

**Fourth Session - Fortieth Legislature**  
of the  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**  
**DEBATES**  
and  
**PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report**  
**(Hansard)**

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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Fortieth Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
ALLAN, Nancy	St. Vital	NDP
ALLUM, James, Hon.	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	NDP
BJORNSON, Peter	Gimli	NDP
BLADY, Sharon, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	NDP
BRAUN, Erna, Hon.	Rossmere	NDP
BRIESE, Stuart	Agassiz	PC
CALDWELL, Drew, Hon.	Brandon East	NDP
CHIEF, Kevin, Hon.	Point Douglas	NDP
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	NDP
CROTHERS, Deanne, Hon.	St. James	NDP
CULLEN, Cliff	Spruce Woods	PC
DEWAR, Greg, Hon.	Selkirk	NDP
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	PC
EICHLER, Ralph	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FRIESEN, Cameron	Morden-Winkler	PC
GAUDREAU, Dave	St. Norbert	NDP
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Liberal
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	PC
GRAYDON, Cliff	Emerson	PC
HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
HOWARD, Jennifer	Fort Rouge	NDP
IRVIN-ROSS, Kerri, Hon.	Fort Richmond	NDP
JHA, Bidhu	Radisson	NDP
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Swan River	NDP
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	Dawson Trail	NDP
MACKINTOSH, Gord, Hon.	St. Johns	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Flor, Hon.	Logan	NDP
MARCELINO, Ted	Tyndall Park	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	Morris	PC
MELNICK, Christine	Riel	NDP
MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	PC
NEVAKSHONOFF, Thomas, Hon.	Interlake	NDP
OSWALD, Theresa	Seine River	NDP
PALLISTER, Brian	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine	Midland	PC
PETTERSEN, Clarence	Flin Flon	NDP
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Arthur-Virden	PC
REID, Daryl, Hon.	Transcona	NDP
ROBINSON, Eric, Hon.	Kewatinook	NDP
RONDEAU, Jim	Assiniboia	NDP
ROWAT, Leanne	Riding Mountain	PC
SARAN, Mohinder, Hon.	The Maples	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	St. Paul	PC
SELBY, Erin	Southdale	NDP
SELINGER, Greg, Hon.	St. Boniface	NDP
SMOOK, Dennis	La Verendrye	PC
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	PC
STRUTHERS, Stan	Dauphin	NDP
SWAN, Andrew	Minto	NDP
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WIGHT, Melanie, Hon.	Burrows	NDP
WISHART, Ian	Portage la Prairie	PC

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, May 1, 2015

*The House met at 10 a.m.*

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

Good morning, everyone. Please be seated.

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### **Bill 15—The Foreign Cultural Objects Immunity from Seizure Amendment Act**

**Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister of Tourism, Culture, Heritage, Sport and Consumer Protection):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the minister of Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, that Bill 15, The Foreign Cultural Objects Immunity from Seizure Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'insaisissabilité des biens culturels étrangers, now be read for a first time.

*Motion presented.*

**Mr. Lemieux:** Good morning, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to present Bill 15, The Foreign Cultural Objects Immunity from Seizure Amendment Act. The act facilitates the borrowing of artworks, of cultural objects from foreign countries by the Manitoba government or any cultural and educational institution for temporary exhibition in Manitoba by guaranteeing the protection from seizure and the return to the lender. The bill amends the procedure for implementation of the act such as that the minister responsible for the act, rather than the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council, would determine that a work is of cultural significance and its exhibition is in the interests of the people of Manitoba. Notice of the minister's determination would be published in the Manitoba Gazette.

This change will be beneficial for government and for applicant organizations as it will be streamlining and expedite the process for application

organizations and reduce legal costs for the department while still ensuring fair notice for potential claimants of the artifact's existence and current provenance.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Any further introduction of bills?

### PETITIONS

**Mr. Speaker:** Seeing none, we'll move on to petitions.

#### **Provincial Trunk Highway 206 and Cedar Avenue in Oakbank—Pedestrian Safety**

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Every day, hundreds of Manitoba children walk to school in Oakbank and must cross PTH 206 at the intersection with Cedar Avenue.

(2) There have been many dangerous incidents where drivers use the right shoulder to pass vehicles that have stopped at the traffic light waiting to turn left at this intersection.

(3) Law enforcement officials have identified this intersection as a hot spot of concern for the safety of schoolchildren, drivers and emergency responders.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to improve the safety at the pedestrian corridor at the intersection of PTH No. 206 and Cedar Avenue in Oakbank by considering such steps as highlighting pavement markings to better indicate the location of the shoulders and crosswalk, as well as installing a lighted crosswalk structure.

This signed by T. Mahon, D. Palidwor, C. Harasymec and many, many other fine Manitobans.

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

### Government Record—Apology Request

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And these are the reasons for the petition:

(1) Government members have been quoted as stating that Manitobans no longer trust the current government.

(2) Sadly, these same members have reportedly stated that since 2014 the government has been focused on its own narrow political interests, quote, ahead of what was once a government plan and what would be indeed the priorities of Manitobans, end quote, and the Premier is, quote, driven by his desire to hold on to his leadership rather than by the best interests of Manitobans, end quote.

(3) According to comments from government members, their caucus is divided by, quote, fundamental differences and animosity, end quote, and that, quote, deep divisions are not just amongst the MLAs in caucus, but they exist at the staff level as well, end quote.

(4) Regretfully, the dysfunction and infighting within the provincial government has nothing to do with addressing the fact Manitobans are paying more and getting less. A Winnipeg family pays \$3,200 more in sales and income tax than they would in Regina but receive some of the worst results in health care and education in the country.

(5) Government members have said in the media that caucus dysfunction is entirely related to internal polls that indicate they are in, quote, annihilation territory, end quote, saying that, quote, our numbers are down and the status quo is not good enough anymore. Our own party pollsters have told us we're facing oblivion, end quote.

(6) Little has been done by government members to end the infighting with the Premier, claiming retaliation is justified because of public comments such as, quote, people have civil rights, but we also have an organization to run, end quote. Government members acting on behalf of the Premier have said publicly, quote, we are not on a witch hunt, end quote, and have also said, quote, we have to look at who caused this and who are the ones that have damaged us the most, end quote.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

Mr. Speaker, to urge the Premier of Manitoba to take responsibility and to apologize to the people of Manitoba for the social and economic damage created but it—by his failed leadership and the disgraceful conduct of government members that has 'distablized'—destabilized the provincial government and hurt Manitoba businesses and families.

This petition is signed by S. Zhang, E. LaPage, M. Bailey and many more fine Manitobans, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson):** Good morning, Mr. Speaker. I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

The government of—government members have been quoted as stating, quote, Manitobans no longer trust the current government, end of quote.

(2) Sadly, these same members have reportedly stated that since 2014 the government has been focused on its own narrow political interests, quote, ahead of what was once a government plan and what would indeed—would be indeed the priorities of Manitobans, end quote, and the Premier is, quote, driven by his desire to hold on to his leadership rather than by the best interests of Manitobans, end quote.

\*(10:10)

(3) According to comments from government members, their caucus is divided by, quote, fundamental differences and animosity, end quote, and that, quote, deep divisions are not just amongst the MLAs in the caucus, but they 'exist' at the—exist at the staff level as well, end quote.

(4) 'Regretfully,' the dysfunction and infighting within the provincial government has nothing to do with addressing the fact that Manitobans are paying more and getting less. A Winnipeg family pays \$3,200 more in sales and income tax than they would in Regina but receives some of the worst results in health care and education in the country.

(5) Government members have said in the media that caucus dysfunction is entirely related to internal polls that indicated they are in, quote, annihilation territory, saying that, quote, our numbers are down and that the status quo is not good enough anymore.

Our own party pollsters have told us we're facing oblivion, end quote.

(6) Little has been done by government members to end the infighting while the Premier, claiming retaliation is justified because of public comments such as, quote, people have civil rights, but we also have an organization to run, end quote. Government members acting on behalf of the Premier have said publicly, quote, we are not in a witch hunt, end quote, and have also said, quote, we have to look at who caused this and who are the ones that have damaged us the most, end quote.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Premier of Manitoba to take responsibility and apologize to the people of Manitoba for the social and economic damage created by his failed leadership and the disgraceful conduct of government members that has destabilized the provincial government and hurt Manitoba businesses and families.

And this petition has been signed by H. van Deldon, D. Moulder and A. Forbes and many, many more fine Manitobans.

**Mr. Reg Helwer (Brandon West):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

(1) Government members have been quoted as saying that, quote, Manitobans no longer trust the current government, end quote.

(2) Sadly, these same members have reportedly stated that since 2014 the government has been focused on its own narrow political interests, quote, ahead of what was once a government plan and what would be indeed the priorities of Manitobans, end quote, and that the Premier is, quote, driven by his desire to hold on to his leadership rather than the best interests of Manitobans, end quote.

(3) According to comments from government members, their caucus is divided by, quote, fundamental differences and animosity, end quote, and that, quote, deep divisions are not just amongst the MLAs in caucus, but they exist at the staff level as well, end quote.

(4) Regretfully, the dysfunction and infighting within the provincial government has nothing to do with addressing the fact that Manitobans are paying

more and getting less. A Winnipeg family pays \$3,200 more in sales and income tax than they would in Regina but receives some of the worst results in health care and education in the country.

(5) Government members have said in the media that caucus dysfunction is entirely related to internal polls that indicate that they are in, quote, annihilation territory, saying that, quote, our numbers are down and the status quo is not good enough anymore. Our own party pollsters have told us that we are facing oblivion. End quote.

(6) Little has been done by government members to end the infighting with the Premier, claiming retaliation is justified because of public comments such as, quote, people have civil rights, but we also have an organization to run, end quote. Government members acting on behalf of the Premier have said publicly, quote, we are not on a witch hunt, end quote, and have also said, quote, we have to look at who caused this and who are the ones that have damaged us the most, end quote.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Premier of Manitoba to take responsibility and apologize to the people of Manitoba for the social and economic damage created by his failed leadership and the disgraceful conduct of government members that has destabilized the provincial government and hurt Manitoba businesses and families.

Signed by C. Vandenbossche, G. St. Hilaire, B. Matthews and many other Manitobans.

**Mr. Shannon Martin (Morris):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

These are the reasons for this petition:

(1) Government members have been quoted as saying—as stating that, quote, Manitobans no longer trust the current government, end quote.

(2) Sadly, these same members have reportedly stated that since 2014, the government has been focused on its own narrow political interests, quote, ahead of what was once a government plan and what would indeed be the priorities of Manitobans, end quote. And the Premier is, quote, driven by his desire to hold on to his leadership rather than by the best interests of Manitobans, end quote.

(3) According to comments from government members, their caucus is divided by, quote, fundamental differences and animosity, end quote, and that, quote, deep divisions are not just amongst MLAs and caucus, but they exist at the staff level as well, end quote.

(4) Regretfully, the dysfunction and infighting within the provincial government has nothing to do with addressing the fact that Manitobans are paying more and getting less. A Winnipeg family paid \$3,200 more in sales tax and income tax than they would in Regina but receives some of the worst results in health care and education in this country.

(5) Government members have said in the media that caucus dysfunction is entirely related to internal polls that indicate they are in, quote, annihilation territory, end quote, saying that, quote, our numbers are down and the status quo is not good enough anymore. Our own party pollsters have told us that we're facing oblivion, end quote.

(6) Little has been done by government members to end the infighting with the Premier, claiming retaliation is justified because of public comments such as, quote, people have civil rights, but we also have an organization to run, end quote. Government members acting on behalf of the Premier have said publicly, quote, we are not on a witch hunt, end quote, and have also said, quote, we have to look at who caused this and who are the ones that have damaged us the most, end quote.

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

To urge the Premier of Manitoba to take responsibility and apologize to the people of Manitoba for the social and economic damage created by his failed leadership and the disgraceful conduct of government members that has destabilized the provincial government and hurt Manitoba businesses and families.

And this is by these Manitobans: M. He, M. Lane, R. Romaniuk and many other fine Manitobans.

**Mr. Speaker:** Any further petitions? Seeing none, we'll move on to committee reports. No committee reports? We'll move on to tabling of reports. Ministerial statements.

#### Introduction of Guests

**Mr. Speaker:** Prior to oral questions, I'd like to draw the attention of honourable members to the public

gallery where we have with us today the Model School/Collegiate at the University of Winnipeg. We have 12 grade 9 students under the direction of John Power, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer).

On behalf of honourable members, we welcome you here this morning.

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### Provincial Budget 2015 Deficit Concerns

**Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition):** There are a tremendous number of problems with yesterday's budget, but the real danger, overarching danger, of the approach that the government is taking, of course, is their spin techniques, you know. They have doubled, of course, their communications staff, and it seems like they actually are believing their own spin now.

\*(10:20)

So the Premier, in commenting on his budgetary approach yesterday, actually used the word prudent. And I want to, for the benefit of the members opposite, read the definition of the word prudent to them, and I hope they will listen with comprehension: the exercise of good judgment or common sense in practical matters.

Yesterday's budget took the level of our provincial debt to \$36 billion. It began at \$18 billion, approximately, when this Premier came to power. So 109 years to get us to 18 and just a few more to double it. The very opposite of common sense. The very opposite of prudence.

Would the Premier today admit that his financial mismanagement is the very opposite of prudence, of good judgment, of common sense, and that it is, in fact, endangering the front-line services that Manitobans depend upon?

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier):** I thank the member for the question. He will have noted in the budget that the cost of servicing our debt this year is 5.6 cents on the dollar. When he was last on this side of the House, it was over 13 cents on the dollar.

So we've reduced the cost of servicing the debt by over 50 per cent, Mr. Speaker, and at the same time we've built up the assets of Manitoba. There's 8 billion more dollars' worth of assets on the books. That includes roads, flood protection, schools,

hospitals. Those investments are making a big difference in the quality of life for Manitobans.

So when he asks that question, he has to ask himself, what would he do that's different, Mr. Speaker? Maybe he could put that on the record for us today.

### **Fiscal Management Government Record**

**Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition):** I wouldn't waste a million dollars promoting the government with a false advertising campaign, Mr. Speaker, that's for sure.

Yesterday was a double-double for Manitobans, Mr. Speaker, not a good one, either. This is a government that ran on a promise not to raise taxes and another promise to balance the books and broke both those promises and really broke both those promises.

Record tax hikes should have meant they'd come closer, at least, to pretending they were balancing the budget, but they're getting further away from it. They've broken their record on increasing tax hikes, and now they're breaking their record on debt hiking. And the actual impact of this amazing, amazing display of mismanagement is that they have also doubled our provincial debt.

Doubling taxes in the record low interest time, doubling deficits and doubling debt is not the right course of action in our estimation. What we would do different is quite evident, I think, to all Manitobans, Mr. Speaker.

Now, how would the Premier like to be remembered? Would he think it would be best that he be remembered as a promise breaker or as a debt doubler? Which would he prefer?

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, the member might helpfully introduce to the Legislature the fact that our economy has doubled since he was last in office. And as a result, our debt as a proportion of the economy is actually smaller than it was when they were in office. They were over 32 per cent debt-to-GDP ratio; we're at 30.9. We actually took it down to 23 per cent during the good times.

We put over \$800 million aside in a Fiscal Stabilization Fund. We've used that money prudently, Mr. Speaker, to reduce deficits every year and to make debt payments, so that we could keep the Manitoba economy growing.

Twenty thousand new jobs last year, one of the best growth rates in the country, increasing wages, Mr. Speaker, on average \$40 a week per worker, over \$2,000 a year.

Mr. Speaker, what does the member opposite have against a growing economy, more jobs and better wages for Manitobans?

### **Fiscal Stabilization Fund Management Concerns**

**Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition):** We love all those things, Mr. Speaker. And with a new government, we might have them for Manitoba.

The Premier spoke about the debt-to-GDP ratio in good times. I think he was talking about Gary Doer's term, not his own. Mr. Speaker, actual debt-to-GDP ratio has escalated under his mismanagement.

But he also spun an—tried to spin Manitobans yesterday about using the phrase right direction, that he was going in the right direction. Last year's deficit projection was fully 20 per cent lower than yesterday's deficit projection, Mr. Speaker. That certainly doesn't provide any evidence that we're going in the right direction under this government.

And the fact is they also, to limit the increase in the deficit by that much, resorted to raiding our piggy bank. They resorted to diving right into, with enthusiasm, our Fiscal Stabilization Fund. And they took over \$100 million out of that rainy day fund, in good times, so that they could look a little bit better. But they don't look good when they do that, Mr. Speaker, because Manitobans know that the tough times may come with additional flooding and fires in the future and we'll need that money.

So will the Premier admit that by lowering the rainy day fund by fully 80 per cent plus in his term of office he's exposed Manitobans to greater risk?

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, there's a big difference. We put over \$800 million aside during the good times to buffer the economy and protect core services during the difficult times. What did they do when they were in office? They took a surplus budget that they inherited, they turned it into a deficit to create their Fiscal Stabilization Fund, and when that ran out they sold off the telephone system—sold off the telephone system—and went from among the lower rates to among the higher rates in the country then to balance the books.

We put real money aside during the good times to make sure that we could protect Manitoba services and grow the economy during the more challenging times, and that's exactly what we've done. Mr. Speaker, 20,000 jobs added to the economy last year, one of the best growth forecast rates in the country, an increase in wages, more people working in Manitoba than ever in the history of the province.

His approach during the '90s would've left people with less disposable income, less employment growth, less growth in the economy. Mr. Speaker, we've taken an approach which makes Manitoba a better place for everybody to live.

#### **NDP Spending Record Manitoba's Credit Rating**

**Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler):** Well, Mr. Speaker, half his caucus doesn't believe him when he says that, I don't know why Manitobans would.

Mr. Speaker, last August Moody's Investors Service revised the outlook on Manitoba's debt. They changed it from stable to negative, and they basically said that the NDP's mismanagement was making Manitoba a riskier investment.

Now, Moody's warned about a looming credit downgrade, and they cited a reduced likelihood that Manitoba would return to balance in 2016-17. Well, it turns out that Moody's was right all the—all along. The NDP did not balance the books. They will not balance the books.

And will the Minister of Finance today admit that because of his government's reckless and out-of-control spending Manitoba now faces a looming credit rating downgrade?

**Hon. Greg Dewar (Minister of Finance):** I'll admit no such thing, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we came—No. 1, Moody's has given us—has given this government three credit upgrades. We take the cautions from the comments by Moody's very seriously. I'll also remind the member that when we came to office the—they were two credits grades down, further down than we are. So, you know, we are actually improving.

But, you know, our budget that we introduced yesterday is about growing the economy, Mr. Speaker, as well as providing opportunities for young Manitobans to get an education, to get skills training. We have one of the fastest growing economies in Canada, and we are proud of that on

this side of the House. The only ones who don't like a growing economy are the members opposite.

#### **Provincial Deficit Debt Servicing Costs**

**Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler):** Mr. Speaker, it's clear to everyone except this Finance Minister that this government's waste and mismanagement has a far-reaching impact, and it has an impact on our debt servicing costs.

Now, Moody's warned about a looming credit downgrade and they said that the government had to stabilize its debt burden in the medium term to avoid that. Well, yesterday Manitobans learned that the debt under this NDP government has soared, has skyrocketed to \$36.3 billion, up \$3 billion from just one year ago. Moody's was right all along.

So, Mr. Speaker, the debt servicing costs under this government are right now \$850 million. Will the Finance Minister just indicate when, as a result of his reckless debt increases, the debt servicing costs in Manitoba will go to \$1 billion?

**Hon. Greg Dewar (Minister of Finance):** The—Mr. Speaker, if the member would look at the budget, he'd notice that the debt servicing costs this year are \$10 million less than they were last year.

I also want to remind the member, as I said, the—when—Manitoba's credit rating with Moody's is two steps higher than it was when we came into office.

But as I said, Mr. Speaker, we have the second lowest unemployment rate in Canada. The economy created over 20,000 new jobs last year. We worked in collaboration with business. We worked in collaboration with the educational institutions. We worked in collaboration with the—with labour. We believe in a partnership to grow the economy.

\* (10:30)

Yesterday we talked about growth, jobs and wages. We're proud of our record.

**Mr. Friesen:** Mr. Speaker, we know that waste and mismanagement in this government is threatening front-line services and they are threatening the debt service costs that we must pay as a province. Moody's warned about loss of fiscal discipline, and Moody's was right. Manitobans learned yesterday that the deficit is up to \$422 million from last year's 357, which they also didn't meet, and spending still outstrips revenues even though revenues have never



been higher. Mr. Speaker, it is clear it is out of control; there is no plan.

I say again: Manitoba's debt servicing costs are currently \$845 million and climbing. Will this Finance Minister acknowledge that the reckless spending record of his government is leading directly to higher debt servicing costs and robbing front-line services?

**Mr. Dewar:** The member talks about front-line services. This budget that I introduced yesterday has more personal-care homes in Winnipeg. It has additional personal-care homes in Morden-Winkler. It has personal additional care homes in Lac du Bonnet. It has a new hospital in Notre Dame de Lourdes.

We are investing in front-line care. We are investing in highways capital, over \$1 billion this year. That'll create over 12,000 new jobs, one of the reasons why we'll lead the country.

And I'll also remind the member that our ranking is one of the highest in the country when you discount the resource provinces. I want to remind the member, when we came to office, our ranking is far better than what it was when they were in office.

#### **Front-Line Service Provision Debt Servicing Costs**

**Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo):** Well, when we discount everything that this NDP government's doing, we are doing pretty well, Mr. Speaker.

The budget introduced by the NDP government yesterday listed the debt servicing costs at \$842 million, almost \$1 billion, the equivalent of the fourth largest government department.

Will the Minister of Finance just admit that his NDP waste is threatening front-line services in our province?

**Hon. Greg Dewar (Minister of Finance):** As I said, we—when we came into office, we were spending about 13 cents on the dollar to service the debt, Mr. Speaker. Currently it's 5.6 cents on the dollar. We came into office the—our net-debt-to-GDP ratio is significantly lower than it was under the previous government.

And, as I said in my earlier comment, we are investing in infrastructure. The Conference Board of Canada said that Manitoba will lead the nation because our investments in infrastructure,

Mr. Speaker. We'll lead the nation because our investments in hydro.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite have a plan. Their plan is to put the brakes on our economy. We must reject their plan.

**Mrs. Stefanson:** Mr. Speaker, Manitoba has the highest ER wait times in Canada, the lowest results in education for our kids and children who continue to fall through the cracks of our child-welfare system, yet the government is spending almost \$1 billion on debt servicing costs.

Will this minister just admit that his waste is threatening the essential front-line services that Manitobans need, want and deserve?

**Mr. Dewar:** Again, I'll remind the House that when we came into office, 13 cents on the dollar was—of revenues was designated to service the debt. We've now cut that in—amount in half to 5.6 cents, Mr. Speaker. As I said, the net-debt-to-GDP ratio has gone down under this government.

As I said earlier, again, we believe in investing in infrastructure. We believe in investing in schools. You'll see more of that as—in the weeks ahead. We believe in investing in health-care facilities, as I said, the personal-care homes in Morden-Winkler, Lac du Bonnet, here in Winnipeg. We believe in investing in front-line care.

They have a different approach, Mr. Speaker. Their approach is for cuts. Their approach is for two-tier health care. And their approach is for—to privatization. We reject that.

**Mrs. Stefanson:** Well, what we reject and what Manitobans reject is wasting money on debt servicing costs instead of putting it towards the front-line services that Manitobans need, want and deserve.

Mr. Speaker, we're dead last in health care, dead last in education, and this NDP government is failing the children in care.

Will this government just admit that, according to the Winnipeg Sun, that wrote this on the budget yesterday, because I couldn't say it better myself, and this is what Manitobans believe, that this budget is the worst and scariest fiscal blueprint the NDP has unveiled since taking office?

**Mr. Dewar:** You know, Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, the only ones who are disappointed about the growing economy in this province, the only ones

who are disappointed about the fact that this province will lead the nation in economic growth in 2014—excuse me, 2015 to 2016 are the members opposite. The only ones who are disappointed that we created 20,000 new jobs in the province last year are the members opposite. The only who—individuals who are disappointed that the average Manitoba worker is receiving \$2,000 more in wage increases are the members opposite.

This government believes in growing the economy, Mr. Speaker. This government believes in protecting front-line care. Manitobans know they can count on us.

### **Children in Care Missing Youth Numbers**

**Mr. Ian Wishart (Portage la Prairie):** Mr. Speaker, last year nearly 6,500 people went missing in the city of Winnipeg. According to the Winnipeg Police Service, the vast majority are vulnerable youth who are in the care of child and family services. The Department of Family Services' own policy manual defines any youth who is missing as a youth at risk.

What is the minister's explanation for allowing so many youth in the care of CFS to be put at risk?

**Hon. Kerri Irvin-Ross (Minister of Family Services):** Mr. Speaker, the workers that work on the front lines of the child-welfare system work with families and communities to provide the best services possible.

There are children that are missing. We are working with our partners as far as Winnipeg Police Service, the RCMP, StreetReach; it's renowned nationally and internationally about the work that it does. StreetReach goes on to the street, finds out where the high-risk children are, goes, finds them and brings them back to a place of safety.

We work every day with these children to support them, to ensure that they can live a healthy lifestyle, and also, while we're working with them, we're working with their families and their communities.

**Mr. Wishart:** Well, Mr. Speaker, according to federal statistics, Manitoba leads the country in missing children on a per capita basis. Worse yet, the Canadian numbers are trending down at a rate of 20 per cent while we are showing a 22 per cent increase.

Can the minister offer any explanation to Manitobans as to why this NDP government's

mismanagement continues to put so many kids in care at risk?

**Ms. Irvin-Ross:** Mr. Speaker, we have been working with our community partners for decades to address the issues that are facing Manitoba families, and when we're addressing those issues, we are addressing the issues of poverty, ensuring that we are providing, as you heard in the 2015 budget, 75 per cent of market median rent Rent Assists will be implemented this year.

We are continuing to build more child-care centres. We are continuing to build more housing projects for individuals. We are addressing the basic needs. We have individuals and families that are struggling in this community and in this province.

We need to work with all of our partners and to address their issues and provide them with the necessary service. Budget 2015 protects those front-line services and in turn it protects the children.

**Mr. Wishart:** Mr. Speaker, we are by far the worst in Canada when it comes to missing children and youth. In fact, in that critical group of teenage girls who are at risk for sexual exploitation, we are six times more likely to have them reported missing—six times. Our numbers are up nearly 40 per cent as compared to the Canadian trend, which is declining by 20 per cent.

Can the minister offer any explanation why this NDP government's mismanagement is putting so many children in risk?

**Ms. Irvin-Ross:** Mr. Speaker, what this government has been doing over—since 1999 is providing supports for families, supports and a safety net that protects them and their children. And when we're doing that, we are ensuring that we're building more housing, that there is a good quality education system, that we are supporting the not-for-profit organizations that are working on the front lines, that we are being innovative with projects such as Block by Block. We're making those decisions to protect families, to support them and to ensure that they can have good outcomes.

\* (10:40)

We also support StreetReach. StreetReach is an important project that goes into this—into the community, finds out where the high-risk kids are and brings them home. We have been able to return 405 children last year. That is success.

We have much more work to do and we're committed to doing that. I ask the member opposite: Will he support this budget to support these initiatives for Manitoba families?

### **Education Funding Debt Servicing Costs**

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet):** Mr. Speaker, the facts speak for themselves. Funding is at an all-time high and our results are at an all-time low in education. Debt servicing costs are reaching a billion dollars. Manitoba has gone from a leader in Canada in educational performance right to the bottom of the barrel and is getting worse under this NDP government.

Will the Minister of Education admit today that the NDP waste and mismanagement is hurting front-line services?

**Hon. James Allum (Minister of Education and Advanced Learning):** I thank the member for the question.

You know, we on this side of the House believe in investing in education. We do build new schools. We do renovate science labs, rebuild new gyms, and the results of that, Mr. Speaker, is that our graduation rates now have reached an all-time high of 87 per cent. We're continuing to work with parents and with teachers in order to ensure that our children have a fair opportunity to have a good life.

Judging by the Leader of the Opposition's responses to the budget yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the opposition has no plan except to cut the budget for education. That would be a disservice to parents and to students.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Another example of spending more and getting far less, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, where can that billion dollars go? For one example, many school divisions are struggling and faced with increasing taxes. There—I must remind the members opposite, there is only one taxpayer in Manitoba, and they're running out of money.

Will the minister admit today that the NDP waste and mismanagement is again hurting front-line services and especially schools and our children?

**Mr. Allum:** Mr. Speaker, the premise of the member's question is, as usually, misinformed.

The fact of the matter is, why investing in schools, we're making a difference in the lives of

children. We're making sure that they get a quality education, and the result of that, as I just said, is our graduation rates have reached an all-time high of 87 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, on the other hand, the Leader of the Opposition wants to cut \$500 million from the budget and imperil the future of our children. We're never going to do that on this side of the House. On this side of the House, we stand with children and we stand with families to make sure that their children have a future.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Mr. Speaker, it's clear that this Education Minister and his government are out of touch with reality. Almost a billion dollars wasted to service that debt. Again, NDP waste is hurting those front-line services that we rely on each and every day.

Teachers were very loud and clear last year about their disapproval of the new report cards. Morale is down and this minister's department has done nothing.

As an educator, as a parent, as a taxpayer, when is this circus going to end, Mr. Speaker? I'll tell you when it's going to end. It's going to end April 19th, 2016.

**Mr. Allum:** Well, Mr. Speaker, what will end if this side is ever in government is funding for education and—imperilling the future of our young children.

But let me—just to give you one example of the kinds of things that we do through our investment, several years ago we introduced a small-class-size initiative to—from kindergarten to grade 3 to make sure that teachers and students have more one-on-one time together so that our students can focus on the fundamentals. The result of that initiative, Mr. Speaker, is that we've hired 300 new teachers. We've invested more than \$29 million in new and renovated classrooms and we've reduced classes with 24 students or more by over 50 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, this is a government that Manitobans can count on to protect the educational future of our students and of our province. What they can count on with the opposition is sending our students into the backwater of the 20th century.

### **ER Wait Times Debt Servicing Costs**

**Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood):** Mr. Speaker, Manitoba patients experience the longest ER wait times in all of Canada.

The WRHA recently admitted that their efforts to fix the ER crisis have failed. This Minister of Health went into hiding after that announcement and has never responded to this admission of failure by the WRHA.

I would like to ask this Minister of Health to admit that poor decision making by her government is threatening front-line services and patient care.

**Hon. Sharon Blady (Minister of Health):** I'd like to thank the member for the question.

And we think it was the right thing to do for the WRHA to set ambitious ER wait targets. It's clear that the WRHA has more work to do in order to reach those targets and I think they've learned a lot over the last two years and remain committed to meeting those targets.

Ensuring all Manitobans have access to rapid emergency care close to home when they need it remains a top priority and is reflected in this budget. While some provinces are cutting health services, introducing health-care user fees or shifting health-care costs to families, this budget allows Manitobans to keep building a better, more accessible health-care system and one that has a record number of doctors and nurses.

**Mrs. Driedger:** Mr. Speaker, this NDP government has chosen to build a massive debt hole for Manitobans and to spend almost a billion dollars a year on debt interest costs.

I'd like to ask this Minister of Health to admit that it would have been better to use that money to fix the ER crisis and harm that is causing patients instead of directing that money to pay for debt. Shouldn't it have gone into better services, front-line services, for patient care?

**Ms. Blady:** Again, this budget includes important increases to health care, funding that protects the services that families rely on and makes sure our province can continue to attract record numbers of doctors and nurses.

We've negotiated new collective bargaining agreements with both Doctors Manitoba and the Manitoba Nurses' Union, new contracts that show the value that we feel for our health-care providers. They include wage increases as well as initiatives to help keep health costs down. Doctors Manitoba agreement includes a commitment for doctors to realize a \$50-million savings in health-care system

over the next four years and initiatives to help the nurses reduce the use of overtime and agency nurses.

We work with our doctors and our nurses. We don't send them out on a mass exodus like members opposite.

**Mrs. Driedger:** Mr. Speaker, on the weekend, in Winnipeg ER waiting rooms patients were crying out for help because they were stuck in waiting rooms and they couldn't get in to the ER to access care. They were on Twitter and it was alive with condemnation of this NDP government.

The \$900 million that the NDP chooses to spend on debt interest payments are putting these patients at risk.

I'd like to ask this Minister of Health: How many patients are falling through the cracks because of risky decisions by this NDP government, which is threatening essential front-line services and putting Manitoba patients at risk?

**Ms. Blady:** Well, again, we are making sure that things like home care remains universal and exists without fees or copayment and provides excellent care to thousands of families right here rather than privatizing it.

We've linked more than 3,000 Manitobans with a family doctor through our Family Doctor Finder, something that didn't exist under members opposite.

We've got our In Sixty cancer patient journey, and we've also got the best-in-Canada home-care cancer drugs, which have saved families over \$17 million in Pharmacare deductibles. When the Canadian Cancer Society asked us to make that commitment, we did it; they said no.

And as far as ERs go, the only time ERs in Winnipeg closed was when their leader was sitting on this side of the House. I remember in 1995 they closed all of Winnipeg's community hospital ERs at night and in '96 they closed the ER at Misericordia.

So we fight for our—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable minister's time has elapsed for this question.

#### **Net Debt Projected Increase**

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, each year that this Premier has been premier, the net debt of this province has increased by between \$900 million and \$2 billion.

This year the net debt is projected to increase by \$1.65 billion. This is the second largest amount in the history of our province. It is second only to the net debt increase in the year of the 2011 flood.

\* (10:50)

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Premier: Why does he want to be responsible for overseeing the largest increases in the net debt in the history of our province?

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, we had the largest decreases in the net debt when I was the minister of Finance, and during the difficult times we've made investments that will grow the Manitoba economy.

Mr. Speaker, last year, from '99—our assets have increased by \$12 billion. The member likes to talk about the debt on the one hand, but he doesn't like to talk about the fact we have more schools. We have more hospitals. We have more personal-care homes. We have better flood protection for the city of Winnipeg and the city of Brandon, and we're working on better flood protection for the people of Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin. Those assets make a difference.

Highways make a difference. The highway investment from Winnipeg to Brandon, over \$200 million, has made a gigantic difference in the ability of those people and those businesses to move back and forth there.

Our debt servicing costs are half of what they were when the members opposite were in office. Our assets are up, the economy is stronger, more people are working, and the member opposite hasn't a clue what he's talking about.

#### **Infrastructure Spending PST Increase**

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, it's the Premier who has a problem with clues.

The projected increase in the net debt is much greater than can be accounted for by the size of the annual deficit. The budget shows that a major reason is that the Premier is actually borrowing money for much of the new core infrastructure spending even as he tells Manitobans erroneously that he's using the money from the PST increase to finance the core infrastructure. In fact, because he borrows money for infrastructure, much of the money raised by increasing the PST is spent elsewhere.

I ask the Premier: Why is he so unable to actually do what he says he will do?

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, we will spend about \$1.3 billion on infrastructure this year. It's projected to generate about 12,000 jobs in the province of Manitoba, and that will make an enormous difference in our ability to not only to have good jobs for young people right now but to have a prosperous province for the future.

Mr. Speaker, those assets will allow CentrePort, for example, to have better access to our major export market, the United States, through Highway 75, where we've committed to an over-200-million-dollar investment to improve the bridges and the flood protection around Morris, Manitoba. Highway No. 1 has been improved dramatically from here to the Saskatchewan border. Now we're improving Highway No. 1 east to the Ontario border. We're building roads in northern Manitoba, an area where the members opposite said they wouldn't build any roads in the future. They said they would actually take the money out of northern Manitoba and put it elsewhere. We're investing in southwestern Manitoba on rebuilding roads and bridges as a result of the flood that's occurred there in 2011 and 2014.

These investments are making a very significant difference in the province of Manitoba, and our revenues are there to support those investments as we go forward.

#### **Provincial Budget 2015 Spending vs. Savings**

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, sadly, the Premier has lost all credibility. The sleight of hand the Premier used to get money for infrastructure is not a magic show that Manitobans find entertaining.

What was notable in the budget yesterday, looking beyond the deceptive and expensive messaging of today's NDP spinners, was a lack of discussion of where the Premier will save dollars. It is a budget of a government which has long lost its balance and its focus.

I ask the Premier: Why did he take such an unbalanced approach, focusing almost all his efforts on spending and virtually none on saving?

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier):** The members opposite will know that they had 13 RHAs with lots of administration associated with that; we now have

five. The difference—the savings that have come out of those—[*interjection*] I know that it's upsetting for them. They were the bureaucracy creators; we're the bureaucracy cutters, Mr. Speaker. We took the savings out of the RHA shrinkage from 13 to five and we put it into free cancer-care drugs for Manitobans that were not in hospitals so they could stay at home with their families, so they could continue in the workforce. Why do the members opposite vote against that?

We took two Crown corporations, liquor and lotteries, and we merged them together. We saved about \$3 million a year in administration. Those savings go directly back into supporting health care and education.

We worked with municipalities to reduce the number of municipalities so they would have deeper, broader tax bases, a greater population base, and be able to respond to the needs of their constituents more effectively.

We used to have 57 school divisions. Now we have about 37 school divisions.

All of these measures are intended to reduce the overhead costs of government and make sure front-line services are protected. And every time we do that, the members opposite vote against it, Mr. Speaker.

#### **École Rivière Rouge New French Immersion School**

**Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park):** [*inaudible*] goes hand in hand with infrastructure, and our government yesterday brought in a budget that continues to invest in core infrastructure and creating jobs.

Our government is committed to making sure young people have the skills they need to get good jobs in our province and raise their families here.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Education please inform the House about yet another investment that our government is making for families in our beloved province?

**Hon. James Allum (Minister of Education and Advanced Learning):** I thank my friend from Tyndall Park for that great question.

Last week the Premier (Mr. Selinger) stood with my friend from Kildonan to announce a new French immersion school for families in north Winnipeg.

Incidentally, Mr. Speaker, when we open new schools and when we build new schools, we also add a child-care centre to that school.

When we were first—since we were elected in 1999, we've opened 35 new schools across this province. Right now we are building new schools in Amber Trails, in Riverbend, in Sage Creek, in Waverley West, in Woodlands and Thompson. We recently opened schools in La Broquerie, Steinbach and Winkler.

Our investment in schools creates a future for our students. It creates good jobs and a future for all Manitobans.

#### **Health Care Funding for Services**

**Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson):** Mr. Speaker, this government's waste and mismanagement has now affected front-line services.

Mr. Shott was rushed to Concordia Hospital emergency last Saturday at 5 a.m. It was found that he was suffering from an eight-millimetre gallstone, creating severe pain. Mr. Shott and his family physician were both shocked to learn that there was no urologist available on weekends due to budget cuts. This appears to be a direct result of NDP's waste and mismanagement robbing front-line services.

Why does this minister and this NDP government only believe people need critical services on weekdays?

**Hon. Sharon Blady (Minister of Health):** I'd like to thank the member for the question. I would like to thank him for raising this matter.

If the situation is as presented, it's one that does not sound like the kind of care that I would want for my family or for any Manitoban, and so if I can ask the member if he has in fact provided the details of this case to my office so that we can properly investigate. I want to know what's happened in our emerges. I want to know how this can be addressed, but I would need that information.

And the member opposite knows that we can't discuss cases within the Chamber, so I ask him to please meet with me afterwards and get me the information.

**Mr. Graydon:** Mr. Speaker, waste and mismanagement. It's cost Manitobans—caused Manitobans to pay a billion dollars in debt servicing.

Mr. Shott was rolled room to room on a gurney—not a bed—all the while on very strong pain medication, fasting for one day, 'anticipating'—anticipating relief, only to find that he was discharged to his family to administer any of the pain medication and was told to come back in two weeks.

The waste and mismanagement of this government has robbed Manitoba health care of what they really need today. It's clear that this minister is more interested in protecting her salary.

And is she misleading Manitobans about providing front-line services and caring more about Manitobans' well-being?

\* (11:00)

**Ms. Blady:** As I've said, without having immediate access to the specifics of this case, I can say that every month there are over 20,000 ER visits in Winnipeg alone, and this doesn't include the thousands of patients who receive care at Pan Am and the Misericordia Urgent Care Centre. I know that our front-line professionals do their very best in triaging these emergencies and responding to them with care, compassion and professionalism.

And, as I've said to the member opposite, when something doesn't go right in the ER, I would like to hear about it. I want to know. I need to know. Again, I invite him to come to my office with the details so that this can be looked into.

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

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

**Mr. Speaker:** It is now time for members' statements.

The honourable member for Agassiz—or, pardon me—[*interjection*] Yes, Lakeside, the honourable member for Lakeside.

#### Dr. Beryl McQueen

**Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to stand before you today to congratulate Dr. Beryl McQueen on having celebrated her 100th birthday on June 27th, 2014, truly a memorable milestone.

This well-known local physician began her story in 1914 in a subdistrict of London, England. In keeping with the family's tradition, she studied medicine at the university, graduating in 1940 from the University of London with a bachelor's degree in medicine and surgery.

She went on to do basic training to become a medical officer in the armed forces. With her travels taking her to India, she would become the first female medical officer to be commissioned to India in the Second World War. Beryl was stationed from 1943 to 1944 in a community in the Himalayan mountains. This service would eventually impact her practice here in Stonewall.

Beryl was sent to southern India where she would meet her husband-to-be and married in 1946. Beryl worked as a general practitioner in the London slums until 1952. The first of her three children was born in 1948.

After arriving in Canada, Beryl stayed home for three years with her children. Then she took a job in Belmont, Manitoba, as a rural municipal doctor. The young woman coming from England and arriving in the middle of a Canada winter had to adapt to a new way of doing things.

By 1959 Beryl had taken a position in Stonewall, continuing to work until her retirement in 1991. Around this time, Beryl was named physician of the year by the Manitoba Medical Association.

Beryl enjoyed art classes, playing golf and spending time in her garden. She remained in Stonewall residing at Rosewood Lodge, surrounded by her family, which included eight grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

It is a rare opportunity as an MLA to acknowledge individuals who celebrated 100 years. What Beryl accomplished was pretty much unheard of in Canada, but she did exactly what she wanted to do with her life, truly a remarkable accomplishment before her passing in December of last year.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### May Day

**Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park):** Today, May 1st, is a very important day. We are fortunate to live in a province that values the safety and well-being of workers.

Manitobans have always been at the front of the battle for equal rights. The history of Manitoba is a history of struggle. Louis Riel fought for our province and the Metis people. Nellie McClung defied convention to make sure that women were defined as people under our constitution. Elijah Harper stood up for the First Nations people of Canada, and in 1919 the Winnipeg General Strike

drew the attention of the world and helped spark the labour movement in Canada.

As Manitoba jobs and workplaces change over the decades, so must our laws and protections. That's why our government continues to reassess legislation and make it work for workers and employers today.

To make sure all Manitoba workers come home safe at the end of the workday, we introduced Bill 65 last year. Among other things, it increases the penalties associated with claim suppression so that every worker will feel secure when they are harmed on the job and they will report a claim.

It is through the tireless efforts of these workers our economy continues to drive forward. In fact, we're No. 1 in job creation in Canada. So, today, on May Day, I would ask all of the members of the Assembly to take a moment to reflect on the contributions that workers have made, and continue to make, in our province.

The need to put initiatives in place that increase worker protection is often brought to our attention by those who work tirelessly to protect and represent Manitoba workers. We are today honoured by the presence of two of them: David Sauer, president of the Winnipeg Labour Council, and John Doyle, communications director for the Manitoba Federation of Labour.

I would ask all of the members of the Assembly to please commend them for continuing to protect our workers.

Thank you.

### **Talk To Your Kids About Money**

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remind Manitobans about the importance of teaching children about money. It is important to teach the next generation about financial matters so that they do not find themselves in financial trouble down the road.

Trouble, of course, means finding themselves in debt. It is important that we set a positive example for our youth, as the provincial government does not seem willing to set one, as they just continue to rack up the debt. The debt they are racking up will have to be paid by our children and our grandchildren. This makes it all the more important to teach our children about money matters, so they can avoid making similar mistakes in the future.

Everyone talks about money during tax season, and especially after budget day. The third Wednesday in April has actually been designated as Talk With Our Kids About Money Day, though. This day encourages parents and teachers to talk with youth about money matters. There is an online hub, [www.talkwithourkidsaboutmoney.com](http://www.talkwithourkidsaboutmoney.com), that offers resources for parents and teachers. The site can be accessed at any time, and I would encourage members of this NDP government, especially the Minister for Finance, to visit it, as it would be a good place for them to start learning about how to handle our money.

It is important to keep the conversation about money going year-round. A key part of good financial planning is making a long-term plan and sticking to it. This, unfortunately, is another area where our government has not set a positive example for our youth, as they keep extending their plan to balance the budget.

As we talk about planning, please plan to have a talk with your child about money. They need positive examples in their life, unlike the one the NDP government is sending—or setting.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### **Springfield Heights Nursery School—50th Anniversary**

**Hon. Erna Braun (Minister of Labour and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize the Springfield Heights Nursery School. This April, the nursery school celebrated 50 years of teaching German to the youngest residents of North Kildonan.

Mr. Speaker, Springfield Heights Nursery School first opened its doors on April 1st, 1965, with a group of 46 four- and five-year-olds. The original director, Sonja Klassen, was affectionately called Tante Sensureonja, and each subsequent director continues with the tante title. Many of these children were first-generation Canadians, born to German-speaking refugees of the Second World War.

Mr. Speaker, Sonja Klassen continued to care for preschool-aged children until 1969, when kindergarten was introduced in the River East School Division. The nursery school then began to accept three-year-olds.

In 1980, the River East School Division began a German-English bilingual program. Since then, the bilingual nursery school has helped prepare many



children for this well-regarded language program in our community.

The nursery school is currently under the leadership of its fourth director, Ms. Renate Dueck, and child-care assistants also help to share the work. More than 1,500 children have attended the school, creating many lasting friendships. Some have even met their future spouse at the school.

Over the five decades, one thing that remains the same is the children's love of singing German songs during *kreis zeit*, or circle time, and the highly anticipated winter concert, *Weihnachtsfest*, and the spring concert called *Frühlingsfest*.

\* (11:10)

Many children loved their time at the nursery school so much that now, as parents, they send their own children there. The nursery school enjoys much of its great success to the ongoing support and involvement of families. Hundreds of grandparents and parents have volunteered thousands of hours for the school.

Congratulations to the Springfield Heights Nursery School, its directors, dedicated board members, the family and children on 50 wonderful years.

### Budget 2015

**Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday's budget by the NDP government was met by a widespread condemnation from various interest groups, stakeholders, media, throughout the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, in the hours that have followed the budget, the summary and the condemnation has started to arrive. It is a budget that is devoid of constraints, said the Winnipeg Free Press editorial board. Manitoba Chambers of Commerce said that it was about massive deficits, poor results and limited options. In another article, one commentator said it was unflinching faith in a failed fiscal plan, and another writer said it is the worst and scariest fiscal blueprint the NDP has unveiled since taking office.

So, Mr. Speaker, if there is one comment to be made, it is that there seems to be a common thread when it comes to the NDP's government budget. This is a budget that raises the debt to \$36 billion. It is a budget that sends the deficit in the wrong direction. It is a budget that sends debt servicing costs higher and higher. It is a budget that takes more and more money from front-line services and puts them into

debt servicing, and it is a budget, for that reason, that our party simply cannot support. And so we call on this government to do the hard work, to take another look, to sharpen their pencil and to go back to the drawing board and try again, because we know one thing is for certain, that this government's mismanagement and waste continues to rob Manitobans of their front-line services that they depend on.

**Mr. Speaker:** I believe that concludes members' statements today.

The allocation, according to the agreement that's in place, provided for three opposition. Is there agreement of the House to allow for the members' statement? The error was on my part in mixing up the rotation for today. So is there agreement of the House to allow the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) to present his members' statement? *[Agreed]*

### Elmwood Economy

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** I would like to bring an Elmwood success story to your attention. Price Industries, located on Raleigh Street, is a market leader in supplying air distribution, critical controls and noise control products. If you're lying on an operating table in any hospital in North America, the chances are when you look up at the air flow system directly above you, it'll have a Price Industries label on it, and you will know you are in an infection-free environment.

After more than 60 years, Price remains a privately held family company with a tradition of innovation and service, providing good jobs for people in northeast Winnipeg for decades. Last year, with our help, we were—they were able to announce a 50,000-square-foot expansion, increasing their manufacturing capacity and adding up to 175 new high-tech jobs for northeast Winnipeg and Transcona.

Our government continues to work towards our provincial goal of adding 75,000 workers to our labour force by 2020. Our focus on training skilled workers is meeting the needs of employers and helping Manitobans get good jobs.

Under our government's leadership, the Manitoba economy continues to thrive. This April, the Bank of Montreal called Manitoba a rising star, and the Conference Board of Canada said our economic growth will lead the country.

Mr. Speaker, never in modern times has so much construction taken place. Construction cranes are everywhere. For example, we have doubled the size of the floodway. We have built a new arena, a new stadium, a new airport, a new Canadian Museum for Human Rights, a new expanded RBC Winnipeg Convention Centre, Wuskwatim hydro dam, Keeyask hydro dam, Highway No. 1 expansion, new Disraeli Bridge, new Plessis Road underpass, \$50 million per year on new city road rebuilds, twinning Molson Street, a new women's hospital, expanded general hospital Health Sciences Centre, a new U of W science building, a new U of M wellness centre, the IKEA. These are just examples, just a few examples, of some of the construction projects that have occurred in recent years with this government.

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud that our government is supporting businesses like Price Industries and growing the economy, benefiting my constituents in Elmwood.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

#### BUDGET DEBATE

#### (Second Day of Debate)

**Mr. Speaker:** I believe that concludes member statements, and we'll now move on to orders of the day, government business, and to resume the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Dewar), that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, standing in the name of the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

**Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker, and to all here, say welcome back to our Legislative Assembly. To the staff, thank you for the work you do; we appreciate it. Mr. Speaker, we appreciate the work you do as well.

I want to offer my congratulations to the members who have recently assumed new positions within the government, some of them for the first time, others moved to different portfolios, some they have held before, some they have not. But, nonetheless, I wish them the best as they face up to the challenges that they will—that are entailed in their obligations to the people of our province.

This budget is a budget which should cause, to any thinking government, embarrassment. It is one which should cause shame. It is a pre-election

budget, most certainly, and that people of our province understand. But they are tired of governments that spend more and get less, and they are tired of broken promises, and this is a budget which contains many broken promises or certainly emphasizes that previous promises made were broken, and that hurts Manitobans.

It is a budget which truly can be a vehicle for a political party, but is not a vehicle for a province, not a vehicle for stronger people, not a vehicle for strengthening our small-business community, for enriching the lives of our seniors, for encouraging our families in their sense of confidence about the direction that we're going.

The Premier (Mr. Selinger) says yesterday in response to his budget that he is going in the right direction; he is going in the wrong direction. He is going in the wrong direction because what he is doing with this budget is further eroding the hope for a better future that Manitobans deserve to have and deserve to feel.

Mr. Speaker, all of us here know that the benefit of political life, one of the many benefits of this honourable career, is that we have the chance to establish more firmly than many people do what we truly value and believe in. We are challenged in our beliefs. We have to deal with a multitude of issues. We meet with a multitude of people. We hear from Manitobans, their perspectives. Our caucus is working very hard to do this, reaching out, going to communities around the province, going to communities within our city, and listening to people and understanding first-hand what their perspectives are so that when we voice a view or a concern it comes from the basis of that listening, that empathy and that understanding.

Each of us also draws upon where we come from as people, what we did before we came to this place, the careers we held, the passions we had, the interests that some of us continue to have and some of us have had to set aside as we age. But the things that we do and have done are inseparable; we are what we have been, we are what we are, and we also are what we hope to become.

I grew up in pretty modest circumstances like many members in this House. We always, at Christmas, gave gifts to one another. Like most families do, we made our gifts. We made our gifts because we couldn't afford to do other than that. So we, of course, invested the time that was important,

and perhaps more important, in the preparation of our gifts than going out and shopping for gifts.

\* (11:20)

When I was about 10, my mother had returned to teaching, and that additional income was really important in our family. My dad and grandpa had a pretty good year on our farm. Those things combined and, I guess, maybe the age of the kids—my dad gave me a little money at Christmas in December. We were in town one day and said, son, you can buy some gifts. I'd never done that before. It was a really new thing for me to go out and buy gifts. I took my little brother in tow and we went together to the McLeod's [*phonetic*] store.

So at Christmas morning, we had our usual gathering around the tree, as every—many families do, and each culture, of course, celebrates this time of year in a different way. But, in our family, it was gathering together with the tree that we'd read the Eaton's catalogue under for about a month before and marked every page with things we thought we wanted and, of course, 99.9 per cent of them we never got. But in that morning, for the first time, my parents came downstairs much after the kids, and they discovered their brand new Christmas presents: a bow on the handle of a shovel for my dad, a bow on the handle of a broom for my mother. Now, we joked about that for—well, we still do. But I was a practical kid at 10-ish, a kid who believed that you shouldn't buy things that were frivolous. You should buy things you could use. And my mom and dad needed the shovel and the broom. Manitobans need a broom now, a broom to get rid of this government.

See, prudence, foresight, responsible, sustainable management, the ways we phrase the challenges we face in money management today in our lives, in a position of relative wealth and relative luxury compared to many, certainly most around the world, the way we describe those things—in those days, that was just a necessity, that was just plain old common sense. You didn't take money. I would never take money. Nobody on this side of the House would take money from a family member or anyone else and waste it. Never. Because you knew how hard it was to earn it. Because you knew how much effort and how much care went into that \$10 bill. And you respected that because you knew if you didn't respect that, you were going to be poor forever or, worse still, you were going to be bankrupt.

The dreams of our parents and the people who came here before us and the people who choose to

come to this beautiful province now are wrapped up in fundamentals, and one of those fundamentals is you have to have enough common sense to know that you can't steal from your children and grandchildren and pretend you're balancing a budget because that's not going to help them.

It is very, very difficult to give any credence to this government's budget. It is difficult in—for many reasons, but certainly it is difficult because it is only written on paper, and the Premier (Mr. Selinger) has belied his previous commitments to balance the books or to not raise taxes by saying, those were just targets; they weren't written in stone. So, until the government tables a budget written in stone, I will not believe any of it, nor should Manitobans believe it.

They have deliberately—deliberately—denied the existence, at this point—at this point, they have denied the existence of any further target to even balance the budget. It is one thing to say you are, as this Premier said when he ran for re-election four years ago—he said, and I quote, our plan is a five-year plan to ensure that we have future prosperity without any tax increases.

And he went further to say, when asked about the balanced budget, that he was ahead of schedule, he said.

Now, the advantage of that time—and, in fact, that was a better position than the one he's taking now. You see the downward direction you're going? That was a better position because at least he had a target that he could miss. Now, he doesn't even have a target. So what's he going to do? Shoot the arrow and then run over there and paint a bull's eye where it hits? Like, is that how this is going to work from now on?

We're not going to name a target now. The government is not going to name a date, not even a date where it can aspire to balance the books of our province. Manitobans are afraid now. Many Manitobans know the risks that they are being exposed to by this government.

But let's talk about tax hikes for a second. Tax hikes. This government is going to become known for them in the—our history books as well as they are known now. History will report on this government as the tax-hiking government in the history of Manitoba.

And what is especially ironic about this is the fact that they ran for re-election on a promise of no

new taxes. They went to your door. They spoke to you in need. Their need was your vote. They made a commitment, a vow, a solemn promise, that they would not raise your taxes—looked you in the eyes when they said it, well trained as they are. And then, weeks later, they imposed the largest tax hikes in over a quarter of a century, on you. On you, on the people of Manitoba.

And remember—remember—that these were not just tax hikes. These were tax hikes on essential, fundamental items. Need a haircut? Seven per cent more. How about insure your house that you've been paying a mortgage on for a decade and a half and now you're going to have to pay 7 per cent more on the house insurance, thanks to a government that promised it wouldn't raise your taxes, remember.

How about if you work for somebody, you're an employee, okay, and you have deducted off your cheque an amount that goes to help protect your own family with some group life insurance. Okay, 7 per cent more for that. And for your employer, additional costs as well, which means that there are less opportunities for higher wages, because the employer's making less money.

This stuff all results in hardship for Manitoba families who are simply trying to get ahead, to give themselves the kind of security that our parents and our grandparents wanted for us. This is the hardship they impose. And so many other things, right from birth and death certificates, compounded by massive increases in hydro rates and MPI costs.

What you are talking about is an erosion of the fundamental ability of Manitoba families to protect one another and to contribute to the economy of our beautiful province. This has got to be stopped.

This is a broken-promise budget in so many ways. I mean, remember just four short years ago, again, that the government ran for re-election wanting something for itself, as we all do when we run for public office. The question is what are you willing to do to get that support.

Well, the Premier (Mr. Selinger) was willing to sell his integrity for 1 per cent. He sold it because what he did, when he was asked specifically about his intentions during the campaign, was he said, quote, ridiculous idea is we're going to raise the sales tax. That's total nonsense. Everybody knows that. And then he followed by broadening it to include many fundamental things—and I left out many of them.

I could reiterate that he also introduced a car tax. Many people need a car to get to a job, for example, or to go volunteer in our province. He also added a car tax. He added a beer and wine tax. In most of our caucus, of course, that doesn't matter. But for many Manitobans, that is an issue. That's an issue. Gas tax, which they promised would go to roads, but didn't, of course, go to roads, went to their structural deficit and their debt service costs. Remember, that consumes a tremendous amount of our taxes now.

So it wasn't just the broadening of it, though. It was the year after. The broadening of it increased the take for the government by about \$200 million a year, \$200 million a year that Manitobans no longer had to invest, to spend and to provide some security for themselves and their kids. Then they raised the PST as well. And it wasn't just the raising of the PST either, but that took the take up to about \$500 million—about \$500 million—approximately \$1,600 for every family of four in the province, of broken-promise taxes that Manitoba families don't have.

That might not sound like much to some people. But I grew up in a household where that was big, big, big money. And I can tell you Manitobans, many Manitobans, struggle to make ends meet right now because of this broken-promise tax.

I'll give you an example here. A single earner making \$67,000 a year would pay \$6,952 in income taxes. Now, how much longer, with these broken-promise taxes—remember, this is your net. Paying taxes is not tax deductible; the members maybe should look that up. So the fact of the matter is they have to make money first. People have to make that money. Then they have to pay the taxes on it, and then what they have left, they've got to pay their taxes with that. So they're paying their income tax and then they've got to pay all the other tax too.

\* (11:30)

Now, if you factor all this in, what do you need to do if you're that single mom making \$67,000? Well, you got to work three more months. Three more months, just with broken-promise tax hikes, is the additional time required to save enough to pay all these additional taxes.

Now, it wasn't just the raising of the taxes and the impact it had on families; it was the way the government did it that bothers many people. They said that people should not have the right to vote, yet

they recrafted the balanced-budget law a few years ago to take out penalties for them. They removed the penalties for them. What did they leave in? They left in the referendum right. Oh, no, they wouldn't take that right away. No way. They would never do that, would they? It's in law. It was in law. Every Manitoban knew it and they knew they were protected.

Every person looking to invest in this province—*[interjection]* You would too. They knew that in Manitoba we had an environment where major taxes could not be hiked without the permission of the people of the province in a referendum. Income tax, business tax, personal sales tax—none of them could be hiked. Not one of those three major categories could be raised without the permission of the people of Manitoba in a referendum.

So someone looking to expand their business who lived in Saskatchewan or New Brunswick could look to come to Manitoba with the full confidence that the major tax rates could not be raised. Someone looking to relocate for work could come to Manitoba confident that although we had some of the highest taxes in the country, they could not be at least elevated. These were important things to attract new business, to attract employees, to attract opportunities for capital investment and, most importantly, this was an important way to stabilize our economy for Manitobans who live here because they knew that they could not be gouged unless at least they got a chance to vote on it first.

Now, what did the government do? The government said they would respect your rights—before the election—and after the election they took that right away. They took it away, and they went to court to do it. They went to court, they used taxpayers' money, they hired high-priced legal help. And then they went to court to say they had the right, you did not. One million Manitobans did not have a right to vote. They went to court to take away the right to vote. They went to court to say that they lied in the election just held. They went to court to say 36 or five or four or whatever there are now NDP MLAs have all the power and you have none of it. They went to court to say you don't matter. They went to court and they said our laws can be broken by us. We can break our laws as we want. We are all the power, said the NDP government members, and you are none of that power.

And what did the Premier (Mr. Selinger) say? He said this, and I quote now for the member for Fort Garry-Riverview (Mr. Allum) who should listen with comprehension to this quote. People have civil rights, said our Premier. People have civil rights. But, he added, we also have an organization to run. Okay, so what does that tell you? His organization, more important than your civil rights, I think, is what that tells everybody who cares about us—cares about civil rights.

And what do the members of his caucus think? We've given them the opportunity to stand in this place and to say who didn't know it was going to happen. No one has stood. Some have said they found this really rewarding because they felt it was necessary to do. Others have said, quote, it came with very little warning. It came with no consultation. With Manitobans, it was very, very jarring to them, and the person who said that, I agree with 100 per cent. It came with very little warning, I repeat. It came with no consultation with Manitobans, and it was very, very jarring to them. End quote. That quote appeared in a noted Winnipeg paper that wasn't the Sun.

And the fact is that member is implying that he or she did not know. They are implying—it's implicit in that statement that he or she did not know. But I believe they did know. I believe every member of that caucus knew. If they did not know, they should stand up now and say they did not know. Otherwise they knew. They knew when they ran for election that they were going to raise the PST. They knew it when they went to the doors and looked in the eyes of Manitobans. They knew it when they promised they would not, they were going to. And, Mr. Speaker, that is not integrity—that is not integrity—because integrity is best defined as doing what you say you will do, not something different, but what you say you will do.

This budget and the ones previous to it affect Manitobans in a real way. They affect real Manitobans. I want to just reference three today.

Diane is middle-aged now, a woman of Metis descent or origin. She is a single mom. She put herself through hairdressing school to train herself. And she got work and she worked with a couple of different companies over a period of time, and she saved. Unlike this government, she actually had a view to the future as well as today, and she saved a little money and she worked hard at her job, and she

cares about her job and she loves the people whom she does hair for and manicures for.

And the NDP candidates came to her door in the last election and they promised her they wouldn't raise her taxes. And then right after the election they broadened the PST to include everything she does, everything she does in her little business that she started on her own, and that has hurt her. It's hurt her badly. Not just the distrust, it's hurt her financially. It's taken money away from her; it's taken money away from her and it's taken away her ability to employ friends. She told me she had to cut the hours of a gal she hired six years before that's been working with her as a partner in her business for over half a decade, and it broke her heart to do it.

But that's the consequence to a human being of a broken promise. It's not just a jingle or a slogan; it's a real effect on a human being that concerns us on this side of the House. A human being who cares, who gives, who gives back, who provides a service, who's innovative and creative and hard-working and honest deserves to be respected. This is the kind of government we will form, one that respects people.

Elaine and her husband are both teachers. Elaine is a dedicated educator. She cares deeply about education and she and her husband raise their children to have good values. But most of all, like—I guess I will say like my mother, they instill in their children that the way up in the world is to get an education, to pursue your education, to pursue self-improvement and work hard at whatever you do with integrity. That's the value system that I think all members of this House have had the chance to hear, but some abide by in their lives. And the reality is, for Elaine, that the NDP canvasser came to her door and promised her that they wouldn't raise her taxes, promised her and her husband they would not raise the taxes on that family. And then, within a few weeks, they raised the PST on their home insurance and they raised the PST on their benefits at work, and they took hundreds of dollars out of the household. And then they went further and deepened it and they took more than a thousand dollars out of that household that they no longer have to save in an RESP for their child's future education. And they see the quality of education declining, and even as teachers and especially as teachers who care about their students, they are very concerned. They are very concerned and they see no direction from this government, no plan, nothing—nothing—except fear, fear tactics.

And so what happened in that house just last year is memorable because in that house last year the NDP came by and left a brochure, and that brochure claimed that I intended to fire those people who lived in that house. And the NDP canvassers told them that and they left the brochure there and their 11-year-old daughter found it. And just as I would have been desperately frightened if someone had told me the year after I first got to buy a Christmas present—because my mom was a teacher—that she would get fired, if someone had come to our place and left a brochure and I had found it as an 11-year-old, I would have been frightened.

Why frighten children to get a vote? It's shameful—it's shameful and it has to stop. Fear is all these members have. There is no integrity available to them now, simply a free election budget that will try to ribbon-cut their way to power and fear tactics to try shamefully to frighten children, to frighten government employees, to frighten seniors, to frighten those vulnerable people in our society who deserve better than that.

\* (11:40)

And then there's Edith. Edith faced the two most stressful things that a person can face, apparently, according to the textbooks, anyway. Retirement is a stressful thing. These members, I know, are stressed by the prospects.

Retirement was something she didn't long for but she knew it was time, and so Edith retired after close to 40 years of giving to her patients as a nurse. And then, within weeks, she'd faced another stress when she lost her husband, back to back. And she faces up to it. She said, I never did the books before; I thought I could live on half as much. Boy, was I naive.

The hydro bill is about the same or more now that the NDP has raised the bill. The insurance that she wants to protect her kids is still there for her to pay for. She got a little from her husband's insurance when he passed, but it doesn't make up for him not being there, as far as she's concerned.

So she pays the bills. And the bills are higher, not lower. The gas tax went up, and she says she does a little more driving now, more visiting than she used to. She volunteers once a week. She always has; she's not stopping. She's not leaving Manitoba. She's not threatening to leave because of what this government's going to do to her or has done to her. But Edith deserves better. She deserves better.

Edith, Elaine, Diane, they're all real people, real Manitobans this government forgot to think about when they took away their right to vote on the PST, when they raised the PST, when they broadened the PST. They did it for themselves. They didn't do it for Edith or Elaine or Diane or anybody else; they did it for themselves. And they did not have to. Nine other provinces face fiscal challenges. Nine other provinces have not resorted to digging deeper into the pockets of working families and of seniors and of vulnerable people, small businesses. Nine other provinces have not resorted to the lazy tactic this government resorted to of raising the PST. And no other province broke the law to do it, that's for sure.

When this government acts as it acts, it ignores many things but it, most of all, I think, is ignoring the reality that our province has to face competitive pressures from other provinces and jurisdictions. I'm sure that the member for Burrows (Ms. Wight), who very likely shops frequently in Grand Forks, knows the reality of their sales tax versus our own. I also know that the people who live in border communities increasingly understand what hollowing out means. Perhaps the member for Burrows would listen and would gain a valuable concept here. Hollowing out, in this context, is what happens to small communities, mid-sized communities, when their retail businesses start to lose business to labouring-neighbouring jurisdictions where shoppers like to go for various reasons.

In our province, that now includes the people in the city of Winnipeg because what's happening is increasingly people are shopping and taking advantage of deals. Manitobans are great shoppers. Our reputation is we are great shoppers. This government has exacerbated that necessity to find deals because they've raised the prices on everything. Now Manitobans are paying more and getting less, and they have to go to find better deals wherever they can.

I have a good friend who lives in eastern Saskatchewan. He lives on the—on a piece of road that is approximately between the area around Roblin, Manitoba, and Yorkton, Saskatchewan. On his little piece of highway, he's told me—I actually saw him just recently at Ag Days up in Brandon, Disney World for farmers, a great event—and he said he wished me well and wished us well. He said, you know, Brian, for many, many years where we live, every Saturday morning cars rushed by our place heading east. Now cars rush by our place heading west. Why? Well, because Manitobans are people

who like to be treated fairly in their stores. Manitobans are people who like to be respected. Manitobans will demand respect in the next election and they will get it from us.

My mother grew up in poverty in the foothills in the Duck mountains in a little community. There's nothing left but the old school now called Merridale. She didn't have much, but she taught us great values. She taught us to respect other people, to give back, to work hard and to get an education. I want the government to listen enough that they get an education on this front.

When the people of Roblin, Manitoba, celebrated their centennial last summer—a year ago last summer they celebrated it with trepidation and fear for their future, because in their little community their small businesses are really hurting. People buy the little stuff, the gum, the bars, the chips and so on in the stores, but the big stuff they go to Yorkton to buy. And what this government's done is ignored the effect that that has on these communities, and it is not just Roblin. It is Swan River; it is Dauphin; it is many, many communities around our province. Retail options are becoming less and less for those communities and the pressure is on them. Many, many communities are suffering as a result of this government's policies and they are ignoring that fact, and they should not because these are good people who value their community, who care deeply about it and who give back to it.

But, when the community starts to hollow out, people will leave and fewer people will come, and that's a shame because the quality of life in these communities and those communities I mentioned and many others is wonderful. The opportunity for people to live in a beautiful, environmentally friendly, neighbourly place where they are respected and feel protected and safe, that opportunity is wonderful. But, if you can't find a job there or you can't get good value for the dollar you earn, or if you're an employer you have to fire people because you don't have enough profit. People have to move to where the opportunities are greater, and many of these people in these communities are moving to other provinces, and that is a shame because we have more to offer than that; we just need a better government to make sure that it is real.

So, you know, we know what the Premier is trying to do with his communication spin. We see it. But here's a quote from the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger) that really should interest members of

the House. He said just a few years ago, he said in respect of balancing the budget: If you don't have targets you don't have the same level of discipline. Hallelujah, what happened? Where'd the targets go? Same level of discipline is not there.

I expect the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) has never seen such a lack of discipline because he has never before been part of a government that has not had a target for reducing its spending and waste. He has never been—until this last week the member for Kildonan has never been part of a government that had no idea when it was going to balance its budget, no target at all, unbelievable.

So what was the answer in yesterday's budget? What was the answer? Well, the government's answer was this, to say they were going in the right direction. Well, their projected deficit—this year's budget projected deficit, is it going in the right direction? It's 20 per cent higher than last year's projected deficit, whoa. And how many years has the NDP government actually spent more than they projected? Every year, yes, so we expect it'll be worse than what they say.

Then they went out and spun the members of the media. They went out into the hall with their prepared talking points that for 193 communication staff put their heads together on, and what did they say? This is a budget with no tax increases; try \$145 million of tax increases. This would be a record if it wasn't for the 'ignonimous' record they hold previously, okay? This is incredible. They're—it's all relative. They're making a 100-plus-million tax hike look like nothing because they raised it by \$500 million in the previous three years. They—\$100 million more.

\* (11:50)

Whose—I won't even read you the list, Mr. Speaker, but it's long, okay, on the additional tax and fee increases these people have imposed on Manitobans. Oh, no, no. I mean, besides the massive cash grab on the cottage owners, which is enormous, they've also put a big additional load on municipal governments. Try—if you're a pet owner, try that, when the new fees for veterinarians—that's going to raise your costs if you love your pets. And bank customers or credit union customers got hit with a massive tax which the government will tell you—they'll spin it. You watch this. They're going to say this is a tax on the big corporations. Ready for that? Tax on the big corporations. When was the last time that a fee put on a bank didn't get transferred to the

people who bank at the bank? Never going to happen.

And every family in this province is going to pay higher bank fees because this government can't find waste in its operation. After 16 years, it has a lot of waste. And the difference between us and them is many, but one thing clearly is this: they are not willing to find that waste and we are willing to find that waste.

The Premier (Mr. Selinger) should—he should, if he understands money management—he should apologize. As the debt-doubling Premier, he should apologize probably about, I don't know, 18 billion times, because that's how much he's increased the debt. He should get started on that quickly. As far as—they make the comment—debt-to-GDP ratios—they like to talk about debt-to-GDP ratios. Well, they've actually gone up to over 30 per cent now. So it's a very significant increase from the Doer days. Very—a very significant debt-to-GDP ratio. Now, why would they not talk about that intelligently is beyond me.

They keep saying their debt service costs have gone down when they've gone up massively. They're at record level. They're at \$900 million and going up, okay? And they keep saying, oh, it's not that much different from, you know, 16 years ago. They like to talk about the '90s a lot. You know, they're retro government—retro government. But what they have failed to acknowledge is that the current prime lending rate is about, well, I don't know, a fifth of what it was in '90s, okay?

Now, what happens to Manitobans when interest rates start to return to higher, previous levels? What's the consequence of all this absence of foresight for the people who need the services that government must provide? I mean, we've got \$900 million. If it was a department, which it isn't, it'd be the fourth largest department of the government. In Saskatchewan, they faced up to the challenge of better management by finding waste and eliminating it and focusing on investing in the right things to increase their economy and their economic strength. In Saskatchewan, their debt service costs have dropped to half of what they were a few years ago, but in Manitoba no such luck. What happens when interest rates start to go back up? Debt service department four? Debt service department ranking three? Debt service department ranking two? They're digging a hole so deep that the most common comment I get from Manitobans is, are you sure you want this job you're applying for?



Nine hundred billion dollars that cannot be used to educate a child, to give security to a vulnerable young person, train, to fill a pothole, to drain a swampy area and let some farmers make some money. Can't be used to dig an outlet. No, won't be used to dig an outlet in the north end of Lake Manitoba. They're still having coffee parties about that half a decade later—coffee parties to discuss what they think they should discuss about what they're going to discuss. A committee they set up. A committee—Ambrose Bierce, the author of *The Devil's Dictionary*, once said, a committee: a cul-de-sac down which ideas are lured and slowly strangled to death. This government, amazingly, doesn't even have an idea to strangle. A committee to discuss the possibility of maybe someday helping people who live in fear every day of being flooded out in their homes and in their communities and on their farms. A committee, after five years. People get to go to a coffee party and look at some nice display pieces that blame the federal government for not digging a ditch that's in the provincial government's area of responsibility.

For heaven's sake, after all these years, if you cared about those people who have given so much to protect the city of Winnipeg and who did it willingly—if you cared about them, if you had any sense of fair-mindedness, if you had any sense of the damage you're doing to those people and their families and their communities, dig the ditch.

It's the level of arrogance that is troubling and should be troubling to many members opposite, and I expect is, to many members opposite, troubling, the level of arrogance, for example, among the former front-benchers I see to my left, the arrogant disdain for those who have tried to help us.

Moody's international, for example, has said that they do not believe this government when they make commitments. So Moody's international has now joined the ranks of most Manitobans in that respect. The difference is Moody's international is a very influential bond rating agency worldwide, I would argue perhaps ranked first in terms of the respect people have for its commentaries, for its observations about the things that matter most to those in public sector life, which are, the costs of borrowing lately for this government. In particular, the cost of borrowing should be a concern to them. Now, when Moody's international changed our bond outlook from stable to negative, that was the first downgrading, the first downgrade in a quarter of a century.

Now the government speaks about its record, but it needs to take a look at its legacy now. It should start right now, before it's too late to turn things around, because its legacy will be one of massive debt, and of arrogance in ignoring the warnings, the warning signs, the red flags that we and many across the country and around the world have showed it as to the dangers of its practices.

Moody's said in its evaluation of the government's spending practices that they needed to get their spending problem under control. They also said that the risks to Manitoba of a higher debt burden, of an increase in the debt burden, were significant. And they went further to say, when they concluded with a negative outlook, that they felt that the government that they were evaluating represented an execution risk. What is an execution risk, Mr. Speaker? If your banker thinks you're an execution risk, you think you're going to pay less for the money you borrow or more? It's not good. Because what it means is the source of your money is going to dry up or it's going to charge you a lot more for that money.

An execution risk means trust is gone. And, when trust is gone, everything else is going to start to fall apart with it. So that was the warning we got just a few months ago, and this is the budget we get as a result of not paying any attention whatsoever to that warning. That is dangerous.

The result of all this is that Manitobans are fearful, many Manitobans, whether through emails or letters or phone calls, or direct contact to our caucus, at the many community outreach meetings that we have, to our party, to us as individual members of the Legislature, are communicating to us their fear and their concern. We are hearing them and we are hearing it consistently and we are hearing it increasingly. And I expect as a result of this inconsiderate broken promise budget, this short-term thinking budget, this pre-election budget, we're going to hear a lot more of it.

Manitoba's small-business optimism is at its lowest level since 2010. Our small businesses drive our economy. Our small-business community deserves better from this government.

The latest results of the Probe Research annual Manitoba Business Leaders Index, an annual survey of 200 CEOs and business owners, shows that just 13 per cent of provincial business owners feel that the government is doing a good job—13 per cent. It's the lowest in the recorded history of that stat. That

means 87 per cent are concerned to some degree, some of them very greatly.

If you wrote a script like this, one member opposite said, if you wrote a script like this for House of Cards, nobody would believe it. This member also said, I'm not a Catholic, but I love the concept of purgatory because it's the only way to describe this. These are the words of the members on the government side, Mr. Speaker, not of the members on the opposition side.

Some of the government's decisions, another member said, not necessarily all that well articulated, results in us being in bad shape. And another member said, when you are a voice—actually, a leadership contender said—when you are voice that may not sing in harmony with what the Premier (Mr. Selinger) wants to say, it becomes very difficult for your voice to be heard after that.

\* (12:00)

This—these are not the sounds of unity. These are not the sounds of a team that can function effectively. These are the sounds of dysfunction. And that in and of itself is sad, and sends a sad message to the people of the province.

The revealing comment of the new budget minister—and I recognize that many of the ministers were put in a rough situation with lacking previous experience in Cabinet. Not perhaps as prepared as they could have been or should have been, because they would have got no help from the members who—*[interjection]* No, the members who chose to resign from Cabinet, and had the right to make that choice, but those members were not invited to do any supportive things, I don't expect, or welcomed in doing any transitional training or giving any guidance to these new ministers.

What we've just seen is a budgetary process which was interrupted by a leadership race throughout its time, presided over by a member of this place who was, at the same time, running for the leadership of his party, to hang onto the leadership of his party, presided over by a person who clearly was in need of delegate support and clearly would have been less likely, common sense would say, to say no to anything, less likely to say no to any proposal that would involve spending, less likely to do anything to jeopardize delegate support. It seemed, at the end of the process, that his support was not unanimous, not extremely strong.

And the reality is, of course, that any slip through those months while the budget was being prepared could have meant the difference to him holding on to his title as Premier. Significant stakes. Significant stakes. More significant to a politician than any other, quite likely, and more significant for him, as this was a historic challenge, unheard of in modern political history, unheard of in ancient political history, in fact, in this province or any other, that the Premier would have to run for re-election during a term of office.

So what happened as a result should not be a surprise. What happened as a consequence was that this budget reflects continued waste, expanded waste, a missed opportunity, higher taxes and fees and no attempt whatsoever to give greater value to Manitoba citizens, to reduce the tax load on them. That would be unheard of by this government and by this Premier. He was not looking for savings for anyone else. He would have been looking for delegates for himself.

This is why The Globe and Mail referred to the whole process as a farce, because that's exactly what it was. But then, of course, the culture of blame that the Premier has cultivated, which he, of course, in a sense has become victimized by, by his own members, is in fact clearly on evidence yet again.

Just a couple of weeks ago the federal government released its budget. It decided, in one of its measures, that it would reduce the tax load on Manitoba seniors by changing the law—and long overdue, I might add—changing the rules for Registered Retirement Income Fund withdrawals.

The rules for Registered Retirement Income Fund withdrawals were established at a time when seniors who retired could get a return on the guaranteed investment of a considerable amount, double digit in that—in some cases, certainly, just with GICs, so—a Guaranteed Investment Certificate. So what the rule said was that you had to withdraw a larger amount earlier because the returns were higher at that time.

And what the federal government did, finally, was change those rules so that seniors would not be forced to withdraw too much of their money early. *[interjection]* I'm sorry, I'm interrupting the pledge drive, Mr. Speaker, at the back *[inaudible]*. The actual—the rules were long overdue to begin with.

Now, we—the change will allow Manitoba seniors, seniors across the country to live with

greater security in the future because they won't be forced to withdraw so much money early, in early years of retirement. Mr. Speaker, I know you understand this, but the fact is your colleagues on the other side of the House don't seem to get that this is a wonderful thing for Manitoba seniors. The reaction from the government was this. They said, quote, that will be eight or nine million dollars that we will have to find in the next short period of time. Wow, well, whose money was it? Whose money was it? Was it the people who saved it that deserve a break on their taxes, or is it the government's money? No, I think the government revealed themselves rather well with that comment. The fact is it does not—the money that Manitobans work for, the money that Manitobans save and invest is not the government's money; it belongs to Manitoba seniors.

This Premier (Mr. Selinger) did get a degree from the London School of Economics, but it was not in economics; that is clear. This Premier, actually, just prior to his appointment and election to this House as Finance minister, sued his financial adviser. He sued his financial adviser and in court documents he filed, when asked for his name, he answered correctly and honestly. When asked for his address, the same. But, when he was asked for his level of financial acumen, he replied low. He must have been honest about that as well, and I think so. Based on his record, his level of financial acumen is indeed low, very low because what he has done, what he has presided over, over the last 16 years, is a missed opportunity to make Manitoba stronger, the perfect trifecta of opportunities.

Shortly after Gary Doer came to power, the transfer payment formula was changed and revised mightily upwards, and he was the beneficiary of massive increases in transfer support, and those supports continue and will continue for some time yet, though the federal government has sent signals they will reduce to the rate of economic growth in about two years' time.

But this minister—this new Finance Minister, perhaps out of naivety or simply ignorance has said that transfer payments are cut. They're not cut; they're 6 per cent higher this year. Who gets a 6 per cent raise? This Finance Minister, and he still complains that it's not enough and he still blames another level of government for his own problem. More, he finds the tin cup and asks for more. Now, the level of financial acumen that is missing is enormous, Mr. Speaker, and the reality is, of course, that Manitobans are the victims of that.

The provincial government under the NDP benefited tremendously from increased transfer payments, record highs on transfer payments. They benefited, of course, also, as we well know, by massive increases in revenues as Manitobans got to work and the economy performed well. And then they had to further pad that with increases in taxes—massive—the largest increases in taxes of any Canadian province under this Premier, also, the largest increase in percentage revenues internally generated of any province, this government.

And yet you'd think with all that plus interest rates that are a fraction of what they were before this government came in, you'd think that they could balance the budget and beef up the rainy day fund, okay? Then they ran a debt-doubling exercise and they stole money from the rainy day fund. This is not good management.

Now, the problem is this government—one of the many problems this government can't step up to is that they cannot find waste. They do not even look to find waste. Instead, it seems that they look to create waste: \$20,000 to put fans in the seats at a speech, you've got to be kidding; shut down Osborne House because, well, you're angry at their political decision; close down a venerated horse racing industry in this province by trying to shut Assiniboia Downs and the Jockey Club through intimidation tactics which continue and expect that you are going to—that's not the way you find waste. That's the way you waste.

\* (12:10)

This is a government which has found a way to waste that is unprecedented. Step in so you can do photo ops at a construction site and rush the construction of a beautiful stadium or what should have been a beautiful stadium. Buy a helicopter, a beautiful red photo op for the Premier just days prior to the last provincial election campaign without tendering, without shopping, without giving Manitobans an opportunity even bid on the job, breaking—according to the Auditor General—every rule in the book, and pay \$100 million more than Saskatchewan for the same service. That's waste, Mr. Speaker—photo-op government.

And now, this year, what have we got to look forward to? Photo ops, paid for by our children with money taken from our children, borrowed from our children, to buy ribbon so this government can celebrate itself when it should be joining with us on this side and celebrating the people of Manitoba.

And the environmental destruction of the bipole line—the environmental destruction of the bipole line—is something that should concern any member. *[interjection]* Still at the pledge drive back there? I hear the member for—the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Gaudreau) needs to concentrate on his sign-up pledge exercise, Mr. Speaker. He has not had any success thus far, but I know if he focuses with laser-like intensity on his project he may be able to get a couple of more members to join in his dim exercise.

Now, in respect of the infrastructure strategy—the infrastructure strategy that the government uses, it is not a strategy at all. It is a process of conspicuous construction just prior to the election. In the previous four budget years, how many departments of the NDP government have been underspent? Remember, Mr. Speaker, this is a government that has a reputation for overspending and wasting in the process, not getting results, just overspending. How many departments of government were underspent each year in the previous four years? One. And it was, of course, not health care, not education—no; it was infrastructure. But now the government has polled and found out what we knew all along and what we've been espousing for a long, long time: strategic infrastructure makes sense to build the future of our province.

For 25 years—for 25 years—the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) knows, as he bleats from his seat, that he is part of a government which took the money out of the infrastructure budget—I see I struck a nerve with the member for Kildonan, I'm glad. The member for Kildonan knows that he's part of a government that took money out of the infrastructure, \$2.2 billion over four fiscal years, out of the infrastructure budget, and repositioned all that money somewhere else. But, on the heels of doing that, they now claim they care about roads, they care about drainage, they care about water and sewage, but they didn't care for four years before so why would you believe what they're saying now? Oh, my goodness.

And what's the strategy when their biggest infrastructure project, the straw that stirs the NDP drink when it comes to infrastructure, is to destroy millions of trees unnecessarily on the west side of the lakes of our province, to destroy environment—beautiful environment—to bulldoze and to push away trees that didn't deserve to die in the name of the NDP's conspicuous construction exercise. This is what this government's engaging in. Not one—they can't produce—they cannot and they have not—they

cannot, have not and will not produce one expert at Manitoba Hydro who supports their foolish west-side route—not one.

And now they go further. As they try, as they endeavour with their financial foolishness, as they endeavour to bankrupt Manitoba Hydro, they are now tendering out work and keeping IBEW members from working for their own beautiful Manitoba Hydro. They're tendering it out to workers from other provinces because they aren't even allowing Manitoba Hydro front-line workers to do their work. They are privatizing Manitoba Hydro by stealth, Mr. Speaker. That's what they're doing. Unbelievable—unbelievable.

All this spending, this massive spending exercise, isn't resulting in improvements in Manitoba's social services. It isn't helping the people who need our services in this province at all. You know, in social services, we pushed the government very hard to have an inquiry following the tragic death of Phoenix Sinclair, and they dragged their feet. They dragged their feet for months and months and months into years. And they did not want to get to the truth. And then, finally, we were successful in having the Hughes inquiry called. And the Hughes inquiry cost taxpayers \$14 million, but it was an investment we hoped—in the better quality of care for our most vulnerable children, those who need our care and deserve our protection. And what did the government do with the recommendations for professional standards? They decided to play silly with them. They decided to say let's define it differently, so we can get around the rules. And Justice Hughes was forced to write an op-ed piece in the Winnipeg Free Press explaining to them that when he made his recommendation he had hoped they would be implemented and followed in the interests of our children in our province.

First in the country in children needing food banks. *[interjection]* I encourage the member not to make a joke of children needing food banks. It is not a humorous thing. Children in care, first. Children in hotels, first. Manitoba girls six times more likely to be reported missing than the Canadian average. After 16 years you have to ask yourself—Manitobans most certainly are asking themselves—if the NDP could ever get it right, why haven't they got it right by now? Why haven't they got it right by now? In education, our students ranking last in math, last in reading, last in science. We're failing our students. This government has failed our students. We can do better. We need to do better.

In health care, 10th in wait times for ambulances, 10th in waits in emergency rooms. These are human beings that are impacted by these things. These aren't just statistics. Tenth in waits for treatment. People getting a referral and then waiting for treatment, waiting for testing, waiting, waiting, waiting in fear, their families in fear, their incomes often jeopardized, the security of their children in jeopardy. It's not a thing for flippancy. I encourage the members to pay attention to this.

We can do better. Tenth in waits for hip and knee replacements. Think of the compounding of the pain and suffering of our seniors who wait for care that in other provinces they would receive much more readily. There are real consequences, and Manitobans are paying more under this government because this government is wasteful in its spending practices. They spend without obtaining results, and people want results and they deserve results with some of Canada's highest taxes being taken from them.

I referenced earlier the legacy—my point about legacy, that the members, all of us—Stephen Covey once said there—life is three I's: living, loving, learning. But, as we get older, I suppose, in part because of that aging process, we start to think about the fourth I, and that is that legacy point. How will we be remembered as people, as a group of people, as a team, hopefully, of people? How will we be remembered? This Premier (Mr. Selinger), this government, this particular government, will be remembered as one which created a giant, top-heavy bureaucracy, a province that is transfer dependent, more than it has ever been, on the support of working people from other parts of the country to keep itself going.

It'll be remembered as a government that is secretive, that avoids providing information, that uses spokespeople instead of accountable elected people to get its message out, which is usually spin, which covers up information so that requests for information are not met with accurate data or are not met at all. This kind of legacy is not a legacy to be proud of. It's a self-promotional government most certainly. It loves to spend more on its spin people and on its advertising budget, but it will be remembered for high school graduates who graduate in larger numbers but who cannot read. It will be remembered by the number of seniors that are waiting in care, poor care. It will be remembered for putting vulnerable children in hotels in the care of people ill trained. It will be remembered for its flood

victims—past, present, and, sadly, future as well. And it will be remembered, and this Premier will be remembered as the king of debt.

\* (12:20)

Only a government with a record this bad would try to claim credit for driving an economy that's performing at the ninth ranked level in the country over the last five years. Only a government this weak and frail would try to cover up its poor performance in actuality by citing projections and forecasts. We all hope that Manitoba's economy performs well. All of us should. But the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) wants to get credit if it does and not, like his colleagues, accept the blame or responsibility if it does not.

Only a premier with a record this bad, surrounded by colleagues who are this self-centred, would refuse to recognize the hardships they have caused to the people of Manitoba, would refuse to recognize the sacrifices they have forced Manitoba families to make, would refuse to recognize the desperation they have created for many Manitoba small businesses and communities, would refuse to recognize the challenges they have imposed on Manitobans on an individual, at a family, at a community and collective level because of the many broken promises they have made and then broken. Far reaching, long lasting.

Each of us is a part of where we've been and what we've done. I've had great opportunities given to me by this province and its people. Last night, I was able to pay tribute to one man who helped me be part of a team. Team building. I love that. I've always been a person who loved that, since—as a kid, loved to be part of sports teams; a business team, as an adult; of a community team, working together like many members opposite. And they know this, and I know they share this sentiment. It's wonderful to be able to join with others in the pursuit of something more than you could ever do yourself. It's a wonderful feeling to be able to contribute in that way. This government has descended into a situation where it is no longer that kind of a team. Here, we have that kind of a team, Mr. Speaker.

Now, within his party, the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger) has created deep discord, deep fractures. His disrespect, as I have alluded to it earlier, and his disdain for Manitobans is clear, but I believe, unfortunately, that quality has also been demonstrated in his relationships with others within his own caucus. And that has created an unhealthy

environment, and it has led to a dysfunctional situation. And, though he will not recognize it, the solution for him is clear.

This is a government that prefers to blame. The member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) continues, from his seat, to, of course, point to this side of the House and blame. His colleagues continue to, like-continue to, on a regular basis, blame the federal government on every opportunity for problems that they themselves failed to face up. They refuse to team with other provinces through, for example, an economic union. Every other province in our nation now, Mr. Speaker, is part of an economic union for the betterment-economic and social union, in fact-for the betterment of the people in their jurisdiction. They see that you can benefit through the additional knowledge, the additional co-operative strategies, the additional efficiencies that you can derive from working together with partners.

It requires a certain skill set to be part of a team. I once thought the member for Kildonan had those qualities. I hope he still does. But he does not have the opportunity in this environment, and he knows it—he knows it full well—to demonstrate his potential to be part of a team because that is not a team. It does not work. Adversarial attitudes and adversarial approaches to individuals, to the Jockey Club or the Osborne House—these are typical of the approach this government takes. Adversarial attitudes to people in professions such as social work, such as nursing, such as teaching. Adversarial attitudes which say, we are entitled to govern and you have no right to take a position different from ours, you have no right to vote, you have no right to expect value for the taxes we take from you, you have no right to expect improvement because our only goal is to be re-elected, nothing else. That's this government. This is a broken-promise budget, and that should not surprise anyone because this is a broken team.

A leader has to be a dealer in hope. I want to deal in hope. Our party wants to deal in hope. As a government, our message will define us to Manitobans as they are. They are, I believe, not fearful people; they are hopeful people. We will be hope. They will continue, on that side of the House, to be fear. That is how they will define themselves. Manitobans are tired of the NDP politics of fear; they are tired of it.

Manitobans are smart shoppers. The PC government will shop smarter with the money

entrusted to us. Just as I bought a good shovel and a solid broom for my mom and dad, we're going to spend money practically and well so that Manitobans get the best possible value from the tax dollar that they pay.

Manitobans know that our government can and will reduce waste because they know that this government cannot and has not. They know that we can improve and enhance services because they have not seen it from them, but they know they will get that from us. Manitobans are tired of the government's broken promises, and they are honest people. A PC government will keep its word. We will lower taxes; we will eliminate waste; we will balance the books; we will improve front-line services like health and education, because we as a team can do better.

This Premier (Mr. Selinger) undervalues the people of this province. He grabs credit that rightly belongs to the people of this province. He chooses secrecy over openness. He chooses darkness and discord over light and hope. We choose hope. He chooses disrespect over responsibility. He chooses fear and anger over courage and respect, and he breaks his word, and he has sold his integrity for a PST hike that we did not need, that Manitobans did not deserve. And, having sold his integrity, he cannot expect anyone to buy his budget because they're not buying. They're not buying anymore.

Manitobans have their integrity. They are going to demand change in the next election. They are asking for change now. This province can reclaim its promise. And, out of this long political darkness, a new day is going to come, a day like this morning, Mr. Speaker, when the sun came up and we had a brighter day, following a cloudy rainstorm. There is nothing wrong with Manitoba that cannot be fixed by what is right with Manitobans.

And so I move, seconded by the member for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson),

THAT the motion be amended by deleting all of the words after "House" and substituting:

therefore regrets that this budget neglects the priorities of Manitobans by:

- (a) failing to recognize that Manitobans are tired of broken promises such as balancing the budget by 2014 and not raising taxes, not respecting the right to vote on tax increases

and not recognizing that Manitobans want a change for the better; and

- (b) failing to recognize Manitobans are paying more and getting less due to front-line services like health care and education being ranked last, and also due to an average family in Winnipeg having to pay \$3,200 more in provincial taxes than a comparable average family living in Regina; and
- (c) failing to acknowledge that government waste has caused the provincial debt to double since 2008 requiring Manitobans to pay more than \$800 million in debt interest charges which threatens Manitoba's future as that money cannot be invested to protected essential front-line services, reduce health-care wait times or improve education results for our children.

As a consequence, the provincial government has thereby lost the confidence of this House and the people of Manitoba.

**Mr. Speaker:** It's been moved by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Pallister), seconded by the honourable member for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson),

THAT the motion be amended by deleting all the words after House and—

**An Honourable Member:** Dispense.

**Mr. Speaker:** Dispense? Dispense.

The amendment is in order and the debate will remain open.

And the hour being 12:30 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. on Monday.

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, May 1, 2015

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