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PROCEEDINGS

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Fortieth Legislature

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, April 8, 2014

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 and know it with certainty and accomplish it perfectly for the glory and honour of Thy name and for the welfare of all our people. Amen.

Good morning, everyone. Please be seated.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Speaker: Are we ready to proceed with Bill 203?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No? Are we ready to proceed with Bill 204?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No? All right. Are we ready to proceed with Bill 205? *[Agreed]*

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 205—The Seniors' Rights Act

Mr. Speaker: Okay. We'll now call Bill 205, The Seniors' Rights Act.

Mr. Cliff Cullen (Spruce Woods): I move, seconded by the member for Agassiz (Mr. Briese), that Bill 205, The Seniors' Rights Act, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Cullen: It's indeed a pleasure to have some debate on Bill 205 this morning. I think it's a very important piece of legislation. This particular legislation was introduced previously to the House. Hopefully, now that the government's side of the House has an opportunity to have a look at it and maybe we can move this particular legislation on to committee and get some feedback from Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, the—I just want to talk a little about the preamble in this particular bill, and as we know, the right to an adequate standard of living is a human right enshrined by the United Nations. All citizens are entitled to social and economic security. And we know many seniors live on fixed incomes and many seniors are victims of physical and emotional or financial abuse.

And this particular legislation talks in regard to that preamble, and it's our intent to bring forward legislation that would protect Manitoba seniors and protect their rights to security. So we believe it's an important piece of legislation.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, Manitoba seniors have been very important in helping build and shape the province of Manitoba and, in fact, all of Canada, but particularly they've been very important in Manitoba. And I think we as a society have an obligation to make sure that our Manitobans and our senior Manitobans are protected and that they have those services that we all feel as Canadians that they should have available to them.

And I think, really, it's about dealing with Manitoba seniors with respect, and I believe we, certainly as legislators, should be looking at that when we look at this legislation in terms of how we actually deal with Manitoba seniors, Mr. Speaker.

Unfortunately, from time to time, we do hear situations of elder abuse or where elders are being taken advantage of. Certainly, there's a reference to the financial aspect of it, and it's something that I think we have to be more cognizant of as we go forward. And we hear more and more stories of different ways that Manitoba seniors are being taken advantage of in terms of financially.

Mr. Speaker, you know many seniors in Manitoba have family that have the ability to keep an eye on their relatives so that, you know, they don't fall through the cracks, that they have someone to keep an eye on them in terms of providing food and shelter and medication and all those things that are required. But many other Manitoba seniors aren't so lucky, and they sometimes, as I say, kind of fall through the cracks. They don't have people to watch over them. And I think that's where we, as a society,

have an obligation to Manitoba seniors to keep an eye on those seniors that maybe aren't as fortunate to have family and friends to keep an eye on them.

I do want to talk in particular for a few minutes on the health-care side of it, which obviously health care is very important to Manitoba seniors. And we see many Manitoba seniors migrate to centres where they think they are going to have access to a reasonable health care in their senior years, Mr. Speaker. So it certainly does have an impact to some of the rural and remote areas in Manitoba. We see some of the population moving out of those areas because they don't have the health care that they think they are going to require as they age.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to relate to even some of my communities now. We have a number of communities who have emergency rooms that are closed. I think the—it's at least 19 emergency rooms across rural Manitoba that are closed, and I think that number is growing. And, certainly, in addition to that, we have a number of facilities and emergency rooms that are sharing on-call services. And I know I've raised the issue in the Chamber and question period.

We have communities such as Deloraine, Boissevain and Killarney, which are carry-cover a very large geographical area, and those three facilities are sharing on-call services on a one-in-three rotation. So it's forcing Manitobans and, in particular, Manitoba seniors to travel long distances to gain access to emergency room services.

And as you know, Mr. Speaker, a lot of Manitoba seniors aren't as mobile as they once were. So even getting access to an emergency room, and sometimes even to a family doctor, can be a challenge for Manitoba seniors, and I think that's something that we should have a look at in terms of delivering health care, you know, across Manitoba.

It's—Manitoba seniors certainly—and when issues arise, it's something that really plays on their minds too. And if they're having issues with obtaining health care in a certain region, it's something that really, really plays on them, and it makes it even more frustrating for them. And it becomes not only a physical health issue, but a lot of times it will develop into a mental health issue because they are focused on that one particular issue. A lot of seniors don't have other activities to keep their minds engaged, and as such, they get focused on some of the negative things, Mr. Speaker. And that certainly

exacerbates the problem, and we do see that from time to time.

Certainly we have challenges in obtaining health care, not just from the emergency side but also sometime—some areas—actually family physicians, so it certainly is a challenge for Manitoba seniors.

* (10:10)

The other thing that we're looking at, too, is certainly in the personal-care home side of it, and I know again—and I'm looking in my particular area, in my region, where some of the emergency facilities or hospitals that have been closed have been converted into personal-care homes. The intent, of course, was these would be temporary personal-care homes or transition facilities. But unfortunately what's happened is they've turned into more permanent personal-care homes, and what we're finding is these seniors are being transported sometimes two and three hours to personal-care homes or enclosed hospitals to be used as personal-care homes. And not only is it extremely disruptive for the individual that has to be transported, it's certainly an inconvenience, at the least, for the family that wants to go and visit that elderly person. They may have to travel two and three hours to visit their relatives who are located in a personal-care home many miles and sometimes two or three hours away, Mr. Speaker. So it's very concerning that we make sure that we have facilities available for our seniors.

Clearly, I think we would all like a nice transition, if you will, before we get to the personal-care-home phase in our lives. Hopefully there's—we would like to see making sure that there is assisted living facilities available for Manitobans so that they don't have to make that direct transition to a personal-care home. Because also it puts a lot of pressure on the personal-care-home beds that do exist right now. So if there was a real effective assisted living program throughout Manitoba, it would certainly take a lot of pressure off the personal-care-home beds, and I think it would certainly increase the life of members as well, Mr. Speaker. It's something about, you know, our respect. It's about life conditions and treating Manitoba seniors with respect, and I think that's very important.

The other issue I just want to raise in my last minute or so here, Mr. Speaker, is the way the—I feel the NDP have not treated Manitobans with respect here in the last couple of years. Certainly, before the last election there was a promise to Manitoba seniors

that they wouldn't raise taxes, that there'd be no increase in the provincial sales tax. Of course, we found that to be wrong. They also promised Manitoba seniors that there would be some help with their property tax rebate. That has not come to fruition yet. Then we've heard another promise in this budget that this may come forward, but it hasn't happened at this point in time. We've also heard the government make promises to Manitoba seniors that they would develop a dementia and an Alzheimer's program, a comprehensive program for Manitoba seniors, and, unfortunately, that hasn't come forward either.

So, certainly, when Manitoba—we talk about Manitoba seniors, under this particular legislation I don't think the current NDP government have been treating Manitoba seniors with respect. So that's why we are encouraged and are bringing forward legislation like this to protect their rights, Mr. Speaker, and I hope the members opposite will take this particular legislation under advisement and hopefully we can move it to committee and hear what Manitobans have to say about it.

Thank you very much.

Hon. Sharon Blady (Minister of Healthy Living and Seniors): I always enjoy the opportunity to talk about all the wonderful things that are happening for seniors and the respect that we do owe them because of what they have done. As someone with folks in her—in their 70s and 80s, I know the contributions that they have made, as well as those of my grandparents and great grandparents in terms of the establishment of this province.

And I really have to say I'm enjoying the timing of this piece of legislation because yesterday was the day that we were able to launch the new Seniors' Guide, the 2014-15 Seniors' Guide. And what was interesting about that launch, which we were able to do at the Good Neighbours Active Living Centre, was we launched it and we also had on display there all the different seniors' guides that have been out since 1981, and it's been interesting to see how the guide has evolved.

And I'd like to say that this year, based on the feedback that we got from many organizations that either used the guide, are listed in the guide and a variety of seniors organizations throughout the province, we've made some improvements in it that really make it a much more user-friendly document. Everything from the increased readability with a

higher contrast print, we've got coloured tabs in there and we've got a phenomenal list of organizations.

And I guess that's the other part that I find amazing about this. It doesn't matter how familiar you are with seniors issues, there is something new that you can learn in that guide. There is a new service, there is somebody somewhere in the province that you might not have known about that is able to help with seniors. And I think that's the one thing that I love about the guide, Mr. Speaker, is it's not just for seniors. It's for anybody in Manitoba who has a senior in their life because you never know when there might be some information that they're looking for that you can help them. It's one—it's something that I keep by my phone, as well as having at my folks' place, because I never know when I might be able to, you know, give them a hand. There's something new that I can learn. But this is the kind of thing that to me does speak to the respect and dedication that we have to the seniors in our province.

And I have to admit, Mr. Speaker, I also come from a perspective where I often prefer to use the term elders. And I think of it in the traditional indigenous context of an elder being someone within the community that has wisdom; it is someone that you go to for advice. And so, for me, one of the greatest acts of respect for our elders is in the way that they have built and done things and laid groundwork for us. We do, in fact, stand on their shoulders in terms of where we have taken things.

And I'd like to thank those that have come before in terms of the work on the Seniors' Guide, the seniors themselves and especially organizations like the Manitoba Council on Aging. They are wonderful partners. Dave Schellenberg is the chair, and he is a great person to work with. But it's a larger community group. And that was the one thing about launching the Seniors' Guide, was getting the feedback from all of those folks that were present yesterday about the things that they are happy to see.

I was thanked for so many different places where the seniors healthy aging secretariat had partnered with someone in their particular community. And whether that was the mayor from Winkler showing up there yesterday, and he had brought some folks from Winkler to be there; it was other folks from the Good Neighbours Active Living Centre. There were folks from my own 55+ Centre out in the St. James area. And what was really nice to see was their reinforcement of telling us about what

things that they—that had worked for them, the support that they were happy to see, and to see how support for seniors is evolving and that we have been meeting those needs.

The one thing that I have to say that has been really fulfilling to work with is our Age-Friendly Manitoba Initiative. For those that aren't familiar with age-friendly, it is about how communities can sign onto the initiative—and just to let you know, Mr. Speaker, this fall we hit 100 Manitoba communities that are age-friendly—and one of the greatest advocates for it is our connection to the Association of Manitoba Municipalities. Ms. Eileen Clarke, who's the mayor of Gladstone, is a wonderful champion for Age-Friendly Manitoba.

If anybody wants to get that short, sweet, to-the-point, wonderful experience of what Age-Friendly Manitoba and being an age-friendly community can do, talk to Eileen Clarke. She talks about the wonderful way that when Gladstone signed on for age-friendly as a way of trying to make their—see what they could do to make their community much more age-friendly, it turns out it didn't make the community just more age-friendly for seniors, it made it age-friendly in a wonderful holistic way. It's brought out intergenerational activities where we've got elders in the community now partnering with the high schools.

And what's interesting is, as the member opposite mentioned, a lot of times, now in the 21st century, we don't have that immediate connection to our families. We don't have multi-generational families as frequently as we used to. So I know that when I was growing up, I had one set of grandparents that were literally, you know, five minutes away. Another were in another province, but, again, we got out to visit them regularly. But having that regular interaction with my grandparents, with my great aunts and uncles, was a wonderful learning experience.

Well, not every kid has that. Well, you know what's happening now? It's the kind of inter-generational activities that Eileen was telling me about that were a result of the signing onto the Age-Friendly Manitoba Initiative that is giving some of the kids in their community that very inter-generational experience, where you have, for lack of a better way of putting it, maybe some adoptive grandparents and grandkids. They might not be genetically related, they might not have a family connection, but you've got some seniors now, that

don't have close proximity to their grandchildren, now connecting with some young folks that maybe don't live as close to their grandparents as someone like myself was lucky enough to do. And there's that wonderful exchange of knowledge. And that, I think, is one of the most wonderful things that we can do in terms of respecting our elders, is passing that onto the next generation, having that next generation know.

* (10:20)

And we continue to do other things, Mr. Speaker, that go beyond age-friendly. Aging in Place, again, is a very important aspect. And we support that and, again, have programming in place. And if you want to learn more about it—I mean, I only have a few minutes here—my best recommendation is go out and pick up a copy of the guide. Follow your way through one of the 11 tabs. So if you want to learn about seniors' organizations and supports, that's the first section. Move onto active living and lifelong learning. Maybe you're having a tough time in—addictions and gambling are some issues; that's tab 3. Caregiving and end of life. There's resources for seniors with disabilities. There's financial advice, especially as it relates to things like issues around elder abuse in the form of fraud.

In fact, actually, for fraud awareness month, I had the wonderful opportunity of doing an interview with Eva Kovacs where we talked about what kinds of things that folks are trying to do to victimize seniors, exploiting that trust—that wonderful loving grandma that picks up the phone and doesn't realize that that person on the end really isn't a long-lost second cousin once removed related to her sister Barb, but, in fact, someone trying to scam her. But she's too polite to maybe say, I don't recognize you, and how she can get unwittingly drawn in. We talked about the things that people can do to prevent that.

We have the Elder Abuse Strategy, as well as a number here. And, boy, I could rattle off all the numbers for you, as well, here, but including financial advice, and, again, what things to look for whether you're a senior or someone who, again, loves and wants to support a senior.

Then there's a whole wonderful section on health and wellness. There's another section on housing, another on legal matters and identification as well as safety and security and transportation. And we've also got a pullout section that includes things on how to plan your health-care directive, emergency

preparedness, fall prevention and other safeties for seniors' information.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's about putting these kinds of resources in seniors' hands with all of this information, and, again, access to so many different things.

Now, the member opposite did mention things like personal-care homes and health and health care. Well, just to remind him, we do have personal-care homes going in in Winnipeg, Morden, Lac du Bonnet, and improvements to home care, as well as new affordable housing units for seniors at the Pineview Manor in The Pas, the partnership with the City of Brandon to see five new sites developed, fulfilling our government's commitment to create 1,500 affordable housing units and 1,500 social housing units in the near future.

Now, I guess, Mr. Speaker, what I found most ironic about any of those comments was that in mentioning his concern for health care and personal-care homes, he's maybe unfamiliar with the history of his party in the past and the desire to privatize personal-care homes and the desire to introduce two-tier health care. So I'm not quite sure how you can talk about respecting seniors when you're about to make—when you talk about making those kinds of moves that would make things far less accessible for the seniors in your own neighbourhood and the seniors in my neighbourhood and the seniors throughout the province.

So, Mr. Speaker, there is so much more I can say. I barely even tapped into my notes, but I know there are so many of my colleagues that would like to talk about the wonderful work that this government is doing in each of their neighbourhoods to show our seniors the respect that they deserve by putting in place programs, by sharing information through something like the Seniors' Guide, because, again, they did build our province. They continue to share—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable minister's time has expired.

Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Midland): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good morning to you. And I certainly look forward to putting a few comments on the record for Bill 205, The Seniors' Rights Act, brought forward by my colleague from Spruce Woods.

And I listened carefully to the minister's comments and I just was hoping she could get through 10 minutes without delving back into the

'90s, but apparently it's not possible. When you've got nothing else to talk about, you always go back there, for this government.

But—and it's interesting too. I did listen and I'm glad that she's brought out a colour brochure that will solve all the seniors' problems. I'm just wondering, does the—and perhaps she'll provide me with a copy of it. I haven't picked up a copy yet. I—just not quite at that age yet, so I'm not there. But I'm sure that it includes the 14 per cent increase in the PST which all seniors are now paying. It will include a guide as to how to pay that additional cost on your home insurance because now the PST has been broadened to include that; the registration on their vehicles that's gone up; the gas tax; the hydro rates on their homes. I'm sure that this brochure includes how to find more money when you're living on a fixed income. *[interjection]* Well, they seem to be a little sensitive, Mr. Speaker, but I'm sure that that's all included in their brochure.

But really the bill is about protecting rights of seniors, and it's an acknowledgement of the contributions seniors have made to our province. And that's—what this bill does is it enshrines that right of seniors in this province for the programs, the services, the supports that they need to live with the dignity and the rights and freedoms that they deserve. And that's not asking too much, Mr. Speaker; that's what seniors should be—should have in this province.

There's just too many seniors that can't afford to buy the food or have adequate housing or access to adequate housing. Those who are in their houses, as I have already mentioned, are facing income issues, being on—living on fixed income and yet seeing huge increases in their cost of living because of this tax-and-spend government. So it's causing issues for them and they need—this government needs to accept the fact that they have placed real burdens on these seniors that do try to maintain their life here in Manitoba, and we need to do much more than just put out colour brochures about how to ensure they have these basic rights.

We know that our health-care system is in a mess. We know that there are not enough personal-care homes for those people who do require that, and that is a decision that seniors and their families have to make. But then these decisions are not easily done because there are—personal-care homes are not available. Spaces are not available to these seniors when they do ultimately decide, or their

family has to make the decision for them, if they're unable to do that.

And yet, we have beds tied up in our hospitals. A lot of our hospitals have—a third of their capacity is used up in waiting placement. And in—and it's not a place for a senior to be living in, in a hospital facility when there's—the quality of life in the personal-care homes is so much better than in a hospital, just because the very nature of the facility. The hospital is set up by nature to look after people who are sick, not to look after and provide life—places for the seniors to be able to have quality of life. That's—you don't go to a hospital to have quality of life, and that's what personal-care homes have been set up to do, and they do a very good job of that. So the waiting placement is just a real burden to both seniors who are experiencing this and to the hospital system that's not set up to deal with waiting placements.

Of course, the housing is—for seniors—is crucial and it continues to be lacking in this province. There are a lack of places for assisted-living places for seniors to live in our communities and to be able to stay in our communities. If they've spent their entire life working and living in a community, and then having to move to a different community just because there's not options available, it's reflective of a government that hasn't really taken a serious look at this and addressed the issues.

Home care—and I—my family is very, very familiar with the home-care problems that we have in there. The home care—the people who are working in the home care are absolutely excellent. They are—they work magic with what they have to work with, really, but the system itself, though, has—is really failing. When I talked to—*[interjection]* Thank you. Now I have reading material for tonight. That's good.

When you talk to the home-care workers themselves, they talk about increasing workloads, patient care, travel times included in this workload, and they're unable to—ultimately, the patient—their seniors that they're caring for are the ones who have—who take—who have to have less care because these home-care personnel are not able to spend that time, and it comes as—many of the seniors look forward to these stops by the home care as part of their daily routine. And when they're—when they have to have services cut back, that means that they are suffering from a lack of care, and safety issues arise from that.

* (10:30)

And this is an ongoing problem that this government just fails to address in terms of providing home care. On one hand, this government claims that they want people to stay in their house longer, and—but they're not providing the home-care services that enable these seniors to be able to live in their homes safely, which is paramount. They must be safe. And there are things the home-care workers now are not able to do, such things as prepare meals or assist with baths and help with medication.

And we had an incident last week in my home constituency that I was made aware of, where a senior fell and was—the home-care person was not able to help that person get up because it was against the rules. And yet we have a senior laying on the floor that has to call Lifeline and have one of their family members come because of this—just the rules that are in place.

And I understand that you need to be careful about helping people when they've fallen, but the other thing that's fallen off here is common sense. There's no common sense left in this home-care system anymore. It's—it—the workers are under increasing stress and workloads, and it's causing issues for them. And these are very dedicated people, but it's the system that continues to fail.

And so, Mr. Speaker, the very issue of seniors' rights should be a given in this province, and this bill helps to address that. There are many other aspects that need to be addressed within that. Passing a bill does not guarantee that you will have seniors' rights, but it is one small step towards moving towards that.

And there are many other aspects of seniors living in our communities, that we need to ensure that they can continue to have—be safe in their homes and enjoy their time. They have worked hard, they have contributed to this province and just passing a bill right now, The Seniors' Rights Act, would be one small step towards ensuring that our seniors do get the respect that they deserve in this province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Melanie Wight (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to have an opportunity to get up and speak with regard to our seniors and the many, many things that we have been working on in that area.

I've—my mother is, of course, a senior, and she lives on her own out on a farm. And she—I'm very fortunate. She's doing very, very well and is able to manage that by herself. And she's quite elderly, so she's really doing very well.

And I—but I know that many people aren't in that situation, and there is a lot more help needed. And I'm grateful that I'm living in a province where we do have those kinds of services and home care and so many other things.

The member from Midland mentioned the Seniors' Guide as if it was of no value, perhaps because he had never seen one. I don't know. But the number is 1-800-665-6565 so that, you know, if you want to order, you can actually order free copies of this for your seniors. And why it's so important, Mr. Speaker, is simply because there are so many services out there, but if you don't know about them, then they're really of no value to you.

So what the Seniors' Guide does for everyone is put it all together in a great package so that you can just go, as the minister mentioned, the number of different, you know, headings that were there. And so you can go directly to the book and look them up, and it's very handy and helps seniors tremendously. So I would recommend it for all sides of the House, to be getting that information out to their seniors.

I did want to speak a little bit about some of the programs that are going on in my own community in Burrows because we have so many amazing people that are running these programs, and many, many seniors that, of course, volunteer for the seniors' programs. So it is usually seniors helping seniors, I've found, and one of them is called KINRC, and that's the Keewatin-Inkster resource group and they provide all types of services like escorted transportation services.

So if you're a senior and you can't get to those medical appointments, you need somebody to go with you, they don't just drive you, they go in with you. So they're, you know—also—they also escort you there. They sit with you through it and then they, you know, they take you back at the end. And that is just tremendously valuable service.

They also have cab clubs so that if you do want to go somewhere people can share the services and the cost of a cab. They have a wheels-to-meals program. They have a really great Men in the Kitchen! program because a lot of men, oddly enough, have not learned to cook—it's hard to believe—and they become seniors and, sadly, maybe their partners have passed away or aren't able to cook anymore, and so they have a great Men in the Kitchen! program. And I—really, I went at the very beginning of the program and I went at the end, and the progress that these guys made and the connection

they had made with each other—and I'm not trying to dis men here, but you guys do have a harder time connecting in any kind of deep way with someone. It's kind of like the old punch in the arm, you know, and how are you doing after, I don't know, five years of not seeing each other and then you wave, right? Or maybe you have a beer together, I don't know. But this—really, this program really helped these guys realize, oh, you know what, I can talk to somebody about some of the issues and problems that are going on in my life. And they did that while they were learning to cook, while they were learning how to sew a button on, a lot of the skills that they had missed over the years.

So it's a fabulous, really fun program and—but it also has a lot of skill building and it really speaks to the loneliness that I feel is, you know, one of the main concerns for some of our seniors is making sure that we're doing things to help with that.

One of the members opposite had mentioned keeping minds engaged. And another program that I had heard of that I really loved was—you could do a phone-in. There was a phone-in program where you phoned into a group and that group did all kinds of things. They did book reviews and they learned Spanish and they, you know, and it was all done over the phone. So if you were closed in or you had a winter like the one we just had and, you know, you didn't want to go out in that -40°, that connection, again, was still there, and it kept the minds active and engaged as well.

So KINRC in my area is one of the ones that has really great services. They also have a call-in program, which I think is really important, so that every morning somebody phones and if that phone isn't answered they send you help, right? So somebody goes to check on you. So I think that's really key and it just gives all of those people even just a couple of minutes of contact.

I know my mom will say, well, you know, I'm out in this farm and this is where I want to be. She loves being out there, she doesn't want to have to move into a care home. She loves waking up in the morning and seeing the sun shining in her window and looking at the fields outside. But, you know, she does comment that, you know, there's days where she might not speak to anyone. I mean, she could phone somebody, but, you know, and so she—loneliness is an issue. And she can get out. She drives and does all of those things and is a very outgoing, social person. So she's not afraid to, you

know, speak to whoever might be walking by. But for many, many seniors that can be a real issue.

So these programs that do these things like call-ins or take you—there's a pilot program also in our area where what they're doing is they're picking people up and bringing them to the aggregate community lunches in our area, and so we'll see how well that works. I know it's also in the member from Tyndall Park's area, as well, that pilot program. And he spends a lot of time with the seniors and I know that they love him and his wife over at that area. So I just want to mention that because they're very grateful at Bluebird for all the work that he does there. They also get you the emergency—they can also let you know how to get the emergency response information kit, which can be an absolute lifesaver for you.

* (10:40)

And we have Seven Oaks links in our area as well, another seniors program that works with so many people in the area, and the North End Centennial seniors. And I guess I'd like to say about our seniors, I'm amazed at—you know, they are our volunteers. They are the core of our volunteers in our province, and I'm so grateful to them and to the work that they do. And they are the core, I think, of our caregivers. They're often the person, you know, deemed the caregiver to each other, to older seniors or seniors with disabilities, and we owe a great debt to them; there's no question.

So I'm grateful that we are a government that is working to do things like ensuring that we do keep, you know, home care, not privatize it. I'm terrified at some of the plans that would occur and how our seniors would be hurt if we were to do things like that, if there was to be \$550 million of cuts to services. I don't see how that could possibly occur, Mr. Speaker, without it affecting our seniors. And when I am speaking to seniors and going door to door, the No. 1 thing I hear is that the CPP needs to be increased. And I think if we all want it as a group, to stand together on something, to me, us standing together, pleading with the federal government to get that up and increased, would truly be of value. It's one of the things that really saddens me, and I would imagine that there's people on your side that it saddens as well, that people aren't given enough money to always live with dignity that was spoken of in this bill.

So I think that would be a really, you know, non-partisan issue that we could work together on,

coming up with something, because I know our opposition federally has certainly tried over the years to no avail to get that increased to something much more reasonable. So I'm hoping that maybe we could work together on something like that.

It would also be awesome if they came to the table on housing, on a national housing program federally because, as one of the members mentioned, affordable housing is also an issue. We are doing all we can in Manitoba ourselves as the provincial government to increase that affordable housing. We put things in our budget to do that. We're building all the time. We're doing everything that we can do, but we do need some help from a federal government to, you know, to come to the table on some of these big, important issues for our seniors and for many other groups.

So I would ask that maybe we could all stand together on that and see if we can't do something non-partisan to improve the lives of seniors that way.

Thank you.

Mr. Stuart Briese (Agassiz): Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today and speak to bill 2005, The Seniors' Rights Act, brought forward by my colleague from Spruce Woods and seconded by myself, who is starting to look like maybe the only senior that speaks to this bill. But it certainly does pertain to me, and I know there's several others in the House. We'll see if we get any other seniors up, the Speaker included. But he doesn't like—he doesn't like that knowledge out there, so I may be reprimanded here very quickly but—

This is a bill that is put forward to provide seniors in the province with programs and services that they need to live their lives with dignity and freedoms that they deserve and they've earned. And we see, time after time in this province, with—through—especially through the last couple of years of budgets, where the costs to these seniors have went up dramatically. The 14 per cent raise of the PST, the car registrations if they happen to have a car, hydro increases every year—8 per cent in the last two years, another 4 per cent at 3.9 this year, and on and on and on. And then I hear the member from Burrows get up and say it's all the federal government's fault because they don't increase the old age pensions and the CPP enough to cover off the extra costs that this provincial government is putting on those seniors. If they weren't putting those on, maybe you don't need the increases; maybe you've got adequate income to meet your needs.

But that's not the way it works in Manitoba under an NDP government.

You know, for the first time in my life—and I've mentioned this before in this House—I am 67. I'm almost 68 years old. For the first time in my life, I don't have access to a family doctor in my own community. For 67 years I had access to a family doctor in my own community. I always had a family doctor, right from birth, and we've got a community that's growing, growing very quickly, I might add. Our population went up by at least a thousand people in the last three or four years in our community, and we're short of doctors, and all over rural Manitoba we're short of doctors.

Doctors are a critical part of the infrastructure to seniors. In my own life I spent one day, one night in a hospital in my life. I've not required very many doctor services over the years, but I'm getting into an age group where probably the need is going to go up and the accessibility has gone down. My mother is still living. She'll soon be 97 years old. She's in a personal-care home in Neepawa. She at least is in a personal-care home in her own community; something many, many seniors don't have and don't have access to is a personal-care home in their own community.

But we saw the size of the personal-care home drop in my community from 125 beds to 100 at a time when the baby boomers—and there, again, I'm in the first wave of the baby boomers—at a time when the baby boomers were becoming senior citizens, we see a cutback in the number of personal-care-home beds in that community. And it just doesn't make any sense. Then they went out and spent something like \$2 million to provide some more assisted living in the community. That \$2 million, I think, provided I think it was nine spaces, which I think is just unreal on cost, and there's certainly some better ways to do that. But those nine spaces apparently were to replace 25 beds of personal care.

So what have we got now? We've got a shortage of nurses at the personal-care home so we have a 10 per cent vacancy rate in the personal-care home with panelled people in the hospital that are waiting to get into the personal-care home—open beds in the personal-care home, not enough staff under this government's policies to provide the services at that personal-care home. That seems so, so ridiculous that they don't—they talk a good story and they don't follow through.

I wonder if, you know, in the brochure, the highly touted brochure, if there's a section in there that does deal with the abuse of the provincial government, of this NDP government, to seniors. Like this bill, part of this bill is about abuse of seniors, and they're being abused by the incredible tax increases in this province that take away their ability to enjoy life.

You know, a couple of seniors that are dependent on their old age pensions and on their CPP, trying to maintain a home now is just about impossible. It's just something that they can hardly do, and it's simply because they're taxed to death in this province. They don't need a bunch more broken promises.

Another promise made and not kept two years ago: We're going to take the school tax off seniors' properties. Well, it hasn't happened. What happened in this budget? Well, we're going to delay it for another two years. Well, now those seniors have got four more years of going without a fulfilled promise. They probably won't have their homes by the time the promise is actually fulfilled.

*(10:50)

You know, another thing that happens here is the bracket creep goes on and on and on. Most other provinces have stopped bracket creep. Now, the seniors that are paying income tax, they're seeing their taxes go up more every year because of bracket creep.

You know, the personal-care home in Neepawa has a thing on their bulletin board there that says, resident's rights, and they're listed out and I've stood there and I've read it several times, the rights of the residents in that personal-care home. And I think it would be an awful—I think I should bring a copy of it and show it to some of the members opposite to show what we're talking about when we're talking about the rights of seniors. They're the ones that built this country. They're the ones that made this country great, gave us the right to stand in this place, gave us the freedom to do the things that we do.

And, you know, my own parents worked hard all their lives, didn't ask for much. Later in life they needed some assistance from government sources, but worked hard all their lives and contributed to this province, and they should have the right to the things they need in their old age. And, in a lot of cases, seniors in this province aren't getting the things that, in my view, they've earned.

Now, I consider myself a young senior, so I maybe haven't earned as much yet, but I'm working on it. I'm still, it appears, employed, which does help a little. But I do know from my mother's income that when the Province comes along and puts extra PST on—puts extra things, taxes in place, it has a dramatic impact.

And, of course, as the member from Burrows says, it's the federal government's fault. They just don't—they're just not raising these pensions fast enough to keep up to the NDP's increases in the province. So it's a—kind of an ironic thing, but it's a—kind of the way—it's kind of what I've almost grown to expect from them, that spin and that twist, that it's always someone else's fault.

So I know there's others wishing to speak to this bill, so with those few words, I thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Flor Marcelino (Minister of Multiculturalism and Literacy): It is a joy to be able to put in a few words related to the seniors' bill sponsored by my colleague across the way.

Mr. Speaker, as a senior myself, I can fully appreciate the role and contributions of seniors in our small communities and, in a larger scale, in our province and in our country. We seniors have a wealth of knowledge, wisdom and life experiences, and our communities can benefit if this knowledge and experiences are tapped. We seniors have many insights in life. Through the years we have learned valuable lessons, some learned as a result of mistakes made, that we can impart to others who will care to listen so they can avoid the pitfalls we have been to. Likewise—and I believe I speak for many seniors in our province—that we seniors have the desire to volunteer and help out, sharing our time, expertise and even resources to the various passions and interests that will benefit our communities.

Mr. Speaker, I believe I speak on behalf on many seniors I know, that our government has undertaken many concrete programs to improve the quality of life of seniors in our province. Two weeks ago, several of my colleagues and I attended the grand opening of the Westlands at Oddy. It's a 37-unit apartment for seniors of Brooklands and the Weston area.

As a former MLA for that area of Weston and Brooklands, it was a joy and privilege to work with the Brooklands seniors group and other organizations who worked hard and persisted despite many odds to

realize a life-long—a long-held dream to have a seniors' housing in the area so those senior homeowners who are no longer able to do the lawn mowing in the summer months and snowplowing during winter can still stay in the area they have lived all their lives and still be close to dear friends and family who are happily settled in that area.

Mr. Speaker, the Westlands at—and all the housing for seniors is a beautiful and valuable addition to the community. And by the way, there is another Manitoba Housing for seniors in the area. It's the 10-storey Bluebird Lodge on Keewatin. And many seniors are proud residents of that area.

While on the topic of housing, Mr. Speaker, we understand that seniors and their families want a variety of supports and housing options for their loved ones. Manitoba's Aging in Place initiative, it's a long-term care strategy, addresses the need for affordable housing options with varying levels of support. It helps older adults to age in their communities by providing resources and housing options. And Westlands at Oddy is one such project.

We have added over 1,000 personal-care homes and supportive housing beds across Manitoba. Also, our government have expanded Home Care to meet the growing number of seniors. And Home Care in Manitoba is well regarded as the best, if not one of the best, in the country.

Even more investments are being made for the growing number of seniors in the years ahead who are expected to live longer than ever before. That's why we announced a renewed long-term care strategy, where we are investing \$200 million to build two new personal-care homes in Winnipeg, one in the south and one in the northeast. Also, our government is expanding Home Care further to support seniors who want to live at home longer.

Also, there are innovate rehabilitation programs to quickly help seniors regain and maintain their independence following an injury or a surgery. And there are income protection benefits to make supportive housing an affordable alternative to a personal-care home for low-income seniors.

There are many, many more programs and resources that can be found in this Seniors' Guide, and I humbly suggest that all of us get a copy of this guide so we'll all be familiar with the resources there are so we can help the seniors in our respective constituencies.

Also, Mr. Speaker, there are many support organizations for seniors. We have—we provide over \$7 million each year for the Support Services for Seniors program, which provides services such as group meal programs, transportation, recreation and social programming.

Also, since 2002, Manitoba has continued to expand its Provincial Elder Abuse Strategy, including opening a 24-7 province-wide seniors abuse line offered through the Klinik Community Health Centre and Age and Opportunity. Also, we have hired an elder abuse consultant to co-ordinate seniors' services and have developed a province-wide Manitoba peer support line to assist older adults affected by elder abuse. There's also created a regional elder abuse response teams in each regional health authority.

The development of an elder abuse safe suite initiative to provide a safe haven for older adults living in abusive relationships have also been undertaken. And we have strengthened seniors' community resources and organizations through the advancing age strategy, helping build their capacity to work on seniors' issues.

And health is very important—

* (11:00)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable Minister of Multiculturalism will have two minutes remaining.

RESOLUTIONS

Mr. Speaker: The hour being 11 a.m., it's time for private member's resolution.

House Business

Mr. Speaker: Before we get to that, though, I'll recognize the honourable Government House Leader, on House business.

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader): On House business, Mr. Speaker, pursuant to rule 31(8), I'm announcing that the private member's resolution to be considered next Tuesday will be one put forward by the honourable member for Interlake (Mr. Nevakshonoff). The title of the resolution is Agriculture Awareness Day.

Mr. Speaker: It has been announced that, pursuant to rule 31(8), that the private member's resolution to be considered next Tuesday will be the one brought forward by the honourable member for the

Interlake, and the title of the resolution is Agriculture Awareness Day.

Res. 8—Veteran Services

Mr. Speaker: We'll now proceed to call the resolution as printed in today's Order Paper, entitled Veteran Services.

Mr. Drew Caldwell (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for St. James (Ms. Crothers), military envoy for the Province of Manitoba,

WHEREAS Manitobans owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to veterans who selflessly served to protect us at home and around the world; and

WHEREAS the men and women who served Canada in the Armed Forces should be able to count on the federal government for services and support; and

WHEREAS the Brandon Veteran Affairs district office has provided veterans and their families with access to specialized staff in claims processing, service eligibility and mental health assistance since 1979; and

WHEREAS Service Canada offices are not equipped to handle the complex needs of veterans without additional resources; and

WHEREAS the federal government's recent closure of the Brandon district office and others across Canada will impede veterans from gaining access to the services upon which they rely; and

WHEREAS the mental health crisis facing Canadian soldiers and veterans requires increased service delivery rather than cuts to key programs.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the federal government to reverse its decision to close Veteran Affairs district offices; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the federal government to immediately address the mental health crisis facing Canadian soldiers and veterans through increased service delivery.

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable member for Brandon East, seconded by the honourable member for St. James,

WHEREAS Manitobans owe a tremendous—

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense? Dispense.

The resolution is in order.

Mr. Caldwell: Mr. Speaker, 2014 is the centenary of World War I, and I'm proud to stand to—in support of this motion in the name of my grandfather, who was a veteran of the First World War, Victor Rands, and my father, a veteran of the Second World War, Boyd Caldwell, and the names of 1,700 veterans of the Canadian Forces who currently live in the western Manitoba region.

Mr. Speaker, over the last number of months and, more broadly, over the last number of years, our government has been a strong supporter of the military in Manitoba and has supported its current members and veterans consistently. Our government was the first in Canada to name an office of envoy for military affairs, and we have been—and I'm very pleased to stress this fact—we have been, as a government and as a Legislature—conducted ourselves in a very non-partisan manner over the last number of years when addressing questions of the Canadian Forces in this Legislature. We have stood as one voice here in the Manitoba Legislature for our military and our veterans and their services.

Recently, Mr. Speaker, we stood in this Chamber united and spoke with one voice on the Support Our Troops licence plates. In 2012, with the support of our government, the Legislature passed a bill which proclaims November 5th to the 11th of each year as Remembrance Day Awareness Week and requires all schools to hold Remembrance Day exercises on the last school day before Remembrance Day. Several years ago, we introduced veterans plates for passenger vehicles, and we are now enhancing the special licence program; the veterans motorcycle plate display will have the symbolic red poppy displayed upon it—the poppy, of course, which has become a lasting memorial to all fallen soldiers. As a government, we designated the Trans-Canada Highway west of Winnipeg the Highway of Heroes, and I was privileged to be in attendance with my colleague, the member from Spruce Woods, to dedicate the Highway of Heroes.

So we have had in this House unanimous support crossing both sides of the Chamber for initiatives that would help our veterans and support our veterans in this province. And that's indeed what we are seeking here today, is all-party support for our veterans in Manitoba to support services for our veterans and to encourage and urge—not to condemn, but to 'concouage' and urge the federal government

to reverse a decision which does, in essence, remove supports for veterans in Manitoba with the removal of and elimination of veterans' services offices in the province, particularly in Brandon, and the reallocation of those resources to Service Canada, which is a front-end receiver of concerns for all issues of government not focused on veterans' affairs.

So, Mr. Speaker, the closure of the eight Veterans Affairs offices around the country, including the office in Brandon, has been a very negative—has had very negative impacts on veterans in Brandon. As I mentioned, there's 1,700 veterans of Afghanistan in the Westman area today. The closure of the office in Brandon has reduced the service support for those 1,700 veterans to one single person on the base at CFB Shilo.

The services offered by the Veterans Affairs offices, Mr. Speaker, are critical in providing easy-to-use and easy-to-access service for veterans. They provide crucial care to veterans across Canada. They deliver services such as home visits for veterans with limited mobility, help with paperwork, and deliver psychiatric and medical care for wounded veterans.

Many veterans—and this is well known across Canada with the tragic legacy of suicides that we are in the midst of right now from veterans returning from Afghanistan—many veterans suffer from physical and psychological injuries that limit their ability to travel further to—for example, to travel to Winnipeg or further to receive the care they need. Removing access to front-line workers and those who work one-on-one with veterans means that these men and women will not receive the treatment that they deserve as veterans who have served our country.

And, Mr. Speaker, the removal of the office in Brandon has had a profound impact already on veterans in my home community. So we are urging, on this side of the House—as we do from time to time even urge our own government—to change a policy that is adversely affecting Manitobans and Manitoba veterans.

I should add, on a personal note—I think it's appropriate—my father was a disabled veteran coming out of World War II. And as a disabled veteran, he availed himself and my family availed themselves of the services provided by Veterans Affairs extensively. He spent many years in the hospital after World War II, and without the personal

services offered by Veterans Affairs, my family—I can't imagine how my family would have suffered without those supports provided directly by Veterans Affairs.

There is no substitute for one-on-one contact between veterans and those who would assist them when they return from their tour of duty, Mr. Speaker, and the closure of the Brandon office and the 'dimunation' of offices across Canada is a tremendously negative fact that is facing veterans across this country.

In Brandon, the Brandon region is home to one of the largest Canadian Armed Forces bases in the province, CFB Shilo. As I said, Shilo is roughly—home to roughly 1,700 Canadian veterans, many of whom have returned from combat overseas and require access to the specific services provided by Veterans Affairs. These cuts will result, as I said earlier, in a single caseworker for CFB Shilo responsible for the entire Westman community of veterans, and one individual cannot adequately address the complex needs of many veterans living in western Manitoba.

*(11:10)

I know my friend and colleague—former colleague here in the Legislature, Mr. Larry Maguire, the MP for Brandon-Souris, has had some success in asking his government to reverse decisions that have been made that have adversely affected my region. He was recently elected so he does have a very good voice at this time, and he has had some success in changing his government's mind in other areas in our region. And I would call upon Mr. Maguire and urge him to use his good offices to help us restore veteran services in Brandon and western Manitoba. He's a good man and I have a lot of respect for Mr. Maguire. I think and trust that when the full impacts of these cuts are understood by the federal government they would have the integrity to change and alter the decisions that they made to cut these services.

But I will say, Mr. Speaker, that in western Manitoba and in—at CFB Shilo we do need direct veteran's services provided directly to veterans. We do not need—and it is inappropriate for just a Service Canada desk with their banks of computers to be available to address the needs of veterans. Many young veterans returning from combat return with very complex needs including post-traumatic stress disorder, and suffering from PTSD often makes travel and new unfamiliar surroundings difficult. The

veteran services workers, those who work with veterans have specialized education, have specialized knowledge that is directly applicable to veterans and there is no replacement for them in the form of a computer or a front-end civil servant.

We need people who are skilled, people who are educated and people are committed to dealing with veterans specifically, and we are urging and—as a government and as I said earlier in this House, we've had all-party support for resolutions and bills that help our veterans. That's what we're seeking here today. With respect—we're respectfully urging the federal government to change this policy which is adversely affecting veterans and we're calling on all parties to support our veterans in Manitoba here today.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Reg Helwer (Brandon West): I am pleased to rise to speak to this resolution brought by the MLA for Brandon East, and I think it's quite sad, Mr. Speaker, as an attempt to direct people's attention away from the failures of their own government they attempt to politicize veterans in this regard. And one has to wonder if this is the same individual, the same staffer that wrote the notes for the Minister of Health (Ms. Selby) regarding the wounds that she opened up a couple of weeks ago. If this is the same person that indeed wrote this resolution to open up wounds on Veterans Affairs and politicize this event, it's indeed quite sad.

Perhaps if the member had the opportunity to visit at Shilo and talk to the people that actually dealt with the individuals that have PTSD and would know more about that whole structure and how it goes about, it is indeed not something to make light of.

Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

These are wounds that are very raw and close to the surface, and perhaps the member would have an opportunity even to go into Service Canada and actually visit with the individuals that are dealing with veterans. He would find from talking to those people, as I have, that indeed the services have expanded for veterans and this is misinformation that this member has put on the record. It's quite sad to see that they do this time and time again.

The Veterans Affairs office in Shilo still has the same number of people dealing with the people immediately in Shilo. The Veterans Affairs officer in Brandon still exists, has now been moved into

Service Canada, and indeed every Service Canada member in the Brandon office is now trained and able to deal with Veterans Affairs and—so as a result, every veteran that goes in there now has expanded opportunity and many more opportunities to deal with these individuals. All the individuals in there, as I met with them last week, are trained to deal with the tier 1 intake and they are fully capable. I'm quite disappointed that the member doesn't think so opposite, that they are disparaging federal civil servants who are fully trained and capable of dealing with tier 1 intake of veterans, and this is indeed the case.

Perhaps you should go into the offices and talk to these people and then you will understand how they fully are aware of everything that is going on there. And indeed for the tier 2 intake there is still the dedicated individual in the Brandon office that has the experience and is now able also to expand that experience to all the other service staff in Service Canada, and indeed we will see that services for veterans have expanded exponentially, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So it's quite sad that they are trying to politicize as much as they did with the couple of weeks ago in Estimates—very sad to watch that occur, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And perhaps if the member thought that there was an opportunity to change something, indeed one should speak to our Member of Parliament, Larry Maguire, who has been very active on this issue. And I speak to Larry quite often; we've had detailed discussions about this, and Larry has gone through and seen how veterans are going to be handled in the Westman area and feels that this is fully capable now that there are more services in place for those veterans.

Because, of course, we see that this government likes to put misinformation on the record, we always wonder where they're going to go next, and then we look at their record and this is indeed where they're trying to go with this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, trying to misdirect Manitobans from their own dismal record.

Let's look back a bit on that record and see what happened. There was, as I recall—now gas taxes were increased and there was a promise at that time—and we know promises just serve to highlight NDP failures—all of that gas tax increase was going into something called infrastructure. Hmm, looking at the results, that didn't happen. They broadened the PST because they had to put more money into infrastructure; once again, didn't occur. And then

there was the dramatic increase in vehicle registration fees that MPI had to collect, that all their agents had to collect and feel the brunt of the anger of the public out there on paying these increased fees—another tax grab that goes directly into government coffers, supposed to go to infrastructure; again, didn't happen.

And then we see the dramatic increase in the sales tax, 14 per cent, over 14 per cent increase; all that promise that it wasn't going to happen and now promise that it's going to go into infrastructure, and I fully expect once we see the year-end statements there, Mr. Deputy Speaker, not one dime of that sales tax increase will have gone into infrastructure. And, you know, time again, we see the failures of this government. Promises only serve to highlight failures.

And they go back and try to take away what the federal government is doing to expand services to veterans, and they try to misdirect people's attention. We know that when the veterans go into Service Canada offices now in Brandon and elsewhere in Canada, there are more individuals than ever they are able to deal with. And that is something that if these members took some time to go and investigate a little bit further rather than allow staff to write these derogatory statements, then perhaps they would find out the truth of the matter, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But I know truth is something that is hard for this government to come by because they said during—prior to the last election, what was it now? It was nonsense, wasn't it, that they were going to raise taxes; no, that wasn't—no sales tax—that wasn't—no, no, not at all. But, dramatically, it changed all of a sudden. And not only did they raise it once by broadening the PST, they raised it twice by increasing the sales tax by 14 per cent, and they even considered at that time and earlier to raise it another percentage point. And it's quite dramatic, the effect that this has had on Manitobans.

If they wanted to help veterans in Manitoba, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they should not have increased the taxes. They should have broadened the personal—minimum personal exemption. All that would have gone far further to aiding veterans than this tawdry little resolution that they have in front of us here.

And it's quite dramatic that they talk about their military for—envoy for military affairs, and I'm pleased that they have an MLA that is now that envoy. I hope she will—well, she won't have to work very hard to do a dramatically better job than her

predecessor because I never saw the—her predecessor out at any events that I was at with the military, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but perhaps Shilo is a little too far for that individual to travel. I invite this—the MLA from St. James to come out to Shilo regularly. I'm sure she will, and I know that opportunity is there for her. So we would be pleased to see her out to visit the troops out in Shilo. And she can, indeed, visit with them and ask them about their experiences with Service Canada and the improvements that they will have experienced by that time.

* (11:20)

So, again, we see this misdirection time and time again, and how else could they help veterans? Well, let me see, now. There's 19 emergency rooms closed. That would be something that would help veterans if those emergency rooms were open so that they could get services from the provincial government and health care. But, again, that's been taken away by this government that raises taxes, makes promises, cuts spending in infrastructure, core infrastructure, by \$1.9 billion and pretends that new money is going to go there. And, again, we know that it won't.

It goes into other areas, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and we apparently can't track it because when we ask in Estimates, we get the derogatory responses from the ministers that are—I mean, we are asking a question on behalf of Manitobans. And the responses that have been coming forth in Estimates and Health was one that I was present at and appalled to see the ministers—I hesitate to even dignify them by saying they were a response. The vile attack that that minister had on our critic and the raw wounds that she opened up for the families again, and we see that time and again here.

So is there an opportunity to improve in services to veterans? Absolutely. And this government could do it by reopening emergency rooms, raising the minimum personal exemption, talking to the MPs and making sure that services are available for veterans, going in to Service Canada and talking to the staff and finding out how proud they are to service those veterans and how good of a job they're doing, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Go in and talk to people, but perhaps that's not something that this government is capable of doing. So I fully encourage this government to go and investigate rather than just blast away.

And I know there are many others that want to speak to this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, so we'll let them see what they have to say.

Ms. Deanne Crothers (St. James): I would like to thank the member for Brandon East (Mr. Caldwell) for bringing forward this resolution. I am very pleased to speak in support of this private member's resolution.

I would like to, however, correct a statement that was made by the member from Brandon West just a moment ago, who indicated that my predecessor did not spend time in Shilo. That is absolutely untrue. She did, indeed, go quite a bit and engaged with military personnel there whether you are aware of it or not.

So, to carry on, though, I would like to say of late in this Chamber, we have been able to agree on issues relating to Manitoba's military. After that last speech, I'm a little surprised we have, but we have. We all appreciate those who serve and want to see them as well-supported as possible. And that's why I was dismayed when a decision by the federal government caused the closure of eight Veterans Affairs district offices, including the office in Brandon.

CFB Shilo is one of the largest Canadian Armed Forces bases in the province. It's home to roughly 1,700 military, many of whom return from combat overseas and need the services provided by these offices. As a result of these cuts, there will be a single case worker for CFB Shilo who is responsible for the Westman community of veterans.

Now, I appreciate the federal government is looking for cost-saving measures. I really do because that's something we examine within our own government as well. And, often, there are challenging choices to make. But who is paying the price for this efficiency? Ultimately, it is the veterans and their families.

There are different people accessing veteran services. We have elderly, someone who has served in the military and survived and is now relying on the programs available to them as they age. Or it could be a young veteran who has served but has suffered physically and is now dealing with physical challenges or coping with the mental challenges as a result of their experiences while serving.

And when a veteran has died and leaves a family behind, it's the spouse who carries on and relies on some support and the assistance of Veterans Affairs. In either case, whether an elderly spouse, who may or may not have family, or a younger spouse who is now supporting children on their own and helping

those children through the loss of their parent, they turn to Veterans Affairs for help.

In every case these are people that need understanding and guidance, which is gained by dealing with someone who is trained and most definitely by dealing with someone in person. The very services that these veterans have provided us by being members of the military obligates us to provide a level of care that shows them that we value what they have done and appreciate that the circumstances they are currently in are a direct result of their choice to serve and protect us.

Internet and phone calls or visiting a practical but impersonal place such as Service Canada offices cannot replace the opportunity for our veterans to be aided by someone face to face.

I have a list of some of the services provided by veteran services, and I'm going to read a few of them out here. They have: career transition services; case management; options for hiring a veteran; rehabilitation services; and transition interviews. If you're looking for financial support, it includes: the Canadian Forces Income Support; death benefit; detention benefit; earnings loss benefit; educational assistance programs; a funeral and burial assistance; grave marker maintenance; prisoner-of-war compensation; supplementary retirement benefits; survivors pensions; and war veterans allowances. They offer: group health insurance; health promotion; homeless—programs for homelessness; long-term care; mental health; pastoral outreach; treatment benefits; and the most important one, Veterans Independence Program. They also have: disability benefits; exceptional incapacity allowance; and permanent impairment allowance. These are just some of the programs that are on offer, and I absolutely commend the federal government for providing these services, because they're needed.

But, you know, when I look at the breadth of services provided here, and the ones that really jump out at me that veterans and their families need at whatever stage of life they might be, we're dealing with things like exceptional incapacity allowance and permanent impairment allowance, grave marker maintenance. I think if most people were told that these would be some of the benefits of the job that they were considering, that they could look forward to if they chose this particular line of work, they would probably run in the other direction. But our veterans did not. They know the risks. They know that these are impacts that absolutely can take place

in their lives, to them and to their family members, and still they chose to protect us and they chose to fight for democracy.

Veteran services has trained staff that understand these issues; they understand the issues that the military face when they return home. And that's a level of sensitivity, I'm sorry, you cannot get through a phone call and most definitely not through the Internet. A meeting in person allows the staff at these offices to detect if there are other issues, and that would be very difficult to replicate by phone, as I said, and impossible by the Internet.

I think relying on phone or computer for the bulk of the interaction will alienate some people. I mean, we have elderly folks who—granted, there are lots of elderly folks that are comfortable with the computer, but not all are—and they may be uncomfortable navigating a system that's foreign to them. The phone option, while more personal, still falls short of a face-to-face encounter, especially if the veteran or widow of a veteran is less capable of expressing challenges or problems they face as time moves on and they are aging. For veterans who find neither of these problematic, there is still the issue of needing some extra care that might not be forthcoming in a phone call and truly, would be inaccessible by Internet.

Veterans have been vocal over the rapid changes that were announced at the end of January. Many gathered in Brandon on February 1st to protest these cuts to services. And I've been contacted myself by veterans, and very recently spoke with the widow of a veteran who was frustrated by this move and asked me why they were doing this and what I could do about it. I've since sent a letter as the special envoy for military affairs to the federal Minister of Veterans Affairs expressing the concerns that I have heard from veterans and their families, and I included my own concerns about the impact on veteran supports as a result of this closure.

Our government has been a strong supporter of the military in Manitoba and—both its current members and its veterans. We've stood with members opposite here several weeks ago and showed our undivided support for the Support Our Troops licence plate as well as the recent opposition motion such as the military driver's licence resolution.

* (11:30)

I know that we can do this, and I know that we all believe strongly that supporting our military is important. And I've heard many stories on both sides of the House, from personal experiences with military, from family members, grandparents, brothers, sisters, nephews, so I would expect that we'll be able to speak in one voice today. And I would like to encourage the members opposite to join us in asking the federal government to please reconsider this closure and to show a united front of support here in Manitoba that we stand with our veterans and their families to ensure that they are given the kind of treatment that they have earned, and the respect that they are so deserving of.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Arthur-Virden): Mr. Speaker, we are proud today to stand and support our veterans and their families. We're here today to—in the Chamber because of the legacy of sacrifice and the courage of our veterans who fought for our rights to be free.

Democracy as we see it expressed in this House today is an ongoing treatment of bravery of our veterans and their families. Mr. Speaker, when our veterans return home, we must do everything we can to support them. And why I think we believe with—we are with the federal government who is actually enhancing the services. I know I've talked to Larry Maguire who is very in tune of the situation and even assures me that the services are enhanced. I—in our—the—that is the least that we can do for all that we have done for us. The veterans deserve to have every service and support that we can to provide, and again to provide the stand to support of our veterans.

It must be said that there is quite a bit of hypocrisy from the NDP here, Mr. Speaker. The NDP is speaking against closures of offices is quite ironic. The NDP is in the process of closing 24 Hydro offices which will hurt the services in Manitoba and including the employees who have to drive extra 30 to 40 minutes to get to work, and having them to find daycare services is also going to be an issue, too, for them. Since 2007, the NDP has already closed three Hydro offices here in Winnipeg. So it's quite hypocritical that the members opposite to be criticizing the closure and closing offices right now.

This government has centralized a lot of different services here in Manitoba, and it's quite ironic. One of the things that they've done and what we feel that we have done as the PC Party under the

Filmon government has—we have decentralized a number of government departments, one including being the petroleum branch in Virden. We have now employed many government employees here in Manitoba—

Point of Order

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member for Steinbach, on a point of order.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): I'm trying to listen to the words from the honourable member for Arthur-Virden. I—he's talking about democracy, he's talking about our right to speak in this Chamber, and I can't even hear him because members of the NDP, particularly the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Gaudreau), are busy yelling between the two of them.

Now, it may be that this particular topic isn't of interest to them and that could be the fact, but if it's not of interest to them, perhaps they could use one of the loges instead of interrupting the member who's using his democratic right as fought for by our veterans to speak in this Legislature, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable Attorney General, on the same point of order.

Mr. Swan: Well, Mr. Speaker, it is true. Many members on our side of the House are incredulous that the Progressive Conservative caucus is more concerned about standing up for what the Prime Minister's Office is telling them to say than standing up for veterans in the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I want to thank the honourable member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen). He does not have a point of order, but he does have a good point in that, you know, we're here to debate and we're here to listen to debate.

The volume was getting up. I noticed it myself, and I want to thank the member for Steinbach, and I would ask all members to please co-operate and keep the noises aside to a minimum.

* * *

Mr. Deputy Speaker: On that note, once again I recognize the honourable member for Arthur-Virden to continue his speech.

Mr. Piwniuk: Yes, I just want to just get back to on track here, that basically I feel that this government currently is hypocritical when it comes cutting services. Like, I find in rural areas we're finding that the centralization is a big issue. We're losing jobs in

our small communities over to the larger communities. The big thing is, too, is I remember years ago when I was younger, the Filmon government actually decentralized services, and I was—we've actually received a petroleum branch in Virden, a taxation branch in Souris and an education branch in Russell. The cuts and closures are only okay when it comes to the NDP making them, Mr. Speaker. How can Manitobans trust the sincerity of the government when they themselves are 'hypothetical'?

The NDP has more credibility when it comes to office closures and reducing services if they weren't closing offices and reducing services themselves. In fact, the NDP was closing offices is not of the only hypocrisy on their part. Manitobans recall that before Remembrance Day of 2012, the First Minister of the—of Manitoba said that Manitoba students should be able to opt out of Remembrance Day services—ceremonies. He said we have religious freedoms in Canada and if there is anything 'pecific' reasons why people for religious purposes don't want their children to attend, that is an option that they have.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

Many Manitobans, including veterans, were very disappointed in the First Minister's statement. When the First Minister made the shameful comments, did the caucus stand up to support the veterans? Did they show respect for those who their lives were on the line? And no speaker, Mr. Speaker—they were silent. Each of them were 'complicit' in the Premier's (Mr. Selinger) disrespect of the veterans. Now that they came to support the veteran—that the—now that they came to support our veterans but their disgraceful actions speak louder than their words.

And I think this is just a distraction of the real issues that we are facing right now and throughout the province: of crumbling infrastructure and roads and bridges and even sewer systems that we have to replace so that we can actually grow our economy; doctor shortages that we see in rural Manitoba; the ER services that are being cut because of lack of doctors in health-care professions; the shortage of daycare spots that parents have to—can't work full-time because they can't find daycare. There are so many different issues that were actually at stake here and when—to call this as a federal issue, I feel that we've—we supported veterans and I believe that they do get the services that they truly deserve.

And I think, also, being closer to the provincial borders of Saskatchewan, we've found there's a lot of issues out there right now, is the PST. You know,

right now we're—difference of 3 per cent, the disadvantage of lower taxes that they have on the other side of the border and the high tax exemption that they also have. These would be important issues in our neck of the woods too, and we find right now, we feel that—when I was talking to Larry Maguire when it came to Veterans Affairs and services that we provide in Brandon, these are not issues that we have in our riding. There are services for those individuals. We're looking at a lot more bigger issues that we have to deal with.

In my conclusion that, Mr. Speaker, we owe it to our veterans. Unlike the First Minister, we do not believe honouring them should be an option. We owe them our safety and we owe them our freedom and we owe them our democracy. Veterans deserve better than the NDP spin and false indignation. I would like to—unlike the current First Minister, we won't let Remembrance Day be an option.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Melanie Wight (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, sorry, I'm a little—I'm grateful to be able to get up and speak on this issue. I'd like to thank the member from Brandon East for bringing it forward.

I was a little bit shocked by the speech from the member from Brandon West and it made me sad. I just struggle to understand how anyone would be against this. I know—I've worked with kids who had post-traumatic stress disorder, for example, and I know the pain and the suffering and how difficult it is to manage. And one of the most important things is to get that help really quickly and to get the help that you need from somebody who's trained in that field. And to suggest that Service Canada offices can do the same job as Veterans Affairs, I think—I don't know if that's just a lack of knowledge about Veterans Affairs. I hope so, but—and I—and it's certainly not too late for members opposite to stand together on this issue.

* (11:40)

You know, my dad was in the Second World War, and I can remember him telling me the story of how he went to sign up. And he had bad eyes, he wore glasses, my dad, and so, anyway, the first time he went he was turned down. And he said he came home—this was a long time ago, I think, before people really knew what war does to you—and he threw himself on the bed and cried, he said, because he couldn't get in to do what he felt he needed to do for his country. And so he tried again later. They had

found, actually, he'd had pneumonia when he was seven, and so there was scars on his lung that kept him from getting in the first time. So he tried again the second time, and for some reason the second time they missed those scars on his lung and he was able to get into the service.

He wasn't able to go overseas because of his eyesight, so he served by teaching, you know, people wireless operator in the planes. So he went to places like Montreal to do that. He was devastated that he didn't get overseas. I'm so grateful because we're all here because of that, quite possibly. Many of the other men and women didn't come home, and many came home with post-traumatic stress disorder, which back then they had no clue what to do, you know, how to deal with that, right? So I was really lucky that I had a dad who came home and he didn't have post-traumatic stress disorder because he wasn't able to get overseas and actually see the horror that our veterans see.

So for me, Mr. Speaker, this wasn't a partisan issue, and it makes me incredibly sad that we aren't standing together for this and that people are not able to recognize that, really, these are people's lives who've given so much for us, and this is one time when we can all stand together. It wouldn't hurt you, on the opposite side, to stand with us on this one and do what's right.

There is no question that the services have been changed and reduced for veterans. It's not that there isn't more offices that are open across the country, we understand that. But they're not people who know what they're—how to do the work for Veterans Affairs. They're not trained in that. There's one person now in the Shilo office instead of three, and it just seems to me that we got elected to do these kinds of things. Sometimes we have an opportunity where we can actually stand together. And so—I don't know. I would plead with you today to do that.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for—Lac du Bonnet. My memory is slipping.

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): It gives me great pleasure today to rise and, as my colleagues from this side of the House had mentioned, to support our veterans, because if it was not for the courage of our veterans engaging in the acts of war, they are the ones who brought our rights and freedoms to reality. And that includes our democratic way of life that we have not only in Manitoba, this great province, but Canada as well, fantastic country that and I feel very, very, very privileged to be a part

of and also stand in this incredible Chamber representing the Lac du Bonnet constituency.

Mr. Speaker, when I do hear about the NDP side, the government, the member from Brandon East bringing forward this resolution, I do hear at times some credibility to some of the words that they do put on the record in regards to caring and vouching for our veterans—*[interjection]* Absolutely.

And at this time, you know, I know that the member from Brandon East had actually spoken for about 10 minutes, and I know that I sat here and listened to what he had to say, so I would appreciate it if he sat there and listened to what I have to say and put on the record as well.

Part of this, though, goes towards the hypocrisy part that I know that we've mentioned a few times on this side of the House, but the hypocrisy piece to this is the fact that if we are really caring for our veterans—I know as a new member in this House and soon I will, I guess, I'll have to pass that torch along to member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Piwniuk) and the member to Morris as far as the new members go—but when we're talking about services to veterans and we're talking about—and you know what, I'm just going to recap something that the member from St. James had mentioned. She stood in her place today and commended the federal government for having—providing the various services to veterans and then they go ahead and they start talking about the possibility or the closings of the veterans' offices.

Well, the hypocrisy that I'm talking about is not only the Hydro offices that have been closed throughout the province, let's talk about services specifically to veterans which definitely the Hydro offices are a service to veterans, but let's talk about the 19 plus ERs that are being closed or services have been dramatically reduced throughout the province.

I know that the member from St. James, the member from Burrows, the member from Brandon East, had mentioned about the—you can't necessarily get the services to veterans by phone call or by email and that and they'd like to have that personal touch. Well, when I stood in this House and talked about ER closures, the past minister of Health, who is now the Minister of Jobs and the Economy (Ms. Oswald), had basically mentioned to me that if you arrive at an ER that happens to be closed and there's no doctors available, the nurses there under nurse-managed care will help the person in the emergency room pick up a phone and call 911.

Now, that was laughable, Mr. Speaker. I could not believe that answer. So if somebody has some sort of issue, if a veteran has an issue, they need to get to an ER. They drive themselves or get a loved one to drive them to an ER, and this government's decision or attitude or response to something like that, if the ER is closed and there's no doctor on call, their answer to that problem is that they will help the veteran or the loved one call 911 which is technically calling the ambulance from outside to come to the ER, pick them up, load them up into an ambulance and then take them to another facility, wherever that ER is possibly open throughout this great province of ours.

So I don't need any lessons from this government on how to care for our veterans. That is one prime example. So if they care so much, stand up and stop discontinuing services in ERs throughout Manitoba. We've already got 19 ERs closed and those numbers are probably at the 25 to 27-28 range. And when we really drill down and talk about how many ERs have had discontinued services or reduced services, we talk about the promises. Each and every member on that side of the House, during the 2011 election, went to door to door, door knocking, making promises, they were going to take the education tax off of seniors, completely off their property tax.

And how I'm going to tie this in to the present resolution is the fact that we're talking about seniors, we're talking veterans, we're talking about services. We're talking about making promises and then breaking promises. We're talking about making promises to take millions of dollars off the seniors' tax rolls and putting it back into their pockets but instead what we're doing is they've broken the promises. They've taken, instead of \$36 million that was promised to take the education tax off their—off seniors' property taxes, they've done some education tax credits which is equated to about 14 to 15 million, so they've got a ways to go. But they—trust them; that's what they continue to say—trust them. So when they bring a resolution like this to the floor of this fantastic Chamber, what they're really doing is they're trying to use this as a political football. So they're trying to slam the federal government in regards to reducing services, but on one hand, that seems to be okay from this government, but on the other hand, they don't take a look at what they are actually doing to harm veterans and to seniors and those people who have fought so

many—so hard for many of the great freedoms and rights that we have today, Mr. Speaker.

* (11:50)

We talk about—I've already talked about the ERs, talked about the education school tax off of seniors. I know that the member from St. Norbert is still talking about how this is ridiculous, but I invite him to stand up and put a few words on the record today, as well, in regards to how this is—this resolution is actually helping veterans when they could take that step back and take a look at those—their own record. They've taken the democracy piece away—that these veterans have fought so hard for—away from these veterans. They decided in the 2011 election to promise to not raise any taxes. And what have they done? Two years after that, 2012, 2011, they not only broke that promise but they rose that PST by one point or 14 per cent increase.

Now what's happening? We hear within the last few weeks that they have actually been entertaining—the NDP government has been entertaining to raise that PST to 9, which is a two-point or a 29 per cent increase from their election promise to not raise taxes in 2011. So what have they done with that? They have broken the taxpayer protection law. They've wiped it out.

So they've taken that democratic right to vote—those—that point that the veterans had fought so hard for, for our rights, freedoms and our right to vote—they've taken that away. They've said, you know what, veterans, seniors, all Manitobans, you don't have that right now. We know better than you, the NDP government says, to stand there and say, we will take these dollars out of your back pockets, whether you like it or not. We don't care what you have to say. We're not going to give you a right to say it. And come election 2016 or '15, whenever their new leadership race ends up happening, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that they'll be apologizing for those misleading flyers and door knocks and all those type of things that they did in the 2011 election.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I feel that we on this side of the House support our veterans, and I think by supporting veterans, we make sure that they have sustainable health care and also dollars in their back pockets, and I thank you for your time.

Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler): It's my pleasure to stand this morning in the Legislature and put some comments on the record with respect to the

resolution that's been brought forward by the member for Brandon East (Mr. Caldwell).

And I have to say that I appreciated the comments of the member for Burrows (Ms. Wight). I know that these issues can be very personal and she shared a very personal story, and I was pleased to hear her relate this information about her father. It reminds me of my wife's grandfather and her great-uncle who fought in the Second World War. And from time to time, I think about the hardship of what they faced there. I think about the tremendous sacrifice it took to leave home and family. I think about how the family struggled in their absence. And I know that that is a legacy across Canada and across so many countries where people left, and there was struggle where they were, and there was struggle back home.

And I also think about the struggle that so many families, including my wife's, had on their return. And that difficult, difficult integration back into society. And from time to time, we look at the medals that my wife's grandfather and great-uncle won, and from time to time, we consider the cost that they paid and that the family paid.

And, of course, Mr. Speaker, I know you understand as well, and lately, again, in the news, we've been hearing more and more about post-traumatic stress disorder and how so many of our veterans served, and then, as a society, we did not have the capacity to help them to come back and to thrive and to reintegrate. We didn't have, as a culture, an understanding about diseases of the mind and conditions that—the things they saw, the tremendous trauma that they experienced, we didn't have the capacity to help them as we should've. And that 'tragedy' was—tragedy was then visited on families. And there was tremendous loss economically. There was loss socially. There was loss in families. And that's the kind of—is something that the member for Burrows alluded to. It's certainly true in our own experience.

And, Mr. Speaker, I know that there has been some sharp moments of disagreement this morning on these two sides of the House. But I know that we can say, in all earnestness, that there is no division amongst us as MLAs here this morning when we talk about the tremendous, the tremendous sacrifice made by our veterans, the tremendous cost that they paid, the tremendous debt of thanks that we owe them. And I know that, like so many MLAs, that I have visited the communities and visited schools in my

community, and to be able to see the schools taking part in Remembrance Day services, it is one way that our communities pay respect to the veterans who fought.

And, Mr. Speaker, I thought it would be a good idea this morning to just bring you to an awareness that in my community there is a young woman who has just distinguished herself for what she's doing on behalf of veterans. And I wanted to make my colleagues aware that an 11-year-old Morden resident by the name of Mollie Wheeler is now competing at the national level with the Royal Canadian Legion's annual Remembrance Day literary contest. She wrote an essay back in November, and then she won a recommendation at the branch level, at the zone level, at the district level and then at the provincial level. And now her essay will be considered at a national level in that grade 4 to 6 category. It's really quite an honour. But I think for me what is most—and I know Ms. Wheeler from the community; actually, she was one of the young students who are performing at the opening and closing ceremonies of the Manitoba Games that I told you about earlier in this session—but what impresses me most about the essay that Mollie has written is that she has veterans in her family as well and she says that she tries to honour veterans every day in her life, and this was one way that she could do it.

And the essay written by Mollie begins this way. It says: What is remembrance? People remember different things in different ways at different times. Many people confuse remembering with remembrance. And for me—this is Mollie speaking—remembrance is thinking about people and the inspiring things they have done. Every year on November 11th, we stop to remember the men and women who sacrificed their lives for our freedom and for peace here in Canada. The soldiers went to war, some of them not voluntarily, knowing there was a chance they would return injured or possibly not return at all. Even though lots of soldiers survived and came back home to Canada, they had to live for the rest of their lives with the memories of feeling wet, cold and tired, the sounds of gunshots, bombs and screams and the loss of many families—of friends and family. Though at school I can learn what the soldiers lived through, I can't even begin to understand what they experienced or imagine how they must have felt.

And Mollie concludes by saying: This is why I am thankful for all veterans. Because of their

sacrifices, I feel safe going to sleep at night. I have the opportunity to go to school and the right to speak my opinions freely. That is why I choose to attend the Remembrance Day service in my community and to live my everyday life aware of the sacrifices the soldiers made.

I appreciate the men and women of Canada who continue to serve our country. They are working on making peace in all countries. And it is my hope that in the future there will be peace in our world. End quote.

Those are the words of one Manitoba student who I think has rightly understood that the debt we

owe to our veterans is not one simply paid by people my age, my colleagues. But it is so encouraging to see this next generation take up this cause and stand for veterans.

And, Mr. Speaker, I know that this morning—

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

When this matter's again before the House, the honourable member for Morden-Winkler (Mr. Friesen) will have three minutes remaining.

The hour being 12 noon, this House is recessed and stands recessed until 1:30 p.m. this afternoon.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, April 8, 2014

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