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of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
Official Report
(Hansard)

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-First Legislature

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, May 8, 2019

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

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

Please be seated. Good afternoon, everybody.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 236—The Celebrating Manitoba 150 Act

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): I move, seconded by the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey), that Bill 236, The Celebrating Manitoba 150 Act; Loi sur l'Année de la célébration du 150^e anniversaire du Manitoba, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Swan: This bill would formally establish 2020 as the year to celebrate Manitoba 150. The bill would also provide that the government's efforts to promote events, celebrations and other activities for Manitoba 150 would not have to cease 90 days before a provincial election in 2020.

This bill is brought forward to ensure that the government can promote Manitoba 150 both inside and outside of Manitoba while still complying with Manitoba's election laws.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

Bill 237—The Technology Advisory Council Act

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): I move, seconded by the member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine), that Bill 237, The Technology Advisory Council Act; Loi sur le Conseil consultatif de la technologie, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Kinew: Madam Speaker, some of the biggest industries in our province, from agriculture to transportation to finance and insurance, are threatened with disruption by rapidly advancing technology change; however, there are also opportunities being presented for our workforce here.

This act proposes to bring together a technology council to advise the government on issues like genetic engineering, artificial intelligence and block chain technology so that we can continue to grow Manitoba for generations to come. I'm proud to bring it forward for consideration at this time.

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

Committee reports? Tabling of reports?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

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

Would the honourable First Minister please proceed with his statement.

Victory in Europe Day

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): I rise today to recognize the 74th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day.

On May 8th, 1945, the Allies of World War II accepted Nazi Germany's unconditional surrender of its armed forces, marking the end of one of the most deadly conflicts in human history. Approximately 70 million people died over the course of the war, including 6 million innocent lives taken during the Holocaust.

Today we are reminded of the immense contribution and sacrifice made by so many Canadians in defence of freedom and democracy. May 8th symbolizes freedom, peace and gratitude to military personnel across the globe and reminds us of the courage and bravery of our service men and women.

We will forever mourn the lives that we have lost, but we will also remember the bittersweet legacy of this victory as years of suffering for

millions of people came to an end, all thanks to those who served.

The impact that the hundreds of thousands of Canadians who bravely served has had on our great province and country cannot possibly be overstated. We owe our very liberty and our freedom to their bravery. Today is an important reminder that we must continue to reflect on their sacrifices and preserve their memory for generations to come.

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): May 8th is the 74th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day, a day when the German troops laid down their arms, marking the end of the Second World War.

Today is a day to celebrate and commemorate the hard-fought victories of the war and the significant contributions of the more than 1 million Canadians who served in the Armed Forces.

Recently we also acknowledged, on Yom Hashoah, the 6 million who perished in the Holocaust, also during World War II.

We ought to take this time to commemorate the brave sacrifices of Canadian soldiers who lost their lives in the war. More than 40,000 Canadians were killed fighting for our freedoms, with many Manitobans among them.

The Allied victory in World War II marked the triumph of democratic ideals and values and a rejection of authoritarianism and ultra-nationalism. The effects of the war in reshaping our economy and politics can still be seen to this day.

However, at a time we are—when we are seeing a resurgence in some of the rhetoric that we triumphed over in 1945, it is important for us to reflect on the lessons learned from our past. We must honour the Canadian soldiers who fought and died to protect our freedoms by continuing to advocate for our fellow Manitobans and fight against injustice whenever we see it. We know that freedom has never been free, Madam Speaker, and today we remember why.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I speak to the day, the victory day, 74 years ago and the anniversary. It is particularly poignant at the moment, to me and to my family.

My brother Peter has been sharing some of the letters that my parents wrote back and forth at about this time 74 years ago. My father was serving in Palestine. He had 'befun'—before that in North Africa and then Anzio where they were bombarded for day

after day for months, and it is amazing in a sense and very poignant to read the love that was expressed between my father and my mother. They had been married three years before but had really hardly had a day together before being separated, and my father was engaged in the war. It is amazing. I want to thank my brother Peter for bringing these letters to light again and for reminding us of the times that people went through.

* (13:40)

And this day past, my father was in Palestine and he was being told that he was one who would have to stay on for some time—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to allow the member to conclude his statement? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Gerrard: Well, my—even as people were being demobilized, my father had to stay on in Palestine and be there. And my mother was anxious about what might happen, even though the war was ended, because it wasn't an easy time. But he did survive. He came back and we're certainly very thankful for that. And my parents lived for many happy years together afterwards.

Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Further ministerial statements?

The honourable Minister for Status of Women, and I would indicate that the required 90 minutes notice prior to routine proceedings was provided in accordance with our rule 26(2).

Would the honourable minister please proceed with her statement.

World Ovarian Cancer Day

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister responsible for the Status of Women): I stand today to recognize World Ovarian Cancer Day and to proudly wear the teal-coloured ribbon in recognition of this important day.

Each year on May 8th women living with ovarian cancer, their families and supporters, along with patient advocacy organizations from around the world come together to raise awareness about ovarian cancer.

Madam Speaker, it is alarming to share that an estimated 2,800 women in Canada and an estimated

90 women in Manitoba will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer this year.

Ovarian cancer has the lowest survival rate of all female cancers. This remains a difficult cancer to diagnose and there is no early detection test yet. Thus, most women are often diagnosed once the cancer has spread, making it more difficult to treat.

Five-year ovarian cancer survival rates vary around the world, ranging from 30 per cent to 45 per cent but, Madam Speaker, I am encouraged to say that there are individuals and groups who do not accept the status quo and are pushing forward.

I am advised that surgeons in Manitoba who conduct ovarian cancer surgeries are beginning to utilize new technologies and are participating in a distinct pan-Canadian project specific to ovarian cancer outcomes.

Ovarian cancer can be difficult—can be a difficult topic to discuss but, Madam Speaker, I am pleased to say that World Ovarian Cancer Day makes a difference. Every time World Ovarian Cancer Day awareness messages are shared—every tweet, retweet, Facebook post, like and share—we are helping to spread the word that ovarian cancer—the message around the world and one voice has power.

It is also my great pleasure to acknowledge guests in the gallery today. I am so pleased and honoured to have representatives from Ovarian Cancer Canada, including their children. You are here representing our mothers, our daughters, our sisters, our nieces, our aunties. I am in awe of your collective strength and determination to create awareness and to eradicate ovarian cancer.

To our courageous and brave survivors, I applaud your strength and am encouraged by your message of hope.

Please join me in acknowledging our guests in the gallery today from Ovarian Cancer Canada.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Point Douglas—oh. The honourable minister for Sustainable Development.

Ms. Squires: Madam Speaker, I ask for leave to enter the names of my guests into Hansard.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to include the names of the guests in Hansard? *[Agreed]*

Crystal Degelman, Karen Dempsey, Linda Kellas, Janice Klassen, Shayne Krasnesky, Tamara Peabody, Doreen Phimister, Mary Polonuk,

Crystal Reiter, Cindy Sanchez, Dillon Sanchez, Kyla Sanchez, Alyssa Slatnik, Christa Slatnik, Sierra Slatnik, Caitlin Southall, Rachel Southall, Jon Tugwell.

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): Today we stand in solidarity with women and patient advocacy organizations across the globe in the fight against ovarian cancer.

Every women—every woman—in the world is at risk of developing this disease, yet ovarian cancer is often overlooked and research is consistently underfunded. There is currently no reliable screening test for the disease and no vaccine to prevent it, despite it being the most lethal women's cancer in Canada.

Ovarian cancer has the lowest survival rate of all female cancers, in part because most women are only diagnosed once the cancer has already spread and becomes more difficult to treat. One in two women diagnosed do not live to see another five years.

We have an opportunity to change those statistics, Madam Speaker, by working with patients and medical practitioners to identify what needs to be done to combat this fatal disease. In order to ensure that women in health care—or women have the best chance of survival, investments in health care are needed. Hopefully, this government will keep that in mind as they undertake a review of CancerCare Manitoba.

I'm inspired by the courage of women battling ovarian cancer and the incredible resilience of their families. I offer my support to all Manitobans who have been affected and I am humbled by their strength.

Miigwech, Madam Speaker.

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): I thank the minister for the ministerial statement.

My own grandmother, Mary Edwards, I'd like to give acknowledgement to her today. The cause of death on her death certificate states unknown cancer and we've always wondered what she passed away from.

She knew it was to do with her woman's parts. She wasn't an English-speaking lady, and so she had trouble describing her symptoms and describing her discomforts to the nursing staff at the hospital in Ashern. And she fought hard, but she wasn't able to survive, and we lost my grandmother at a very young age of 44 years young.

Fast forward to 2004, when my own mother was diagnosed with a cancer as well, and, again, the same story. She repeatedly went to the nursing station, pleaded with the doctors to send out her bloodwork because she knew something was wrong. She knew it was to do with her woman's parts too, and she kept saying that she wanted her bloodwork sent out because she wasn't accepting that it was simply menopause for over four years that she fought.

And so we finally brought her out on the winter ice road to Victoria General, where she was diagnosed with stage 4 non-Hodgkins lymphoma. And she, too, fought very hard to survive, but it was way too late and nothing could be done.

And the most scary part of this is both husbands, my grandfather and my dad, had to overhear the doctors rushing down the hallway and laughing about a possible misdiagnosis and a possible—treating them the wrong way for whatever the conditions that they had. We need to fix this.

Megwetch, Madam Speaker.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Max's Restaurant

Mr. Jon Reyes (St. Norbert): Manitoba continues to be open for business—international business, that is—and today I'm honoured to recognize the Alibin Group Inc. and Max's Restaurant.

In January of this year, Max's Restaurant opened its doors, and on April 5th, for its official grand opening. The Alibin Group filled in the void of national franchises from the Philippines that was truly needed in Winnipeg—in my mind, the Filipino capital of Canada.

Max's Restaurant started in 1945 as a family restaurant in the Philippines feeding GIs fried chicken and fries. It is only fitting that the Alibin Group, a local family, all work together to bring the taste of home to Manitobans, which includes our large Filipino population that is an estimated 80,000 strong in Manitoba.

Hipolito Alibin Jr., or JR, as he is referred to, along with his three brothers, John, Frank, Arnel and sister Sheila worked hard to convince Max's head office that Winnipeg was the right place for their next franchise.

JR credits the Provincial Nominee Program, which was started by efforts from our former premier, Gary Filmon, for helping convince

Max's Restaurant to come to Winnipeg, as could be run by expatriated Filipinos. Not only does Max's Restaurant bring the tastes of home to Filipinos and introduces their fine cuisine to all Manitobans, but it helps create new jobs and new beginnings to those who they gainfully employ.

We are thankful to the Alibin Group by their hard work, dedication and persistence to bring Max's Restaurant to Winnipeg. It is a true Manitoba-made success story, from their humble beginnings to owning a business and employing others and sharing the dream.

Madam Speaker, today in the gallery, I would like to recognize Hipolito Alibin Jr. and his brother, his kuya, John Alibin. Thank you for having made Manitoba your home of hope and investing back into our province through job creation, and, of course, we can enjoy the delicious and tasty Filipino cuisine of Max's Restaurant.

Maraming salamat po sa inyong lahat. [*Thank you very much to all of you.*]

Thank you.

* (13:50)

Programs and Services in the North

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): As has become the norm with this government, northern Manitoba is experiencing program and staff cuts that are harming the quality of life for those who live in the North.

Due to the fact that clerks at the conservation offices were cut, people are unable to obtain a fishing licence. When the conservation officers are out in the field, which is where they should be, there is no one at the office to issue licences anymore, and although the regular fishing season is closed, the stocked trout lakes are still open but people can't get a fishing licence.

Reductions in the Northern Affairs office in Thompson also resulted in contractual workers not getting paid in a consistent or timely manner. That's unacceptable.

At the moment, there are no Manitoba Housing managers at the local office in Flin Flon. There may not be anyone in The Pas who answers the phone, so those seeking assistance are unable to contact and speak with a person who has the authority to help them. Instead, people have to phone Manitoba Housing headquarters in Winnipeg. This system

makes it incredibly difficult for individuals who are applying for housing and who want repairs done.

Now we've learned that funding for Snow Lake centre on family violence has been cut effective July 11th, 2019. The centre provides services like emotional support, crisis intervention, information referrals and educational workshops that people would otherwise have to leave the community to utilize. Now that their funding has been cut, many of their services will have to be eliminated, and vulnerable women, children and men will struggle as a result.

Northern Manitobans shouldn't be expected to get by with inadequate services. The needs of northern Manitobans can no longer be neglected. Madam Speaker, the programs and services available in the North need to be maintained and improved, and don't get me started on health care that's missing in the North.

Koch Fertilizer Canada Facility Upgrade

Mr. Len Isleifson (Brandon East): Today I take great pleasure in rising in the House to share some exciting news about the importance of a vibrant economy and what a positive economic outlook for the future means to a community.

On April 25th, Madam Speaker, I was joined by some colleagues at Koch Fertilizer Canada Ltd. as they announced a \$130-million facility upgrade in Brandon East. The project includes the construction of a \$33-million administrative building on the north end of their property, bringing together over 100 employees who currently operate in various buildings located throughout the Westman area.

While Koch Fertilizer's Brandon plant is the only Canadian fertilizer production facility of Kansas-based Koch Industries, it touches the lives of over 300 employees who call the Westman area home.

In addition, Koch transports 400 to 600 trucks and 300 to 400 rail cars of fertilizer each month to western Canada and US markets. This creates hundreds of additional jobs for Manitobans and makes a huge impact on the local economy.

With the work already underway, the creation of local jobs for the construction of the administration building alone will generate many hours within the various areas of a required labour force.

In an article from the Brandon Sun, the editors states, and I quote: The construction process, which they've projected to take place over the course of a

five-year renewal, will at the very least bolster the number of local jobs in the short term, which is still good news. Koch Fertilizer Canada's investment in Brandon is a boon, both economically and, very likely, environmentally. End of quote.

Madam Speaker, investment of this nature speaks volumes to Koch Fertilizer's confidence in both the provincial climate and to the future growth of the city of Brandon.

Madam Speaker, I'd like to invite you and our colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Kelly Simonson, Mr. Paul Liddle and the entire team at Koch Fertilizer Canada's Brandon facility on this great investment in Manitoba, proving once again that Manitoba is open for business.

Thank you.

Rapid City Reservoir Upgrades

Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain): Today I want to recognize Rapid City, a community in the constituency of Riding Mountain that has rolled up its sleeves to complete a project providing a rejuvenated recreational facility for the area.

The Rapid City reservoir predates 1892 and was originally constructed for water storage for irrigation, drinking water, livestock watering and for use by a lumber mill.

In 1961, the Rapid City dam was constructed to control water on the Little Saskatchewan River. In 1992, Manitoba's first fish ladder was created so fish could pass upstream past the dam to the reservoir.

The use of the reservoir for recreational activities, such as swimming and fishing, had deteriorated over the past number of years due to the large buildup of silt and subsequent growth of bull rushes.

The community decided something needed to be done, and in 2016 the Rapid City Beach and Reservoir Committee was formed with the goal of restoring the beach and reservoir.

The removal of bulrushes, the addition of sand and the construction of a new dock was completed in 2017. Today I am pleased to report that the thousands of cubic yards of silt built up over the years was excavated from the reservoir this past winter.

What is remarkable, Madam Speaker, is that this work was done without any government funding, thanks to a major financial contribution from Rapid City native Gord Peters, the CEO of

Cando Rail Services, Ltd., along with generous donations from many community organizations and businesses.

Madam Speaker, I want to salute the committee, financial contributors and the citizens of Rapid City on completion of this project that will benefit the community of Rapid City for years to come.

Co-Management Fishery Board Meeting

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolesey): This morning I was honoured to be invited to attend as a witness to a closed-door meeting of fishers who have been a member of the co-management fishery board for Lake Winnipeg.

Fisher communities from all three areas of the commercial fishery—the north basin, the south basin and the central region—were all represented. And the theme of the comments as we went around the room, speaker after speaker, was the same: intense feelings of—*[interjection]*

That would be our emergency briefing, I would assume.

Madam Speaker: I would encourage the member to continue. Yes. *[interjection]*

The honourable member—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

We can start again with the member. It does appear that that was the emergency alert. That was the emergency alert that probably went off on some phones, so it does work.

Mr. Altemeyer: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I appreciate that.

This morning I was honoured to attend a closed-door meeting of fishers from Lake Winnipeg who were meeting under the banner of the co-management board of the Lake Winnipeg fishery. Communities from all areas of the fishery—the north basin, the south basin and the central region—were all represented. And the themes, as we went around the room, listening to comment after comment from each speaker, were the same: intense feelings of frustration, betrayal and despair at what they had been receiving from this government. The fishers highlighted for me the numerous times when this Premier (Mr. Pallister) and his Minister for Sustainable Development have made promises to them that have then been broken, promises about

regulations, promises about consultation. And none of it has been lived up to.

Now, co-management is a special relationship. It's where government is actually willing to share power with the people most affected, most connected to the resource that is involved. And so it was not with any small hesitation that the fishers continued their deliberations. I had to leave to come back to the Legislature, but they have sent me this statement and asked me to read it into the official record on their behalf.

It reads simply as follows: The Lake Winnipeg Fishery Co-Management Board voted this morning unanimously to dissolve this current board due to a lack of trust and unwillingness of the fisheries department to work as a true co-management fishery board, which was the initial agreement to share in a decision-making process.

Madam Speaker, a government's job is to make life better for its residents, not worse. This Premier, his minister, his government have failed.

Madam Speaker: It has come to my attention that we may have members in the Chamber that are wearing protest badges. Protest badges are considered unacceptable in the Chamber, and that has been a—*[interjection]* Oh. I'm just receiving further information. And it—the further information is saying that we can wear them as long as they do not create disorder.

So I would encourage members that if there are badges that are being worn they are—*[interjection]*—order—they are not to be used as a prop or to be used to further cause disorder in the House. And that, I think, is critically important.

* (14:00)

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: I would like to, at this point, draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us today some special guests. We have Lincoln, baby Lincoln, and Jamie Smith, who are the son and wife of the honourable member for Southdale (Mr. Smith).

On behalf of all honourable members here, we welcome them to the Legislature.

We also have seated in the public gallery from Pine Creek Mennonite School we have 12 grade 6 to 12 students under the direction of Kenneth Plett, and this group is located in the constituency of the

honourable Minister of Indigenous and Northern Relations (Ms. Clarke).

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

Concordia and Seven Oaks Hospitals Request to Retain ER Services

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Madam Speaker, we know full well that health care is the No. 1 priority of the people of Manitoba.

Yesterday the Premier had a big speech, and he had the opportunity to send a message to Manitobans that he cares about health care too. How did that go? Not super well, from what we can tell. The biggest reported fact out of this speech was a thermos, Madam Speaker, a lot of reports of a thermos and, I guess, a metaphor about how Manitobans lost a thermos, and then, now, there's going to be a thermos returned to them.

Well, here's a surprise twist, plot twist in that story: the thermos that Manitobans care about is keeping the Concordia emergency room open, and this Premier is trying to steal it.

Will the Premier simply back off his plans, give back the thermos to the people of northeast Winnipeg and keep the Concordia emergency room open?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, Madam Speaker, health care is our top priority as a government. That's why we're investing more than \$400 million more this year alone than the NDP previously ever did, and why we're getting better results than the NDP government ever did.

But I know the member is fairly giddy with excitement at having had the ignoble accomplishment of forcing a 35-year member of the Legislative Assembly out of his party today. I know that he's excited about that. Not, ironically, is this member, Steve Ashton, being excluded from running for the NDP for his failure to disclose numerous pertinent—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —pieces of information over many—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: Madam Speaker, he's not being kicked out of the NDP as a candidate for covering things up, which he did numerous times, but rather, he's being not allowed to run because he disclosed information which the member for Fort Rouge doesn't like.

Madam Speaker, that's a—on a day when we should be celebrating the accomplishments of freedom, I think that that is absolutely the last thing that the member should be giddy about.

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

Mr. Kinew: Madam Speaker, as a leader, I can commit to the following: the Premier can attack me as much as he wants, and I'll keep coming back and standing up for the No. 1 priority of the people of Manitoba which is health care.

And so I was there in northeast Winnipeg today, standing with the people of Concordia, of Radisson, of Rossmere, of River East, of Transcona, of many, many constituencies, who all had a very simple message: Save our ER. I can still hear the chant in my head. Save our ER; it's a very simple message and the Premier ought to heed that message. It's what the people of Manitoba want. They don't want another consultant who's going to come in and only talk to management. They want leadership that is going to listen to them and put health care first, Madam Speaker.

So the question remains: Will the Premier simply cancel his plans to close the emergency rooms, Concordia and Seven Oaks?

Mr. Pallister: The member's priority isn't the people of Concordia or anyone else. His first priority is himself and his political aggrandizement and that's why he's forbidden a former leadership rival from running under his leadership because—not because that member—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —Steve Ashton, that former member of 35 years of this place, Madam Speaker, not because he covered things up, but because he released accurate information, accurate information about the member pertinent to his background, pertinent to his actual behaviour and his choices in life. And he stands here today and promotes himself, but he does it at the expense of what is right and what is fair.

Now I'm probably the last person who should stand and defend Steve Ashton. I'm not defending his conduct, but I am not going to celebrate with the member the expulsion or exclusion of any person for releasing accurate and honest information to the public.

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

Mr. Kinew: Again, Madam Speaker, the Premier and his political party, their only hope at re-election is to attack me. That's fine. Let them knock themselves out with it. I'll keep standing up for health care and I'll keep standing up for the people of Manitoba.

We know very well—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —what the people of Manitoba want. They want emergency rooms and ambulance stations across the province to stay open. We see the evidence that the Premier's plan for health care is a disaster: emergency room wait times are up in the city of Winnipeg, surgery wait times are through the roof and rates of mandatory overtime being worked by nurses are at 'unprecedented' levels.

The plan that the Premier has brought forward is failing. The people right across Manitoba and Winnipeg are speaking up, demanding better results from health care.

Will the Premier simply put a plot—put a pause to this misguided plan and announce today that he will not close the emergency rooms at Concordia and Seven Oaks hospitals?

Mr. Pallister: Well, the member is quite wrong, Madam Speaker. The way we will win is the way we won last time, and that's by telling the truth to Manitobans, not covering it up as the NDP did.

And setting aside for a moment, if I could, the member's obvious egotistical self-importance and narcissism, I will say this: the NDP record is one of miserable failure. The NDP record is one that saw our emergency waits the longest in Canada. The NDP record saw our deficits going up to up to \$1 billion a year, and our—now our interest service costs \$1 billion a year; and it's not helping our health care system, Madam Speaker, to try to tell everyone we should go back to where we were dead last.

So, we'll confront the challenges of changing the system so it works better for people while the member has to confront his own personal demons.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Just a caution to members that we need to be respectful in our comments to and from—*[interjection]*—I'm looking on all sides. *[interjection]* Order. A caution to all members that we do need to be careful as we are bringing forward questions and answers, that we don't delve into the area of personal attacks. I think that is not where we want to go with the comments that are being made in the House, so I would urge in the debate that people work very hard to maintain that.

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

Mr. Kinew: I certainly welcome your esteemed guidance, but I'm completely fine with the Premier continuing on with the negative personal attacks. I'll keep standing up for health care and the people of Manitoba.

Speaking of information that the Premier would not like to have made public, I have to share with the House the following bit of information that he is not telling the public, Manitoba. It would be irresponsible for this government to close the Concordia emergency room at this time. The reason is the government's own experts say that this ER should not be closed unless the St. Boniface emergency department renovations are complete and ready to handle the influx of new patients.

We know that St. Boniface is currently a construction zone. FIPPA documents that I will table show that that renovation project is nowhere near complete. It's severely behind schedule. Therefore, closing Concordia at this time would be irresponsible.

Will the Premier simply cancel the plans to close the emergency rooms in Winnipeg?

* (14:10)

Mr. Pallister: Again, Madam Speaker, Dr. David Peachey, who was commissioned by the previous NDP government and who filed recommendations saying we should have fewer emergency rooms and more urgent-care centres, had his report totally ignored by the previous NDP government. So the fact remains that we are listening to the experts, including Dr. Peachey.

We are looking to change the system for the better and we're not content, as the member appears to be, with last place when it comes to emergency treatment and access for Manitobans to have that treatment and care.

The member appears to want us to go backward in time, Madam Speaker, and we're not willing to do that. We are going to pursue improvements to the system that result in better care being available to Manitobans who need it sooner.

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

Mr. Kinew: What the Premier has neglected to share is that his emergency room wait times task force told this government that they ought not to close the emergency rooms at Concordia and Seven Oaks until St. Boniface Hospital's renovations are complete.

The reason is simple. We know when they close those emergency departments that tens of thousands of patients will then have to go to the remaining emergency rooms. These are patients not just from northeast Winnipeg and northwest Winnipeg, but also out-of-town patients who travel from the Interlake, from Eastman, from Westman, to use those hospitals.

It is simply irresponsible for this government to close the emergency room while St. Boniface's emergency department is still a construction zone. The documents we tabled today show that that plan is well behind schedule, and it is not ready to accomplish the task of caring for the new influx of patients.

Will the Premier simply listen to the evidence and not close the emergency rooms at Concordia and Seven Oaks hospitals?

Mr. Pallister: Well, there's an adage we're all familiar with, Madam Speaker, that says something like, if it ain't broke, don't fix it. What the NDP appears to be saying is that the health-care system isn't broken. It is. It was. They did nothing about it.

What they broke, Madam Speaker, we're committed to fixing.

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

Mr. Kinew: I'll put some very clear evidence on the record, Madam Speaker. This is a direct quote from that task force report. And I quote, verbatim: The physical space in St. Boniface emergency room is

old and inadequate, even for current volumes of patients. With the current space and patient flow, a 55 per cent increase is not possible. A new or completely renovated emergency department is urgently required.

That was the advice that the Premier received. That emergency department has not been constructed. That plan is well behind schedule. That's what the FIPPA documents show.

It is irresponsible. It could potentially harm the care for people in Manitoba if this government rushes full speed ahead with their plan to close the emergency departments.

Seeing as those renovations are incomplete, that it would be irresponsible to move ahead, will the Premier simply agree not to close the Concordia emergency room or to close the Seven Oaks emergency room?

Mr. Pallister: It's particularly ironic on a day when the member excludes Steve Ashton for telling the truth that he tries to conflate two contradictory things.

Madam Speaker, the renovations at St. Boniface Hospital are far, far more expansive and encompass far more aspects of the facility than the emergency facility itself. And so he's trying to take one and juxtapose it to another for his personal advocacy purposes.

He's wrong in his advocacy. He's 'misleading'—he's attempting to mislead Manitobans on the same day that he punishes someone for putting out facts about him. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

Concordia Hospital ER Request to Retain Service

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Madam Speaker, today hundreds of individuals, youth, seniors, nurses—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Wiebe: —doctors and other front-line workers from across northeast Winnipeg gathered in front of the Concordia Hospital with a very clear message for this Premier (Mr. Pallister): Save our ER.

The people who gathered there today are angry, but they're also confused because for two years now they have been told that their ER will shut down, and now—and for two years the residents have been

begging this government to reconsider. For two years they've been saying to the Premier (Mr. Pallister), with one voice, to reconsider, and now the minister and the Premier say they want to reconsider.

Will the Premier stand up and stop the closure of our Concordia ER?

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): I note the member's protest button today. The protest button, though, that he has never worn is the one he should have for years that said get better health care for all Manitobans. That's the message that would have demonstrated to Manitobans that that member truly cared about getting better results, and that is what Manitobans care about, is getting better results.

We know—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Friesen: —that their government for 17 years lacked the courage to act. We accept the challenge of this getting better health care sooner for Manitobans. We are on our way. There is more evidence all the time that shows our plan is working.

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

Mr. Wiebe: Madam Speaker, in addition to the hundreds at the rally today we have nearly 700 more residents who have signed the petition, demand the Concordia ER stay open. I table that here today.

This is over and above, of course, the thousands of other signatures, hundreds of postcards, emails, contacts directly to the MLAs in their constituencies to send that message clearly, yet time and time again the minister and the Premier won't listen.

Now, at the eleventh hour with a snap election on them—on the brain, all of a sudden this Premier wants to make a change. Well, I invite him to do that, but to send the message clearly. The damage has been done and our community will not take this sitting down.

Will he commit to saving the—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Friesen: I don't know if that member has ever actually read that Peachey report that was originally delivered to his government. They didn't act on it.

I do note that in that report it clearly says that the health-care system in Manitoba was characterized as

siloed, fragmented, with concerns over quality and access, redundancy and inefficiency and challenges for those who are planning the system resulting in poor results and outcomes for Manitobans.

That member says go back, but Manitobans do not want to go back to waiting longer and getting worse care.

We accept the challenge. We accept the responsibility. We are making progress, and we have more to say in the coming days about Concordia as Dr. Peachey's work is allowed to continue and to complete.

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

Mr. Wiebe: The reality is, Madam Speaker, that something that should have never been a political decision, that is to close the Concordia emergency room, continues to be and it's clearly in the hands of this minister and this Premier.

The Premier seems to be realizing now, maybe, that creating chaos and lasting damage in our health-care system might not be a politically popular decision. He has made this his priority. It is his choice now to reverse that.

So I ask him one more time to join with the community, to stand with us and to stand up against this closure and reverse the decision to close the Concordia ER.

Mr. Friesen: That member not once mentioned patients or patient care in his three questions. He continues to put politics over outcomes, politics over patient experience. I would say to that member that this government is listening. This government is acting. This government continues to get results for all Manitobans, and we will continue to stand up to get better health care sooner for all Manitobans.

I ask that member for a few more days of patience to allow this external, independent review to continue. We have promised to Manitobans to be fully transparent with the advice that is presented back to us.

Concordia Hospital ER Closure Management Review

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): My question is to the Premier.

This Premier has done lasting damage to our health-care system. There's chaos at Concordia Hospital. It's slated to close in just a matter of weeks.

There's been a mass of staff departures from the hospital, and even now many former PC voters have told this government loud and clear: don't close the emergency room. Now, at the eleventh hour the Premier says he's going to do a management review.

* (14:20)

Why has this Premier caused such damage to our health care?

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): That's quite a question coming from the member for Elmwood, who knows full well that the damage to the Manitoba health-care system was protracted and prolonged under the former NDP government who, for years and years, failed to receive the advice of experts, failed to look at external examples of how to co-ordinate your efforts better, failed to get value for money for Manitoba taxpayers and Manitoba patients, had the longest wait times in Canada year after year. That member knows full well who's responsible for the failures, the mess that our government is now cleaning up.

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

Mr. Maloway: To the Premier: Over the last two years I've talked to countless constituents, including many angry former Conservative voters. This Premier has refused to listen. Now, with just weeks left, the Premier calls a management review.

Why is the Premier only listening to consultants when people in our community have been telling him for two years, don't close Concordia emergency room.

Why won't he listen?

Mr. Friesen: Madam Speaker, I note with some interest that that is exactly the characterization of former NDP ministers of their own premier at the time who said he had failed to listen.

Madam Speaker, what is clear is that our government is listening. We're listening to experts. We're listening to front-line workers. We're interested in what they have to say.

And what that expert, that external independent expert, is telling us right now is that many of the parts of the provincial clinical and preventative services plan under way are working well, places like indigenous health, places like mental health and

addictions, places like planning for surgeries. These things are coming together. They are being co-ordinated better. They're getting better results—personal-care-home wait times in Winnipeg are down to historic levels.

However, where there are challenges, we have the courage and the ability and the determination to address them.

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

Mr. Maloway: My final supplementary to the Premier is that the Premier has caused chaos in our hospitals. Concordia's slated to close in just a few weeks. There's been a mass staff departure from the hospital. The Premier's done lasting damage to our health care with less care by the bedside, and even his own Conservative backbenchers are telling the Premier, have been telling the Premier, don't close the Concordia emergency room.

Why won't he listen to his own members?

Madam Speaker: The honour—[*interjection*] Order.

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Manitobans recall, as does the member opposite, the chaos that prevailed in the NDP caucus room and elsewhere in that party as a consequence of the miserable failures of the previous government. The member was so ashamed of the performance of that government that he refused to put the letters N, D and P on his own election sign. It is ironic he stands today and attacks this side when, in fact, he was totally ineffective as part of a government that drove our health-care system to last place in Canada. They broke the system and he was a part of that, Madam Speaker, not a big part, but he was a part.

What they broke, we'll fix.

Madam Speaker: The order at this point would be the—it would be a Liberal question? [*interjection*] Okay.

Health-Care Reform Service Delivery Concerns

Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition): Day after day, Madam Speaker, when the NDP ask the Premier why this government is closing hospitals, ERs, ACCESS clinics and rural EMS stations, the Premier responds he's just doing that the NDP did first, and he's following a plan even the NDP didn't think was good enough. It's an indictment of this government that the only ideas

they can come up with are the ones they have to pay for because, again, day after day the PCs talk about the NDP failures and then they boast that they are following in their footsteps.

Why is the Premier following an NDP plan for health care at all?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Perhaps the member needs to consult some experts himself, Madam Speaker, in question preparation.

The fact of the matter is that, Madam Speaker, we are working very, very diligently on this side of the House to clean up the mess we inherited. It was an enormous and historic mess not just in health care, but in social services where we ranked dead last in terms of dealing with issues like child poverty. In terms of the mismanagement of money entrusted to the previous government for spending, Madam Speaker, we conducted a procurement review. Procurement modernization is an important thing that other governments have done, including the federal Liberal government the member constantly ascribes to support.

The difference is we're adopting the recommendations that were given to us; and just, for example, in that category alone we'll be saving over the next four years in procurement efficiencies over \$180 million in accumulated savings. That's multiples of the costs of getting the advice, Madam Speaker.

So when we listen to experts, as the previous government failed to do on health care and we are doing, you get better results.

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

Mr. Lamont: The Premier likes to talk about courage when it comes to health care. It's not courageous to make people in need suffer.

More than a year ago this government cancelled the special drugs program so that hundreds of people were denied fair access to life-saving medications, and over a year ago the wait times task force told the Premier they needed to slow down on health-care changes because the government was shutting down facilities too fast.

Is the re-hiring of Dr. Peachey just an admission that this government does not have a plan on health care?

Mr. Pallister: Madam Speaker, the member's preamble reminds me of a buddy of mine that just, whenever you ride with him, refuses to ask for directions even when he's totally lost, as the member clearly is.

The member is lost, and he is now attacking us for asking for help and directions. When we inherited a system that was clearly disadvantaging Manitobans in so many ways, Madam Speaker, I think it would have been wrong for us not to ask for additional help. It would have been egotistical to assume that we had all the answers.

There are experts in this province. There are experts at the front line. We've asked them for advice; Madam Speaker, we've received that advice.

The members may not like it, but the front-line workers who gave us the advice that we follow do like it, and we're getting a better system because we're a government that's willing to ask for advice and to act on it.

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

Mr. Lamont: I've had many conversations with people who work in the health-care system who are distressed and upset not just because of change, but because this government is completely unable to explain where any of these changes are headed because there is no end in sight. A nurse told me she could actually buy in to this if there was any sense that there was a plan that was going to be followed and a destination, and a doctor told me that every doctor that she works with is miserable. She said it would actually be easier if this government was just honest and admitted that they don't want to spend the money to treat everyone.

Will the Premier just admit what everyone knows to be true, that more and more Manitobans will have to go without care because this government refuses to provide it?

Mr. Pallister: Well, it's a ridiculous and silly preamble, Madam Speaker, because of course we care about providing care and sooner, and that's why we are investing hundreds of millions of additional dollars in health care at the front line and why we trimmed the system at the top, a very top-heavy administrative system which placed tremendous additional costs but not—not—better results in front of Manitobans.

Madam Speaker, the member needs to understand that his questions and their preambles show that he is on the side of the previous NDP government when he suggests we should go back in time to a period of time when the system failed Manitobans and when the philosophy seemed to be: don't ask, don't listen, don't worry about results, just spend more money and hope.

We're consulting with experts, Madam Speaker, front line and internationally, and we're getting better results as a direct consequence of that.

Health-Care Reform Access to Primary Care

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): A strong health-care system requires timely access to primary health care.

When this government took office 90 per cent of those seeking a family doctor were able to find one within 30 days. In the last month of 2018 that number fell to 32 per cent, Madam Speaker. Manitobans are just not getting the same timely access to the care that they need.

Why is the minister creating straight chaos in the health-care system, including in the in primary health care?

* (14:30)

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): Madam Speaker, the member is quite right when she says that timely access is the goal and timely access was the threshold, the mark by which the NDP fell short year after year after year.

I would note for the member, though, new information, a new study by CIHI, the Canadian Institute for Health Information, that states that when it comes to the number of patients who say they had a positive opinion of their last hospital stay, Manitoba seems to be beating the national average with a number that is higher than most jurisdictions, people who say their stay at a hospital was good or excellent.

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

Mrs. Smith: The numbers don't lie. When this government took office—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Smith: —90 per cent of those seeking primary health care found it within 30 days. Things have gotten way worse under this government. It's not hard to understand why.

The minister has closed QuickCare clinics, ACCESS centres, the Corydon Primary Care Clinic and now the Family Medical Centre in St. Boniface. Thousands of Manitobans have lost their primary care provider.

Why is this minister continuing to create straight chaos in the health-care system and why is he not standing up and listening to Manitobans when they say they want access—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Friesen: Madam Speaker, I note the member's protest button, but she could have worn a protest button that would have been more genuine that would have said NDP got the worst results in Canada year after year. That's the button that she's not wearing today. It would be a big button because it was a very bad record, and it would have to present all the failings.

However, Madam Speaker, we accept with sobriety and determination the challenge that is before us. I would say to all Manitobans, and I regret to inform that member that when it comes to emergency department wait times, for instance, under the NDP's last year, average of 2.3 and 2.33 hours of wait; and under our government, under 2.15 hours.

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

Mrs. Smith: For a second day in a row this minister stands up and makes fun of people. Now, today, it's the save Concordia ER group that are made up of people that live in that community that are calling on this government to not close their ER. Shame on that minister. He should get up in this House today and apologize to those members. Under his government he continues to create straight chaos. He can't get up in this House and tell us why he continues to not listen to Manitobans and why he isn't going to keep Concordia hospital open.

Mr. Friesen: Madam Speaker, neither I nor Manitobans can understand why that member is so afraid of a quality assurance exercise undertaken to understand what areas of this very significant transformation of our system are going well and

which ones need additional resources, and we're not afraid of that work.

That member may never have read that master report called the provincial clinical and preventative services planning for Manitoba, but I would note for her the subtitle, because the—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Friesen: —subtitle of that report is: Doing Things Differently and Better.

That member says go back. We say we're on a journey with Manitobans to get better health care sooner for all Manitobans.

DBRS Credit Rating Manitoba Improvement

Mr. Bob Lagassé (Dawson Trail): Our government was elected with a mandate to fix Manitoba's finances after 17 years of NDP mismanagement. An important part of fixing our finances was stabilizing Manitoba's credit rating, which had experienced numerous downgrades because of the reckless deficits racked up by the former government.

Thanks to the hard work of our government, credit rating agencies are recognizing Manitoba's commitment to financial stability and a return to balanced budgets.

Can the minister please update the House on the latest report from the DBRS credit rating agency?

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): Thank you to the member for the question, and I'm very pleased to provide to the House an update on the Dominion Bond Rating Service's confirmed Manitoba's credit rating in terms of our plan to fixing the finances and bring ourselves back into balance.

While we're making progress, there's much, much more work to do, and you know why, Madam Speaker? It's because the NDP's reckless and risk-adverse pursuit of major capital projects continue to challenge the financial health of the Province. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Fielding: Our government is very mindful, Madam Speaker, of the concerns that Manitoba Hydro's past performance and financial commitments have and continue to have on our finances, and that's why we be—need to be even more prudent to ensure

that Manitoba taxpayers get good value for their money.

First Nations Health Care Treatment in the Community

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): I'd like to point out my badge. It's a commercial fisheries emergency meeting by the MMF, SCO and MKO.

Anyway, diabetes is an epidemic in all of my First Nations. A major issue for those living in the North is being unable to receive treatment in their home communities. Many are sent south to receive treatment far away from loved ones and supports. That method is very expensive.

My own brother, Riley Harper, lived in a hotel room for almost three years. I wish the government would do the math.

At-home support networks can also help in the recovery process.

What is this government doing to help those First Nations receive treatment close to home?

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): I thank the member for the question, and I appreciate that comment about doing the math because it is the framework for decision-making for our government, an evidence-based decision-making process, one that is not politicized but based on evidence and the outcome of patients—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Friesen: —and while I continue to be heckled by members on the other side who do not care about patient outcomes, we do.

Madam Speaker, the member makes a good point. Every effort is being undertaken to address not only the challenge of the chronic disease epidemic that's clearly coming at our province, but to decide how we can best locate services and resources to serve people in their own communities.

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

Berens River First Nation Dialysis Treatment Units

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): Berens River First Nation should be commended for their work to end the epidemic in their First Nation. Instead, this government pulled out their dialysis units from them without as much as a word to the chief

and council nor to the nurses. In fact, when the nurses noticed the machines were missing, they thought they had been stolen.

I know it's pointless to ask this PC government to stop the health cuts, but can they at least assure us that they will respect First Nation leadership by making them aware of such drastic health-care changes?

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): Madam Speaker, here the member is less correct, decidedly. I can inform her that when it comes to Berens River, the leadership of the First Nation was notified six and seven months in advance of the changes. That member should know that for a period of six and seven months, there were no patients needing this service. The resources were relocated to be able to help more patients.

In the meantime, though, the other consideration she fails to recognize is that not all patients can safely and effectually receive these kind of treatments in their own home. Sometimes it is more complex and, in those cases, those things need to be done in hospital.

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

Ms. Klassen: First Nations people have a history of not being consulted on major issues impacting our communities, and it does not surprise me that this government is continuing on that trend.

Madam Speaker, Berens River was blindsided, their nurses left in the dark without proper explanation until after the fact. The Berens River health director has stated that the elders in our community who need and deserve to be home in their communities were close to being approved for treatment.

When will Berens River have their dialysis units back in their community and when will the renal centre be up and running?

*(14:40)

Mr. Friesen: Madam Speaker, I must inform that member that she is incorrect. I did look into this issue and the community was not blindsided, that there were meetings; there was notification provided well in advance that on the basis of the lack of evidence that those resources would be redeployed and able—in order to help a greater number of people.

We are committed to renal resources for people in the North. I would—I only wish I had more time to talk about the ways in which we're working in co-operation with others who are system leaders to be able to do more diagnostics and to be able to more effectually be able to help people with chronic disease get the services they need in their own communities. We'll continue to make that commitment.

Building Sustainable Communities Program Project Funding Criteria Concerns

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): Many community organizations have reached out, fearing for their future because of the Premier's (Mr. Pallister) egregious cuts to Neighbourhoods Alive!. Neighbourhoods Alive! is a flagship initiative that created jobs and built community and capacity in the most economically disadvantaged communities.

Instead, the Premier chose to introduce Building Sustainable Communities, a program with radically altered criteria for project funding for corporations and organizations. Experts say, Madam Speaker, this new funding project criteria will make it nearly impossible for groups to access funding for their existing program.

Will the Premier stand up today and guarantee that these groups will continue to receive funding for their existing, cost-effective programming?

Hon. Jeff Wharton (Minister of Municipal Relations): I'm happy to stand up and correct the record on some of the inaccuracies that the member opposite is putting on the record.

Madam Speaker, Neighbourhoods Alive! program was not cut. As a matter of fact, it's been enhanced, and I know the member will probably—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Wharton: —be very sad to hear that we're actually enhancing a project. The project was over 20 years old. Working with Neighbourhoods Alive! and non-profits throughout Manitoba and—including the—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Wharton: —city of Winnipeg, we're putting together a sustainable program that not only will work for today, but for tomorrow as well.

Madam Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

Speaker's Ruling

Madam Speaker: And I have a ruling for the House.

On April 3rd, 2019, the honourable Official Opposition House Leader (Ms. Fontaine) raised a point of order regarding the authenticity of a document that had been tabled by the honourable First Minister. The Official Opposition House Leader suggested that the document in question was not from the Public Accounts as the First Minister had indicated. I took the matter under advisement for further consideration.

Regarding this matter, I feel it is important to begin by reminding members of two important principles of general application in the House. The first is that all members are honourable members, and as your Speaker I accept the word of honourable members.

This principle is supported by Beauchesne citation 494, which notes that statements by members respecting themselves and particularly within their own knowledge must be accepted. The second principle is that it is not up to the Speaker to adjudicate matters of fact.

Similar instances to the matter in question have arisen in the House in the past. In 1996 a government minister raised a matter of privilege accusing an opposition member of misleading the House by tabling an allegedly false document in the House. In that instance, Speaker Dacquay ruled against the matter of privilege on the basis that the word of honourable members must be accepted and that statements by members respecting themselves and within their own knowledge must also be accepted.

Also, in a situation regarding an audio cassette which a member tabled in the House in 2002, Speaker Hicke ruled that it was not the function of the Speaker to identify the authenticity of the tape or the information on the tape as the authentication of material is not the responsibility of the Speaker.

In another similar matter in November 2005 related to a letter that had been tabled by the minister of Health which a member claimed did not look like it was an original, Speaker Hicke ruled that it is not the role of the Speaker to verify the authenticity of material and that the word of the honourable members must be accepted.

Based on the principles described above I am ruling that the Official Opposition House Leader did not have a point of order.

I will reiterate the words of my predecessors in this Chair that it is not the role of the Speaker to determine the authenticity of materials tabled by members and I will continue to accept the word of all honourable members in such matters.

PETITIONS

Early Learning and Child-Care Programs

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Early learning and child-care programs in Manitoba require increased funding to stabilize and support a system that is in jeopardy.

(2) Licensed, not-for-profit early learning and child-care programs have received no new operating funding in over three years, while the cost of living has continued to increase annually.

(3) High-quality licensed child care has a lasting, positive impact on children's development, is a fundamental need for Manitoba families and contributes to a strong economy.

(4) The financial viability of these programs is in jeopardy if they cannot meet the fiscal responsibility of achieving a balanced budget, as all operating expenses continue to increase.

(5) The workforce shortage of trained early childhood educators has continued to increase; quality child care is dependent on a workforce that is skilled and adequately remunerated.

(6) Accessible, affordable and quality early learning and child-care programs must be available to all children and families in Manitoba.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to increase funding for licensed, not-for-profit child-care programs in recognition of the importance of early learning and child care in Manitoba, which will also improve quality and stability in the workforce.

This has been signed by many Manitobans.

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

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I wish to read the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

Early learning and child-care programs in Manitoba require increased funding to stabilize and support a system that is in jeopardy.

Licensed, not-for-profit early learning and child-care programs have received no new operating funding in over three years, while the cost of living has continued to increase annually.

High-quality licensed child care has a lasting, positive impact on children's development, is a fundamental need for Manitoba families and contributes to a strong economy.

The financial viability of these programs is in jeopardy if they cannot meet the fiscal responsibility of achieving a balanced budget, as all operating expenses continue to increase.

The workforce shortage of trained early childhood educators has continued to increase; quality child care is dependent on a workforce that is skilled and adequately remunerated.

Accessible, affordable and quality early learning and child-care programs must be available to all children and families in Manitoba.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to increase funding for licensed, not-for-profit child-care programs in recognition of the importance of early learning and child care in Manitoba, which will also improve quality and stability in the workforce.

Signed by Aimee Odias, John Paul Narviaz, Angela Koop and many others.

Daylight Saving Time

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

And the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The loss of sleep associated with the beginning of daylight savings time has serious consequences for physical and mental health and has been linked to the increase in traffic accidents and workplace injuries.

(2) According to the Manitoba Public Insurance news release, collision data collected in 2014 showed

that there was a 20 per cent increase in collisions on Manitoba roadways following the spring daylight savings time when it compared to all other Mondays in 2014.

* (14:50)

(3) Daylight savings time is associated with a decrease in productivity the day after the clocks are turned forward and with no corresponding increase in productivity when the clocks are turned back.

(4) There is no conclusive evidence that daylight savings time is effective in reducing energy consumption.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to amend The Official Time Act to abolish daylight savings time in Manitoba effective November 4, 2019, resulting in Manitoba remaining on Central Standard Time throughout the year and in perpetuity.

And this petition is signed by Shawn Graydon, Dave Schmidt and Brendan Heppner and many, many more fine Manitobans.

Early Learning and Child-Care Programs

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to the petition is as follows:

(1) Early learning and child-care programs in Manitoba have—require increased funding to stabilize and support a system that is in jeopardy.

(2) Licensed, not-for-profit early learning and child-care programs have received no new operating funding in over three years, while the cost of living has continued to increase annually.

(3) High-quality licensed child care has a lasting, positive impact on children's development, is a fundamental need for Manitoba families and contributes to a strong economy.

(4) The financial viability of these programs is in jeopardy if they cannot meet the fiscal responsibility of achieving a balanced budget, as all operating expenses continue to increase.

(5) The workforce shortage of trained early childhood educators has continued to increase; quality child care is dependent on a workforce that is skilled and adequately remunerated.

(6) Accessible, affordable and quality early learning and child-care programs must be available to all children and families in Manitoba.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to increase funding for licensed, not-for-profit child-care programs in recognition of the importance of early learning and child care in Manitoba, which will also improve quality and stability in the workforce.

This is signed by many Manitobans.

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Early learning and child-care programs in Manitoba require increased funding to stabilize and support a system that is in jeopardy.

(2) Licensed, not-for-profit early learning and child-care programs have received no new operating funding in over three years, while the cost of living has continued to increase annually.

(3) High-quality licensed child care has a lasting, positive impact on children's development, is a fundamental need for Manitoba families and contributes to a strong economy.

(4) The financial viability of these programs is in jeopardy if they cannot meet the fiscal responsibility of achieving a balanced budget, as all operating expenses continue to increase.

(5) The workforce shortage of trained early childhood educators has continued to increase; quality child care is dependent on a workforce that is skilled and adequately remunerated; and

(6) Accessible, affordable and quality early learning and child-care programs must be available to all children and families in Manitoba.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to increase funding for licensed, not-for-profit child-care programs in recognition of the importance of early learning and child care in Manitoba, which will also improve quality and stability in the workforce.

And this petition is signed by Tekla Cunningham, Mary Barton, Stephanie Gardner and many other fine Manitobans.

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

To the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba:

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Early learning and child-care programs in Manitoba require increased funding to stabilize and support a system that is in jeopardy.

(2) Licensed, not-for-profit early learning and child-care programs have received no new operating funding in over three years, while the cost of living has continued to increase annually.

(3) High-quality licensed child care has a lasting, positive impact on children's development, is a fundamental need for Manitoba families and contributes to a strong economy.

(4) The financial viability of these programs is in jeopardy if they cannot meet the fiscal responsibility of achieving a balanced budget, as all operating expenses continue to increase.

(5) The workforce shortage of trained early childhood educators has continued to increase; quality child care is dependent on a workforce that is skilled and adequately remunerated.

(6) Accessible, affordable and quality early learning and child-care programs must be available to all children and families in Manitoba.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to increase funding for licensed, not-for-profit child-care programs in recognition of the importance of early learning and child care in Manitoba, which will also improve quality and stability in the workforce.

This petition has been signed by many Manitobans.

Flin Flon General Hospital Obstetric Services

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. Give me one second, please. Sorry about that.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Access to quality health care is a fundamental right of all Manitobans, no matter where they live.

(2) The Premier has slashed budgets and cancelled projects for northern communities, making it harder for families to get the primary health care they need.

(3) The budget of the northern regional health authority has been slashed by over \$6 million, which has negatively affected doctor retention programs and the northern patient transport program.

(4) With limited services in the North, the Premier is forcing families and seniors to travel further for the health care they need.

(5) On November 6th, 2018, the northern regional health authority announced that obstetric delivery services at the Flin Flon General Hospital would be suspended, with no discussion regarding when they will be re-instated.

(6) The result of this decision is that mothers in Flin Flon and the surrounding area will have to travel at least an hour and a half to The Pas, creating unnecessary risk for mothers and babies.

(7) The people of Flin Flon are concerned for the health and safety of mothers-to-be and their babies, including the extra physical and financial stress that will be placed upon them by this decision of the provincial government.

(8) There has been no commitment from this provincial government that mothers and their escorts who have to travel to The Pas will be covered by the northern patient transport program.

(9) Flin Flon General Hospital is a regional hub that serves several communities on both sides of the Manitoba-Saskatchewan border.

(10) Because this provincial government has refused to invest in much-needed health services in The Pas, the hospital in The Pas may not be able to handle the extra workload created by this decision.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to reinstate obstetric delivery services at Flin Flon General Hospital and work with the government of Saskatchewan and the federal government to ensure obstetric services continue to be available on a regional basis.

And this petition, Madam Speaker, has been signed by Art Hughes, Chris Hynes, Chris Best and many other Manitobans.

*(15:00)

Early Learning and Child-Care Programs

Ms. Flor Marcelino (Logan): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Early learning and child-care programs in Manitoba require increased funding to stabilize and support a system that is in jeopardy.

(2) Licensed, not-for-profit early learning and child-care programs have received no new operating funding in over three years, while the cost of living has continued to increase annually.

(3) High-quality licensed child care has a lasting, positive impact on children's development, is a fundamental need for Manitoba families and contributes to a strong economy.

(4) The financial viability of these programs is in jeopardy if they cannot meet the fiscal responsibility of achieving a balanced budget, as all operating expenses continue to increase.

(5) The workforce shortage of trained early childhood educators has continued to increase; quality child care is dependent on a workforce that is skilled and adequately remunerated.

(6) Accessible, affordable and quality early learning and child-care programs must be available to all children and families in Manitoba.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to increase funding for licensed, not-for-profit child-care programs in recognition of the importance of early learning and child care in Manitoba, which will also improve quality and stability in the workforce.

Signed by many Manitobans.

Thank you.

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): I was kind of hoping I could read this with the bag pipes, but there you go.

I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Early learning and child-care programs in Manitoba require increased funding to stabilize and support a system that is in jeopardy.

(2) Licensed, not-for-profit early learning and child-care programs have received no new operating funding in over three years, while the cost of living has continued to increase annually.

(3) High-quality licensed child care has a lasting, positive impact on children's development, is a fundamental need for Manitoba families and contributes to a strong economy.

(4) The financial viability of these programs is in jeopardy if they cannot meet the fiscal responsibility of achieving a balanced budget, as all operating expenses continue to increase.

(5) The workforce shortage of trained early childhood educators has continued to increase; quality child care is dependent on a workforce that is skilled and adequately remunerated.

(6) Accessible, affordable and quality early learning and child-care programs must be available to all children and families in Manitoba.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to increase funding for licensed, not-for-profit child-care programs in recognition of the importance of early learning and child care in Manitoba, which will also improve quality and stability in the workforce.

Madam Speaker, this petition is signed by Amber Harbun-Ewing, Darren McCorristor [*phonetic*], Natalie Trudeau and many other Manitobans.

Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Early learning and child-care programs in Manitoba require increased funding to stabilize and support a system that is in jeopardy.

(2) Licensed, not-for-profit early learning and child-care programs have received no new operating

funding in over three years, while the cost of living has continued to increase annually.

(3) High-quality licensed child care has a lasting, positive impact on children's development; it's a fundamental need for Manitoba families and contributes to a strong economy.

(4) The financial viability of these programs is in jeopardy if they cannot meet the fiscal responsibility of achieving a balanced budget, as all operating expenses continue to increase.

(5) The workforce shortage of trained early childhood educators has continued to increase; quality child care is dependent on a workforce that is skilled and adequately 'remunerated.'

(6) Accessible, affordable and quality early learning and child-care programs must be available to all children and families in Manitoba.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to increase funding for licensed, not-for-profit child-care programs in recognition of the importance of early learning and child care in Manitoba, which will also improve quality and stability in the workforce.

Madam Speaker, this petition was signed by many Manitobans.

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Early learning and child-care programs in Manitoba require increased funding to stabilize and support a system that is in jeopardy.

(2) Licensed, not-for-profit early learning and child-care programs have received no new operating funding in over three years, while the cost of living has continued to increase annually.

(3) Licensed child care—licensed not-for-profit early learning and child care—let me say that again:

(2) Licensed, not-for-profit early learning and child-care programs have received no new operating funding in over three years, while the cost of living has continued to increase annually.

(3) High-quality licensed child care has a lasting, positive impact on children's development, is a

fundamental need for Manitoba families and contributes to a strong economy.

(4) The financial viability of these programs is in jeopardy if they cannot meet the fiscal responsibility of achieving a balanced budget, as all operating expenses continue to increase.

(5) The workforce shortage of trained early childhood educators has continued to increase; quality child care is dependent on a workforce that is skilled and adequately remunerated.

(6) Accessible, affordable and quality early learning and child-care programs must be available to all children and families in Manitoba.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to increase funding for licensed, not-for-profit child-care programs in recognition of the importance of early learning and child care in Manitoba, which will also improve quality and stability in the workforce.

This petition was signed by Neal Cornish, Josephine Lopez and Raymond Cornish and many, many more.

* (15:10)

Addictions Services—Brandon and Western Manitoba

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Addictions are a health and social problem that require co-ordinated responses from the health-care, social services, education and justice systems.

(2) It is well known that the number of people addicted to alcohol, drugs and other substances is on the rise in Manitoba, with a notable increase in the use of methamphetamine and opioids, two highly addictive and very destructive drugs.

(3) Between April 2015 and April 2018, drug abuse and alcohol abuse were two of the top three risk factors identified by the community mobilization Westman HUB when dealing with persons with acutely elevated risk.

(4) Recent Brandon Police Service annual reports show a steady increase in calls for services

for crimes against people or against property and person.

(5) In Brandon and western Manitoba, individuals seeking addictions treatment and the families trying to help them do not have local access to the services or supports they need.

(6) There is no publicly available, centralized list of addictions facilities in Manitoba.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To request that the provincial government consider establishing a cross-departmental team to provide leadership on a culturally appropriate, co-ordinated response to the growing addiction crisis in our province that includes an aggressive, widespread education campaign on the dangers of using methamphetamines and opioids, along with addictions education for front-line medical staff in health-care facilities.

(2) To request that the provincial government consider providing additional addictions services in Brandon and western Manitoba across the continuum of care, including acute response, detoxification, long-term rehabilitation, transitional housing and support for managing co-occurring disorders.

(3) To request that the Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living consider establishing a public available inventory of all addiction facilities in Manitoba.

(4) To request that the Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living consider providing supports for the families of people struggling with addictions, including counselling, patient navigation and advocacy and direct access to free naloxone.

This is signed by Arlene Pottinger, Murray Pottinger, Braden Kirby and many other Manitobans.

Early Learning and Child-Care Programs

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): Madam Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Early learning and child-care programs in Manitoba require increased funding to stabilize and support a system that is in jeopardy.

(2) Licensed, not-for-profit early learning and child-care programs have received no new operating

funding in over three years, while the cost of living has continued to increase annually.

(3) High-quality licensed child care has a lasting, positive impact on children's development, is a fundamental need for Manitoba families and contributes to a strong economy.

(4) The financial viability of these programs is in jeopardy if they cannot meet the fiscal responsibility of achieving a balanced budget, as all operating expenses continue to increase.

(5) The workforce shortage of trained early childhood educators has continued to increase; quality child care is dependent on a workforce that is skilled and adequately remunerated.

(6) Accessible, affordable and quality early learning and child-care programs must be available to all children and families in Manitoba.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to increase funding for licensed, not-for-profit child-care programs in recognition of the importance of early learning and child care in Manitoba, which will also improve quality and stability in the workforce.

And, Madam Speaker, this petition is signed by Donalda Wishart, Paul Orsak, Sacha Sabourin and many other Manitobans.

Thank you.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Assiniboia?

Point of Order

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): On a point of order.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Assiniboia, on a point of order.

Mr. Fletcher: Madam Speaker, the point of order deals with the Interim Supply bill that we have on the agenda today. It's down—it's the Interim Supply for 2020.

Now, we had a—quite a bit of a to and fro on the Interim Supply for 2019, and that was passed. This bill seems to have been introduced on April 8th. The problem is it is for a year in the future. It is outside the fiscal cycle that normally is associated with Interim Supply.

If I can just take a moment, the—according to the House of Commons rules and procedures, the process is—of course, our primary function is the allocation of funds, and those are appropriated from the consolidated fund. And because you don't give all the money for all the programs all at once, you have incremental allocations through Interim Supply and through the year that is—you know, that—everything is expended.

Madam Speaker, what we have here is it seems that the government is taking the middle of a fiscal cycle without having a budget or any—and actually—or even a mandate to expend funds sometime in the very distant future.

Madam Speaker, the reason why this is important, especially in the 'contek'—the Premier (Mr. Pallister) has rightly or wrongly said that he's going to have an election this year. So if we have an election this year, how can we have an Interim Supply bill for next year?

It's—it'll be a different government or a different composition, a different session. It may not be a different government, but it doesn't really matter, it's a different session.

Madam Speaker, according to The Manitoba Act and the fiscal—Manitoba fiscal arrangement act or similar statute, our fiscal year goes from April to April. It doesn't say it goes to multiple years. It doesn't say that governments can oblige future governments on Interim Supply. It is actually impossible, it would seem, to do an Interim Supply outside the fiscal cycle in which you're applying the supply.

* (15:20)

So, Madam Speaker, I understand that there are no, quote, rules in the book that governs this place on this issue, but there's no rules because it is impossible. Like, no one ever contemplated that a government would try an Interim Supply before even bringing forward a budget or even assuming that they would have a mandate a year from now. Like, it's—I—we can give the benefit of the doubt to the government and say, okay, that was a little presumptuous, or a cynic would say it's arrogant, egotistical and—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

I would ask the member if he could reach the point of indicating what the point of order is that he's actually—and what the breach of the rule is that he is

actually raising a point of order on. He's taking an exceedingly long time to raise his point of order, and I would ask him to get to his point.

Mr. Fletcher: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and you're right. We need—this place needs authorization to withdraw funds from the Consolidated Fund. Interim Supply is needed to do that, but it's within a fiscal cycle. This bill is outside the fiscal cycle. We've already done this year. And then next year, we do next year. But we can't do next year before this year has happened.

The remedy, Madam Speaker, is to simply have the bill withdrawn. The rules that are broken are the ones that are inherent in the fact that our fiscal year is what it is as set out in the BNA Act and in the Manitoba Act and the fiscal administration act. And when in doubt, we go to the House of Commons, often, and they have a very specific, orderly sequence that can be done. But nowhere do they say you can pass Interim Supply a zillion years to come. Why not do 2020? 2025?

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The member is just repeating himself now, and I would ask him, you know—I'll give him a few more seconds, if he could just wrap up, please.

Mr. Fletcher: I get—the point of order is that this debate, this Interim Supply bill, is out of order, and therefore, we should move on to other business.

Madam Speaker: The honourable Government House Leader, on the same point of order.

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): On the same point of order, Madam Speaker, the member opposite, my friend from Assiniboia, didn't actually cite any rules or a breach. He cited the BNA Act in general, but that's not citing a rule or a violation. That's just citing an act that exists.

The rationale for the legislation of which we haven't called yet this afternoon, but it's what our intention is to do is clear. The member opposite was the point person for trying to stall the interim appropriation when it was debated about a month ago. He put at risk the salaries of the public service, Madam Speaker, by those actions. We were asked by those who are involved with the public service, including some of the unions who they are represented by, to find a way to prevent the NDP and the member for Assiniboia (Mr. Fletcher) from stopping them from getting paid again. They were quite concerned about it.

In discussions with Leg. Counsel, this was a way in which that could be done to give assurances for next year while, perhaps, the rules committee has some discussions on how to look at other jurisdictions that don't put themselves in this situation. But the reason this act is here is because of the actions of the NDP and the member for Assiniboia and, to a lesser extent, the members of the second opposition.

And it seems that they want to continue the pattern or want to continue to put at risk the wages and salaries of the public service. They have to ask themselves why they want to do that. But there is clearly no breach of a rule. None was cited. And there is none to cite because it is entirely within the legislative purview to debate this.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for River Heights, the House leader for the second opposition, on the same point of order.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (Second Opposition House Leader): Madam Speaker, briefly, the Government House Leader (Mr. Goertzen) is continuing his fear mongering in terms of threatening that he won't pay people's—or his government won't pay salaries. There's no precedent for that and has have been already exposed, it was the government's lack-adaisical attitude toward this which led to the problem in the first place.

This current Interim Supply bill is an example, quite frankly, of a government which has lost its way trying to act on next year's budget before it has even passed this year's budget.

There are many hours of Estimates to complete before this year's budget is completed. We should be spending time on this year's Estimates instead of on this Interim Supply for next year because there are still many unanswered questions which the government is trying to avoid answering.

Madam Speaker, the previous NDP government from 1999 to 2016 had many faults, but they never tried to pull this sort of a stunt to avoid asking questions in Estimates.

This Interim Supply bill for '20-21 is a quintessential example, furthermore, of a government trying to spend money it doesn't have. The government will not even start collecting the money needed for the bill presented today until next year.

People thought a Conservative government would do its best not to spend money it doesn't have.

Now we see the truth. This government is setting a precedent. It is going to extraordinary and unprecedented lengths to spend money it doesn't have. It's a sad, sad fall from grace by this government. It's a sad, sad admission by this government that it can't manage the finances of our Province without spending billions of dollars it doesn't have.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Points of order are meant to be dealing with a break and a breach of the rules and it is not to be used for debate, and I think the member is going off now on debate and I would urge the member to bring it back to the final words he has to say on the breach and the—of a point of order.

Mr. Gerrard: Yes.

Manitoba Liberals see this point of order that's been presented as valid. The government should be calling Estimates today in terms of process instead of trying to spend money it doesn't yet have.

This order—point of order on matters of process and procedure, so this is correct in terms of how it is being presented and, furthermore, it's extraordinary for the government to presume it will still be government next year anyway. That's a lot of hubris.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Concordia, on the same point of order?

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Deputy Official Opposition House Leader): On the same point of order, Madam Speaker.

I just wanted to address the point of order as ever so briefly to say that I think I agree with—that the member for Assiniboia (Mr. Fletcher) is probably right in at least a couple of ways.

One, of course, this is a bizarre move by the government to bring forward this particular bill at this time for debate when, of course, there are so many important issues that Manitobans are asking us to debate in this House and to talk about, but also to agree with the member for Assiniboia that this is probably not a breach of the rules as they are written now.

That being said, I do believe that it is, perhaps, something we as a House, as you as a Speaker, could take under consideration in terms of looking at just how this has been brought forward. Debating a bill, as the member has pointed out, that pertains to a term in office that has yet to be determined is very

presumptuous at the very least, and so I think it would be incumbent on all of us to spend some time to look at this carefully.

And, ultimately, Madam Speaker, I think it speaks to a government that is looking for any distraction it possibly can. It's totally out of gas. They have no legislative agenda, and for this to be their priority—

Madam Speaker: Order. Order. Order, please.

As the—I'm assuming, then, the member has just concluded, too, because he was going off on debate on this.

I would indicate in terms of the point of order the—I have previously ruled on April 1st, 2019, and October 22nd, 2018, that the Speaker does not determine the appropriateness of fiscal actions like this.

So, respectfully, there is no point of order.

Madam Speaker: Grievances?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

House Business

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): On House business, I'd like to announce that the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs will meet in camera on Thursday, May 9th, 2019, at 12 p.m. to consider the appointment of the Ombudsman for the Province of Manitoba.

* (15:30)

Madam Speaker: It has been announced that the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs will meet in camera on Thursday, May 9th, 2019, at 12 p.m., to consider the appointment of the Ombudsman for the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. Goertzen: Madam Speaker, could you please call for second reading Bill 30, The Interim Appropriation Act, 2020, sponsored by the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding).

Madam Speaker: It has been announced that the House will resume debate on second reading of Bill 30 this afternoon.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 30—The Interim Appropriation Act, 2020

Madam Speaker: Resuming debate on Bill 30, The Interim Appropriation Act, 2020.

Questions

Madam Speaker: There are three minutes left in this question period, and I would ask if there are any further questions.

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): Yes, I'd like to ask the minister why his government is persisting in calling bills before giving the opposition the courtesy of a briefing on what's contained in the bill?

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): What I find ironic—you talk about courtesy in terms of what the opposition tried to do in terms of their approach in terms of blocking this to potentially have civil servants not get paid. That's something that we find completely inappropriate.

We want to make sure we're prepared. We heard from all the politicians in the past that you need to move these things forward in exponential process, and that's exactly what this does.

Mr. Swan: Maybe I'll try it again, because I don't know if we need to send a box of Q-tips to the front bench of the government or what's going on.

Again, this bill—as the member for Assiniboia (Mr. Fletcher) pointed out—this bill was introduced in the House on April 8th, and there is a briefing which is scheduled for tomorrow. This is now the second time this government has persisted on calling this bill before giving the opposition the courtesy of a briefing.

And why is the minister not even going to provide a courtesy that's been customarily extended in this House for years if not decades?

Mr. Fielding: What we want to ensure is that Manitobans are protected, civil servants are protected into the future years. You don't have to look back to know what's going to happen in the future by looking back in the past.

And we know the lengths that the NDP government will go to, as well as members of the opposition in the Liberals, to block and to put the livelihoods of civil servants ahead and potentially apart of their political agenda.

So we have some concerns; we want to make sure we're prepared. This is entirely appropriate, and that's why we're moving this forward.

Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition): I was just wondering—it's not clear to me that there is any evidence that passing this bill will actually ensure that people get paid because I—if I'm not mistaken, there are other avenues for payment.

Is there any example in the past of public servants not being paid as the result of Interim Supply not being passed?

Mr. Fielding: I can point to a few examples where it almost happened just very recently with the opposition. Who would have thought? This is the Manitoba Legislature; anything can happen here. We want to make sure we're prepared.

We think it's completely irresponsible for the members of the NDP, the members of the Liberal and the member of the independent to get in the way, to essentially use civil servants as some sort of a pawn to forward their political agenda.

We don't think that's appropriate. We want to make sure that civil servants are protected and paid on time.

Mr. Swan: Well, this bill on its face says it doesn't take effect until April 1st, 2020. Are we then to expect this government doesn't plan to bring the House back until after April 1st, 2020?

Mr. Fielding: What I've heard, and I think members from this side of the Chamber would say, is all we've heard is delays, delays, delays from the opposition.

We don't exactly know what's going to go on and what's on their agenda, why they delay bills, why they 'knownt' Manitobans to have better access to things like health care that are part of our legislative agenda, or better access in terms of everything in terms of fixing the finances of the Province of Manitoba.

We don't know what's in the 'psycly'—psyche of the opposition. We know that the political calculations obviously are more important than getting things done for Manitobans.

Debate

Madam Speaker: The time for this question period is over, and I would ask if there are any members wishing to stand in debate of this bill.

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): I move, seconded by the member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe), that debate on Bill 30 now be adjourned.

Motion presented.

Madam Speaker: Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

Madam Speaker: All those in favour of adjourning debate, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Recorded Vote

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Deputy Official Opposition House Leader): Madam Speaker, a recorded vote.

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

Order. The one hour provided for the ringing of the division bells has expired. I am therefore directing that the division bells be turned off and the House proceed to the vote.

The question before the House is that debate be adjourned.

Division

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

Yeas

Allum, Altemeyer, Fontaine, Kinew, Maloway, Smith (Point Douglas), Swan, Wiebe.

Nays

Bindle, Clarke, Cullen, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Friesen, Gerrard, Goertzen, Guillemard, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Lamont, Lamoureux, Mayer, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pedersen, Pivniuk, Reyes, Schuler, Smith (Southdale), Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wharton, Wowchuk, Yakimoski.

Deputy Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish): Yeas 8, Nays 34.

Madam Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

Mr. Swan: Madam Speaker, here we are, on an afternoon we could be actually into Estimates, debating Bill 30, debating an Interim Supply bill for the next fiscal year.

And, of course, the government of the day, aided and abetted by the Liberals, is going to use its majority to go ahead, to plow ahead and have debate on this when they haven't even had the courtesy to give the critic for the opposition a briefing, something which has happened for decades and decades in this House.

And, you know, Madam Speaker, it's not a rule. I can't stand on a point of order and say, well, I haven't been briefed. It's been a matter of common courtesy and common decency in this House for decades that the opposition is offered a briefing before the government insists on members getting up and having to debate the bill.

And, Madam Speaker, I can only imagine the crocodile tears the current Government House Leader (Mr. Goertzen) would have cried if, when he was in opposition, if we had purported to move ahead and insist on debating a bill without a briefing had been continued.

If Len Derkach, right, then the House leader, had been forced to go ahead and start having his critics debate without a briefing being given, Madam Speaker, you and I both know that would have brought down the House in this Chamber.

Even if Mavis Taillieu, then as House leader, had been the House leader when the government of the day had moved ahead, we would have had big trouble in the—in this House. I would also—Mr. Hawranik, Gerald Hawranik, a man with whom I have—[interjection]—well, and I know the current Government House Leader is giving lots more material, but I only have half an hour to be able to put my comments on the record.

* (16:40)

So what are we doing this afternoon? Well, we're debating Bill 30.

What are we not doing? We are not going through government Estimates, which is, of course, the tradition of this House, that once the budget is passed, we then move on to deal with Estimates to allow opposition members the right—on behalf of

their constituents, on behalf of the people of Manitoba—to ask questions of government ministers about money being spent in the department, about the direction of the department, about the direction of this government.

And, of course, what kind of things would we be asking about if we had departmental Estimates going on? Well, I was here when we had, I believe, it's just one day of Estimates so far this spring, Madam Speaker. And my friend, the member for Point Douglas (Mrs. Smith) asked this Health Minister repeatedly, as she has in question period, as we have elsewhere in other processes, about the fate of Concordia emergency room and Seven Oaks emergency room.

And that minister refused to answer, refused to answer—in an afternoon of Estimates, refused to answer. And then, lo and behold, with perhaps an election on the way—if the Premier (Mr. Pallister), who purports to be a big fan of the rule of law, decides to break the law, calls the election, well, maybe we'll head into an election.

And, with that in mind, the Minister of Health suddenly cut the sails and turned in a different direction and has now told us he's going to rehire another outside consultant and pay a bunch more money to have that consultant come in.

But we're denied to ask questions of the Minister of Health this afternoon, which is what this Chamber should be doing.

An Honourable Member: Question period.

Mr. Swan: Well, question period, says the opposition—or says the Government House Leader (Mr. Goertzen). I will remind him that the member for Point Douglas asked the Minister of Health 13 times, I believe it was, to give a date for the closing of the Concordia emergency room.

And the Minister of Health was either unable or unwilling to provide that information to the House, even though it is a matter of great concern to people who live in the northeast part of Winnipeg, the north part of Winnipeg—in fact, everybody in the province of Manitoba concerned about emergency services.

You know, we could be into Education Estimates. And there's a lot of questions that I know my friend, the member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe), our fine Education critic, would like to ask the Minister of Education about what's going—*[interjection]*—well, and, you know, here we go

again. And I'm going to take a few times—I know I'm getting a little bit off of the bill, but I'm going to respond to the comments of the Government House Leader.

Of course, Estimates is supposed to be a process that is less partisan and, Madam Speaker, today was no different. You had to caution some of us in the Chamber about the way we're conducting ourselves. Question period is a partisan place, and that is the way it is.

In—the goal of Estimates, of course, is to maybe take that down a level or two, and perhaps allow opposition members to do their job and ask questions of ministers and to get actual answers from ministers to questions that are being validly posed.

And, you know, I know the Minister of Health didn't perform very well on that scale the other day, but I'm always an optimist and I would like to think that we could resume Estimates, but no. Instead, we're here debating a bill which is not going to take effect until after April 1st, 2020, which is, of course, the next fiscal year.

And what if we could ask the Minister of Sustainable Development (Ms. Squires) questions? You know, I know there's a lot of things that my colleague, the MLA for Wolseley, our conservation critic, would love to ask this minister about the lack of any perceptible green plan, about just today—*[interjection]*—well, and now the Minister for Sustainable Development wants to join the debate, and I welcome that.

An Honourable Member: She's got all the answers.

Mr. Swan: Yes, she seems to have all the answers today.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

Thank you.

Mr. Swan: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and it does highlight, and perhaps—I'll give leave if the minister wants to—if the Government House Leader wants to stand up today and say, you know, the member for Minto is right. We've made a horrible mistake. Let's go back into Estimates.

We're quite prepared to do that this afternoon, because I know that if the conservation critic from our NDP caucus had the chance to ask questions, he'd be asking questions today on behalf of fishers in Manitoba, fishers who today met and who have

conclusively agreed that they cannot trust this government to protect their interests, to protect the fishery, to protect the industry in Manitoba.

And I know I'd love to hear the answers from the Minister for Sustainable Development—

An Honourable Member: Pass the bill. I'll call Estimates.

Mr. Swan: And well, now, here again, here's the Government House Leader (Mr. Goertzen) trying to shut down debate—

An Honourable Member: Pass the bill and I'll call Estimates.

Mr. Swan: Well, here's the member—*[interjection]*—member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen), eight minutes into the opposition critic asking questions on a bill, which is—which wishes to give the government of the day authority to spend somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$12 billion, eight minutes of debate is all that this Government House Leader, this paragon of democracy, wants to allow the opposition, and that is a shame.

You know, it takes—every government becomes arrogant over time. Sometimes it might be four terms, sometimes it might be two terms. It is remarkable the level of arrogance that this government has managed to achieve in only three long years in power. And, of course, we know—we know—because the Premier (Mr. Pallister) will tell us, my, the tone starts at the top. Well, maybe that's never been more true than it has been with this government.

But I'm going to continue to put comments on the record, and my colleagues, as long as we're not going to have Estimates called by this government, then we'll be talking a lot about the things we could be talking about.

I got lots of questions I'd like to ask the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding). I'd like to ask him how it is that this is the only jurisdiction in the world that is apparently unable to make any money from the legalization of cannabis.

And I know we spent a lot of time in Estimates last year getting zero answers at all, and now, of course, now that cannabis sales have been legal for more than six months, I'm hoping now the Minister of Finance will have some kind of answers on that. I look forward to asking that.

I look forward to asking him about the eight civil servants who've now been taken away from their previous duties, who are now locked in a room and whose task is to get out their red pens and start lining out regulations. Eight civil servants: considerable chunk of the people who work in the Department of Finance; that is now their calling. They're locked—locked—in a windowless, airless room where they're doing the bidding of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business in a way that's not actually saving anybody any money and not making things any better for people in this province.

What about the minister for municipal affairs? Well, I'd love—I know our critic for municipal affairs and all the rest of us would love to ask him questions about why this government all of a sudden yanked \$50 million away from the City of Winnipeg, money which the City of Winnipeg had already put into their budget for road repairs and road construction and yanked away.

Instead of allowing us to ask about money that this government took out of the City of Winnipeg's current year, they would like us instead to talk about the next budget year without even knowing what their budget is going to do.

And I know the Minister of Finance is now chatting from his seat. You know, it's actually his successor, Councillor Scott Gillingham, who, last time I checked, would consider himself to be a Progressive Conservative, who was the most critical of what this government has done to the finances of the City of Winnipeg.

An Honourable Member: I remember.

Mr. Swan: I—we all remember, and, of course, the voters are going to remember when this government takes us back to the polls, whether that's tomorrow, whether that's next month, whether it's next year. I guess we'll just find out.

An Honourable Member: Where are you running?

Mr. Swan: And while I'm running the Physio Fit 10K on Saturday, and the minister is more than welcome to come and join me. I know you—we've always tried to get the minister out to run in Steinbach, and it's never happened, but I'm more than happy to invite the member to come out.

I'd love to ask the Minister for Infrastructure questions, and I know the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) would really love to ask the

Minister of Infrastructure (Mr. Schuler) questions.
[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order, everybody.

I'm losing control here. We only have about 12 minutes to go, so if we can just hang on a little bit here. Let's get through this and hear the debate as we are supposed to, and I would ask for everybody's co-operation.

The honourable member for Minto.

Mr. Swan: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

And I know that we've got a lot of questions for the Minister of Infrastructure, and, of course, we'd like to ask him how it is he thinks that it is appropriate or in any way congruent with what he and his Premier (Mr. Pallister) and the rest of his party promised in the 'laxsh'—the last election to have cut more than 50 per cent out of the highways budget in the province of Manitoba, meaning that communities can't count on the road access.

* (16:50)

Roads are getting worse; workers, of course, now don't have employment for the summer; construction companies are now actually facing grave consequences. We know there's a number of construction companies that are actually in grave difficulty and may even go under because there is less work that's being given by this government. We'd love to ask questions about the Infrastructure Minister, and we'd love to get his take on that and his explanation on that.

And what about the Justice Minister? Well, we'd love to ask him questions about why he's been sitting on his hands while crime has skyrocketed within the city of Winnipeg and outside of the city of Winnipeg. Crime is way up in 2017 over 2016, 2018 over 2017.

And, Madam Speaker, obviously it's anecdotal, but it's also, in looking at the police statistics, crime continues to go up in communities like mine, communities like yours, communities that all of us represent in this House. And I know that my friend, the member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine), our Justice critic, has a lot of questions for this minister about the lack of any action to build safer communities in the province of Manitoba. And there's a lot of things that we would love to be asking about that.

We'd love to ask the family services minister questions. And I know my colleague, the member for

The Pas (Ms. Lathlin), has a lot of questions about how it can be that services are being cut, that funding is being cut even while more and more children are coming into care.

And I know the minister of family services is denying that because she counts kids in care one way which, short and simple, is not to count every kid in care, and yet the various agencies and the authorities are telling us what she's hearing from workers, that there are more kids in care that need more services, and yet this government is cutting. We'd love to get to Estimates and ask those questions.

And, of course, our favourite person to ask questions in Estimates is, of course, the Premier. And, Madam Speaker, we know that if you're the Premier, Estimates is not a lot of fun; Estimates means, in many cases, 15 or 20 hours being asked about things which happen in—pretty much anywhere in government. And whoever is the Premier is never very happy with that process.

But we have a Premier who is most unhappy with having to sit in his seat, to actually have to work through the entire afternoon and answer questions about things he does not want to talk about.

And we know—I've never seen ever in my 15 years in this House a politician unable to sit in his chair and answer questions for two straight days. Right? And I know the Health Minister—and I include the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen), I include the previous Health ministers and even the current Health Minister. It's not always comfortable sitting there and taking questions. But we have a Premier who is clearly unable to control himself for more than a day at a time.

And I know last year we'd have Estimates set up, and then we'd be told, well, no, the Premier's not going to be there tomorrow. He can't be there. Nope. He's already—he's filled his quota, he's already done a day of Estimates this week, that's all the Premier's going to do.

And maybe that's what's driving this. Maybe that's why the Government House Leader (Mr. Goertzen)—again, who I rather like—has to stand up and keep calling bills that did not make it in time, that don't advance the good of the people of Manitoba. And he's going to stand up every day and pull a different one out and say, well, this is the nothing bill that we're now going to be debating.

You know, we'd love to ask the Premier lots of questions. And probably if we could, we'd start with

the \$23 million now that this Premier and this government has spent on hiring consultants. It's not a government by the people for the people; it's a government by the accountants for the wealthy. That's what this government is all about, and that's why we've got a lot of things we would like to ask.

And, you know, with this minister, you know, I asked him a couple of questions in the short question period today. And, of course, he's got his lines that he simply parrots back to us. And what becomes very, very clear from listening to this government and their ministers talk is this is a government that really hates governing. Right? They really don't like this process that we get to debate things and talk about things. They don't like answering questions.

The Premier (Mr. Pallister) believes he is the ultimate authority and whatever he decrees shall be the way it is. And unfortunately, that's not the way it works in our system. You know, I don't always agree with the member for Assiniboia (Mr. Fletcher). I thought—even though I believe you correctly ruled it was not a point of order, he definitely had a point. And the point is this: Why are we debating Bill 30?

We are debating an Interim Supply bill which is not going to take effect until April 1st, 2020, so just for the backbenchers who may not be following too carefully, that is the next fiscal year. That is not the current fiscal year. We have a budget that the budget vote has happened, but there are still many budget procedures yet to happen, including, of course, Estimates that we've talked about in some detail.

It is strange, indeed, that this government, which tells us about smart shopping and tells us about being accountable and transparent, is now coming forward and seeking—well, is now coming forward and seeking *carte blanche* to spend, again, somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$12 billion without having to come back to this House, because if you read through the bill—which I don't expect the member for Southdale (Mr. Smith) has—if you read through the bill, it is based on the previous year's budget. So the intention is to use this interim appropriation act in the complete and utter absence of any budget bill.

So we're left to wonder what's going to happen. Is it possible that the Premier, of course, despite all his musings and ramblings and thermoses, is not actually planning to call the election in the summer, that maybe the Premier is not going to call the election until next year, but this Premier knows

what his plan of austerity is doing to economic development in the province of Manitoba.

We know the Conference Board of Canada is predicting that Manitoba will have the worst level of growth in the entire country. Let me just repeat that again because I realize not every minister—well, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) will have a chance to speak. Well, the Minister of Finance is now saying that I'm wrong when I put on the record what the Conference Board of Canada is saying, and the Conference Board of Canada has predicted, and it's true. They can review their decisions over time, but they have predicted that Manitoba is going to have the worst rate of economic growth in the entire country in 2020.

So maybe we have a Premier who plans to continue on—I would say governing, but that might be pushing it—but intends to remain in power, intends to do the things that he does, whatever it is that he does, and they don't plan on coming back and introducing a budget in the spring of 2020.

Maybe they don't plan to introduce a budget because they are now going to realize that a couple of things may happen. The cost of their austerity is truly going to be seen. They may have what would be a disaster for this government, and that would be a Conservative government federally, because we know what's going to happen to transfers.

This government has actually been collecting windfall. They've been collecting hundreds of millions of dollars extra from the federal government, and why? Because they're such poor managers that Alberta and British Columbia and Ontario and Quebec are doing so much better than this government. They are handing over hundreds of millions of dollars to this Finance Minister who's using it to backfill their cuts. That is what they are—they're all up to.

And well, you know—[*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Swan: —and there's the Government House Leader (Mr. Goertzen) certainly has all kinds of things to say. As always, I would be delighted to hear his debate on this bill. It's always fun listening to the member talking. It's like someone dropping a whole cupboard full of pots and pans at the same time and it's always, always entertaining.

So maybe we're going to have a government which is going to come back in the allotted date in the spring but just not introduce a budget. We're not going to introduce a budget because we don't have to, because we've got \$12 billion that we were now able—*[interjection]* Well, and I'm glad the Government House Leader says now, just admitting, putting it on—and I'll put on the record for him that the Minister of Education is now agreeing with us that our suspicion is well placed.

So it's very helpful; it's very clear we get this kind of clarity from any member. You know, maybe—maybe we shouldn't have Estimates. Maybe we'll just keep debating bills and we'll see what comes out of the minister's mouth, because that's kind of fun.

Maybe they're not going to bring in a budget because they know that any budget they bring in is going to show a deficit which is actually increasing even as they cut services, and who knows when the Finance Minister gets summoned if, indeed, there's a change in government. He'll get summoned to Ottawa and there will be the envelope, and I know how the process works. It's a weird process, and I'll agree with the minister of—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, May 8, 2019

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