the agriculture sector. I grew up in a agriculture family. My father farmed and my grandfathers farmed as well, and it is a key economic driver.

I live in an urban centre. I—my husband works in Manitoba Hydro. So we are not directly connected to agriculture financially, as we were in the past, unless we consider what my dad still gives my children for spending money or the stories that are being told by my father to just ensure that my children understand the significance and the importance of agriculture to Manitoba. And my children enjoy those stories. They like to know how grain is processed and like to still

visit some of the farm machinery of neighbours of where my parents used to farm.

And I think it's important that we continue to educate children and Manitobans about the significance of agriculture, because I believe that what we're seeing on the government side of the House is an indifference because they don't understand and they don't know of the challenges and the benefit that the agriculture sector has on this province.

Over the past—I'd say 10 years, but more importantly and more specifically, over the past year, I've heard from a large number of agriculture producers with serious issues that have not been addressed by this government, and this continues to snowball and become more significant as I travel my constituency. A majority of the producers I've spoken to at—to have at least seriously considered leaving the industry or have—if not have already done so.

It's interesting. We've lived in Souris since '97-98, and the number of young people that are getting out of agriculture and getting into jobs outside of the industry is staggering. And it's interesting—the people that come talk to me, that I call young farmers, but they're my age, they're in their mid-40s. They're farmers who are feeling that they've failed their parents, their grandparents, because they've left an industry—they're leaving an industry that they're very proud of the work that they've done and the work that their grandparents have done in developing that industry, that business, that home business. And now they see that they can't continue and they take it personally, Mr. Speaker, and I feel that losing a farm that has been in families for generations is something that is very hard for families to take.

And you see many, many families who have worked off the farm—my father was one of them, who had worked also off the farm to maintain the farm—and you go into any business in the community of Souris or Minnedosa or Rivers or Rapid City, you see often the woman in the house of the farming community working in a business. A lot of the MPI brokers within my communities, two or three of them in the office will be women in Souris, and they're connected to agriculture. So we need to respect that and appreciate what families are trying to do to maintain the family farm.

Last year, many grain producers were fortunate and the extended harvest season led to high crop

yields. However, producers throughout the province also faced flood conditions, droughts, and many, especially the livestock farmers, have just come through some of the most economically challenging years in recent history.

So Mr. Speaker, when I speak of the ag sector, I speak for them as private-sector operators as well as the public-sector operators, meaning the, you know, the GO teams and the individuals who are working directly with farmers, people from within the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives. They work extremely hard with the producers in my area, in my constituency and throughout the province, and I think that they do their best in trying to address what they can in dealing with the needs of these individuals.

But what we're seeing, Mr. Speaker, is fee increases related to agriculture—in this last budget, the levy for producers on the exchange transfer of the value of quotas, licences for inputs and Crown land lease rental fees and—I guess if this was a government that cared about the producers and listened to the producers and listened to the front-line workers who are working within the departments of, you know, directly related to agriculture, they would see that the producers are looking for help and support and strategies that will help producers excel in offering their products to market.

Instead, Mr. Speaker, this government, instead, seems to be content in ignoring the opportunities in our ag sector, and this is a detriment of our larger provincial economy.

Mr. Speaker, the budget was silent on important and timely issues such as electronic waste. I live in a community that has taken pride in their recycling program. They have a building; they have great staff. We don't always make it in time to get our recycling product out on the curb so, often, my husband and I, on a Sunday, will go down—or a Saturday—and actually go down and sort it and cycle it ourselves.

So it's open 24/7 and the people that are there are amazing in helping ensure that people, you know, are doing the right thing and working towards it.

And I think that more and more Manitobans are into recycling. But what I found was that, in the budget, there were serious questions as to whether the levy on electronic waste is going to actually be resolved. It seems that that's a fair question and a lot of people know that we go—families go through electronics very quickly. And I think that we need to

know where the government stands on this very important issue and my constituents would be very interested to know what—to know where the government's going on this.

Another very serious issue with regard to agriculture or rural families, acreages and et cetera, is the septic system issue and the rules associated with that.

There doesn't seem to be any mention of assistance to help Manitobans adapt to the recent changes to the on-site waste-water management system regulation. And every municipality that I met with prior to session and through the last few months have indicated this is a very serious issue. We have families that have, you know, wanted to know what government can do because, some areas, this type of a system is just not feasible.

And at one point I did talk to the former minister for Conservation. He said, Oh, Leanne, this will be a—implemented on a situation-by-situation basis. And I thought, okay, that's fair, because some landowners in some situations, well, weren't, you know, what the government is proposing, and other areas, the government will see that this is not acceptable or will work in those areas.

But I see that there's been a reversal or I was misled. I'm not sure, but it doesn't seem to be working that way. And I do believe that there are a number of landowners that are very concerned about the requirements, and, in a lot of ways, this is a very costly—costly—decision by government in that it's costing some landowners up to \$25,000 apiece in trying to meet these requirements when, in some situations, it's questionable whether that is the right way to go.

The budget maintains that commitment to conservation district programs, and I think that's really important. The conservation districts in my community and surrounding areas are a great resource and they provide an educational component to not only producers, but to the children within the communities.

The community in Souris often holds a conservation day, and we have students from all over the school divisions in the western part of the province come and learn about conservation and this is hosted by the local conservation districts. And I think what it does, it raises questions, it educates students on the importance of long-term planning within the conservation area. And I believe that

there's still a tremendous amount of uncertainty over the government's long-term plans for the district. So we're looking forward to the government providing a clear role and responsibility to this department or to these areas.

* (11:40)

With regard to regulatory reform, the NDP government haven't taken any steps really to reduce the regulatory burden for businesses or individuals, and I want to congratulate my colleague, the member for Morris (Mrs. Taillieu) on her private members' bill, which she introduced in 2008 and continues to bring forward. It's The Regulatory Accountability and Transparency Act and, you know, I believe that the NDP, if they were really interested and committed to regulatory reform, they would support this bill. Mavis has—the member for Morris has done a lot of work on this bill, and the bill requires the government to develop formal procedures to make the process for enacting regulations more transparent.

It also requires the government department to develop regulatory reform plans to eliminate unnecessary regulations and encourage restraint in making new regulations. So both the government procedures and department's plans must be made public, and I think that would definitely serve in the best interests of Manitobans.

With regard to rural services, I spoke briefly about MPI and how a number of the staff that work in a lot of the brokers' offices are women who are supporting the family farmer, just, you know, looking at staying within rural Manitoba and working within the communities. Despite the demand for MPI's testing services in rural communities, MPI has been forced to cut these services, negatively impacting individuals, and these are young families, new immigrants and small businesses.

And, we've had a situation—I raised it in the House this session—with regard to young people who are trying to get their class 1 or class 3 driver's licences, and the minister had indicated that there is really no wait times and they can get through rather quickly. Well, I shared a situation where Mylan Dunbar, a young man from Souris who didn't have that experience—and it's actually contrary to what the minister was saying.

So the minister claims that the demand for these services in my communities is trivial, yet the

manager for a single agribusiness in Souris that I was referencing informed me that he had more employees that had made appointments for class 1 and class 3 driver's licences—driver licence tests—than the number the minister quoted. So this is just one employer. So I just—you know, the numbers that are being shared, I question. So I believe that we need to revisit this and just, you know, instead of taking away services and supports in rural Manitoba, we should really be looking at ways to support those services that are there.

Mr. Speaker, seniors are again receiving the short end of the stick on supports or recognition through this budget. They need better long-term care options and quicker placements in personal care home facilities, and these resources need to make available for them in their own communities and not in larger centres miles away from their families and friends.

Auntie Sue, who I've mentioned before in the House, she's 105, 106 years of age and just recently left living on her own and is in—put in—has moved into a personal care home. And I visited with her recently on her birthday in December and I just found that the staff are excellent, they're working hard, but they're just finding it really hard to meet all the demands within that facility, and I just feel that we really need to be looking at better options for the staff and better options for the clients that reside in these facilities, because I believe that people like Auntie Sue, who have contributed immensely to Manitoba, deserve quality care and the best care possible, and I do know that there's ways that we could be looking at supporting those individuals in a better way.

In rural areas, seniors on fixed incomes are being unfairly burdened with extra costs, when selling their homes, to the Onsite Wastewater Management Systems Regulations, which I mentioned earlier. A number of people that are wanting to move into the—into town, as we say it in rural Manitoba, into Souris or Minnedosa, and they're looking at, you know, the extra costs of \$25,000 to address that need of a waste-water management system. So, again, seniors are being hit in that way.

I had the honour—I have the honour of now representing the critic role of Healthy Living, Youth and Seniors and, over a month and a half ago, when I first took over the role, I wrote to the minister asking for a copy of the department's structural organizational chart, and have yet to see such a

document. And you would think that, before a budget was brought forward, that all department granted money would be formally structured or at least be well on that way. So, I'm looking forward to, at some point, hearing back from the minister on this very important note.

I've met with different groups and organizations out there who are very concerned about the restructuring and how that will affect their organization, their dollars, and their supports and services. So I look forward to the government, you know, getting down to my correspondence, at some point, which is a month and a half into their pile of work and see when I can get that information.

The budget fails to provide a comprehensive focus on wellness and prevention care. With health-care costs making up such a huge percentage of this budget, it seems obvious that preventative care in a long-term strategy for cost savings should be a priority.

So I was just made to see that the Partners in Planning for Healthy Living Youth Health Survey, which was released in March, showed some disturbing facts about our province's young people. A fifth of high school students still smoke, and roughly only half get enough physical activity. A fifth have used illegal drugs at least once in the last month, and a third have engaged in binge drinking in the same period.

And the next day there's a snap release that came out after this release and this report was released—and the government—from this government in response to the survey, and the minister says she'll throw money here and there and hopes it will stick, is what, more or less, the message was from this government and this minister.

Personally, I do hope that the government is successful in turning these statistics around because the health and well-being of our young people is critical and crucial and in a sad state. You know, we're fortunate in some communities that there are organized programs and supports for kids to be active and—you know, I'm fortunate enough for my children to be in that state but I have also visited and travelled to communities where this is not an opportunity that is freely realized.

And so I do believe that this government does have a lot of work to do in this area, especially when 4 percent of high school students are eating the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables. And I

know that it's a battle, even in our household, to get them to eat their broccoli and their cauliflower and their carrots and their celery, and I'm not always keen on that either. But I do believe that it's something that we need to, you know, address in a comprehensive way, and make sure that simply throwing more money around or offloading it onto organizations is not the answer.

Mr. Speaker, addictions. Today, we had a healthy debate in the Legislature during question period on the issue of addictions, and with regard specifically to the putting on hold of the Magnus Centre, which would be a comprehensive service within one building, that would provide services for addictions. And I believe that the government has dropped the ball on this. I believe that this is a service that was being developed with experts within the field. They were meeting regularly over the last few years and I believe that they had a strong vision of how services could be provided for individuals, and in a sense supporting families, who obviously are dealing through addictions.

So I would say that this government should be working with addiction services providers in a more leadership way. It doesn't appear to be something that is happening at this point, and we encourage them to reconsider and to move forward.

I'd raised questions recently with regard to residential treatment beds and wait times within the system, and if we don't address these issues we are going to see an increase in hospital visits and increased use of the judicial system. We need to provide the supports to individuals who need it now, Mr. Speaker.

We need to invest in the front-line addiction treatment providers who are already on the ground, getting the job done. And we need to co-ordinate services so that addicts from all areas of the province and from a variety of different backgrounds can access the care that is appropriate to them.

* (11:50)

Mr. Speaker, we've talked about health care, and I've raised an issue with a Saskatchewan man who was visiting family in Manitoba and waiting for surgery a week, for heart surgery, and then running into challenges and issues with regard to the supports that would be available for him to have the surgery.

Mr. Speaker, a critical incident review is being done, and that, obviously, when you do that there is some serious challenges and issues. And I guess, you

know, Manitobans are getting tired of this government saying: We'll fix that; we'll fix that; we'll deal with this; we'll deal with that. They're reactive, and what families are wanting is this government to show that they are proactive and are dealing with this issue. And I think that the Alan Powers family are wanting to see that happen sooner rather than later so another Manitoban doesn't have to deal with the pain and the loss that this family is feeling, a loss that, in many ways, they feel shouldn't happen and needs to be addressed, and they need to be assured that this will not happen again.

So, in closing, Mr. Speaker, I just want to say thank you for the opportunity to put some things on the record with regard to this budget, given some advice to the government on ways that they can move forward.

But, again, I will continue to represent the Minnedosa constituency and bring questions forward that I think need to be asked within the Legislature. Thank you.

Hon. Bill Blaikie (Minister of Conservation): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to speak to the budget today, and I'm particularly pleased to have the opportunity to speak today, on April the 9th, which is Vimy Ridge Day, and also a very unique day in Canadian history when we—I think celebrate would be the wrong word, but when we mark or commemorate the end of an era, the end of the era that ended with the death of John Babcock, otherwise known as Jack Babcock.

And the fact—and what we're doing today across the country, Mr. Speaker, is, in a way, a response to the humility of Mr. Babcock, that he didn't want to have a state funeral or anything like that in his particular honour, and that humility on his part is being respected by the Canadian government, and instead, what we're doing today is marking the end of an era and the end of our ability to know, first-hand, members of that generation of Canadians who participated in and who served in the First World War.

Ms. Marilyn Brick, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

And this has a special significance for me, Madam Deputy Speaker, because I feel connected to the—to this particular day for a couple of reasons, which I'll want to just to share with the House before I talk in particular about the budget.

I had the great honour of being there for the 75th anniversary pilgrimage to Vimy Ridge in 1992, and

so that would mean that 18 years ago, today, I was at the memorial in Vimy Ridge. And I had the great honour and privilege at that time of being there with 14 Vimy vets who were part of the Canadian delegation, and had the opportunity to spend basically sort of a week and a half to two weeks with these gentlemen who were ranged in age from 93, at that time, to 104.

The 93-year-old was known as "the Kid" by other members of the delegation, and the Kid was a guy by the name of Frank Bourne who I was one of the Vimy vets on that—in that event that I was able to befriend and spend some time with. It turned out that he—even though he lived in Vancouver in 1992, he was originally from Winnipeg and had worked for the CNR as a car man, and had been active, or present, during the events of the 1919 strike, and was able to recount for me some of the things that went on at that time that he had witnessed first-hand. Frank, at the time, was almost blind, but he could see shadows, and it was a great opportunity for me to be with him and to be with so many others of those Vimy vets, all of whom, now, are no longer with us.

I also feel connected, Madam Deputy Speaker, to the—to this special day because, as with many others in this House, I'm sure the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. McFadyen) cited earlier today that his great-grandfather, I believe he said, had fought at the Battle of Vimy Ridge and had been wounded.

There are others in the House. I know the honourable member from Burrows, his grandfather was at Vimy Ridge and, probably, if we canvass the House we would find that there were a number of us whose grandparents or grandfather or great-grandfather, depending on how old we are, might have participated in the Battle of Vimy Ridge, or in some other significant battle in that great and horrible event that the First World War was in terms of human destruction.

My grandfather was at Vimy Ridge with the 1st Canadian Mounted Rifles, a regiment that was raised in Manitoba and Saskatchewan in response to the creation of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, and went, was—had only arrived in Canada in 1911 from Scotland, married in June of 1914 and by the fall of 1914 was on his way back across the ocean as part of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, the 1st Canadian Mounted Rifles, with his brother, his older brother, Jim Blaikie. And they were a part of the very unique outfit in the Canadian Army, or for that matter in Canadian military history, because I think they were

the only—it's the only mounted pipe band in the history of the Canadian military. And I have a picture of the 1st Canadian Mounted Rifles pipes and drums on horseback in front of the Brandon barracks in the early part of the—their training before they went off to France.

And so I was very pleased to discover when I was at Vimy Ridge in 1992 that the tunnels which are preserved there, and which are now part of the park, a park—the land of which, you might say, is actually Canadian territory, because when they created the Vimy Ridge Memorial, they actually—the Government of France ceded the ownership of the land on which the memorial is—stands to the Government of Canada. So you're actually on Canadian territory when you're there. And the tunnels which are preserved at Vimy Ridge are the exact same tunnels, by coincidence, I just—I did the research, and they're the exact same tunnels that my grandfather and his brother would have passed through on the morning of April the 9th, 1917. They are the tunnels that were used by the 3rd Division and the 1st Canadian Mounted Rifles were part of the 3rd Division, 8th Brigade.

So I thought it was not only interesting and kind of neat that those were the same tunnels. But I felt that even more so later, a number of years later, when my eldest daughter, Rebecca, went on to serve as a guide at Vimy Ridge, and she was actually taking visitors to the Vimy Ridge Memorial through the same tunnels that her great-grandfather would have proceeded through on the morning of April the 9th, 1917.

So that's something, Madam Deputy Speaker, I wanted to put on the record. It's—it is very, very sad to think that that generation is no longer with us, remarkable that they hung on as long as they did, and particularly in Mr. Babcock's case, of living to be 109 years old. When you think of what they went through, the terrible abyss of destruction, the mud and the blood and of the trenches and the—just the sheer human destruction of it.

One of the things that I also saw when I was there, Madam Deputy Speaker, was I had occasion not just to visit the Vimy Memorial but, of course, a great many memorials all around that area, but also to go to Beaumont-Hamel, which is the Newfoundland memorial, where the Royal Newfoundland Regiment, on the first day of the Battle of the Somme, July the 1st, 1916, was almost completely wiped out.

* (12:00)

I think, if memory serves me correctly, there were some 900-and-some members of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment who answered the call that morning, and the next morning when they had roll call, there was only about 60 of them. And this is a day that is remembered.

We might celebrate July 1 as Canada Day in the rest of Canada, but, in Newfoundland, July 1 has an entirely different meaning to the people of Newfoundland. It's a time when an entire generation of Newfoundlanders was wiped out in one day, that morning at Beaumont-Hamel.

And the terrible burden that they bore, Madam Deputy Speaker, also in terms of when they returned home: they returned home to an economic situation that wasn't all that terrific, and which resulted in the case of Winnipeg to the events that we know as the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919. But also, keeping in mind what they witnessed, and I often think of this in terms of my grandfather who was, as I—who was a piper. And pipers, when they weren't fighting and when they weren't piping, they were often called upon to be stretcher bearers. So you can imagine if it was your job not just to be part of it all and to keep moving but to carry literally the wounded and the dead and the dying and the pieces of, off the field. And that was in a day before anyone knew anything about post-traumatic stress disorder. People were just expected to suck it up. You know, chin up, chest out, and it was a time when there was a lot less understanding of the effects that that kind of experience, especially an experience over four years, could have on people, and there were many people of that generation who were damaged psychologically, if not—as well as physically by that experience. And I sometimes think that we underappreciate exactly what they went through and how little understanding that their own age was able to extend to them because there was this attitude.

So that's just a few reflections of mine, Madam Deputy Speaker, on this day, April 9, the end of an era but also the 93rd anniversary of Vimy Ridge.

I might perhaps just tell another little anecdote, Madam Deputy Speaker, about that trip on the way home. Well, before we got on the plane to come back with all the Vimy vets, I bought a bottle of Armagnac, which is a French brandy, comes in a wooden box, and on the way home, I got all the Vimy vets to sign their name on the wooden box and I said, the good Lord willing and the creek don't rise,

that on the hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, I would, presumably with the help of others, drink the brandy in their honour, and they all said: That's a good idea, kid. We don't expect to be around on the hundredth anniversary of Vimy Ridge, but it gives us some comfort to know that you'll be doing that. So the box and the bottle and the occasion awaits and 18 years down, seven to go.

So, at this point, I'd like to turn my attention to—and I thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker, for not being called to relevance with respect to the budget, but, you know, sometimes budget speeches can be wide ranging and I was relevant in terms of the significance of the day.

I'd like to begin by extending my congratulations, as other members of the Legislature already have, to the new member from Concordia and to hope that he has a long and productive life in politics. I happen to know the new member from Concordia very well, and I know that he will be a very dedicated MLA indeed and that he knows the community that he represents and he will be a great asset not only to our caucus but also to the public life of Manitoba. Our constituencies border each other, my constituency of Elmwood and his of Concordia, and, in fact, after the boundary changes, some of what is now Concordia will be in Elmwood and that sort of thing, and so we have a lot of constituents' or community interests and concerns in common. And one of the things that we both welcome in the budget was the inclusion of a certain area of Elmwood in the Neighbourhoods Alive! program. This was something that, you know, I think, frankly, was something that could have happened years earlier. Certainly, some of the things that—some of the social and economic indicators that are characteristic of some neighbourhoods in Elmwood are—point to the fact that these are neighbourhoods that need the kind of attention and the kind of investment that Neighbourhoods Alive! has been able to deliver in other communities in Winnipeg, and I'm just very grateful that we were able to secure that kind of beginning in Elmwood.

To have the Neighbourhoods Alive! program, it's something that became more obvious, I guess you might say, during the course of the by-election last year. Not just to me but to others who were there helping in the campaign, coming back and saying, you know, this would be just—this is the kind of neighbourhood that could really benefit from Neighbourhoods Alive! In fact, I think I remember, in particular, the Minister of Justice (Mr. Swan)

saying that to me as he came into the headquarters one night.

So, very pleased that we were able to do that, and I know the community is very pleased, and they see it as the beginning of a process by which more attention might be paid to the needs of that particular community. And so it's always nice when you feel that you can get something accomplished for your constituency, Madam Deputy Speaker, and to see that in the budget as it was, is certainly something that I'm very pleased about, and I know my constituents will be very pleased about.

The other thing, of course, Madam Deputy Speaker, was the inclusion of the money for the Disraeli—for the new Disraeli Bridge, something which, a year ago, was a matter of some uncertainty and controversy because people were concerned that the plan which originally had been developed was going to see the bridge shut down for 16 months. It was only going to be a repair of the existing bridge. There wasn't going to be a new bridge, and people were very, very concerned about that plan. And it was one of the commitments that I made during the by-election was that the Province would step up to the plate and make sure that the residents, not just of Elmwood, but of northeast Winnipeg, the residents of Concordia and Rossmere and River East and all East St. Paul, anyone who uses Henderson Highway or uses other—or other areas that might be affected by a traffic being stopped on Henderson Highway. So I'm very pleased that even the member for Springfield (Mr. Schuler) seems to be pleased if noise means anything.

So the—we were able to invest in an entirely new bridge, not just a repaired bridge that would last for 35 years, but an entirely new bridge that would last for 75 years. That was one of the conditions of the provincial funding. It's going to be a new bridge, and it's going to be accompanied by an active transportation bridge, active transportation being what we now call cycling and walking, Madam Deputy Speaker. And so, in the end, it all turned out very, very well, and I feel very good about having kept the promise that the then premier made to the constituents of Elmwood and that the—and that I made to the constituents of Elmwood as, first of all, a candidate in the by-election, and then as their MLA, that we would deal with that particular situation. So, two concerns raised and two concerns looked after.

As far as the budget, in particular, well, I've already been talking about the budget, Madam

Deputy Speaker, but as to more controversial aspects of the budget, one of the things that strikes me as odd is the complaint offered by members of the opposition that somehow what the government is asking of the Legislature, both in terms of this budget and of the need to amend the balanced budget legislation, is something out of the ordinary. What would be out of the ordinary would be if this government decided not to run a deficit. What would be out of the ordinary would be if we decided to cut front-line services, to stay within the balanced budget legislation and do the very things that we know Manitobans don't want us to do. In fact, all we are asking for, both in terms of the budget itself and in terms of whatever amendments might be made through the legislation, is to have the freedom as a government to act in the way that all governments across the country, whether they be provincial or for that matter, the federal government are acting.

*(12:10)

The federal government, the Conservative federal government, Madam Deputy Speaker, could not run the deficit and have the five-year plan or whatever it is that they have to deal with their deficit if they had to act within the constraints of the balanced budget legislation that we have here in this province. And so all we're asking is that—and we're asking this on behalf of Manitobans, not ourselves—that we not be asked to be one of the few governments in the country who have to deal with the effects of the recession, hopefully now ending—recession hopefully now ending. But, you know, these things continue to have their effect.

All we're asking is that the government of Manitoba not be asked to deal with this with one hand tied behind their back, or perhaps two hands tied behind their back depending on how severe you regard the effect of this legislation. So what we are asking for, Madam Deputy Speaker, is basically perfectly normal—perfectly normal—that a government wanted to maintain front-line services, continue to invest in infrastructure, and continue to move forward as perhaps only—and, I think, you know, probably if you look close enough at the budget in Saskatchewan, you'll find that they're probably running more of a deficit than they say they are. Certainly, that's the claim being made by the opposition there, a very reputable opposition, I might add.

So, but not only are they running a deficit, but they're cutting front-line services left and right. You

know, when I looked at departments, you know, whether it comes to Conservation or Agriculture or—I'll give you an example. I know you'd like to have an example over there. You know, let's take—we look for savings. I know we did in my department. We looked at things and we saw a particular program. Well, maybe we could reduce that a bit here and reduce that a bit there because we know Manitobans want us to look for savings so that we have the money to keep investing even more in health care and education and those kinds of things. So we had to do some shifting according to priorities, but, in Saskatchewan, what did they do? Well, they just wiped out whole programs altogether.

Dutch elm disease in Regina and Saskatoon, oh, there's—what's the Saskatchewan approach? Just wipe it out. Municipalities, you're on your own. And yet this is the ethos, if you like, that has been constantly put forward in the House by the opposition as something that we should imitate.

Well, we're not going to imitate Saskatchewan, Madam Deputy Speaker. We're going to do it the Manitoba way or at least the Manitoba-NDP way, which is to maintain front-line services, to continue to invest, and to respect what we feel are the overwhelming desire of Manitobans that we not repeat the mistakes of the 1990s when members opposite were in government and they were faced with difficult economic circumstances, and they tried to cut their way out of the problems that they were in and they left us with an incredible social, economic, ecological, and health-care deficit that the NDP government has basically spent an entire decade trying to make up and has made up in many respects, and has even gone beyond so.

One of the other things that I'd like to address, Madam Deputy Speaker—I'm not sure how much time I have left.

An Honourable Member: More.

Mr. Blaikie: More? Okay, unaccustomed as I am to public speaking, is the panag—the pana—well, you know, it sounds like speaking, it sounds like ranting to the opposition, you know, like—it reminds me of something that—of an old anecdote about John Diefenbaker, actually. You know, when somebody said, give 'em hell, John, and he said, I don't. I just tell the truth and it sounds like hell to the other guys. Sounds like a rant over there, but we know here it's a, you know, a liturgy of the truth, so to speak, about what's actually going on.

One of the things that very pleased me greatly as the Minister of Conservation about the budget, Madam Deputy Speaker, was the inclusion in it of the—and we brought in a bill to bring this into effect—is the \$10-million trust fund for Pimachiowin Aki for the project on the east side of Lake Winnipeg, which, we hope, within the required number of years, will actually lead to a certain area of the east side of Manitoba and part of Ontario being designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. We believe that this is a very, very important development for Manitoba, but particularly for the communities in that area, and that this holds a great deal of promise for the communities that are part of the Pimachiowin Aki project, and, of course, we're working very closely with them and with others who are interested in preserving both ecologically but also culturally, because if this Pimachiowin Aki is approved, it won't just be an environmental site. It won't just be because of the natural heritage of the area. It will be because of the cultural heritage of the area. And that's an important aspect of what is being achieved through this particular process, Madam Deputy Speaker.

And I say, we will work with others who are genuinely interested in preserving the boreal forest in that area and beyond, because it's right in that area on the east side of Lake Winnipeg. If you look at the map of the boreal forest stretching all the way from Alaska to eastern Canada and perhaps even beyond, it's right on the east side of Lake Winnipeg that you see the greatest concentration of the boreal forest—east and stretching up the whole east side of Lake Winnipeg.

And that's why, Madam Deputy Speaker, we're not building the hydro line, the Bipole III, down the east side of Lake Winnipeg, because we don't want to disturb that one remaining, that absolutely unique boreal forest that the whole world will come to value even more than it already does when it becomes that UNESCO World Heritage Site and which the whole world values more and more as we look at that—at the need to—at the effects of climate change. We look at the boreal forest and all the peat lands associated with it as a place where carbon is stored and where carbon should not be disturbed, where carbon should not be emitted from. So we're looking a huge carbon sink there as well. A great many reasons for us to do the right thing, but also a great many reasons for others to object if we didn't do the right thing and we did the wrong thing, and we built the bipole down the east side of Lake Winnipeg instead of down the west side, as is now proposed and is going ahead.

Why? Because we have those commitments to make. We've got a process to go through, but we shouldn't kid ourselves that those who advocate that we start all over again and that we seriously consider running the bipole down the east side of Lake Winnipeg are not just encouraging us to be part of an environmental act that the whole world would come to regret.

But they are encouraging us to put at risk that \$20-billion worth of export contracts that are safeguarded by the expenditure of that extra 600, 540, whatever it is, million dollars, because we don't know exactly. Nobody knows for sure that would—that it will cost to put that Bipole III down the west side of Manitoba, creating, I might add, Madam Deputy Speaker, opportunities for transmission of hydro power to Saskatchewan, a possibility that arose out of a joint Cabinet meeting in Yorkton between some members of the Manitoba Cabinet and the Premier (Mr. Selinger) and some members of the Saskatchewan Cabinet and the Premier. And it was out of that meeting that came an understanding that we needed to explore the possibilities of exporting hydro to Saskatchewan. I hope not something that members opposite would object to—

An Honourable Member: It has no relevance to a hydro line on the east side.

Mr. Blaikie: —because—it does. I hear the honourable member saying it has no relevant—I can understand that he doesn't like the idea that we might be looking at transmitting hydro power to Saskatchewan. There'd have to be some investments in the technological capacity to do that. It's down the road a bit. But imagine if all those coal plants in Saskatchewan that are now emitting greenhouse gases could be replaced by hydro power, Madam Deputy Speaker. I wonder what the honourable member—or perhaps it's the Hydro critic, I'm not sure, from the opposition—what is it they've got against clean energy?

* (12:20)

You know, so, you know, we're looking at a premium that's going to be paid in order to ensure that \$20 billion of export contracts, and in order to ensure the pristineness, if you like, of the boreal forest on the east side of Lake Winnipeg, and to see and hear the honourable members spending over and over and over again that money that's going to be spent on the Bipole III and pretending that somehow that's part of the budget, that's money that hasn't even been spent yet, if it is spent, it'll be spent by Hydro.

It'll be paid for by Hydro out of export contracts. It's not money that can go to hospitals. It's not money that can go to addiction centres. It's not money—it'll be—Madam Deputy Speaker, I know what they're going to do. By the time the budget debate is over, these people will have spent that money 10 times over—10 times over, because that's all they've got to say, because if they had anything else to say about the budget, they would have said it by now, but they haven't.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): It's always a tough act to follow. I'm sure his colleagues in Ottawa were hearing his voice ringing even in the Chamber there with the bell from the—quite a different statement that the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Blaikie) made today than he did after the budget when he said that he didn't enjoy the budget. But that was his first statement that he made to the media after the budget came down a couple of weeks ago, and now I gather that he's been whipped into shape by his party and told that that's not how they do things in the New Democratic caucus, that they never are able to speak their mind and we've seen that in fact in the past, Madam Deputy Speaker.

I remember the would-be leader of the party, the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), going out during the leadership campaign and talking about how crime was skyrocketing here in the province of Manitoba, and he had it right. The crime is skyrocketing, and it was one of the most true statements that I've heard from a New Democrat on that side of the House in a long time, and it may have garnered him the one delegate—it may have garnered him the one delegate that he got in the Steinbach riding who went in support of him at the convention, because, certainly, people appreciate truth and honesty in Steinbach, and the fact that the member for Thompson stood up and said that crime was skyrocketing and out of control no doubt got him that one member. And when he runs for leadership again, maybe not too far in the distant future, if he makes that statement again, he might actually get two delegates out of Steinbach and we'll look forward to seeing that happen.

I know the—you know, the now current Minister of Justice (Mr. Swan), the would-be leader of the NDP Party, also made statements at that time about putting the—and it's relevant in the fact that the Minister of Conservation talked about the hydro line, and right beside him in the House is the member who is going to run as the leader on reviewing that decision of moving the hydro line from the west side

over to the east side. His colleague, his seat colleague, Madam Deputy Speaker, was running on that. Of course, that was before he got that knock at the door in the middle of the night from Eugene Kostyra, pulling him out of the leadership race, saying you have to resign or the member for Thompson might actually win, so you have to get out of the race. And one wonders what it would have been like if he would have continued on in the race. You might have had a true discussion about putting on that kind of a policy, about moving the hydro line from the west side to the east side.

You know, the member for Justice was on the right track, and, maybe the two of them—I know they've been on opposite sides on the leadership race—but they should caucus together. I'm not sure if the New Democrats still caucus together, if they have separate caucuses, or how that works, but if they are still caucusing together, I think the member for Thompson and the member for Minto (Mr. Swan) need to get together and the member for Thompson can tell the Attorney General (Mr. Swan) how crime is skyrocketing and the member for Minto can tell the member for Thompson how the hydro line has to go from the west side over to the east side and maybe there'll be some progress on that side.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

And while he's at it, he can talk to his colleague in Cabinet, the Minister of Conservation, who sits beside—whom—who has a completely different opinion about where the hydro line should go. So, if they would get together, if they would discuss these things as a caucus, maybe they would have a unified position even if it wasn't the correct position.

That would go with the economy as well, because, you know, you have different statements, and it was a bit of a puzzle, as we looked at the budget, about what problem it was that the government was trying to solve, because those who would follow the goings-on of the Legislature—and I know that doesn't always capture the imagination of every Manitoban—but those who did would remember the statement for the former member for Concordia just a few months ago, standing up, the then-premier, and saying that Manitoba was the economic engine of Canada. And he was followed not long after, you know, followed right in line, the member for La Verendrye (Mr. Lemieux), the minister of whatever he's minister for now. I can't keep track. He's got more business cards than Staples, Mr. Speaker. But the minister for whatever

he is minister of, stood up and said that the economy was booming, following his leader. And then we heard with the budget, the new Premier (Mr. Selinger) stand up and say, well, it was the worst recession since the Great Depression.

All of a sudden they were new deal New Democrats. You know, they had to bring in a completely new way of governing because the recession had wreaked havoc over the land of Manitoba. And Manitobans who follow the goings-on would have been saying, well, how is it that we went from being the economic engine of Canada to a booming economy to being in the midst of one of the greatest recessions since the Great Depression?

I mean, even today, and even within the context of one question period, you'll have ministers who will stand up like the Minister of Healthy Living (Mr. Rondeau) and say, you know, in these tough economic times, these are the difficult decisions we make. And then you have a backbencher stand up in question period and say to another minister, can you tell us how great the economy's doing in relation to employment. I mean, which is it, Mr. Speaker? They don't seem to be on the same page. They don't seem to be talking to each other, and yet they want people to vote for a budget that projects a deficit over the next five years, and it doesn't even contain all of the spending in it.

I mean, we could talk about the stadium. We'll get into that more, I think, when I continue on with this. *[interjection]*—oh, you know, I know that the member for Minto (Mr. Swan), I think, probably the greatest disappointment that he had with the leadership campaign was that he missed the Labour Day Classic as a result of trying to run for leadership, and didn't get to go off to Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and I regret that for him.

I mean, there are many people with—on both sides of the House who would be considering themselves to be Bomber fans, who consider themselves to be Bomber supporters. I remember back in the '80s, under the time of Warren Moon, when he was starting off with the Eskimos—going to the Bomber stadium and seeing Warren Moon play the first game that I ever saw at the Winnipeg Stadium. *[interjection]* Well, you know, I don't mind talking about the '80s and the time of Howard Pawley. We seem to have regressed back to that time. But there was a few happy moments, even in

the '80s, at the Bomber stadiums under the powerhouse there.

So there's a lot of people, or fans of the Bombers and sports fans, a lot of them that I talk to, but they come with the same sentiment. They say, well, sure, it'd be great to have a new stadium but not at any cost. You know, there has to be some protection of taxpayers. There's many municipalities and jurisdictions who go through this debate. Down in Minnesota, not far from here in Minneapolis, they're having a great stadium debate about what they're going to do about the Dome and whether or not they're or not they're going to build a new stadium for the Minnesota Vikings.

And you have a lot of debate going on about how do you protect taxpayers. You know, they don't just build it at any cost. They don't just say, well, we need to keep the Vikings, so we'll go cook up a deal with somebody about some mall that may or not happen. We'll take the money from school taxes, and we'll throw it all into a new stadium for the Vikings. They actually have a democratic debate about what would be best for taxpayers. Well, that's not what happened here. Here we have the Premier (Mr. Selinger), at some point during spring break, quickly rushing to a deal that essentially has taxpayers paying the whole load for the new stadium, every penny—wasn't in the budget, wasn't a debate, wasn't an answer, wasn't asked. And so you have a lot of people who are strong football fans who come and say, well, you know, sure it would be great to have a

new stadium, but at what cost? Is this the best deal we could have got? In fact, we supported the previous deal that was negotiated by the former premier, the now ambassador to the United States.

Well, I know that this aggravates the Minister of Education (Ms. Allan). You know, she chirps from her seat, but I wish the Minister of Education would have been as vocal in Cabinet when the money was being taken from schools and from students than she is here in the House. Now she's found her voice. Mr. Speaker; now she's found her voice when she presumably sat silently at the Cabinet table—that the Premier went and strong-armed her and said: We're going to take money out of schools; we're going to take money from students. We're going to put it into the football stadium instead of sticking with the original deal which wasn't a bad deal for taxpayers.

And so, I mean, it's just further proof that this Premier is nothing like the last premier. You know, and in some ways, I'm glad the—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have 21 minutes remaining, and it will also remain standing in the name of the honourable Minister for Healthy Living (Mr. Rondeau), who will have 25 minutes remaining.

The time now being 12:30, this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. on Monday.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, April 9, 2010

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