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of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
Official Report
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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Second Legislature

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, March 4, 2021

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Madam Speaker: Good afternoon, everybody. Please be seated.

An Honourable Member: Point of order.

Point of Order

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

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): On a point of order.

I'll be brief, although I think it is important to raise this privilege as we start a relatively new sitting in the Legislature.

Yesterday during question period, Madam Speaker, the member for St. James (Mr. Sala) in—apparently posing a question, said in reference to the Premier (Mr. Pallister): Why did he break the law by hiding his interference in Manitoba Hydro?

Madam Speaker, all of us know that we are elected here to do a job and to do it respectfully. Accusing another member, the Premier, or any other member of breaking the law is clearly beneath the offices that we were elected to by the good people of Manitoba.

I know that this is something that you take very seriously, the issue of decorum, and have done many things to try to improve decorum in the House. And I regret that the member for St. James is falling into a pattern, and I would hope that his leader would take it upon himself as leader of his caucus to speak to the member about this continued abuse of the rules.

But in the interim, in the absence of the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Kinew) doing what a leader of any political party should do, Madam Speaker, I would ask that you would, using the rules of this House, say to the member opposite that it is not appropriate to suggest or to specifically accuse any member of this Legislature, in this case the Premier, of breaking the law.

Madam Speaker: I would—as this is a serious issue, I am going to take this under advisement to pursue, look into Hansard and to see what was actually said, and then I will come back to the House with a ruling.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 207—The Abortion Protest Buffer Zone Act

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for St. James.

An Honourable Member: St. Johns?

Madam Speaker: Sorry.

An Honourable Member: That's okay.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for St. Johns.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): I move, seconded by the member for Thompson (Ms. Adams), that Bill 207, The Abortion Protest Buffer Zone Act, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Ms. Fontaine: Bill 207, The Abortion Protest Buffer Zone Act, establishes buffer zones or safety perimeters around any clinic, hospital or health-care facility offering abortion services, in addition to buffer zones around public schools. This bill prohibits any protest, demonstrations or picketing within these zones to protect Manitobans, alongside health-care providers, against harassment, intimidation and persuasion on abortion.

Anti-choice individuals, Madam Speaker, have absolutely no business protesting and harassing citizens accessing abortion services, or harassing children outside our schools.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I welcome and encourage anti-choice protestors to protest here at the Manitoba Legislature any time they want. It is their right to do so, and it doesn't bother any of us here.

Miigwech.

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

Committee reports? Tabling of reports? Ministerial statements?

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Lymphedema Awareness Day

Hon. Wayne Ewasko (Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Immigration): Madam Speaker, Lymphedema Awareness Day in Manitoba is March 6th, and all members know that this day was proclaimed in Manitoba back in 2014 when I brought forward a private member's bill declaring March 6th each year as Lymphedema Awareness Day.

The message remains the same each and every year, and it is to raise public awareness of lymphedema and the impact that ongoing education and research has on creating valuable resources and supports within the lymphedema community.

Lymphedema affects over 250 million people globally. Not only are cancer survivors susceptible to lymphedema, but also to anyone whose lymphatic system has been damaged through accident, surgery or other genetic factors. In fact, lymphedema can show up at birth and continue throughout infancy and into adulthood. The symptoms, such as chronic swelling and pain, progressively gets worse unless it is treated, and often affects the quality of life of individuals on a daily basis.

Here in Manitoba, there continues to be a dedicated team made up of staff, board members, volunteers and health-care workers that help to not only raise awareness of lymphedema and improve access to quality information, but finding treatment solutions for those living with this debilitating medical condition.

Madam Speaker, while COVID-19 has limited in-person activities and gatherings, the importance of this day is not lost. On the afternoon of March 6, to celebrate world lymphedema awareness day, there will be a virtual symposium hosted by our local chapter with guest speakers on the important topic of healthy lifestyle for lymphatic and fat disorders. I encourage all members to sign up for this symposium to learn more about this important topic.

In closing, I want to thank President Linda Menzies and the LAM board for its ongoing work to raise awareness of lymphedema to the general public and the medical community. I am tremendously proud to once again recognize March 6 as Lymphedema Awareness Day here in Manitoba.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, whilst I still have your attention, I'm asking leave to be able to enter the list of

Lymphedema Association of Manitoba's board of directors into Hansard, which—I've provided you the list.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to name those names in Hansard? *[Agreed]*

Lymphedema Association of Manitoba Board of Directors: Linda Menzies, president; Susan Stratford, past president; Isabelle Thorvardson, vice-president; Claire Ann Deighton-Lamy, treasurer; Adrienne Pearson, secretary; Cherida Olson; Ron Wersch; Ace Zhao.

Mike Babb

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Madam Speaker, a good education is key to building strong individuals, community and society. Central to that truth are the teachers and educators who guide and inspire their students to achieve success, both in their academics and in their community.

One educator who has consistently gone above and beyond to help build successful students and community is Elmwood High School principal Mr. Mike Babb. In celebration of our province's sesquicentennial, Mr. Babb is being honoured for his outstanding work with the prestigious Honour 150 award for his contributions to making northeast Winnipeg and our province an even better place to live.

Since starting as Elmwood's principal in 2008, having served four years as vice-principal beforehand, Mr. Babb has overseen an increase in the size of the graduating class by over 50 per cent. His work over the last decade implementing Elmwood's Student Success Centre has meant hundreds of additional students graduating and achieving their goals, while supporting—support for initiatives like the Elmwood Legacy Fund has meant many of these students have been able to attend college and university as well. This has been a game changer for those students.

Beyond the classroom Mr. Babb's passion for the community has helped instill a sense of pride for the whole neighbourhood, as he has been a champion for the changing face of Elmwood. Whether it's initiatives like the school's annual multicultural dinner, support for community programs like the after-school homework club, or his passion for organized sports with the revitalized and competitive Elmwood Giants teams, Mr. Babb has given students a reason to be proud of who they are and where they come from.

Whether it's in the classroom or in the community, Mr. Babb has served as a role model for many. In his 17 years at Elmwood High School, he has continuously been a force for positive change for the students and community members whose lives he's touched, while always remaining approachable and humble of all his achievements.

On behalf of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, I wish to thank Mr. Babb for his years of dedication to his students and to our community, and formally congratulate him on this well-deserved award.

Royal Fashion

Mr. Andrew Micklefield (Rossmere): Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Royal Fashion, a new East Indian fashion store in Rossmere, which I was honoured to help open this last Tuesday. This boutique shop is the most recent endeavour of Sonia and Jaswant Singh and their extended family who came to Canada from India 30 years ago.

Over the last three decades, Sonia and Jaswant have built a janitorial supply company supplying businesses in cities across Canada. They also own a clothing store in India and are raising two teenage sons.

On top of these accomplishments, Sonia desired to establish a local fashion store to serve the East Indian community in Rossmere and the city of Winnipeg. With a beautiful selection of lavish wedding attire, elaborate graduation gowns, colourful saris and pajama suits, glittering golden jewelry, sparkling clutch bags, fancy purses and stylish hand-stitched shoes, Royal Fashion is sure to become a fashion shop favourite for a community known to celebrate with exuberant style and hospitality. I felt like I was in India again when I walked into the store.

* (13:40)

When reflecting on living in Manitoba, Jaswant expressed gratitude for the transparency with which Canadians can do business. He feels Manitoba is a place where an honest man can start a new life and his family can flourish.

Madam Speaker, I'm honoured to speak in favour of such wonderful people building their lives and starting a community-enriching business in my constituency of Rossmere. I invite all members to join me in wishing Royal Fashion's Sonia and Jaswant all the best in their new endeavour.

Support for Women in Trades

Ms. Malaya Marcelino (Notre Dame): I rise today to bring forward serious job concerns of my constituents. Study after study has shown that low-wage earners—like many Notre Dame families—have been hit hardest by the pandemic. This is largely due to the fact that most low-wage earners work in the service industry shuttered by public health restrictions.

Women, who make up the majority of low-wage earners, have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic, and this government needs to act to ensure that they can find work through retraining programs. One way to do so is by encouraging and supporting more women to join the construction industry.

Manitoba needs skilled tradespeople, and women are severely underrepresented. Only 3.4 per cent of all building trades workers in Manitoba are women. Compare that to 14 per cent of women certified in building trades in Newfoundland, and we know that our province can do better. By 2029, Manitoba will need at least 8,100 construction workers, and this demand will be much easier to fill if more women, newcomers, youth and Indigenous people enter the trades industry.

Initiatives like the pilot project led by the Status of Women that's helping 13 River East-Transcona female students with exposure to heavy construction sector are good steps that need to be rapidly expanded to the rest of the province.

The government should reverse their decision to scrap the one-to-one journey-person-apprentice ratio, as this will make workplaces less safe, and they should also keep the requirement for employers on public contracts to hire apprentices instead of trying to repeal it.

More tuition-free programs are needed for women and underrepresented groups, and more focus is needed on pre-employment training, micro-credentialing and support for full trades certification.

This government can spur growth—job growth by providing wage subsidies to employers that hire people from underrepresented groups to help them land jobs after completing their training.

Low-wage-earning Manitobans have been hardest hit by the COVID recession, and getting folks retrained and skilled in trades will help individual families and our economy get back on the right track.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Conseil jeunesse provincial

Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface): C'est avec beaucoup de plaisir que je prends la parole pour partager avec vous l'excellent travail que le Conseil jeunesse provincial, Cjp, est en train d'accomplir. J'ai rencontré des jeunes très engagés et inspirés pour la communauté francophone à Saint-Boniface et à travers le Manitoba.

Le Cjp est un organisme porte-parole de la jeunesse d'expression française au Manitoba. L'organisme est admirable de son dynamisme dans l'accompagnement de la jeunesse. Il contribue au développement et la conscientisation des jeunes âgés surtout entre 14 et 25 ans. Le Cjp exprime sa capacité et sa volonté de participer activement à sa promotion de la francophonie. Cette jeunesse debout très engagée aspire le leadership, la détermination et le pouvoir de contribuer activement au développement du pays en ayant comme outil la langue française à laquelle elle appartient.

Chers membres, nous savons tous que la jeunesse est une chance, et non une charge. La jeunesse est un espoir, et non un problème. La jeunesse est une—aussi une force, et non pas une menace. Notre pays a besoin de cette jeunesse, car elle a un idéal, une énergie, un enthousiasme. Cette jeunesse ne réclame pas aujourd'hui l'assistance, mais une implication et de l'écoute.

Je ne saurais terminer mes propos sans vous parler de l'Accueil francophone, qui ne ménage aucun effort pour le bien-être des immigrants. Leurs activités sont nombreuses et variées : les activités-phares de l'Accueil se situent dans l'accueil des immigrants, leur accompagnement, leur programme de démarches administratives menées par l'Accueil pour les immigrants, les logements de transition, l'aide aux enfants des immigrants pour l'inscription à l'école, l'apprentissage de l'anglais, les agents d'interprétation et tant d'autres. La liste est longue. L'Accueil a des employés avec des profils différents qui parlent plus de 35 langues, selon madame la directrice Bintou Sacko.

Je vous remercie.

Translation

It is with great pleasure that I stand to share with you the excellent work being done by the Conseil jeunesse provincial, or Cjp. I met young people who are very committed to and very inspired by the French-speaking communities of St. Boniface and elsewhere in Manitoba.

Cjp is the main organization representing Manitoba's French-speaking youth, and it is remarkable in its drive to support young people. The organization works to promote the development and awareness of young people mostly between 14 and 25 years of age. The Cjp expressly states its desire to actively participate in the promotion of the francophone community. These very committed, outstanding young people inspire leadership and determination, and the power to actively contribute to the development of the country through their very own French language.

Dear members, we all know that young people represent an opportunity, not a burden. They represent a hope, not a problem. They also represent a strength, and not a threat. Our country needs these young people, because they bring ideals, energy and enthusiasm. Young people are not asking for assistance—they are asking to participate and to be heard.

I cannot conclude my remarks without mentioning the Accueil francophone and its tireless efforts to promote immigrants' well-being. The organization's activities are numerous and varied, and its main focus centres around welcoming and supporting new immigrants, helping them complete administrative processes, offering temporary housing, helping immigrants' children with school registration, offering English-language training, providing interpretation services and so much more. The organization's employees come from a variety of backgrounds and collectively speak more than 35 languages, according to Accueil francophone's director, Ms. Bintou Sacko.

Thank you.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Variant Cases of COVID-19 Public Notification

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Madam Speaker, after the member for Fort Whyte's (Mr. Pallister) last appearance at a public health press conference, Manitobans were disappointed to find out an hour later about the first two cases of a new variant of concern.

Now, clearly, the member for Fort Whyte knew about these new variant cases when he went out to talk to the public; he just didn't share it with the people of Manitoba. And it's going to show that their approach to the variants is much the same as the government's approach to the pandemic overall: it's very disappointing.

It's taken 18 days to notify the public of the first variant of concern; 14 of those days was simply this government sitting on the test and failing to refer it to the national lab. Now, it wasn't until February 7th, months after variant cases began emerging, that labs were told to send all positive samples for screening.

Will the member take responsibility for the delay in notifying Manitobans of variants of concern, and will he explain to Manitobans why this happened?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Deputy Premier): Madam Speaker, all Manitobans are, of course, watching the various things that are happening when it comes to COVID-19, including the variants, but there are no people who are more engaged than our officials at public health.

And I recognize that the member opposite, the Leader of the Official Opposition, continues each and every day, whether it's publicly or in other ways, Madam Speaker, to try to discredit and undermine and question those officials at public health who are offering their best advice to help Manitobans continue to flatten the curve and continue to do the right things to get us on the other side of the pandemic.

That's not becoming of any Manitoban. It's especially not becoming somebody who is the official Leader of the Opposition.

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

Mr. Kinew: Madam Speaker, we know that these variants of concern are likely more contagious. We know that some of these variants of concern potentially are also more elusive with respect to antibodies. And that's why Manitobans deserve to know as much as they can about confirmed cases of variants of concern—of variants of concern as soon as they can so that they can protect themselves and protect others.

Public information can only help public health. Withholding information from the public can only harm public health, and yet that is precisely what the member for Fort Whyte has done. He knew about the cases of the variants of concern when he greeted the media and spoke to the public, and yet he refused to share that information.

Will the Premier (Mr. Pallister) commit to being more transparent with Manitobans by providing detailed information about confirmed cases of variants of concern once he knows about them?

Mr. Goertzen: Madam Speaker, each and every day public health officials are going over the various data that is being collected. They're looking at things that are happening here in Manitoba. They're looking at things that are happening around the world.

Only yesterday, Madam Speaker, they made the decision—the vaccine task force—to move to a one-shot regime with more time between the second shot. That's because they were looking at the evidence being provided federally and looking at what was happening in the real world in other parts of the pandemic in other countries. They are relying on the best advice that they can find. They're providing it to the government, and then, in turn, we rely on that advice.

If the member opposite thinks that these decisions should be made politically on the floor of the Legislature, we're all happy he is not in charge, Madam Speaker.

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

Mr. Kinew: Madam Speaker, that's precisely the concern I'm bringing forward here. These variant cases were known. The decision was made at the political level to actively conceal them from the people of Manitoba.

Now, of course, the delay in the first instance of 18 days was inexcusable, most likely a sign of the incompetence of the Health Minister and the Premier when it comes to testing for these variants of concern, but the Premier himself knew that there were two new cases of a variant of concern here in Manitoba. He went out and spoke publicly, and he actively concealed that information from the people of Manitoba.

The question that is still remaining here: is this government notifying the people of Manitoba about new variant cases in real time as soon as they find out about them? Or is their political interference leading to unwarranted delays before the people of Manitoba find out?

Will the Premier tell us how long it's taking between the confirmation and publicization of cases—

* (13:50)

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Goertzen: Madam Speaker, these are ridiculous accusations made by the Leader of the Official Opposition. And it's one thing, you know, if you want

to go and say things, you know, about politics, but behind what he is saying is an accusation about public health.

This government, this minister, the previous minister, has been following the advice of public health since the beginning of the pandemic. They've been working closely with all the public health officials. Public health has been working closely with others in the field. They've been looking and learning from around the world. They've been 'promviding' that advice to the government, and the government has been following that advice.

It's one of the reasons that we are now in a better place than we certainly were a few months ago, Madam Speaker. This member wants these things to be driven politically. They'll be driven by the medical experts. We won't follow his bad, bad, bad advice.

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

Manitoba Hydro International Auditor General Investigation

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Madam Speaker, the minister is still not committing to telling the public as soon as they know about new cases of variants of concern. That should be a concern to all of us.

What should also be a concern is the fact that we have learned that the Auditor General has opened an investigation into the interference by this government into Manitoba Hydro International. This is a very serious, concerning development surrounding the interference that this government is carrying out around our Crown corporation—that Crown jewel—one of their very, very important subsidiaries.

Now, we already know that their cuts to MHI are going to lead to fewer jobs and to higher Manitoba Hydro rates. But what's very concerning to us is that this government is actively cutting this subsidiary just as the Auditor General is preparing an investigation.

Will the Premier (Mr. Pallister) commit to participating fully with the AG investigation, including restating his public admission that he has already interfered with Manitoba Hydro International?

Hon. Jeff Wharton (Minister of Crown Services): Again, here we go again, from the Leader of the Opposition, again putting falsehoods on the record. My office has confirmed with Manitoba Hydro that they're not aware of any investigation called by the

Auditor General, Madam Speaker, about Manitoba Hydro International.

We know that the member from—the member—the Leader of the Opposition likes to bring up fear, Madam Speaker. We certainly will not take any lessons from that member.

Madam Speaker: I would just like to caution the minister that one of the grouping of wordings that are not allowed in the House is saying that somebody is putting falsehoods on the record. That is just another way of saying somebody is lying, and that is not parliamentary language in this House. And I would just remind members that that is not something that I will allow to be said in the House. So just a caution to members, when they're looking to find their answers, that that shouldn't be part of it.

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

Mr. Kinew: Madam Speaker, I want to thank the minister for confirming on the record today that his office has been in communication with Manitoba Hydro about the investigation by the Auditor General. Now, I would wonder if the minister could put on the record the nature of these communications that his office and perhaps he have had with Manitoba Hydro.

Of course, we're very concerned to learn that the Auditor General has launched an investigation into this government's interference with Manitoba Hydro International. We know that MHI is a source of good jobs. It owns very valuable intellectual property. It contributes revenue that helps to make everyone in Manitoba's hydro rates lower. That's why this government's interference is so very, very wrong.

Will this government listen? Will they stop interfering with Manitoba Hydro International, at least while the Auditor General is investigating?

Mr. Wharton: Well, again, Madam Speaker, this is another example of fear-mongering by the NDP. We know for decades, the NDP—their only talking point and their go-to point is privatization. We know. Manitobans know.

Let's look at the NDP record, Madam Speaker. The NDP record is clear: there's been a burden on Manitobans to the point of \$10 billion. Let me tell you, that equates to \$46,000 to every Manitoba household. That's \$46,500 on every mortgage of every family in Manitoba.

We will take no lessons from the member opposite, Madam Speaker, when it comes to Manitoba Hydro.

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

Mr. Kinew: Yes, Madam Speaker, you know, I think that the Cabinet colleagues of the minister are listening very carefully. They're not clapping at all because they want to hear more details about this minister's communication with Manitoba Hydro about that investigation being carried out by the Auditor General.

Now, of course—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —we think it is very concerning, not only that the Auditor General is investigating this government's interference with Manitoba Hydro International, but today to learn that this minister has been in communication with the leadership at Manitoba Hydro about this investigation by the Auditor General.

I wonder if the minister would be able to table for the House today all records related to his communication with the leadership of Manitoba Hydro surrounding this or any investigation by the Auditor General.

And in the meantime, before he commits to that undertaking, will this government finally commit to stopping their interference with Manitoba Hydro International while the AG is investigating?

Mr. Wharton: Well, Madam Speaker, let's talk about interference and let's talk about communication: two things that are lacking from the member opposite and the former NDP government.

We know that communication—this party—the NDP party are devoid of communication, Madam Speaker. Not once did they speak to Manitoba Hydro board. Not once did they consult the PUB during the Bipole III and Keeyask projects. The former NDP government had a mandate: that was to build the Keeyask Bipole III projects—Manitoba for Americans and it's going to be paid by Manitobans for generations to come.

Let me tell the House today, Madam Speaker, we will not allow this to ever happen again in Manitoba under our watch.

Manitoba Hydro International Auditor General Investigation

Mr. Adrien Sala (St. James): We know that decisions about the future of Hydro are being made at the Cabinet table. That's why the action being taken by the Auditor General is important. It means the PCs cannot avoid or hide from accountability on this important file. This government should be committed to offering its full co-operation in the investigation, including offering access to all decisions made at the Cabinet table regarding Hydro.

Will the minister make the commitment to transparency and accountability today?

Hon. Jeff Wharton (Minister of Crown Services): Well, Madam Speaker, here we go again. I mean, the member obviously—the member is not aware of his past record in his government.

Matter of fact, Madam Speaker, the member was a senior support staffer for the former—current NDP government. The member—why doesn't the member maybe tell the House what he was aware of when they were looking at Bipole III and Keeyask?

The member knows something. We know that. Why doesn't he just come clean today? *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

The honourable member for St. James, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Sala: I'm speechless.

The Premier (Mr. Pallister) and his government is using every means to interfere in Hydro. They've pushed the Public Utilities Board—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Sala: —to the side so they can raise rates at the Cabinet table. They interfered and forced profitable Hydro subsidiaries to stop doing business, costing jobs and millions in revenue. This interference is what's most concerning and that's why we need to hear from an outside expert like the Auditor General. The government needs to make sure the auditor can do their work.

Will the government commit to stopping their interference in Hydro while the AG investigates?

* (14:00)

Mr. Wharton: Again, we can certainly repeat the disastrous record of the NDP when it comes to

Manitoba Hydro, Madam Speaker: no transparency, no communication.

As a matter of fact, last July, approximately a year ago, the member from St. James reached out to my office and wanted to set up a meeting, Madam Speaker. He advised me that he was looking at lobbying me for private alternative energy solutions. It's interesting—I think it would be very important for, perhaps, the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Kinew) to call an emergency caucus meeting to find out what exactly the member from St. James is lobbying for in private supplied energy in Manitoba.

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

Mr. Sala: Yet another bizarre statement.

Madam Speaker, the Pallister government's actions regarding Hydro are of concern to all Manitobans, and they're of concern to the Auditor General, who has opened an investigation.

The Pallister government's interference forced profitable Hydro subsidiaries to stop doing business. That business helps keep hydro rates low. Now, with an investigation under way, it's important that this interference stop and the auditor be allowed to do their work.

Will the minister and the Pallister government commit that they will stop interfering in Manitoba Hydro and fully co-operate with the Auditor General's investigation?

Mr. Wharton: Again, as I alluded to earlier, there is no investigation from the Auditor General. Actually, I invite the member from St. James to table the alleged request by the Auditor General, Madam Speaker. I don't see any tabling of that report coming forward by the member.

Again, he's hidden by secrecy and non-transparent actions, so I can appreciate that, Madam Speaker. But, you know, I can tell you that we know the record of the NDP, and we know that under the NDP management, Manitobans will be paying for years and years to come.

Post-secondary Education Funding Level Concerns

Mr. Jamie Moses (St. Vital): When the minister of advanced education and training was sworn in, he no doubt found out that over the past few years his government has made multi-million-dollar reductions to post-secondary institutions. These are absolute

reductions that don't account for the increased cost of inflation and the growing student body.

Unfortunately, any temporary measures by the Pallister government during the pandemic are just that—temporary—forcing our colleges and universities to make impossible choices. Many of them are already telling the public that their financial situation is difficult.

In the coming days, will the minister reverse course and invest in our post-secondary institutions?

Hon. Wayne Ewasko (Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Immigration): I'd like to thank my critic for the question.

I will get to his answer shortly, Madam Speaker, but at first I'd like to say how extremely honoured I am to have been appointed Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Immigration. I'd like to take the opportunity to thank my family, my constituents of the Lac du Bonnet constituency, my colleagues and, of course, the Premier (Mr. Pallister). I'd like to thank my predecessor, the minister of EDJ, and of—all the department staff of Advanced Education, Skills and Immigration for all of their hard work, which continues.

Madam Speaker, I look forward to putting correct facts on the record, as opposed to what the member opposite's putting on, and I'll answer that briefly—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

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

Mr. Moses: The correct fact is that Assiniboine Community College is facing a projected deficit of almost \$1.1 million. The president of ACC says that this is the first time in his memory that they've faced such a challenge. They need support, as does every other post-secondary institution in this province.

At ACC, programs like the adult collegiate, the school of health and human services, are facing budget cuts of up to 17 per cent. The Pallister government's absolute reductions to operating funding is forcing them to make very difficult choices.

Will the minister commit today to restoring the funding the government has cut from post-secondary institutions?

Mr. Ewasko: Hopefully, the sound is a little bit better. Just—I'd like to thank the critic for the question again, especially when it comes to funding and talking about the challenging times that our post-secondary

institutions have had over the last year, Madam Speaker.

I know that our government is proud that we provided a one-time transition support fund for the year of 2020, which was just over \$25 million. We know that the pandemic created a whole lot of uncertainty here in Manitoba, and not only in Manitoba but for our post-secondary institutions.

Our goal as a government is to make sure that our No. 1—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

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

Mr. Moses: Madam Speaker, I'd like to remind the minister again that his government has cut funding at post-secondary institutions since they came into office—millions of dollars. Students and teachers are worried about the role and the mandate of the minister; his sole focus on the bottom line is not the path toward robust post-secondary education in Manitoba.

Students are especially concerned about the affordability of education. Assiniboine Community College has already indicated that tuition will increase \$250 per program this coming year.

Will the minister commit today to restoring the funding they have cut, so that staff and faculty can focus on continuing to provide high-quality education, affordable education, for their students?

Mr. Ewasko: You know, the time flies when you've got so much good news to share with Manitobans, Madam Speaker.

I appreciate the fact that the member has brought up the portion of tuitions and all of that. Just to be clear, we are spending over \$1 billion—the highest historical amount—on post-secondary institutions. That's over \$1 billion. That's a B, Madam Speaker, not an M.

As far student tuition, our goal, again, is student success. We have the third lowest tuition in all of Canada, Madam Speaker, the lowest in western Canada, west of Quebec.

Thank you, Madam Speaker. We'll take no lessons from the members opposite.

Democratic Process Government Record

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): The PC's current assault on democracy is just their latest volley. They brought forward an omnibus bill, Madam Speaker, cutting safety and environmental standards and now even things like adult literacy, in the name of cutting red tape.

They appointed the most partisan clerk of the Executive Council in the history of our province. They appoint a commission of inquiry, not led by a justice, Madam Speaker, but by an ally and a fellow Conservative.

None of this is normal, Madam Speaker. The conduct of the PCs continues to undermine the very principles of democracy that we all hold dear.

Will the PCs just stop their assault on democracy?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Deputy Premier): I don't think that any Manitoban has ever seen an assault on democracy such as what was displayed by the member for St. Johns last spring, during a pandemic.

First time in 100 years, Madam Speaker, that we've seen a pandemic. Nobody in our living history has lived through a pandemic, and what did the NDP decide to do? Well, not rally around Manitobans, not try to find ways to help Manitobans who are in need.

No, the only thing they could think of at that time was to come in the Legislature, block question period, ring the bells for days, for weeks, I think almost for months, Madam Speaker. That's the only thing they could do during a pandemic. This member knows nothing about democracy. She knows everything about filibusters.

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

Ms. Fontaine: Well, Madam Speaker, to—let's go back to June of 2006, and I quote: Earlier this spring, opposition members—all of them—repeatedly raised points of order and challenged the Speaker's rulings on them, which forces the Speaker to ring the bells. The move stalled debate on the provincial budget and almost 40 other bills for more than five weeks.

* (14:10)

So, Madam Speaker, the Pallister government is hiding from democratic accountability. For months they hid consulting—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, order.

Ms. Fontaine: The education review the former minister referred to as once in a generation has been complete for almost a year—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Goertzen: Well, Madam Speaker, I don't want to participate in filibuster envy here, but let's make a comparison here. Yes, this—members of this caucus, many members who were in opposition at that time, participated in a filibuster when the NDP said that they weren't going to raise the PST on Manitobans and then raised the PST on Manitobans, costing Manitobans thousands of dollars. That is what we were trying to stop.

What is the—was the NDP trying to stop? Were they trying to stop the pandemic? Well, I don't think so, by ringing the bells. I don't know what they were trying to stop. Were they were trying to stop question period? And the way question period is going, they might want to try to stop it again.

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

Ms. Fontaine: The Pallister government has legislation before this House that would remove the ability for citizens to have their voices heard and for open and transparent decision-making. For months now many in the Cabinet have been kept away from media and from public scrutiny. They shut down the Legislature for months at a time. This isn't normal. Their current actions are just the latest debasement of democratic norms, Manitoba—Madam Speaker.

Again, will the PCs just stop and instead begin to uphold and honour our democracy in Manitoba?

Mr. Goertzen: Madam Speaker, I don't know if the member opposite missed the pandemic that was happening last year, one of the reasons that the Legislature, of course, had to close down. And now we're back in this virtual way, through the good work of yourself, Madam Speaker, and the various officers in this Assembly, to allow us to come back in this way.

But we've gone above and beyond—this Assembly has, the government has—to try to ensure that the democratic principles of this Legislature can continue on, that we can continue to meet in this way, in this historic way. We have gone to that length so we could continue to have democracy.

What isn't democratic, Madam Speaker, is not allowing bills to be debated, whether it was the

member for St. Johns filibustering or whether it was the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) and his leader not allowing bills to be distributed during January and February. Those are affronts to democracy.

Northern Manitoba Communities Accessibility of COVID-19 Vaccine

Ms. Danielle Adams (Thompson): Northern Manitoba has struggled significantly in its battle with COVID-19. These struggles are made worse by this government's consistent failure to not consult with local leadership in northern communities.

Earlier this year, the government chose a northern vaccine super site that was simply inaccessible for many folks living in Thompson. Thankfully, due to the Thompson mayor's advocacy, this location has been shifted.

But the fact remains, why was this an issue in the first place? And this leads to my question.

What consultations and preparations has the minister done with northern communities to ensure the vaccine accessibility is there for all northern Manitobans?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Health and Seniors Care): I know we've had numerous consultations with various members of our northern communities, Madam Speaker. I have met with them a few times since taking over this role. I know we've had many consultations on the budget side.

In fact, I think we reached out to 8,600 people in our northern communities, and we'll continue to consult on this. I know our Vaccine Implementation Task Force has been in touch with members in the northern communities; I know that Dr. Brent Roussin has been in touch on a regular basis with those in our northern communities. We will continue to consult those people in the northern communities.

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

Ms. Adams: I think the minister is confusing consultations with dictating, as that is what they are doing.

Accessibility and transportation to get the vaccine remains an even greater issue for northern communities. Northern Manitobans are worried about this government's plan to transport people to the vaccine. The plan seems to change every day in a manner which will force many to leave their communities for

a full day and share transportation with others, which has people concerned about further spread of COVID-19.

With the changing dynamics in the vaccine, what is the government's plan to bring the vaccine administration closer to home for northern communities?

Mrs. Stefanson: Well, Madam Speaker, it doesn't get much closer to home in Thompson than having a super site that is right in Thompson. So I'm not sure—you know, the important thing in all of this is that people in our northern communities have access to those vaccines, and we have assured that that will happen. But again, the member opposite, you know, she wants to play politics with this.

This is a very serious issue, Madam Speaker, and all of those people deserve to have the vaccine on a timely basis. That's what we're ensuring. That's what our Vaccine Implementation Task Force is ensuring, and I want to thank those members of the Vaccine Implementation Task Force for the incredible work that they're doing on behalf of Manitobans.

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

Vaccine Eligibility Requirements Métis and Inuit Populations

Ms. Danielle Adams (Thompson): I believe the minister needs a map of northern Manitoba to know that there is more communities in the North than just Thompson.

Manitoba wants an—to see an equitable vaccine rollout which prioritized Manitobans with increased risk. I'm happy to see First Nations are prioritized in the vaccine rollout, but Métis and Inuit Manitobans are not prioritized because—and this is troubling, as they share the same disproportionate health risks and challenges.

Will the minister commit today to expanding the vaccine eligibility for Indigenous Manitobans to include Métis and Inuit Manitobans?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Health and Seniors Care): Well, the arrogance of the member opposite never ceases to amaze me, Madam Speaker.

I've had the opportunity, as have many of my colleagues—all of my colleagues on this side of the House—to visit northern communities.

We've consulted with those folks in the northern communities, Madam Speaker, and we will continue to do so.

We are working very closely with our First Nations communities, with our Indigenous communities. The Manitoba Metis Federation is part of our Vaccine Implementation Task Force, Madam Speaker. I will tell you we will continue to work with those individuals to ensure that we offer the vaccine to those who need it.

I will remind the member opposite that it is not politicians who decide who gets the vaccine in a priority basis, Madam Speaker. That is part of the medical team on the Vaccine Implementation Task Force.

Canada Health Transfer Funding Levels

Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface): I heard the Premier's (Mr. Pallister) comments about health care at noon. I thought I would table some facts.

One is a document that shows Canadian health-care transfers have never been over 26 per cent at any point in the last 45 years, and they're going up even as this government froze and cut; (2) 'cahi' statistics that show that hip, knee and cataract replacements all got worse under this government—sorry, CIHI—year over year; (3) an article showing that, in 2007, the Premier and the premier of Alberta, both as Conservative MPs, voted for a fundamental change in health transfers that cut funding to provinces with aging, Indigenous and sparse populations, including Manitoba.

Why should we believe the Premier and his MLAs when they say they want more health-care funding, because when they were in power—federally or provincially—they cut?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Health and Seniors Care): Madam Speaker, yesterday the federal government dictated to provinces across our country as to the second dose of the vaccine and how it would be and how much would be delivered to the provinces.

They had given four options to the provinces: one was on a per capita basis; one was based on Indigenous populations; another was based on elderly populations; and the fourth option, Madam Speaker—which is the option that Manitoba chose because it's in the best interest of Manitobans—is based on Indigenous as well as elderly populations.

I would suggest that, if the member opposite wants to do what's in the best interests of Manitobans, that he gets on board and stop representing Ottawa and start representing Manitobans.

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

COVID-19 Vaccine Sites Accessibility Concerns

Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface): Still on health care, we have to question the government's decision to only set up three super sites so far, because instead of taking vaccines to seniors, this government is forcing vulnerable seniors and their caregivers to spend thousands of dollars to travel for hours to get vaccines.

* (14:20)

There are currently three super sites, with a couple more planned. I table a CTV News story from last month showing that Saskatchewan, by contrast, will have 230 vaccine clinics in more than 180 communities across the province. It's not just unfair and expensive, it is bad public policy.

Is this government going to stop forcing vulnerable people in their 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s and older to travel, wait in line, pack into planes, or are they going to do the right thing, the smart thing, the safe thing, and make sure vaccines go to where people are living?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Health and Seniors Care): We are committed to ensuring that the vaccine gets out to Manitobans who need it on a timely basis, Madam Speaker. The unfortunate part is that the federal government, his colleagues in Ottawa, have not been delivering the vaccine to the province of Manitoba. Again, I would hope that he would get on board to ensure that the federal government delivers more doses of the vaccine for Manitobans who need, want and deserve it.

COVID-19 Vaccinations Vulnerable Populations

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, unlike British Columbia, which has prioritized individuals with medically fragile conditions—underlying health conditions that render them extremely vulnerable, I table a list—the Manitoba government has been slow in its vaccine policy to prioritize individuals with medical conditions which put them at high risk for severe infection with the COVID-19 virus.

Surely, individuals who are less than 65, and including those less than 50, should be considered to be prioritized, as British Columbia has done. We are receiving many letters daily from such individuals.

When will the government put a priority on vaccinating all very vulnerable individuals in Manitoba?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Health and Seniors Care): Of course, once again, those decisions are not made by politicians, they're made by the medical team on our Vaccine Implementation Task Force, Madam Speaker. They are responsible for deciding the priority list for those who get the vaccine in the province of Manitoba. We will continue to rely on them for that advice.

But again, I will remind the member opposite that those people in their 50s and 60s can't get the vaccine unless Ottawa delivers the vaccine to Manitoba. So once again, I will ask and call on these Liberal members of this House to call on their cousins in Ottawa to ensure that Manitoba gets the vaccine that they need, want and deserve.

Support for Homeless Population Government Initiatives

Ms. Janice Morley-Lecomte (Seine River): Combatting homelessness is an ongoing challenge in our city and all major cities across the country. We know that simply providing shelter space is not enough. We must provide housing and supports in order to ensure the success of those housed.

Can the Minister of Families update the House on her government's recent initiatives in this area?

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Families): I'd like to thank my friend from Seine River for that question.

Housing and providing supports to those who are precariously housed is very important to our government. That is why we tripled Rent Assist from—up from \$13 million when the NDP were in office to \$36 million under our government. That is why we built 713 new units of affordable housing since we formed government.

And just last week, that is why we provided another 2 and a half million dollars to the housing non-profit corporation to help us provide wraparound supports for those who are experiencing homelessness, once we get them into homes. And we've identified over 50 homes to be occupied this month for those who are homeless, and we will be providing

them with clothing, with shelter, with housing and with food supports as well. Our government believes in a wraparound support because we know housing solutions aren't the entire picture.

Elective Surgery Backlog Wait Time for Procedures

MLA Uzoma Asagwara (Union Station): Madam Speaker, last year, due to the pandemic, Manitoba had a backlog of over 11,000 surgeries. Elective procedures had to be cancelled or rescheduled for valid reasons, but now Manitoba is the most heavily impacted province in the country, and it's been one of the slowest in addressing this backlog.

Thousands of Manitobans are waiting, some for over a year now, for surgeries that would drastically improve their quality of life and improve their health outcomes. Many continue to wonder how much longer are they going to have to wait.

Will the minister tell this House today where is the current wait-list at, in terms of elective surgeries for Manitobans?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Health and Seniors Care): I want to thank the member opposite for the question.

Madam Speaker, I—what's important here is that we're protecting Manitobans during a pandemic and we will continue to take the advice of the Chief Provincial Public Health Officer when it comes to doing so.

And there was a period of time when we had to out-of—due to safety reasons for Manitobans, where we had to shut down elective surgeries in the province of Manitoba. That is not something that is unique to our province. It's happening across the country. This—these are obviously challenging times, Madam Speaker, so we need to protect Manitobans first.

Obviously, we are also putting together a plan and a process in place to ensure that we—now that elective surgeries are back on, Madam Speaker, to ensure that Manitobans get their elective surgery when they need, want and deserve it.

Madam Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

MOTIONS OF CONDOLENCE

Madam Speaker: And I am advising members that, in accordance with a House agreement yesterday, the required 90 minutes notice was provided for the consideration today of condolence motions for the

following former members of this Legislature: Conrad Santos, Harvey Smith, Martin Dolin, Clarence Pettersen, Frank Pitura, Stuart Briese, Edward Connery.

The honourable member for Concordia, I believe, has a change he wishes to advance.

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Just seeking leave of the House to set aside the condolence motion for Martin Dolin for consideration at a later date.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to set aside the condolence motion for Martin Dolin for consideration at a future date. Agreed? [*Agreed*]

As previously agreed by the House, today we will be using a new process for the consideration of condolence motions. As a reminder to all members, the process will work as follows for each motion: following tradition, the Premier (Mr. Pallister) or Deputy Premier will move the condolence motion. The first 10 minutes of speaking time will be allocated to members of the deceased member's political party; the next five minutes of speaking time will be allocated to members from another political party; and the final five minutes of speaking time will be allocated to independent members.

Within each speaking time allotment, the parties or independent members may assign as many members as they wish to speak. At the conclusion of the speeches, I shall put the question to the House to indicate their support for the motion. Members in the Chamber may rise in their places and remain standing, while remote members may remain seated and bow their heads.

Conrad Santos

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Deputy Premier): I move, seconded by the member for Burrows, that this House convey to the family of the late Conrad Santos, who served as a member of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, its sincere sympathy in the bereavement and its appreciation of his devotion to duty in a useful life of active community and public service, and that Madam Speaker be requested to forward a copy of this resolution to the family.

Motion presented.

Mr. Diljeet Brar (Burrows): I thank you for the opportunity to speak in memory of Mr. Conrado Santos.

It's an honour to pay tribute to a person like Mr. Conrado de Regla Santos, who was the first

person born in the Philippines to be elected to political office in Canada. That's a great achievement for an immigrant person, to reach to this Chamber and represent the people of Manitoba. It takes courage, passion, commitment and vision to make it happen.

* (14:30)

He was born in the Philippines in 1934 and was educated at Harvard University and the University of Michigan, receiving a Ph.D. in political science from the latter institution. He moved to Winnipeg in 1965 after receiving a teaching position at the University of Manitoba, where he retired from in 2008.

His family and friends called him Conrado. He was married to Emerita Maglaya. He had three children: Evelyn Santos, Conrad Santos and Robert Santos.

Santos has also worked as a consultant for the Instituto Centroamericano de Administración Pública in Costa Rica, and was a board member of the Citizenship Council of Manitoba from 1977 to 1980.

I understand that one has to try and try again to be successful, to make their dreams come true. Mr. Conrado made a few unsuccessful efforts to get into political office before he was successful. He sought the NDP nomination for Fort Garry in the 1973 election, but was defeated. He ran for the Winnipeg City Council in 1977 and 1980, but lost both times.

In the year 1981, he was elected as MLA and served until 1988. In 1988, Santos lost the Burrows NDP nomination but still didn't give up. He subsequently entered the party's leadership election. Again, he didn't succeed. He also ran for mayor of Winnipeg in 1989, and finished fourth.

It's motivating for all of us to learn that he continued his efforts towards his goal. In 1990, Santos won the NDP nomination for Broadway by a single vote, and then he was elected as MLA Broadway in 1990, defeating incumbent Avis Gray in the 1990 general election, re-elected in 1995 and served till 1999, before Broadway riding was eliminated by redistribution.

In 1999, he tried for a nomination for the constituency of Wellington, which he got successfully. Once again, he was elected MLA Wellington in 2003, and served till 2007. This is a great success story for all of us who get through all the struggles in our lives.

Many times, we are close to quit—giving up, and low times, however, when we learn about such stories,

we get encouraged to follow our dreams. Continue fighting. Keep making efforts to reach our goals.

Today, as I hear about the struggles that my constituents in Burrows are facing during this pandemic, I am comforted by thinking of individuals like Mr. Conrado. I'm inspired by his dedication to his community.

Santos was also named Deputy Speaker after the elections of 1986 and 1999.

Santos died in Winnipeg on February 29, 2016, at the age of 81. We remember him as a role model for new Canadians working hard to settle themselves in this beautiful country they call home. We remember him as a motivator for our generation, and generations to come.

Not everyone is like Mr. Conrado, who was a versatile personality. He had higher education at prestigious institutions. He taught university students, had academic success, then tried his luck in politics and set an example, created history as a first person of Filipino origin to get into Legislature.

As the first person born in Philippines to be elected to political office in Canada, Mr. Conrado made a great contribution to diversity in the political system. As an immigrant myself, I understand some of the difficulties that one must face when coming to a new country and becoming part of a new community. One of the greatest strengths of Canada is our diversity, and I believe it is important to see this diversity reflected in all institutions and workplaces.

Here in the Legislature we are representing our constituents, the people of this province. It is common sense that we, as elected representatives of our communities, should also reflect our population diversity. This diversity makes our communities stronger by giving us opportunities to learn about our differences, share our experiences with one another and work together towards our goals. I am grateful for people like Mr. Conrado, who is a role model for new Canadians.

Mr. Conrado's experience as a university educator and his background in political science are examples of the great value that he brought as an MLA. He became an expert in his field of study, then was able to put his knowledge into real world experience in local politics. But without hard work and determination, he may never have had that opportunity.

Mr. Conrado's successes were interspersed with experiences where he did not succeed, yet he

continued on. This is a reminder that a failure, a let down, a bad experience, does not have to be the end of something. It does not mean that you will not achieve your goals at a later date. You must keep working, keep learning and keep trying.

While we remember Mr. Conrado for his contributions to this society, we should also appreciate Canadian society for being so inclusive, welcoming, embracing and open to new Canadians for exciting opportunities.

Ours is a diverse society and diversity is our strength. No society is a perfect society so there's always a scope of making it still better. We should work together to strengthen this society in all possible ways while standing against inequalities, intolerance, racism and discrimination.

We need to resonate this message of love, harmony and inclusiveness all around and remind everyone that all human race is one. In spite of the fact that we look different from others, we speak different languages, we practise different faiths, we have different festivals, diverse heritage, but still, we are one.

When I look around in this Chamber and see the diversity we reflect, it makes me proud of our nation. I feel blessed and honoured to be a Manitoban, a Canadian.

Mr. Conrado's first successful seat was Burrows. This is a great honour for me to represent the same constituency and get a positive energy from his life history and success story. I'm happy to be able to share his story with you today.

I request you to join me, send our deepest condolences to Mr. Conrado's family.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Jon Reyes (Waverley): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity to give a tribute to the late Dr. Conrad Santos, the former MLA for Burrows, Broadway and Wellington, an MLA representing three constituencies as a result of boundary changes, something I would know and have experience representing St. Norbert and now Waverley.

Before I begin, I want to acknowledge his family members for supporting him on his true dedication to public service for five terms. As an elected official, you do reflect on the past, on those who came before you. At a young age, I'd be glued to the TV set, at times watching question period, election nights and

the news on politics. It was interesting to me, just like sports was.

I was never, at the time, a huge follower of provincial politics, it was more on the federal side but as a young Filipino-Canadian kid growing up, it was gratifying to see, for me, that a Filipino immigrant could make it in the political world. That Filipino-Canadian trailblazer was Dr. Conrad Santos.

Our community was very proud to have one of our own when we found out that in 1981, Dr. Conrad Santos would become the first Filipino-Canadian to be elected in office right here in Manitoba and the first Filipino-Canadian in all of Canada.

* (14:40)

In 1981 MLA Santos was elected to represent the Burrows riding. He ended up serving a total five terms as an MLA, from 1981 to 2007 in Burrows, Broadway and Wellington.

In 2003 MLA Santos was named the Deputy Speaker, making him the first Filipino to be the Deputy Speaker in Manitoba. Every provincial election most of our Filipino community, including myself, would watch with anticipation on how Dr. Conrad Santos would do and, as we know, he served five terms in office.

I remember a story from the late Mrs. Rosalinda Cantiveros, who told me that Dr. Santos would be on his bike packing a lunch in his sling leather bag, travelling by bike between meetings to see his constituents. I remember seeing him as a young teenager speaking at—bringing greetings at the Filipino youth basketball award site, a league called the Philippine national youth cagers, which my dad was the commissioner. I remember him saying to the effect of we all love to play the game, but there is no thrill like winning. Dr. Conrad Santos served five terms, so he knew how to win.

Even putting his name forward in the NDP leadership contest, he won already with the bravery and courage he had put by putting his name forward. I remember watching that leadership contest on TV and his first words were, I am nervous, to the delight of the crowd, as they knew he was a good man.

Most recently, in 2016, at the 20th anniversary of the Bulacan Association of Winnipeg—Bulacan is a region in the Philippines where Dr. Conrad Santos was from—I had the honour and privilege from the president of the association, Ms. Clarita Nazario, to bring greetings on behalf of our government to present

the plaque of recognition honouring Dr. Conrad Santos to his son Robert.

This man inspired me. Regardless of our political stripes, it allowed many Filipino-Canadian elected officials, including myself, to serve in public office. I will say time and time again that I am proud to be from a province which has produced and elected fellow kababayans [*countrymen*], the most Filipino-Canadian elected officials from Manitoba.

Dr. Rey Pagtakhan, the first Filipino-Canadian Member of Parliament from Manitoba, Flor Marcelino, the first Filipino-Canadian female MLA, the former MLA for Burrows—or, Logan—excuse me, who is now has her daughter serving as the MLA for Notre Dame, both from Manitoba.

Other notable Filipino-Canadian former MLAs from Manitoba: Mr. Cris Aglugub, and for some of us, our former colleague and the former MLA for Tyndall Park, Mr. Ted Marcelino. Also I must mention Mike Pagtakhan, who I worked with prior to politics and during. He was the first and only Filipino-Canadian city councillor for the City of Winnipeg to this day from Manitoba.

I'm very proud of those who came before me as a Filipino-Canadian. I'm very proud to have been the first Filipino-Canadian-born MLA in the Manitoba Legislature. I am proud to be the first Filipino-Canadian MLA in our Progressive Conservative caucus.

I look at Dr. Conrad Santos as a pioneer, inspiring those who I've mentioned, including myself, to serve the people from different races, religions, creeds, backgrounds.

As our Premier (Mr. Pallister) has stated, Manitoba is the home and—home of hope and every Filipino-Canadian kid, every kid, no matter what community you are from, it's all up to you to continue to hope, continue to dream and continue to work as hard as Dr. Conrad Santos did for five terms.

As a current MLA, a veteran, and as a fellow kababayan [*countryman*], Dr. Santos—Dr. Conrad Santos, respectfully, thank you for your public service.

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

Thank you. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, I speak to pay tribute to Dr. Conrad Santos.

He served for a total of 24 years in the Manitoba Legislative Assembly in the constituencies of Burrows, Broadway and Wellington.

Born in the Philippines and educated at Harvard, he received a Ph.D. in political science from the University of Michigan and he had taught at the University of Manitoba before being elected as an MLA.

Dr. Santos had a long-running interest in politics and in helping those who were less well off. He was the first MLA with a Philippine background to be elected in Manitoba. He served for a while as Deputy Speaker and he used to entertain members of the Assembly with long speeches which covered a lot of territory.

In common with our present Premier, Dr. Conrad Santos had ties to Costa Rica. He served as a consultant for Costa Rica's Instituto Centroamericano de Administración Pública.

In his maiden speech in the Manitoba Legislature on February 26, 1982, Dr. Santos spoke of how meeting people in Burrows as he campaigned had transformed him. He spoke of the importance in a multicultural society of the Legislature being representative of the diversity of our society. He spoke of life as a long, winding road and the importance of considering all the alternative courses of action along that road.

He spoke specifically about people in Burrows. He said, and I quote: We in the constituency of Burrows consider life like a big grinding stone; it grinds us down or could pulverize us, or it could polish us up, depending on the kind of materials we're made out of. But we're made out of granite rocks, Mr. Speaker; the more life grinds us, the more we come out like shiny pebbles, worthy to be jewels in the crown of this country. And Dr. Conrad Santos was one of those shiny petals, an example to many, many others who have come after him.

Dr. Santos was an optimist but he also warned his colleagues in the NDP party to avoid the tendency to egotism and corruption. And he also spoke as a trained political scientist that he was, of the importance of public morality and making government responsible, something we would all do well to remember.

On behalf of the Manitoba Liberal caucus, I extend condolences to the family and friends of Dr. Conrad Santos and to the Philippine community in Manitoba.

Thank you, merci, miigwech, salamat po.
[Thank you.]

Madam Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt this motion? To indicate support for the motion, members in the Chamber may rise in their places and remain standing while remote members may remain seated and bow their heads. [Agreed]

A moment of silence was observed.

Harvey Smith

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Deputy Premier): I move, seconded by the member for Wolseley, that this House convey to the family of the late Harvey Smith, who served as a member of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, its sincere sympathy in their bereavement and its appreciation of his devotion to duty in a useful life of active community and public service, and that Madam Speaker be requested to forward a copy of this resolution to the family.

Motion presented.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Wolseley. The member needs to unmute. The honourable member for Wolseley, to unmute her mic.

Ms. Lisa Naylor (Wolseley): I am very pleased to have the opportunity to offer condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of Harvey Smith.

Harvey Smith was a Canadian politician who served both on Winnipeg's City Council and in the Manitoba Legislative Assembly. Smith was born on November 6, 1936, in Winnipeg but grew up in Vancouver, British Columbia, where he first became involved in politics at the age of 12. He joined the British Columbia Social Credit Party when he was young and remained a proud social democrat throughout his life.

* (14:50)

Smith obtained a bachelor of arts degree in economics and history from the University of British Columbia, a bachelor of education from Simon Fraser University and worked as a history teacher, first in rural Manitoba in Birtle, and then in Russell, before moving to Winnipeg to teach and serve as librarian at Tec Voc High School.

Smith was elected to the Winnipeg City Council in 1980 for the division of Sargent Park and held the seat until 1986. Then, in 1986, Smith was elected to the provincial Legislature in the Winnipeg riding of Ellice, defeating the PC candidate by over 2,000 votes. He would serve as an MLA until 1988.

Ten years later, in 1998, Smith came out of political retirement to run for the Winnipeg City Council again, representing the Daniel McIntyre Ward on City Council. In 2002 he was re-elected, defeating the second place candidate by almost 3,000 votes. He would serve until 2014, making his total time spent on the council 22 years.

Paul Moist, the former national president of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, had this to say about Harvey: I would say that every Canadian city council needs a Harvey Smith, somebody who's not really worried about assuming power or being on the executive committee. He felt very much that he needed to represent citizens and he took positions that sometimes bothered the powers-that-be.

He also lauded Smith as a committed social democrat who stood up for ordinary people and supported public transit, repairs to inner-city back lanes and public housing. Everybody viewed him as a fighter—his supporters and his detractors. He had a pretty good run in public life, Paul Moist said. The citizens of the West End and the city as a whole benefitted from Harvey's advocacy for the inner city.

City Councillor Jenny Gerbasi, who served with Smith for 16 years, echoed those sentiments. He liked the fight itself, putting up a fight to get something for people, she said. Most of his life was focused on his work and being in the midst of these battles for making our lives better and fighting for people who didn't have a voice. You can pretty much rely on him on the basic social justice issues.

Smith was a character with a creative imagination and a sense of playfulness. He gained some news coverage and notoriety for his acts of political mischief and tended to draw attention to very important civic issues, such as naming a back lane in disrepair after the then-mayor and holding a public meeting about a non-existent plan to build a hog plant in Tuxedo. He may have had some fun with these issues, but citizens he represented have described him as a man of principle whose interests always lay in the improvement of community.

Whether serving at City Hall or the Manitoba Legislature, Harvey Smith was always open to the concerns of the citizens he represented and was often spotted deep in conversation with constituents, listening to their ideas or trying to help solve a problem.

One of Smith's last community fights was to keep the Sherbrook Pool open, and he was honoured at the grand reopening of the pool in January 2017.

Harvey Smith died on March 12th, 2017, at the age of 80, following a brief illness, and more than 200 community members attended the celebration of his life at the West End Cultural Centre.

Thank you.

Madam Speaker: The honourable Minister of Mental Health, Wellness and Recovery (Ms. Gordon).

The honourable Minister of Mental Health, Wellness and Recovery?

We will move on, then, for the moment, to the honourable member for River Heights.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, I rise to speak on the condolence motion for Harvey Smith.

He served for two years as an MLA from 1986 to 1988. He's actually better known for the 22 years he spent as a city councillor from 1980 to 1986 in Sargent Park Ward and from 1998 to 2014 in the Daniel McIntyre Ward.

I met Harvey Smith many times, and we had many talks during his tenure as a city councillor for the Daniel McIntyre Ward from 1998 to 2014. He was very, very active in attending community events, and in particular events put on by diverse ethnocultural groups in his ward.

In his maiden speech in the Manitoba Legislature, on May 9th in 1986, he expressed his concern for those who are unemployed, saying, and I quote, unemployment is a degrading experience and can destroy the dignity of an individual.

He continued, the longer one is unemployed, the more devastating can be the result as door after door is shut in your face. Unemployment scars the individual.

Harvey Smith was concerned—very concerned about those who were less well off. And he was also very concerned about the human rights of individuals in Manitoba. In his maiden speech, he also talked about multiculturalism, and spent quite a section about the need to clean up the rivers in Manitoba, and a program for cleaning that up.

Harvey, in his three years in the Manitoba Legislature, spoke many times. He served as party whip for a while, and he spoke on one occasion about

the need for improved decorum in the Manitoba Legislature. This was on August 28th, 1986, in a grievance.

I quote him: When people put on question period on the TV, and hear all that noise, they think they're all acting in a wild fashion, an irresponsible fashion. It was a member who I will not name whose behaviour he picked out, and I quote, Harvey said, his behaviour has been absolutely incredibly bad.

On the other hand, he remarked in that same speech of the Leader of the Liberal Party, that, and I quote, I think she's acted as a responsible person, a responsible member of this House.

I thank Harvey Smith for his fair-minded comments on Sharon Carstairs, who was then the Manitoba Liberal Leader, and I say on behalf of the Manitoba Liberal caucus, condolences to the family and friends of Harvey Smith.

Thank you. Merci. Miigwech.

Mr. Goertzen: I just seek leave to be able to speak to this at this time, having moved the motion earlier?

Madam Speaker: Is there leave for the member to speak at this time on this condolence motion? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Goertzen: Thank you, Madam Speaker, members of the House.

There are politicians who sometimes transcend parties or ideology and, of course, Harvey Smith, as we've already heard this afternoon, had very strong beliefs, Madam Speaker, and they would be beliefs that many of us would agree with, but I'm sure—and I did have the opportunity to meet Mr. Smith a few times in his role as city councillor where we would have had some disagreements as well.

But he is one of those politicians who you remember because of their character, but also because they were fighters for their community. And that's often the case for those who are coming from the inner city of Winnipeg. We've seen many individuals who have renowned political careers, who have made a legacy by standing up for those who needed somebody to be their voice.

And Harvey Smith was one of those individuals, serving for 22 years; the vast majority of that at city council, and it was mentioned by the member for Wolseley (Ms. Naylor), and quoting one of the individuals who was eulogizing Mr. Smith at the time

of his passing, that he didn't really care much about political power.

He wasn't trying to get into Cabinet, at the time, necessarily, the brief time he was in the Legislature or on Executive Council at City of Winnipeg. That isn't what motivated him. He was motivated by helping people, by trying to ensure that his community, whether it was a pool or something else, was—there's a legacy, because he understood that those things were very, very important to his community.

And there have been many tributes to him since his passing, and he has clearly left a legacy, some of which we will never know. The young people who've benefited from the things that he championed, whether it was keeping a pool open or doing something else. Those young people might see the name Harvey Smith somewhere, but they may not themselves know how they've benefited from his 'activism' and how he was a champion for those communities.

* (15:00)

Twenty-two years is a long time to serve, and in public life, Madam Speaker. I know there are some in this Chamber who are at that or approaching that, and we know the toll that it can take on family and individually. And Harvey Smith always motivated to help his community, to help others who were less advantaged than maybe he was at that time in his life, always put the energy in, always ensured that he was speaking the voice of his community.

And so it doesn't matter—politics, what political party you're in, we all have respect for that. And on behalf of the government of Manitoba and the Progressive Conservative Party of Manitoba, we want to say to the family and the friends of Harvey Smith, thank you for sharing him with Manitoba and for all that he did to make our province a better place to live.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? To indicate support for the motion, members in the Chamber may rise in their places and remain standing while remote members may remain seated and bow their heads. *[Agreed]*

A moment of silence was observed.

Clarence Pettersen

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Deputy Premier): I move, seconded by the member for Concordia, that this House convey to the family of the late Clarence

Pettersen, who served as a member of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, its sincere sympathy in their bereavement and its appreciation for his devotion to duty in a useful life of active community and public service, and that Madam Speaker be requested to forward a copy of this resolution to the family.

Motion presented.

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): It is indeed my honour to rise today to speak to this resolution, to put some words on the record about my friend and colleague Clarence Pettersen and to pass along our sincere and deepest condolences on behalf of my caucus, the NDP caucus, as well as all members here in the Legislature.

Clarence was a dedicated family man, he was an outstanding teacher and community activist, and he was a principled member of this Legislature representing the great community of Flin Flon from 2011 to 2016. Clarence was known first and foremost as a teacher by his friends and his colleagues and his community. Of course, he taught in Flin Flon for 33 years and for 10 of those years, he taught at the Many Faces educational centre.

Clarence was somebody who valued education and always felt that making a connection with students and lifting them up in whatever place they were was the path to getting a good education. In his own words, Clarence said: my philosophy about teaching school was I wanted to make sure everybody who came into my class wanted to come into my class and felt good about themselves. It was my job to do that, to make sure they wanted to be there and to make sure they wanted to learn.

Mr. Doyle Pivniuk, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

Clarence found that the satisfaction he got from teaching went beyond his student's graduation, in fact. He said, I've taught so many kids—thousands probably. The greatest accomplishment I look at is when I walk down Main Street and people will come out of their way just to say hi. I just had a love of education and a love of kids and I hope I passed that on.

For those that knew him in this Chamber, they knew that he brought that same philosophy to his everyday work here in the Legislature. I had the pleasure of sitting next to Clarence for many years in this Chamber and his role as a teacher never really ceased. He taught me many things. Even though I had been here for a year in the Legislature before he came, he brought a certain levity and a certain easygoing

style that I think worked very well to communicate the things that were important to him.

We connected mostly about his love of his community. He would often tell me stories about his life in Flin Flon, about the many communities that he would visit as part of his work as MLA, often talking about the hours that he would spend on ice roads and going out to remote places, always in a very positive way, and always telling me stories about the good things that he learned from those trips.

But he was also an outdoorsman, and so we connected in that sense as well, somebody who enjoyed snowmobiling and fishing, and so we often would talk just about the natural beauty of the place that he came from. And he always talked about how his community, though he liked to travel, his community was one of the most beautiful places to him and to his family and to his wife.

He continued to teach me and, as I said, teach everybody in this Legislature. That attitude of a jovial nature, or an easygoing nature, is something many will remember him by. He had a way with words and knew how to turn a phrase. In fact, I think, Mr. Speaker, it may have been the only time, certainly, that I've ever heard, Yoda from Star Wars being quoted in the Legislature and he would say that and encourage people to get on board with him.

He also said, and this is a phrase that outlived him in the Legislature, get on the love train. And I hear other members reminiscing about that, and clerks of the Legislature, and, as I said, that actually is something that lived on beyond his time here.

He used that phrase; he used these easygoing colloquialisms and different ways of connecting with people, I think, to make those connections—to make connections with all members, across party lines and across everyone in this House, and he carried that through in the caucus table.

But you always knew that behind all of that good nature that Clarence brought to these debates and this discussion was a passion for social justice and a passion for his community that really shone through, and I think people really saw that as one of his strengths.

He was very passionate, as I said, about the North. He was very proud of some of the accomplishments that he had as a member for Flin Flon, as I said, for a very short time he was here. But he brought in over \$180 million worth of investment, including upgrades to Highway 10, which were important to him, and

many other projects. He put—he got money for Flin Flon for the community hospital to make improvements and then improve the emergency room, bring a new emergency room there and different greening projects throughout Flin Flon.

At all times the North and his home community were his primary focus, and that wasn't always easy. I'll be frank, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because Clarence, though he was here for a short time, was here at a very tumultuous time in the Manitoba Legislature. There were a lot of distractions, you could say, within the Legislature. He kept that focus. He kept that focus on his home community, and when it was time for him to make a stand and to make a decision on where he stood about internal decisions within the caucus, he always took a principled stand first. He didn't make a political calculation; he took a principled stand.

And, you know, principled stands aren't always politically rewarded, but I think it did allow him to walk out of this place with his head held high, knowing that he did what he felt was right, and he was never shy to make that stand and to let people know exactly how he felt.

Sadly, Clarence was diagnosed with cancer in 2015, fought hard and, in fact, had a period where he was in recovery, felt strong and had said, in fact, said his mojo was back; he was ready to get back into public life in Manitoba. Sadly, that wasn't to be the case.

* (15:10)

Clarence was surrounded by his family and his community when he passed away, as I said, always knowing that he did what he felt was right when he was in this place, that although it was a short time and it was a tumultuous time, he put in his best effort and did what was right by his community.

I'll just end, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by saying in his own words. Clarence said: I've led a very good life. I don't want people to feel sorry for me. I want them to celebrate my life and the things I've done. Hopefully people have been touched. I sure enjoyed growing up here—that is, in Flin Flon. I think it was a big honour to represent my constituency as MLA, and I'll never forget that. It was great. I really appreciate and thank the people of Flin Flon for giving me that opportunity. I was in love with Flin Flon, and I always will be.

To Clarence's friends, to his family, to his wife and children and grandchildren, and on behalf of all

of us in the Manitoba Legislature, we offer our deepest condolences to Clarence Pettersen.

Thank you.

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): I know that my time here is short and I know that my colleague from Concordia did a very meaningful job in conveying his condolences to the family of the late Clarence Pettersen.

I just wanted to put a few words on the record, not to retread any of the ground, but just to share that I think towards the end of Mr. Pettersen's life, his family spent some time in my constituency. I believe his daughter lived in Fort Rouge, and as part of, you know, some of their journey together, that, of course, Clarence and his wife stayed with her as well.

And I know that they were going through a challenging journey. It's a journey that none of us can fully understand but I believe that we can empathize with, given the fact that this illness takes its toll on so very many of us.

So I did just want to take a moment to acknowledge, I think, the contribution that they made to our community of Fort Rouge, that they gave, in lending Clarence to us here at the Legislature and, of course, for his service to the great people of Manitoba.

Miigwech. Merci. Thank you.

Hon. Wayne Ewasko (Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Immigration): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and hopefully you're not having an issue hearing me virtually. But I did want to take a few minutes today, when I knew we were doing condolence motions.

I absolutely volunteered to bring some condolences on behalf of the Premier (Mr. Pallister) and our PC caucus team.

I had the pleasure of sitting next to Clarence for a few years when I was in opposition. Again, I did want to express how saddened the Premier was when Clarence had passed. I know that they ended up going to school together for a time at BU, and I know that the Premier has reached out to the family formerly, when Clarence had passed.

You know, much like myself—except I'm a tad younger than Clarence, of course, but—former teacher turned MLA. Kind man, kind man.

And I would like to say thanks to the member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe) and—for putting a few words

on the record in regards to Clarence, and he beat me to the punch, but mentioned the love train.

There was often times when Clarence would get heated and—up in debate, and he would yell across and he'd say: Get on the love train. And we'd sit back—and we weren't really that far away from each other in the Chamber—and we'd make some form of train noises and whistles and that.

And Clarence and I had many conversations in the back of the Chamber, talking about education, of course—we were both very passionate about education. And Clarence—you know, it wasn't just about what was happening in the House, it was a lot about what was happening within families and communities and all those types of things.

Clarence spoke, of course, highly of his wife and his three daughters and how proud he was of them. And Clarence was deeply, deeply, deeply, over-the-moon proud of his community of Flin Flon and I know he represented his constituents very, very, very well, spoke on their behalf. And I know that within those conversations, you know, he actually told me a bit of his story about his wife Judy and his time at BU.

And it was nice to actually read A love for Flin Flon, which—Clarence Pettersen reflects on his life and career dedicated to a better community. This was in the Flin Flon Reminder back in 2018, and, yes, it just brought back some really nice memories of Clarence and the conversations we had.

You know that Manitoba is only a sixteenth degree of separation from everybody, and as an MLA, and going to various events around the province, I had the pleasure of running into some of Clarence's relatives, and we spoke of Clarence, of course, and it is—it's tough to say goodbye to somebody who put in that many years as an educator, a teacher, and again, absolutely loved his community of Flin Flon.

Thirty-three years of teaching, 10 of which, near the end, was Many Faces, the educational centre in Flin Flon.

Again, I mean, he ran for politics in 2011 under the NDP, and I'm just going to read a quick quote from the Reminder here, and I thought it was pretty interesting. And after reading this, I thought, yes, you know what, that's Clarence, exactly this in a nutshell.

So I'm going to read just a quick quote: "After retiring from teaching, he ran for provincial office. Pettersen was elected MLA for Flin Flon under the NDP banner in 2011 with 57 per cent of the vote. He

admits he was likely more of a social liberal, but he knew what he wanted to do for the community, and running under the NDP was the way to get there." End quote.

Getting to know Clarence for the few years that I spent with him, the backbenches-of-the-Chamber type of thing, I know that he was a kind-hearted man, but at the same time, he wasn't afraid to challenge decisions or even his leadership. And with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, unfortunately, I'm running out of time, but condolences to the family on behalf of our PC team, and thank you for this opportunity to finally tribute Mr. Clarence Pettersen. Rest in peace, Clarence.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I speak on the condolence motion about Clarence Pettersen. He served in the Manitoba Legislature from 2011 to 2016, representing the constituency of Flin Flon.

A teacher for 33 years, Clarence was a graduate of Brandon University with a degree in history and education. He loved travelling and backpacked around the world with his wife Judy when he was younger. He was passionate about education. He taught grades 4 through 12 during those 33 years.

For his last 10 years as a teacher, he was at an alternative high school, Many Faces, helping children who were having difficulty with the traditional educational system. He worked very hard to help young people achieve their full potential. He said in his maiden speech at the Manitoba Legislature that teaching was one of the hardest jobs, but also one of the most important and rewarding.

Clarence was passionate about northern Manitoba. In one of his members' statements, he spoke of this passion as he recognized the 100 years since the North became part of Manitoba in 1912. He loved canoeing and paddled many times up the Churchill River to Pakatawacun. Several times, he took his basketball teams to Pakatawacun to show Flin Flon students what life was like in a First Nations community. His students were invariably impressed by the friendliness of the people and their wonderful hospitality.

Clarence was only too well aware of the issues around the health-care system in northern Manitoba. When his daughter needed a CT scan, it was a long ride in an ambulance to The Pas. When his mother broke her hip, she had to travel to the Boundary Trails hospital.

* (15:20)

He was also very concerned about the mining industry, and he praised the mining academy in Flin Flon for the promise it offered. Clarence was at times outspoken in standing up for people in the North, and we honour him for that. In the end, sadly, he was defeated over a rift in his own party.

On behalf of the Manitoba Liberal caucus, I extend our condolences to the family and friends of Clarence Pettersen.

Thank you. Merci. Miigwech.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? To indicate support of the motion, members of the Chamber may rise in their places and remain standing, while remote members may remain seated and bow their heads. *[Agreed]*

A moment of silence was observed.

Frank Pitura

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Deputy Premier): I move, seconded by the member for McPhillips (Mr. Martin), that this House convey to the family of the late Frank Pitura, who served as a member of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, its sincere sympathy in their bereavement, and its appreciation of his devotion to duty in a useful life of active community and public service, and that Madam Speaker be requested to forward a copy of this resolution to the family.

Motion presented.

Mr. Goertzen: Just a few comments, and then I know that my friend, the MLA for McPhillips, will also have some words to say. And we have something in common, my colleague, and that is, that we were both legislative interns at the term-time that Frank Pitura was elected as the MLA for Morris and had the opportunity to serve in his bank of offices before he became a minister in the government.

And, they often say that you can tell the integrity of a person not by how they treat those who can do many things for them, but how they treat those who maybe can't do as much for them, and Frank Pitura treated everybody the same way: with grace and with dignity, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And he treated them all respectfully.

I often remember his very gregarious nature and his laugh, and the fact that he genuinely cared about the people who were with him. I looked at some of the tributes that were online when he passed away, and there was a number including the words sincerity and

integrity and genuine, and that truly describes Mr. Pitura.

When he became a Cabinet minister, I remember, as new Cabinet ministers are often concerned about their first question period and the questions that might happen. And so he was preparing for that, and I think he, as Government Services Minister, tried to look at every potential question that came up, and it was a very obscure question that came up, but—it was something about, like, the cafeteria downstairs in the Legislature, which he would have been responsible for, and it was almost an impossible question to prepare for, but he did his best.

It was the time when we did more taking questions as notice at that time. We don't do that so much anymore. But he didn't take it. He tried to muddle through, and to get it done, and he only improved since then.

And then of course, he ended up being integral in the flood fight of 1997. And, of course, it impacted his own community, but he had a role in the government as well, in terms of protecting Manitobans from that devastating flood.

I know that all the members of the Cabinet who would have served with him—my friend Albert Driedger and, of course, Premier Gary Filmon—would want to say that he was an honourable public servant and they appreciated serving with him, along with leader Stuart Murray, who he also would have served with in his time in opposition.

So, on behalf of the government of Manitoba and the PC caucus of Manitoba, I want say to the family and the friends of Frank Pitura, thank you for his years of public service.

Mr. Shannon Martin (McPhillips): It's a—I don't know if it's—if the word pleasure is quite appropriate, but I am pleased to share some comments about, actually, one of my predecessors, the MLA, or former MLA for Morris—which doesn't exist anymore, but—Frank Pitura.

As my colleague, the MLA for Steinbach, the Deputy Premier, commented, we both started in the same time in 1995, and in that inaugural year I had the opportunity to work for Frank—not first-hand—it was the MLAs for Gimli and Emerson, at the time. But in my second year when I was hired onto his staff, I had the opportunity to be in room 138, and that's where I got to really know Frank Pitura.

And so for the MLAs and staff there's something to be said about, you know, that large bank of offices that you can have with a number of your colleagues. And so there was, you know, Frank and Ben Sveinson and Merv Tweed and, oh God, there was—is so many. There was so many great, great MLAs at that time.

And the one word that really struck me and strikes me most about Frank Pitura is one of camaraderie. I mean, the—he was a true public servant. He wasn't a loud and flashy individual, he was the kind of elected official that, when his constituents would call him up, he would tell them to hold on and he would, you know, when the House was in sitting, whether it was in the morning or on Fridays and weekends, he would drive out and he would see them. He would go right out into the field to talk to the farmer. He would go right into the community to talk to, you know, the mayor and that. He was very, very much a hands-on individual.

That, you know, that hands-on approach that Frank took as a member of government, both in government and in opposition, probably in large part came from his past as a farmer and a proud government employee. In fact, he served almost—for almost 20 years as a government employee before being elected from 1995 to 2003 as the MLA for Morris.

You know, during that time of working with Frank I also got to see his deep love for his family. If there is an event that gives us all an opportunity to interact in a less partisan way, it is the Christmas open house. And I know Frank would be there, his wife Evelyn and his sons Paul and Darren would often show up, especially when they were younger and that. And Frank would take the time to talk to everyone who came through and treat everyone as if they were an old friend come for coffee.

You know, it's hard and it's always difficult to sort of, you know, truly encapsulate somebody's life, and that's obviously not any of our goals; we're simply trying to share a moment and share a memory. And that is the wonderful thing about Hansard and about the permanent record that it offers us as elected officials, because we can put on the permanent record that Franklin Paul Pitura was an honourable man, that he was a good MLA and he was my friend.

So, with those comments, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity. I extend to Mr. Pitura's surviving family nothing but my love for them, and

that Frank—and hope that Frank lives on in their memories, the memories of their—of his grandchildren, and knowing as they drive around in the former constituency of Morris, they can see many of the good works that Frank Pitura had a hand in.

So with those brief comments, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank you for the time and having the opportunity to share a few comments related to MLA Frank Pitura.

* (15:30)

Thank you.

Mr. Nello Altomare (Transcona): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise today to speak to the condolence motion for Frank Pitura. Although I never knew or never met Frank Pitura, I know that as MLA for the legacy constituency of Morris and by researching his background, it would've been a pleasure to get to know this individual.

Frank was born in Winnipeg in October of 1943 and passed away peacefully in his sleep in February of 2019. As a youth, Frank graduated from Sanford Collegiate and, of course, then graduated from the University of Manitoba. In 1967, Frank married Evelyn Diehl and were fortunate enough to be parents of two sons, Paul and Darren.

Frank and his family dedicated themselves to community and spread themselves widely wherever they were and in many circles. At Domain, Frank gave fully and happily at this time, whether it was through his church choir, helping young sports teams or serving on many community boards. He brought sincerity, integrity to all of these tasks. He enjoyed curling in his spare time, singing and playing the trombone. He accepted the public call on many occasions and with grace and humility, made his community proud of the way he discharged of all of his duties.

Frank had several different, fruitful careers throughout his life including in government from 1967-77, again from 1987-95. From 1977-91, he was also a farmer, and in 1995, decided to run for public office and was elected to serve as a member of the PC caucus representing the Morris constituency. He was appointed as Minister of Government Services in 1997, serving under the Filmon government until they lost the 1999 election.

Some of Frank's achievements as minister included jointly announcing with federal Cabinet minister Ron Duhamel the construction of the flood-

protection dike at Ste. Agathe as a response to the serious flood of the century in 1997. Frank would continue to represent Morris in the Legislature until he announced his retirement in 2003.

Frank, of course, is described by friends, family and many colleagues here today as someone with a friendly, humorous demeanour, very supportive in nature, who treated each other with kindness and respect. His family describes him as a wonderful, loving father, grandfather, husband and a friend who had a big heart. Frank is survived by his wife, Evelyn, of 52 years; sons Paul and Darren; and grandchildren Ella and Julian.

Mr. Frank Pitura, thank you for your service to your community, thank you for your service to the people of Manitoba. And on behalf of the Manitoba NDP caucus, our sincere condolences to Evelyn, Paul and Darren, and their families.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to talk about the condolence motion for Frank Pitura.

Frank was the MLA for Morris from 1995 to 2003, born in Winnipeg and educated at Sanford Collegiate. He then went to the University of Manitoba.

From 1967 to 1977, he worked for the government of Manitoba. In 1977, he left to take up farming and farmed until about 1991. He returned to working with the provincial government in 1987 and was there until he entered politics in 1995.

In his maiden speech, Frank Pitura waxed poetic. I will quote as follows: There is something in the air. It is a freshness like a spring prairie sprinkled with the glistening morning dew. It is an energy of light and movement like crisp pure winter's evening with the aurora borealis dancing across the sky. There is something sweet in the air in Manitoba like the waft of fragrant blossoms which seep across the balmy breezes of summer. It's so powerful, you can almost taste it. It is optimism. It is hope. It is a faith in a bright and prosperous future.

Madam Speaker in the Chair

It was a poetic side of Frank Pitura that I didn't often see, but I certainly appreciated his using colourful words to express his feelings.

He was appointed the Minister of Government Services in January 1997, the year of the flood of the century. That spring, when the flood hit, I was the Member of Parliament for Portage-Interlake and was involved with the flood effort at the federal level as the Minister of State for Western Economic Diversification, so I remember Frank Pitura well from that time.

His provincial riding and my federal riding overlapped to a small extent. I remember, as an example, during the flood of 1997, visiting with the reeve and council of the RM of Macdonald. It was a critical stage of the flood, and keeping connected with municipalities was really important so that everyone was working together. It was a tough time, and I think particularly tough for Frank Pitura, for his riding was badly affected by the flood. But he worked hard and he did well.

As minister, Frank Pitura also participated in some of the planning for dike reconstructions, announcing in due course the building of the new dike around Ste. Agathe.

I remember sometime after that going to the dike with Herm Martens, the then-reeve of the RM of Morris, after the dike was partly completed. There was some adjustment needed, but when that dike was finished building, it has served the community of Ste. Agathe well for many, many years.

After the election of 1999, though Frank was re-elected, it wasn't the same thing being in opposition as being in government. And in 2003, he stepped back from politics.

On behalf of the Manitoba Liberal caucus, I extend our condolences to the family and the friends of Frank Pitura.

Thank you. Merci. Miigwech.

Madam Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt this motion? To indicate support for the motion, members in the Chamber may rise in their places and remain standing, while remote members may remain seated and bow their heads. *[Agreed]*

A moment of silence was observed.

Stuart Briese

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Deputy Premier): I move, seconded by the member from Agassiz, that this House convey to the family of the late Stuart Briese, who served as a member of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, its sincere sympathy in their bereave-

ment and its appreciation of his devotion to duty in a useful life of active community and public service, and that Madam Speaker be requested to forward a copy of this resolution to the family.

Motion presented.

Mr. Goertzen: Members of the Legislature enter this Assembly in different ways and at different points in their career. For some, it's their first elected office, for others, they've served for a long time, and that was certainly true with Stuart.

He'd been a councillor for, I believe, more than 20 years when he arrived here. And you'll remember, Madam Speaker, when there were questions about AMM or municipal politics, Stu was like the encyclopedia, you pull them off the shelf and you ask questions, because he knew so much about so many communities and about the interrelation of the communities and how they worked at the municipal level.

And it speaks to somebody who, after having gone through 20 years of municipal politics, which is a difficult way to serve, that they would decide then, particularly with when they don't live necessarily close to the Legislature, to come to the Legislature, to leave their families for many days on end and come to an apartment in Winnipeg, which, you know—but—doesn't quite feel like home. And to make that drive on a weekly basis, sometimes with bad weather, and leave your family after having served already for so many years.

* (15:40)

I remember talking to Stu about that one time, and he did express that it was difficult, and it got more difficult, I think, as the years went along, to leave home and to come to the Legislature.

But you could just tell how much it meant to him to represent people, and that he was proud—not proud for himself, of what he had achieved, but proud for his communities. And sometimes that would come out in those late-night suppers over at the Norwood, where the Rick Borotsiks and the Peter George Dycks of the world would gather for some food and maybe some other things, Madam Speaker.

And they would—I don't know if they solved many problems of the world; they may have created more than they solved. But there was great camaraderie there, Madam Speaker, in those days. Maybe in—more so than we see since those days. And it's wonderful to see. And it was wonderful to see them interact and to

share their stories and to see how much they cared about their communities.

I would often—when I would ask him questions, he'd come up to me and he'd say, whoa, young feller—he'd call me young feller, I—you know, I'm not that young, but it was nice when anybody would call me young feller, and I appreciated, you know, his camaraderie and his easy style, and the ability to ask him questions, that he would take all those questions seriously.

So, on behalf of our government, on behalf of our Premier, Brian Pallister, on behalf of former leader Hugh McFadyen, I know that each would like to express their great thanks for the service that he provided to our caucus and the service that he provided to the communities that he served for so many years.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for—oh, there is another member wishing to speak. It's the Minister of Agriculture and Resource Development.

Hon. Blaine Pedersen (Minister of Agriculture and Resource Development): Stuart Briese: he was my friend; he was my mentor.

We were both elected in May of 2007, and Stu quickly became a mentor to me to help learn the mechanisms of government, given his long experience with the Association of Manitoba Municipalities, the AMM.

Stu was one of those people who seldom spoke, but when he did speak, you listened. Early in 2011, he warned our caucus and the government of the day about the impending flood on the Assiniboine River, long before anyone else even thought about it.

During and then after the flood in the spring of 2011, Stu spent hundreds of hours and thousands of miles working with and listening to the flooded-out farms and ranchers in the Interlake and Westlake area. I went with him several times to watch and to listen to the empathy and the compassion that Stu had for those facing a very difficult time.

Stu loved to visit and have a beer at the Legion in Neepawa on a Friday night, much to the chagrin of a certain campaign manager. And he—but he really loved his community and the province.

Stu was very astute at reading legislation and understanding the long-term implications of the proposed legislation. This made him a very effective

debater, sometimes much to the chagrin of the government of the day, but he was always very thorough and very fair.

For Stu, it was always family first. He owned and operated a fourth-generation farm, now on the fifth generation with his son Kallan taking over the farm. His knowledge and expertise in agriculture served him well in advocating for agriculture throughout his AMM and legislative career.

Stu was always a team player. Whether asked to organize or to fundraise, there was never a doubt Stu would go about the business at hand in his quiet, deliberate manner, and then deliver results.

After Stu retired in 2016, we would talk on the phone on a regular basis. He missed the public life, and yet was happy to watch from the sidelines. He told me he watched QP every day. I told Stu, you've got to get a life. But we both just had a good laugh over that. He loved to watch the debates going on.

Stu was a Blue Jays fan and an avid curler in his younger days. He would love to tell a great joke, sometimes not necessarily within the bounds of today's society, but he loved it anyway and he was a great storyteller and a historian. Whether it was local history or Manitoba history, he really loved his history.

So I extend my condolences to his partner, Barb Harris, their daughter Karla and son Kallan, their families and the grandchildren who he spoke of often. Stu will be fondly remembered by his family and by those who served in public life with him, both at the AMM and in this Legislature.

Rest in peace, my friend. You deserve it.

Thank you.

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Born in Neepawa in 1946, Stu Briese served in the Manitoba Legislature from 2007 to 2011, a representative of Ste. Rose and then the constituency of Agassiz, which he represented from 2011 to 2016.

As has been mentioned, Stu was a proud farmer, a lifelong champion and advocate for the agricultural community. He lived all of his life on the farm and owned and operated a four-generation farm himself.

Prior to his time in the Legislature, Stu served for 20 years in the council of the rural municipality of Langford, including eight years as deputy reeve. He spent six years on the board of the Union of Manitoba Municipalities, and then six years with the

Association of Manitoba Municipalities: three years as vice-president and three years as president from 2001 to 2004.

That's a very small snapshot, Madam Speaker, because Stu's public life went far beyond that, as he served on many boards and in many capacities within his community. Truly, as has been spoken about, his dedication to public life was exemplary.

Despite these electoral achievements, he often shied away from the limelight, claiming he wasn't much of a public speaker, and claiming that he liked to work behind the scenes and let others take the credit. And for that I respected Stu Briese. He really was a salt of the earth politician and somebody that I was proud to serve with here in this Legislature.

Colleagues, I've heard him referred to or described as rough around the edges, but always with a caveat that he had a heart made of pure gold. He was the kind of guy that you'd like to be cornered with—or cornered by—at an AMM convention or out in Brandon at Ag Days or the Royal Winter Fair, somebody that would always share a good story, a joke, an anecdote, but always leave you with a better perspective and a better understanding of the rural community that he represented.

He attributed his success in politics to remembering most, if not all of the people he had ever met by name, understood their connection to the community, and understood and remembered something interesting about them. He was considered, I know, a mentor. It's been mentioned here this afternoon by many other PC MLAs, and there were many who sought out his advice and his mentorship to get elected themselves.

Stu's community service was recognized as he received the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, but his legacy goes far beyond that. This is one of the members, I think, in this Chamber this afternoon that I wish we had more time to talk about Stu's life and to share personal anecdotes, because he was the kind of guy that absolutely every member who served with him remembers fondly and remembers in a way that really served his community first and foremost—always put the people that he represented first. He was an exemplary public servant and somebody that we all have a lot of respect for.

So, on behalf of the NDP caucus and all members of the Legislature, we pass along our condolences here this afternoon.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, I write—rise to speak on the condolence motion for Stuart Briese.

Stuart served in the Manitoba Legislature as an MLA from 2007 to 2016, representing Ste. Rose for the first four years and Agassiz for the last five. He was a hardworking, community-minded person. He'd previously served for 20 years on the council of the rural municipality of Langford, and had served ably and well as vice-president and then as president of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities.

* (15:50)

He also served for three years on the board of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, but still was first and foremost a farmer, owning and operating a fourth-generation grain, hog and cattle farm, starting in 1975.

In his comments in the Legislature, he often spoke of agricultural issues and, following the 2007 Throne Speech, he bemoaned the lack of attention to agriculture. He said, and I quote: Any jurisdiction that forgets its agricultural roots is destined to failure.

Stu recognized the need to attract young people into agriculture and advocated the development of mentoring and apprenticeship programs for young people. He was also very concerned about the stewardship of Crown lands. I suspect he might be quite concerned and—about the government's most recent approach to Crown land, which is causing a lot of distress for farmers in the Crane River area, a region that was part of the Ste. Rose constituency when he was the MLA for 2007 to 2011. I wish, actually, he was back in the Legislature to speak to this issue now. We need him.

He was passionate about the people in his constituency. He was a strong advocate for the personal-care home which was eventually built in Neepawa. He criticized the NDP when he was first elected for announcing the construction of the care home many times over an eight-year period without there ever being a shovelful of dirt moved.

He—and, when it was built, it was actually quite interesting because they had a wing which was specially designed for people with dementia and Alzheimer's disease, which was—had quiet music and was carefully positioned to avoid the kind of aggressive behaviour that sometimes happens with those with Alzheimer's.

Stu was very concerned about Indigenous people in Manitoba. He spoke strongly in support of a bill to promote reconciliation following the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and he hoped genuinely that it will lead to a better relationship between all the people of Manitoba.

In the spring of 2015, he brought forward a resolution to support Jordan's Principle and its implementation. In a spirit of generosity in recognizing that I'd been trying for a number of years to get the Legislature to support Jordan's Principle, he asked me to second his resolution, which I was proud to do. In his speech on the resolution he emphasized we have children still falling through the cracks today, and that's simply unacceptable. The resolution received unanimous support.

On behalf of the Manitoba Liberal Caucus, I extend condolences to the family and the friends and constituents who Stu Briese represented.

Thank you. Merci. Miigwech.

Madam Speaker: As the seconder, the member for Agassiz (Ms. Clarke) was not visible on Zoom, so I would ask, is there leave for the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Pedersen) to be considered the seconder? *[Agreed]*

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt this motion? To indicate support for the motion, members in the Chamber may rise in their places and remain standing, while remote members may remain seated and bow their heads. *[Agreed]*

A moment of silence was observed.

Edward Connery

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Deputy Premier): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Portage la Prairie, that the House convey to the family of the late Edward Connery, who served as a member of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, its sincere sympathy in their bereavement and its appreciation of his devotion to duty in a useful life of active community and public service, and that Madam Speaker be requested to forward a copy of this resolution to the family.

Mr. Ian Wishart (Portage la Prairie): It's an honour to be—have the opportunity to speak to this condolence motion on behalf of the life of Ed Connery. Ed Connery passed away after a brief illness in June 14, 2019, at the age of 85 years and he was predeceased by his wife, Beverley, his son Doug and his son Jeff and his daughter Jackie and sister Eileen.

And—but he is lovingly remembered by his son Tim, brother-in-law Phil and daughters-in-law Paulette and Beth and many grandchildren, as he had a large and extended family, and many more friends.

Ed's passions in life were his family, his friends, farming, his community and politics—not necessarily always in that order. Ed has been described as the father of modern commercial vegetable production in Manitoba and a community-binded family man, and he was certainly accredited in both those regards. Many of his production techniques for vegetable production were developed here in Manitoba, piloted by Ed in Manitoba, and are now used in many other places in the world, based on his experience and he was amongst the first to do many of these things.

Ed was born in St. Vital in 1933 where his parents operated a market garden and a greenhouse, and in the early 1960s, Ed began looking around the province for an area more suitable for commercial vegetable production. He eventually decided that Portage la Prairie presented the best combination of soil, climate and location for large-scale mechanized vegetable production and established Riverdale Farms along the Assiniboine River.

To ensure a reliable supply of workers for his very labour-intensive operation, Ed is one of the first growers to provide housing for his employees, and he later worked with the government to bring farm workers from Mexico and help create a program called Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program, that has run now 26 years and continues to be a mainstay all across Canada.

Ed is an industry leader in mechanizing the harvesting of carrots and onions and rutabagas and a strong supporter of agriculture research to solve industry production, storage and marketing issues. And in 2007, Ed was inducted in the Manitoba Agricultural Hall of Fame. He was also one of the early adopters of large-scale strawberry production and many of you have benefited from strawberries that I have brought in that have come from Riverdale Farms.

From 1986 to 1992, Ed was a Conservative MLA for Portage la Prairie. He was first elected to the Manitoba Legislature in 1986 and became a member of the official opposition.

Ed was re-elected in 1988 and 1990 serving under Gary Filmon as PC government. During that time, he held various Cabinet positions, including Minister of Labour, Minister of the Environment,

Workplace Safety and Health and Minister responsible for Workers Compensation Act, Civil Service Superannuation Act, Public Servants Insurance Act and also as Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs from 1989 to 1991. Ed resigned from the Legislature in 1992.

Ed was very active in his local community as well and many groups benefited from his efforts. Portage Rotary's first vegetable sale, of course, was organized by Ed and he was instrumental in the Republic of Manitoba Park project, a very successful project for our city.

He was active for a number of years in the Habitat for Humanity building projects, also very active with Trinity United Church, United Way, Central Plains CancerCare services. He was also part of the first Koko Platz community club on Laverendrye Crescent and also was there when it was moved to Meighen Avenue. He had a term on the Portage Golf Club and enjoyed many hours with his friends.

Ed's volunteer involvement in the agriculture industry was very impressive in its own right. He served as a committee member or a director for the Vegetable Growers' Association of Manitoba, chair of the Manitoba Root Crop Marketing Board, director and president and also a Canadian—sorry, director and president of the Canadian Horticultural Council. He fought for fair prices for growers through orderly marketing, which led to the establishment of Peak of the Market. And every time you see that logo on TV or enjoy one of those carrots, you should be thinking and thanking Ed Connery.

* (16:00)

Whether on a tractor, or golfing, or just driving around town in the country, Ed always had a cigar in his hands. I think anybody that knew Ed would associate that cigar with him. It wasn't always lit, but it was always with him, and he—you—if you couldn't hear him or you couldn't see him, you could generally smell the cigar.

I appreciate the opportunity for having a moment to remember Ed's life and his contributions to our community. He was instrumental in getting many people involved in many different industries, and he was responsible for getting me involved in politics as I had the pleasure of serving on his local board for a number of years, and it was an honour every time I got to do that.

So I appreciate the opportunity to say a few things about Ed's life. I know that there are many other

people that remember Ed as fondly, and certainly our community is poorer for the loss of Ed Connery.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Diljeet Brar (Burrows): I appreciate the opportunity to speak today regarding Ed Connery, and I appreciate this platform, which gives us, the current members—to talk about the members who came before us, their contribution to the society, to the Chamber, to our province.

These are the platforms where we get to learn about the members so many things that we would not have learned about them if we didn't have this opportunity.

Edward Connery, born July 13, 1933, in St. Vital, was a member of this assembly from 1986 to 1992, and was a Cabinet minister in the Filmon government from 1988 to 1991. Ed Connery passed away after a brief illness on June 14th, 2019, at St. Boniface Hospital, when he was 85 years of age.

Edward was educated at Glenlawn Collegiate in Winnipeg, and later worked as a market gardener. He was chair of the Root Crop Marketing Board from 1972 to 1981, and vice-president of the Manitoba producers' board from 1982 to 1984. As well as having been a director of the Vegetable Growers Association of Manitoba.

Edward was first elected to the Manitoba Legislature in the 1986 provincial election, as the MLA for Portage la Prairie. He was re-elected in the 1988 election, and was appointed Minister of Labour and Minister of the Environment and Workplace Safety and Health.

He was also responsible for The Workers Compensation Act, The Civil Service Act, The Civil Service Superannuation Act and The Public Servants Insurance Act. Following a Cabinet shuffle on April 21, 1989, he was named Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

Edward was re-elected in the 1990 election, and resigned from the Legislature in 1992. In 2003, he called for greater efforts to combat crime in the Portage la Prairie region.

Edward was an industry leader in mechanising the harvesting of carrots, onions and rutabagas, as well as their bulk storage, utilizing air circulation and humidification. He was a strong supporter of agricultural research to solve industry production, storage and marketing problems.

His assistance contributed to solving problems related to surface browning of carrots, neck rot in onions, surface cracking of rutabagas and quality maintenance in broccoli.

On July 19, 2007, Edward was inducted into the Manitoba Agricultural Hall of Fame. Edward was active in community through rotary, Central Plains CancerCare services, the Portage Golf Club, in Koko Platz and, of course, in agriculture, including as a board member with the Manitoba vegetable growers marketing board, Vegetable Growers Association of Manitoba and the Canadian Horticultural Council.

Edward married Beverley Sager, and his passions in life were his family, friends and his farming community by whom he will be deeply missed.

I request to you to join me sending our deepest condolences to Ed's family today.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, I rise to talk to the condolence motion on the passing of Ed Connery.

Ed Connery was the MLA for Portage la Prairie from 1986 to 1992. He was well-known for his farming background and his ability to stand up for the people of Portage la Prairie and region.

With his vegetable farm, Riverdale Farm, just south of Portage la Prairie, he was an industry leader. He adopted and introduced new approaches, mechanizing and in other areas and got involved with and chaired the root crop marketing board from 1972 to 1981.

He was the vice-president of the Manitoba producers board from 1982 to 1984. He was the director of the Vegetable Growers' Association of Manitoba and a director the Canadian Horticultural Council before he entered politics in 1986. He would later, in 2007, be inducted into the Manitoba Agricultural Hall of Fame.

I had the opportunity to meet Ed on many occasions. Indeed, he was one of the first people I visited when I ran to become the MLA or the Member of Parliament in Portage-Interlake in 1988. He was very knowledgeable, and impressed upon me that he'd won election in Portage la Prairie because he'd knocked on every door in the constituency.

He was forthright and he didn't hesitate to tackle issues, even if they were difficult ones. He began his

maiden speech in the Manitoba Legislature as follows, this being—I quote: This being my maiden speech, I shouldn't have an objection right from the beginning, but I do have one. To the member of Charleswood who suggested I should stand on the books, I'm not that short.

In his speech, he spoke eloquently of the attractions of Portage la Prairie, a beautiful city, well treed, with a beautiful lake and a nice island park in the centre. As a vegetable farmer, he spoke up about Portage being the vegetable capital of the Prairies with the most favorable climate and growing conditions on all the Prairies.

But he bemoaned the lack of a swimming pool in Portage la Prairie and the deterioration of the Delta Marsh.

When I was elected the Member of Parliament for Portage la Prairie in 1993, I was able to help address the lack of a swimming pool. With our federal infrastructure program, the swimming pool at the former Southport base was redone and made into an excellent public swimming pool for the area. But, sadly, little progress has been made in the revitalization of the famed Delta Marsh.

In a comment in his speech, which connects well today during the COVID-19 pandemic, where there's not been enough advanced planning and training, he said—this was his maiden speech—you cannot quick flip training for community services. He was right.

He also talked of the need for social services in the community, including daycare, a shelter for battered women and the friendship centre. This was notable, for it indicated his broader vision for the community.

In 1988, when he became a part of the Cabinet in Filmon's government, his tone changed. On that occasion when he spoke on the Throne Speech, he was still blunt and not mincing words. His comment in reply to the suggestion that he had changed by becoming in government he said, and I quote, in opposition you throw the bricks and in government you've somewhat ducked them.

* (16:10)

On behalf of the Manitoba Liberals, I extend our 'consolences' to the family and friends of Ed Connery.

Merci. Miigwech. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt this motion? To indicate support for the motion, members in the Chamber may rise in their places and remain standing, while remote members may remain seated and bow their heads. *[Agreed]*

A moment of silence was observed.

PETITIONS

Madam Speaker: I will now call petitions, and if anybody has one, we will hear them, and if not, I will go on to the next person.

Dauphin Correctional Centre

Mr. Diljeet Brar (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:

The provincial government plans to close the Dauphin Correctional Centre, DCC, in May 2020.

The DCC is one of the largest employers in Dauphin, providing the community with good, family-supporting jobs.

Approximately 80 families will be directly affected by the closure, which will also impact the local economy.

As of January 27, 2020, Manitoba's justice system was already more than 250 inmates overcapacity.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Minister of Justice to immediately reverse the decision to close the DCC and proceed with the previous plan to build a new correctional and healing centre with an expanded courthouse in Dauphin.

This petition has been signed by many, many Manitobans.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Tyndall Park?

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): Yes, Madam Speaker, I have a petition.

Madam Speaker: Go ahead.

Vivian Sand Facility Project— Clean Environment Commission Review

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

The Vivian sands project is a proposed silica sand mine and processing plant to be built in the RM of Springfield. The overall project includes mining claims of over 85,000 hectares, making it the largest claim ever given to a single company in Manitoba's history. It is larger than the city of Winnipeg, which is 46,410 hectares. The amount of dry, solid sand mined and produced per year according to the EAP is 1.36 million tons, and much of this sand will be used in fracking.

A major concern of the proposed mine and plant is that, if developed, it could contaminate the Sandilands aquifer, which covers much of the southeastern Manitoba. It has excellent water quality and is the water source for tens of thousands of Manitobans, including many municipal water systems, agriculture, industry, private wells and an abundance of wildlife and ecosystems. Further, people in the Indigenous communities that are potentially affected by this were not afforded the required Indigenous consultation from either federal or provincial government officials.

The sustainable yield of the combined sandstone and carbonate aquifers has still not yet been established by the provincial authorities.

The mine could cause leaking of acid and heavy metals and pollute the aquifer, as it will go down 200 feet into the Winnipeg formation of the sandstone aquifer. There is concern that the shale, which separates the carbonate and sandstone aquifers, will, when exposed to injected air from CanWhite Sands extraction process, turn to acid.

In addition—an additional concern with the proposed mine and plant is the potential to pollute the Brokenhead River and the aquatic food chain leading to Lake Winnipeg.

Residents in the area have also expressed fears of being overexposed to silica dust during production, as there has been a demonstrated lack of safety and environmental procedures by the CanWhite Sands Corporation during the exploratory drilling phase. Signage and fencing has been poor; identifying and required mine claim tags were missing; there were no warnings for silica dust exposure and no coverings to

prevent the exposure of the silica stockpiles to the elements.

Residents' concerns include the fact that boreholes, which should have been promptly and properly sealed, were left open for a year. The drilling of hundreds of improperly sealed boreholes yearly create significant risks of surface contamination, mixing of aquifer waters and drainage of surface fecal matter into the aquifer.

There is also a risk of subsidence around each borehole as a result of sand extraction.

There are also potential transboundary issues that need to be addressed as the aquifers extend into Minnesota.

This project should not proceed, as no licensing conditions and mitigation measures will alleviate the risk to all Manitobans and the environment since CanWhite Sands Corporation plans to use an unprecedented mining technique with no established safe outcome. The corporation has gone on record indicating that it does not know how to mine for the silica in the water supply and "need to develop a new extraction methodology that has never been done before."

Contamination of the aquifers and the environment is irreversible and there are many surface sources of high purity silica that can be extracted without endangering two essential regional aquifers.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to undertake a combined review of the Vivian Sand Facility processing plant and the mining/extraction portion of the operation as a class 3 development with a review by Manitoba's Clean Environment Commission to include public hearings and participant funding.

To urge the provincial government to halt all activity at the mine and plant until the Clean Environment Commission's review is completed and the project proposal has been thoroughly evaluated.

This petition has been signed by many Manitobans.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey). Is the member for Flin Flon there with a petition?

Therefore I will move to the honourable member for Elmwood.

Does the honourable member for Elmwood have a petition?

CancerCare Closures at Concordia and Seven Oaks Hospitals

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background of this petition is as follows:

(1) On September 4th, 2020, the provincial government announced that CancerCare outpatient services will be cut at the Concordia Hospital and Seven Oaks General Hospital, effective December 2020.

(2) Closing two CancerCare sites in Winnipeg will mean a third of existing sites are lost, with increased burdens placed on outpatient cancer services at the Health Sciences Centre and St. Boniface Hospital.

(3) The cut of these outpatient services has provoked concerns from patients and northeast Winnipeg and northwest Winnipeg residents, health-care workers and CancerCare nurses alike, who have stressed to the provincial government that the cuts are detrimental to the health of the area residents.

(4) Patients who do not have access to a vehicle or reliable transportation will be hit the hardest by this cut, with the burden falling largely on seniors and Manitobans on low incomes.

(5) Cuts within the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, including the provincial government's closure of the Concordia's emergency room and the Seven Oaks emergency room, have already compromised health-care access close to home for residents of northeast and northwest Winnipeg.

(6) The deterioration of health care within the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority has meant increased wait times, compromised patient care and worsened health outcomes. This cut will only continue to deteriorate the quality of care for patients, while forcing more demands onto health-care workers.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to halt its proposed closure of CancerCare sites at Concordia Hospital and Seven Oaks General Hospital, while guaranteeing access to high-quality outpatient cancer services in northeast and northwest Winnipeg.

Early-Learning and Child-Care Programs

Ms. Malaya Marcelino (Notre Dame): 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.

* (16:20)

(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: The honourable member for St. Vital?

Mr. Jamie Moses (St. Vital): No petition today, Madam Speaker. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. The honourable member for Wolseley.

Ms. Lisa Naylor (Wolseley): I'm sorry, no petition today.

Quality Health Care Access

Mr. Adrien Sala (St. James): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

The provincial government's program of cuts and restructuring in health care have had serious negative consequences, reduced both access to and quality of care for patients, increased wait times, exacerbated the nursing shortage, and significantly increased workload and the reliance on overtime from nurses and other health-care professionals.

(2) Further cuts and consolidation are opposed by a majority of Manitobans and will only further reduce access to health-care services.

(3) The provincial government has rushed through these cuts and changes and failed to adequately consult nurses and health-care professionals who provide front-line patient care.

(4) Ongoing cuts and changes appear to be more about saving money than improving health care.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to reverse cuts and closures that negatively impact patients' ability to access timely, quality health care.

(2) To urge the provincial government to make real investments in Manitoba's public health-care system that will improve the timeliness and quality of care for patients by increasing the number of beds across the system and recruiting and retaining an adequate number of nurses and other health professionals to meet Manitoba's needs.

This has been signed by many Manitobans.

Dauphin Correctional Centre

Mr. Mintu Sandhu (The Maples): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The provincial government plans to close the Dauphin Correctional Centre, DCC, in May 2020.

(2) The DCC is one of the largest employers in Dauphin, providing the community with good, family-supporting jobs.

(3) Approximately 80 families will be directly affected by the closure, which also will—which also impact the local economy.

As of January 27, 2020, Manitoba's justice system was already more than 250 inmates over capacity.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Minister of Justice to immediately reverse the decision to close the DCC and proceed with the previous plan to build a new correctional and healing centre with an expanded courthouse in Dauphin.

This has been signed by many Manitobans.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Fort Garry (Mr. Wasyliw)? Is the honourable member for Fort Garry there with a petition? If not I'll go to the honourable member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe).

That will end, then, petitions for the day.

Madam Speaker: Grievances?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(Continued)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Madam Speaker: Oh—the honourable Government House Leader.

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Municipal Relations (Mr. Johnson)—*[interjection]* I'm being advised that I should call the motions, Madam Speaker, that are on the Order Paper.

Madam Speaker: Oh, okay.

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Madam Speaker: It has been announced, then, that the House will now consider government motions.

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Municipal Relations,

THAT Len Isleifson, member for the electoral district of Brandon East, be the Deputy Chairperson of the committees of the whole.

Madam Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Government House Leader, seconded by the honourable Minister for Municipal Relations,

THAT Len Isleifson, member for the electoral division of Brandon East, be Deputy Chairperson of the Committees of the Whole House.

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

The honourable deputy—or the honourable Government House Leader.

Mr. Goertzen: I move, seconded by the Minister of Municipal Relations,

THAT Dennis Smook, member for the electoral division of La Vérendrye, be Deputy Chairperson of the Committees of the Whole House.

Motion agreed to.

* * *

Mr. Goertzen: Madam Speaker, can you canvass members to see if it is the will of the House to call it 5 p.m.?

Madam Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it 5 p.m.? *[Agreed]*

The hour being 5 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until Monday at 1:30.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, March 4, 2021

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS			
Introduction of Bills		COVID-19 Vaccine Sites	
Bill 207–The Abortion Protest Buffer Zone Act		Lamont	1384
Fontaine	1373	Stefanson	1384
Members' Statements		COVID-19 Vaccinations	
Lymphedema Awareness Day		Gerrard	1384
Ewasko	1374	Stefanson	1384
Mike Babb		Support for Homeless Population	
Wiebe	1374	Morley-Lecomte	1384
Royal Fashion		Squires	1384
Micklefield	1375	Elective Surgery Backlog	
Support for Women in Trades		Asagwara	1385
Marcelino	1375	Stefanson	1385
Conseil jeunesse provincial		Motions of Condolence	
Lamont	1376	Conrad Santos	
Oral Questions		Brar	1385
Variant Cases of COVID-19		Reyes	1387
Kinew	1376	Gerrard	1388
Goertzen	1377	Harvey Smith	
Manitoba Hydro International		Naylor	1389
Kinew	1378	Gerrard	1390
Wharton	1378	Goertzen	1390
Manitoba Hydro International		Clarence Pettersen	
Sala	1379	Wiebe	1391
Wharton	1379	Kinew	1393
Post-secondary Education		Ewasko	1393
Moses	1380	Gerrard	1394
Ewasko	1380	Frank Pitura	
Democratic Process		Goertzen	1394
Fontaine	1381	Martin	1395
Goertzen	1381	Altomare	1396
Northern Manitoba Communities		Gerrard	1396
Adams	1382	Stuart Briese	
Stefanson	1382	Goertzen	1397
Vaccine Eligibility Requirements		Pedersen	1398
Adams	1383	Wiebe	1398
Stefanson	1383	Gerrard	1399
Canada Health Transfer		Edward Connery	
Lamont	1383	Wishart	1400
Stefanson	1383	Brar	1401
		Gerrard	1402

Petitions

Dauphin Correctional Centre Brar	1403
Vivian Sand Facility Project– Clean Environment Commission Review Lamoureux	1403
CancerCare Closures at Concordia and Seven Oaks Hospitals Maloway	1404
Early-Learning and Child-Care Programs Marcelino	1405
Quality Health Care Access Sala	1405
Dauphin Correctional Centre Sandhu	1405

ORDERS OF THE DAY*(Continued)***GOVERNMENT BUSINESS****Government Motions**

Goertzen	1406
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are also available on the Internet at the following address:

<http://www.manitoba.ca/legislature/hansard/hansard.html>