

Third Session – Forty-First Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
Official Report
(Hansard)

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Myrna Driedger
Speaker*

Vol. LXXI No. 64A - 10 a.m., Thursday, June 14, 2018

ISSN 0542-5492

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-First Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALLUM, James	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
BINDLE, Kelly	Thompson	PC
CLARKE, Eileen, Hon.	Agassiz	PC
COX, Cathy, Hon.	River East	PC
CULLEN, Cliff, Hon.	Spruce Woods	PC
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FLETCHER, Steven, Hon.	Assiniboia	Ind.
FONTAINE, Nahanni	St. Johns	NDP
FRIESEN, Cameron, Hon.	Morden-Winkler	PC
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
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SWAN, Andrew	Minto	NDP
TEITSMA, James	Radisson	PC
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WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
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<i>Vacant</i>	St. Boniface	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, June 14, 2018

The House met at 10 a.m.

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

Please be seated. Good morning, everybody.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader): Good morning, Madam Speaker. Two matters of House—on House business, I seek leave to move to debate Bill 225.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to proceed with Bill 225 this morning? [*Agreed*]

**DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS—
PUBLIC BILLS**

**Bill 225—The Human Rights Code
Amendment Act
(Genetic Characteristics)**

Madam Speaker: We will then move to second reading, Bill 225, The Human Rights Code Amendment Act (Genetic Characteristics), standing in the name of the honourable member for River Heights, who has one minute remaining.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, just in summary, I think this is an important bill to move forward. At the same time, I think that, over time, we will have to do something that is even more substantive to make sure that concerns over discrimination related to insurance are adequately addressed, but time will tell.

Thank you.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for—the honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): To put a couple of words on the record—or in respect of Bill 225,

just a couple of minutes, Madam Speaker. Certainly, I want to put on the record that our full support of this bill what—which would prevent genetic discrimination. Certainly, I would suggest to the House that our NDP team has long stood against discrimination against Manitobans and Canadians, and we will continue to stand up for the principles of human rights and anti-discrimination.

And we certainly believe that genetic discrimination wrongfully attacks Manitobans. We certainly would suggest, Madam Speaker, that we live in a wonderfully 'diversed' mosaic of persons and cultures here in Manitoba and that our team stands proudly with our province's health-care providers, community organizations and the vast majority of Canadians who are in support of genetic privacy and in opposition to discrimination based on one's genetic information.

And so with those brief words, Madam Speaker, I say miigwech. Thank you.

Mr. James Teitsma (Radisson): I'm grateful for the opportunity to speak to this bill this morning. It's one that is indeed near and dear to me. Certainly—and I think I may also be in a somewhat unique position in this Legislature.

You don't know all the backgrounds of every member here, certainly, but for me, on both sides of this issue, if you can think about that there may be two sides to these issues, and I'll take the opportunity this morning to speak on both angles.

And now for starters, I think I connect with the words of the member for St. Johns. You know, we as legislators have a profound and significant calling to uphold human rights of everyone in our society and to ensure that every person's rights are respected and that those who might be singled out from our society are, in fact, afforded special protection and I think that's appropriate. And I think that's a sentiment that I hope I share with many, many MLAs in this place, and I trust that I do.

So I will give you a little bit of background as well, as to why this issue might be of some importance to me. I know that I've met with the Jewish Federation, as I suspect the member for Minto (Mr. Swan) has as well, and they certainly let me know that you had planned to bring this bill

forward—that he had planned to bring that bill forward, and I appreciate them keeping me in the loop in that regard as well.

And, certainly, the sentiment of the bill is something that I deeply support. I know, from a family history perspective, my parents—I'm a first-generation Canadian, I guess. My parents both immigrated here from the Netherlands and they lived through the horrors of World War II and—in quite a poignant and powerful way on both sides of my parents' family. On my mom's side of the family my maternal grandfather was sent to a concentration camp, in part for his values and beliefs that he expressed, and as a consequence of that he spent several years of his life in a concentration camp in Germany. Thankfully, he did survive, but not—certainly not without significant harm to his person and to his—not just to his physical well-being, to his mental well-being as well. Although he did live what most would consider a good long life, he lived into his late 80s. All of his older brothers and sisters at the graveside commented that it must have been the concentration camp that did him in because they were all in their 90s at the time, but—some interesting memories there.

On my dad's side of the family, perhaps more poignantly, because as we all know the Hitler regime at the time specifically targeted people on the basis of, effectively, genetics. They were after Jews. They had specific rules that would define what a Jew was from a genetic and family history perspective, and this resulted in not just the persecution, but, quite frankly, the death of millions of individuals who were targeted as well as many, many individuals who died trying to protect those people. I know in my paternal grandfather's hometown there was certainly, as you would expect in any case, there was different views as to, you know, what risks you should put your family in and to what degree should you be willing to stand up for what is right.

My parents—or my grandparents, rather—and my dad, at the time as a teenager, harboured a young Jewish girl named Carrie. She lived with them and—for much of the war, and they knew full well that if their Italian neighbours had decided to be less charitable than apparently they were—they were known as Nazi sympathizers, but they also knew that my grandfather was, well, a considerable man with a fair bit of family and support from the community, and so they chose not to turn them in. And—but they knew that if they had, my grandfather would have been shot on the spot, likely my grandmother as well,

and any adult children would have been taken off into concentration camps and the young girl would have also been sent away to a death camp.

*(10:10)

So that's my family's history of standing up for human rights, and it's one that I think I can rightfully be proud of and I am proud of. I think it's very important. So I do want to thank the member for Minto (Mr. Swan) for giving us the opportunity to talk about this—these issues and to also take the opportunity to reflect on how genetic discrimination, also, has no place in our society.

Now, I did talk about the other side of the table and some of the other concerns, and in that way my experience in the world of finance comes to bear to some degree. I was tapped to be an actuarial early in my life and, thankfully, I chose a different path. I chose a path as being a software developer. But, still, I ended up getting pulled into things that might resemble actuary where they're called—as insurance companies, they're called to provide insurance for us and, you know, they do so in group settings. And, certainly, there's an awful lot of, well, frankly, mathematics that goes behind that, you know, when they're looking at whether a person is a smoker or not and looking at whether a person is male or female, even. So there's discrimination built within the system that I think most people understand and accept that, you know, females tend to live longer than males and, therefore, they have a slightly different look to their insurance policy. You know, males tend to get disabled a little bit more often than females in terms of workplace injury, and so there's a little bit of a difference in the insurance system.

And when insurance agencies would—or sorry, insurance providers would look at the bill at the federal level, which I think is currently under somewhat of a challenge in that regard, and I think the bill that was put forward by the member for Minto, well intentioned I think as it is, they would have concerns. And specifically they would have concerns about people finding out for themselves that they are highly susceptible to an early demise as a result of a particular disease or cancer or whatever that may be, and that they then take advantage of the insurance system by purchasing, you know, perhaps far more insurance than they might need or that might be reasonable, and that they—that those kind of interactions, I think, make the insurance industry rightfully cautious about how this might be misused. They themselves, I believe, would testify that they—

they're certainly not intending to be discriminatory, but at the same time I think we all have actually known about, you know, people who effectively become uninsurable.

And if I still have some time, I could share a little personal history on that too. My sister-in-law, she had battled cancer for a number of years. She was in remission, met my wife's brother and they decided that they were going to start a life together, get married. And—but during the engagement, cancer came back up again. They decided to go ahead with the marriage and they did, and for the months that they were together as husband and wife it was certainly a huge relief to her, to her family as well; they certainly appreciated that my brother-in-law was willing to not abandon her in her time of need.

And—but at the same time she was very aware. She asked that her siblings not be tested. She didn't want them to know if they were susceptible to the kind of cancer that killed her. And the reason she didn't want them to know is because that knowledge would somehow render them uninsurable. And so in that way that ignorance was a blissful thing for them, and I believe they've carried out her wishes and they've not undergone that kind of testing, although they are regularly checked and looked at within the medical system, something I'm grateful for as well.

But that maybe gives you a little bit of a background of why I see this as a complex issue. It's an important issue. I think it's one that deserves further debate and something that I think as presented by the member is noble, but perhaps too far reaching. I think there needs to be some nuance. We're going to let the courts work that out, perhaps at a federal level, and that will give us some insight as to what might be appropriate or the best way to guarantee the best outcomes for Manitobans. And that's certainly what I want and I'm confident that's what the member for Minto (Mr. Swan) wants as well, that we have a fair and just society and that human rights are respected. And on—when—that note, I'm going to end my remarks.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Andrew Micklefield (Rossmere): I do want to express, at the onset, my sincere appreciation for member for Minto bringing this forward. It's an intriguing issue. It's an important issue. It's a modern issue that certainly is not going away and, on the face of it, certainly would appear to be a commendable issue.

I think that—I think, particularly, of people from other nations who would come to Canada either today or possibly recalling their own family history, as we've heard from the member from Radisson. I won't repeat what has been said there, but I will just allude briefly to the Yazidi community that I've worked with who are facing awful persecutions for no other reason than that they are of a particular ethnicity.

And so on the surface, there is no hesitation to commend measures which in our country would protect from the abuse of people based on that genetic quality. However, as one thinks perhaps a little more deeply about these things, it's seldom in legislation, the presenting issue, which is the problem, but there are unintended consequences.

And so while I do not oppose what the member from Minto, I believe, is commendably attempting to reach for in this legislation, I would ask some honest questions. And they are questions intended to open up a discussion. They're not questions intended to squash the discussion or belittle the conversation. But they are questions which I think need to be answered and I think need to be thought through in this place.

So it is determined, I believe, by the Manitoba Human Rights Commission that existing provisions already would allow for no such discrimination to occur. There's also a federal conversation happening, and that conversation is going through a constitutional review process. All provinces are certainly watching that federal conversation. And so we are not beginning a conversation here. We're really joining a conversation. And I think it behooves us to listen to the other voices in that conversation because, clearly, this is an issue which is not going away. It's not going to expire on a certain date. It is an issue which we do need to think through as we legislate something that has great potential to impact people's lives in very real ways. Manitoba, I think, would be wise to be consistent with what happens across Canada, and, obviously, we need to respect there is a certain degree of complexity to this.

So one question that I would raise is that my understanding of something as simple as life insurance—and I don't claim to have a great understanding of these things, I'm—I welcome people to push back and correct me here. But my understanding is that my beloved wife's life insurance costs slightly less than my own by virtue of the fact that she is female. And so if we are

contemplating the legislation of—that would prohibit any kind of adjustments to rates based on genetic qualities, would that thereby force insurers to, in the case of my wife and I, give us the same rate? That would be a change in the industry, and, obviously, there'd be financial implications to that. And I'm asking that question. I'm not critical. I'm trying to open up the conversation because I think there are questions we should consider, and that, for me, would be one of them. So I suspect, I think, that insurance companies would want to ask about that.

*(10:20)

I have a question as well. This isn't an insurance-related question, I don't think. But the nation of Canada has agreements with indigenous peoples and they are indigenous by virtue of their ethnicity, and so I would ask the question, could legislation which prohibits the—prohibits any kind of discrimination based on genetic qualities be used to take away indigenous rights? Is—would there be any protections for indigenous people who currently have existing agreements with certainly the federal government and other governments as well? There are genetic components to that, and so that's a question that I would ask. Is—are we unwittingly opening the door to—into that whole discussion as well, and I think that's a question that would need to be answered before I would be comfortable endorsing a bill that has some pretty broad sweeps on this issue.

In 2017, I believe it was in May, the Genetic Non-Discrimination received royal assent at the federal level. That act prohibited people from requiring someone else to undergo genetic testing or disclose results of genetic tests to provide goods, services, and enter a contract or agreement or continue the terms of a contract. So non-compliance, it was a pretty serious bill. If you are in non-compliance you could face, potentially, a \$1-million fine and up to five years in prison. So the bill has some real teeth and this is a—it's a statement by the federal government.

Now, the Quebec government said that this was unconstitutional. This was in June, just a month later. It didn't take them a long time to raise some flags. They initiated a reference at the Quebec Court of Appeal. There are other intervenors in that case: a number—a province, British Columbia; also the Canadian health insurance association; of course, the federal government; the Canadian Coalition for Genetic Fairness; Canadian Human Rights

Commission. There are a number of people weighing in on this issue between Quebec and the federal government. If the Quebec reference is not successful, there is every speculation that Quebec will pursue this at the Supreme Court level.

So in my opinion, Madam Speaker, I believe we would be prudent to watch those developments and see how the existing case unfolds before we pen legislation here in our province, but also to see how the—if there is an appeal. If there is an appeal to the Supreme Court, then surely we would be wise to allow the Supreme Court to speak to the issue so that we would be drafting legislation which would be legal and which would be informed by a much broader conversation that has happened across the country across the span of several months.

Some people have suggested that there should be some wiggle room here, that there should be some allowances for some minor modifications. Although, of course, whenever you say minor modifications someone will say they're not minor at all; that's discrimination. And so I think we have to think carefully about our definitions of discrimination. We often think of discrimination in a very negative sense, and rightly so because those are the forums where discrimination is most obvious. And the member for Radisson (Mr. Teitsma) and other members in this House would all agree on the most heinous examples of discrimination. But when it comes to something like an insurance contract, this is not something that is inherently racist or, you know, this isn't something that is necessarily criminal, but there may be more subtle things at play should a law like this take effect.

Now, quite possibly, having had this discussion, we may all come to agreement that no, we reject all forms of discrimination, period; my wife's life insurance should cost the same as mine because to make a variance would be to discriminate. Well, I'm not sure I'm ready to go there yet, but possibly that's where the laws of our land will go. Whatever happens, I think we are prudent to stay in step with the rest of the country.

Some have suggested that minor modifications could be made: perhaps capping life insurance amounts, perhaps changing some caps for critical illness or long-term care. I know that this conversation is not unique to Canada. It is happening in other countries, and, interestingly, I have friends in other countries who are part of these very discussions. And so I'm talking with them and

asking them, how are you discussing this in your jurisdiction and what kinds of things ought to be contemplated?

So, Madam Speaker, my time is short but I think that I would not issue a red light or a green light, but certainly an amber light. Thank you.

Mr. Nic Curry (Kildonan): It's a pleasure to rise on behalf of the good people of Kildonan today to discuss this important matter.

Hearing all this talk of genetics and how it can be used for discrimination reminds me of the old phrase, *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*: that the more things change, the more things they stay the same. Twentieth century was supposed to be this wonderful era where technology, new medicines and peace between countries would bring in an era of good and justice. Sadly, as historian—especially historian focused on 20th century history—the exact opposite happened. The most evil things that humans could have ever done were done over and over again. Over and over again to people often because of how they looked from our outside appearance.

The phrase, of course, to judge someone not on the colour of their skin but on the content of their character, uttered well before I was born, is something that's—I have tried to always try to use in my life. I think Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is someone who exhorted the ideas that one must look beyond what we are necessarily born with and work on the qualities that make us different for our ideas, for our thoughts, which is very important.

This discussion of how genetics can be used to discriminate is something that is not new. It is something that is as old as the idea of genetics, when people started understanding there are microscopic things inside of us. And, sadly, that has been used too often for nefarious means. Think of representing people in the North End, where very recently I met a family from Ethiopia, and I lived beside one family from Punjab, another family from Manila. Across the way, there's a Ukrainian couple and down the street, Polish, Italian, Portuguese, people from South America, people from China. Across the world, people gather in the North End of Winnipeg. There must be some multicultural magnet that draws us together. The foods, the songs, the dance, everything that's wonderful about this mixing of cultures.

But, sadly, it is very also dangerous for some people. I hear of stories of violence that would happen in the post-Second World War era, where

roaming gangs of ethnically based people would attack others because of their ethnicity, because of how they looked. Another way of saying because of their genetics. Very sad.

But this heritage is something that we worked through. And time and time again, though, we find ways to bring up the old arguments of why we're different genetically, what that means for insurance, perhaps what that means for other social services, what that means for justice, what it means for health care, maybe. But these are things where to dwell on them is very frustrating, I think, for many of us who wish to move beyond this idea that our heritage—our inheritable things that we have are all that we care for.

Although I must say, my mother has blue eyes. I have blue eyes. My daughter has blue eyes. This is something where the three of us can share and look at each other's gaze and see there is similarities. And it's a wonderful thing; it's beautiful. And I look in my daughter's eyes every once in a while, like I did this morning as we're getting her ready for breakfast. And she, at 14 months, certainly is not one for attention yet. Once in a while, I catch her gaze, and she's staring at my eyes, and I'm wondering if she goes, well, that's similar to me.

So there's some good things that we can look at genetics. We can see that, sadly though, a bad part of our genetics is diabetes in my family. My grandmother died as a result of complications from diabetes. Another grandmother was stricken with issues because of diabetes and would later die mostly from complications. My father has been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. And so I'm happy that we're working with him, especially weight loss is the No. 1 thing we can do with that.

But I hear these things; I see them; I experience them and I know that there is a good chance between my brother and I, we are going to struggle with type 2 diabetes. How do we respond to these things? Well, I know that I need to be on top of my diet and nutrition. I need to certainly get out jogging more frequently than I do. And being active and teaching, say, the next generation about these genetic traits that are likely. I can't see it. I can't look in myself in the mirror and identify which part of me is the diabetes gene. I don't know, but I know that it's there.

* (10:30)

We know that this is something that we can look into. We can use this for a positive means, say, in

health care. If we can identify that in an early age, perhaps we can find means to mitigate some of this scourge that is diabetes.

And for anyone who's experienced a loved one dying of diabetes, it is brutal. It is incredible. These strokes are persistent and frustrating. Family looks on as this thief steals the life right out from under them, and you get to see it. And now, with the foresight of knowledge that we have in sciences that I have in looking at my own family's history, I can go back and see we need to be on top of this, and this is in our genetic code and it's troubling.

So I'm happy that we are having this conversation. I think we're able to put on some important discussion on this. I thank the member for Minto (Mr. Swan) for bringing this topic forward. He has mentioned that he's spoken with many people in the Jewish community. Of course, the North End would be not complete if we didn't include our Jewish friends and colleagues. I'm very happy to have been able to participate in many events. Most recently, we had Israel Independence Day, and I was able to speak with people from Israel, very interesting journeys. Many of them Russian speaking who—sadly, the Soviet Union, despite claims of egalitarian for many, this was not true for especially its Jewish population where some quasi Holocaust denial happened very early in the 1950s. Certainly, it was suppressed and any discussion that there was wide-scale suffering by the Jewish people, well, that was just—all the suffering that the fascists put on all of the Soviet Union when, of course, we know there was specific targeting of the Jewish diaspora across Europe.

And so this suppression sadly started early in the 20th century, and it continued and many people within the Jewish community at the end of the Soviet Union, when there was freedom to move and leave the Soviet Union, many went to Israel. And so speaking with these people who have had quite the journey being born and raised in Saint Petersburg, moving to Israel, living in Tel Aviv, being in the conflicts that have happened in Israel and now living in the North End and being able to see the old vestiges of our synagogues, seeing places that used to be kosher delis and experiencing and seeing some of the names of our streets with Jewish heritage in them. And this is, I think, a great experience that we get to have in the North End. I could not be more privileged to be able to be surrounded by this genetic diversity, if one could even refer to it as that, because I don't like to think of it that way. I think of the

diversity of the ideas that these people bring, many of whom are interested in small business. And coming from a family of small business I'm able to communicate with them well on various things that, if you're in that kind of lifestyle you know, and this opportunity is what they were going for.

I asked one of my Israeli friends, my new Israeli friends, so did you leave because of violence happening there; perhaps it was unsafe, you wanted to raise a family here. He said, like, violence has been there forever. But he was really interested in opening a grocery store, and in his neighbourhood you had to basically be born into the grocery store family. There's not much space in Israel, of course, and so that kind of economic opportunity—although there are many wonderful things happening in Israel and its economy, there are some things where that fellow, he couldn't open a grocery store, or it was at least very difficult, Madam Speaker. I wouldn't say he couldn't. But he had the idea: I'll go Canada. And as soon as he got here he opened up a grocery store. He later sold it, but it still operates. And we're able to get this wonderful panna copita of food that nowhere else can you get, and the Jewish dumplings are a special favourite of mine. Luckily, my wife doesn't like them, so when we make them I make them for myself, technically. And so I'll make the sauce and we do a pasta for her, and I'm hopeful that my daughter enjoys them. I've actually run out. So this reminds me I need to get more of those wonderful dumplings.

But it's that opportunity that we see, and I find more heartening joy that it's not, say, the—an ethnic question that is why they came to Canada. It is a question of economic opportunity, that opportunity to take risks, and risk it is to open up a grocery store, open up a business. It's very difficult. And we see this across our community where people are trying that from across all spectrums of say, genetic difference or cultural difference, religious difference. But it's different ideas, and people are bringing those and it's wonderful. But it's still important to talk about this because we know that genetics exist. To, say, turn our back to them and claim, well, this isn't what we're going to talk about because it's, maybe, scary, because there's horrible things that have been done in the name of genetic purity in the 20th century, is not useful either.

And I will always look at the terror that happened to many people, where families like my Polish family that fled Poland in the 1920s. Many

people did this and many were not able to and millions of people suffered because of that.

But at the end of the day I think this is something that deserves significantly more discussion, more debate. We know that there is some rules going before the federal government in place, legislation, and we think that this deserves certainly more discussion. And I've certainly heard many perspectives on both sides, and I continue to reach out and speak to, especially my friends who have come here from places like Israel, places like Ukraine, and hearing from them that perspective, and it is not a unified voice from what I hear. Many are for; many are against. I hope we can continue this discussion to perhaps even bring a more balanced approach to this as we move forward in the future.

I know my time is brief on this, Madam Speaker, but, again, I wanted to thank all of the people who are in Kildonan area, especially where I live in Garden City area where diversity is our strength.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mrs. Sarah Guillemard (Fort Richmond): I'm happy to put a few words on the record for this Bill 225. I think it's a very important topic, and I do thank the member opposite for bringing this forward, because I think it's a discussion that needs to be happening, and I think I have an interesting perspective in seeing both sides of the responsibility of balancing our own privacy of health information versus our responsibility to disclose, especially if we're talking about insurance purposes.

DNA testing has come quite a long way very fast, and I don't think that our laws and our understanding of the implications of these testing really has kept up with the pace, I would say, and it is important that we look at our laws and how they can address certain concerns that are affecting our society right now.

Madam Speaker, I have to say that discrimination already does exist within the insurance industry, and rightly so. They have to do a risk assessment. They need to know whether insuring your life, in particular, is going to be beneficial, because it is an industry that depends on profits and, you know, paying their employees and whatnot.

My personal experience down this road of even contemplating the whole genetic ramifications of knowing what is within your body, what you might develop one day, began when my second child was showing some really odd symptoms. He was doing—

well, he was about two years old at the time, and he began to have some behavioural issues where he would have temper tantrums. And I understand that there's a certain level of normal behavioural issues that come along with two-year-olds, and we all can attest to that. But these were a little bit odd in terms of what we had come to know him by that time, and part of that was, you know, he had been in toilet training at the time, and we all know how difficult those months and years can be, especially if you have a stubborn child. But he had been doing very well, and we were actually patting ourselves on the back, thinking that, wow, we've got this down pat, you know; we've got two kids and they're already toilet trained, out of diapers.

He started to have frequent accidents, and we went through the whole gamut of, well, what are we doing wrong? Is he not getting enough sleep? Are we exciting him too much? Is he forgetting that he needs to go to the washroom. Well, at one point, Madam Speaker, when he happened to really start to lose weight at that age, we knew something was definitely wrong and we needed to investigate what was going on. At the time, life insurance or any ramifications of what illness it could be were far from our mind. We were just concerned with what was happening in that moment, and we needed answers and we needed him to get well.

Madam Speaker, we took him to the doctor. Blood tests were taken. Urine samples were taken. We were coached multiple times through, you know, behavioural issues with children that young. You know, essentially it was assumed that because we were young parents, we probably were feeding him too much sugars or giving him, you know, far too much control over the household. It was a frustrating process because the blood tests didn't reveal initially—because they were the wrong test order—what he actually was dealing with. It took three weeks of being told that your child's fine; you're just making up these symptoms; you just tell him, no, he can't have more drinks if he's thirsty, before we finally came to the point where an expert got involved and said, we are 99.9 per cent sure your child has type 1 diabetes. He would have gotten far more ill before he got better had we not reached that point of diagnosis.

* (10:40)

Now, at the time that he was diagnosed and he was put on proper treatment—and were we ever thankful that there was proper treatment to be given

and to help his symptoms—he recovered relatively quickly. It's a long road of learning about how to treat this particular disease, but one of the aspects that did come up, and I really can't even remember who discussed it with us, was that he would no longer be eligible for life insurance at any point in life, and that is because he was diagnosed with this disease. And the reality is, when you're treating type 1 diabetes, you are essentially balancing life-and-death decisions every single day. If he misses a dose of insulin, if he eats too much sugar and doesn't account for it, he can develop ketoacidosis, which really destroys the body and can be life threatening. If he takes too much insulin, he miscalculates the dose, he could die very quickly from hypoglycemia if he's not treated and given the sugars he needs.

Although that was not necessarily high priority on our mind, that he would not be eligible for life insurance, looking long term in his life, that could be a real detriment to his family one day if he—you know, when he decides to move on and have a family and, certainly, we know that type 1 diabetics do get married and they do have children. But they have to think differently in terms of their health and the coverage that they will be eligible for, including life insurance.

Now, in addition to his diagnosis, our family was offered testing. The siblings were offered blood tests and we were, as parents, were offered blood tests because they want to do research. They want to know how to eradicate type 1 diabetes, to make nobody else in this world suffer from it again, to find vaccines or preventative measures. And as parents we decided to be part of this study so that they could look at our genes and determine whether the mixture of our particular genes has led to our child developing this particular disease and, certainly, our son, who was already diagnosed, he participated in this study as well.

We decided, though, as parents, that we would not have our other children subjected to this particular research, and the reason for that, Madam Speaker, was because (a) we already knew that they were at an increased risk for developing type 1 diabetes because they had a sibling, a first degree relative who had developed this disease. Secondly, if we were to find out through this research study that yes, they actually had some genes that could lead to type 1 diabetes, (a) there was no preventative measures we could take; there was nothing to stop the development of this disease in their lives.

Secondly, there are 18 different potential genes that could lead to type 1 diabetes because it's triggered by the environment. There's some sort of virus out there that causes your body to misread your insulin-producing cells, and it attacks your pancreas and then you no longer produce insulin. So if there's 18 different genes, and you can have any mixture of these genes, it does not guarantee you will actually develop type 1 diabetes in your lifetime. It just means that you're a little more elevated risk because if you get exposed to that particular virus, you could develop it.

Madam Speaker, this knowledge would have just led us to be a lot more paranoid than we already were in terms of the development of this disease, but it would not have stopped it. And secondly to that, we understood that even though right now the insurance industry has guaranteed that, you know, this particular testing and gene testing will not affect their ability to take out life insurance, we don't know at what point that could change. And we did not want to limit our children and their options in their life based on, you know, a research project that, really, they weren't thinking long term what the impacts and potential outcomes of that could be.

Madam Speaker, we can relate a lot of new technology and new testing to this genetic and DNA testing as well. Ultrasounds were developed, you know, within the last century, and that led to great leaps and bounds in terms of diagnosis of serious conditions that prevented people from dying young. You found out that they had a certain condition; you could treat it. But with new technology, although we have benefits to those in terms of early diagnosis and treatment, there can also be some detriments to the new technology. And we have seen this in certain countries where maybe ultrasounds are used for prenatal ultrasounds where some cultures maybe value one gender more than another. And these testing and knowledge that you can gain from this technology can actually lead to some very poor outcomes and devastating results when it comes to our own personal view on what these test results mean and the decisions that we base on those details.

Madam Speaker, we also are coming into a time where, you know, we're discussing this medically assistance in dying, and I think part of our discussions on that topic is, at what point are we viewing people as what their cost to the health-care system is versus their value to society and their value in this world?

And I think that's one of the important discussions that needs to come out of this topic when we are testing for DNA and genetic testing, what are we going to do with that information, and does it benefit people, or does it just add an unnecessary stress to our lives?

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Shannon Martin (Morris): It gives me a pleasure to rise this morning and make a few brief comments on the member for Minto's (Mr. Swan) bill, Bill 225, The Human Rights Code Amendment Act, the genetic characteristics.

I've had an opportunity to read the bill and unfortunately, I haven't heard too much from members opposite about the bill. For some reason, there doesn't seem to be a lot of enthusiasm on their side of the House, in terms of rising to talk about the bill and to support their own legislation, Madam Speaker, but that is their legislative right.

Considering what we've read in the two Winnipeg dailies in their editorial comments today, Madam Speaker, I'm not surprised that members opposite want to have a lower profile today.

The issue, Madam Speaker, about genetic characteristics has been around, unfortunately, for quite some time. A number of my colleagues have pointed out their own family histories of persecution, of being interned in camps, about their own situations with their own children and the impact that it's had on them.

Obviously, you bring up the very idea of genetic testing, Madam Speaker, and it does have a darker connotation and some would argue even very—from a very dark, dark chapter of human history. And obviously you know what we're referring to, in terms of the Nazis and World War II.

Madam Speaker, the idea, though, of genetic testing, the idea that somehow there are those that—individuals that could be identified and somehow, I guess, made less, whether made less physically or mentally made less, in the case of the member opposite's amendment here to the Human Rights Code, but these ideas, again, go back quite some ways.

It's interesting, Madam Speaker, that Tommy Douglas, the founder of the NDP, actually had a strong enthusiasm for eugenics when he was a medical doctor. It was actually a really interesting article that was written by Dr. Shevell in the

Canadian Journal of Neurological Sciences about the history of Tommy Douglas and his enthusiasm for eugenics.

He noted that Canadians suffer from a collective national amnesia regarding Tommy Douglas's support for eugenics, likely because they're reluctant to talk about the medicare pioneer's glowing image with unsavoury ideas. That was his analysis, and this is a McGill University position.

My goal here, obviously, Madam Speaker, is not to diminish, obviously, what Mr. Douglas has achieved and his place in history and in Canadian history, it's to highlight the fact that the idea of eugenics, that the idea that somehow, through some test, we are able to value or devalue an individual, isn't unique.

It goes on, Madam Speaker. It talks about how many biographies and accounts of Tommy Douglas, the creator of the New Democratic Party, have either ignored or downplayed his striking embrace in the 1930s of forced sterilization and segregation for people of quote, subnormal, end quote, intelligence and morality.

In his academic paper, Madam Speaker, he argued that people should remember that Tommy Douglas's early advocacy of eugenics really should serve all of us, even today, here, as a cautionary tale about mistakes that people make going forward.

* (10:50)

You know, it's a beginning—he notes that it's the assumption that somebody for some reason is not a person, and that's the beginning of a very slippery slope. And, obviously, the spectre of eugenics, the spectre of genetic testing, is even higher today, Madam Speaker. And, I mean, most of us can simply go online, send away for a kit, get a swab done and find out your own family and genetic history. And myself—my sister is very big into genealogy and has done our family tree going back to, I think, about the late 1400s and had asked us to participate. And I remember doing that. I was quite surprised by some of the results because what you learn sometimes doesn't always align to what you were told.

But, you know what, Madam Speaker, you know, today we have DNA testing of embryos to find out—and it makes it possible for parents to pick and choose specific attributes that they want in their children from in vitro fertilization. And, again, we have to look back at the history of this and sort of where the idea of genetic testing and the idea

of genetics—or eugenics came from. You know what—and back to, you know, Tommy Douglas's comments, you know, it's thought that it's not really that surprising. I mean, you have a—here you have a left-leaning politician who's also a Baptist preacher. It's thought from his biographers that this probably led, in large part, to his views on eugenics.

So it's interesting, Madam Speaker, that under eugenics, human reproduction is restricted as a way to address social problems and improve the human population. And, unfortunately—and, again, it's not just overseas. It wasn't just, you know, obviously, the Nazis. And, you know, we speak of them, and we know, obviously, their crimes against humanity, especially in terms of genetic testing and experimentation. But here at home in North America, in the 1930s, 24 US states as well as Alberta and British Columbia had laws mandating sterilization of those found to be intellectually disabled or morally degenerate. So, again, it was the state's imposition, the state believing that these individuals somehow were a burden on society.

Tommy Douglas actually argued in his thesis that one of the key causes of poverty are subnormal families, ones that are mentally inadequate—and I'm quoting from his thesis—anywhere from high-grade moron to mentally defective, end quote, of low moral character and/or a burden on the public purse. And this is from Tommy Douglas's thesis, Madam Speaker. He urged sterilizations of those deemed mentally defective or incurably diseased.

So you can only imagine if these tools that we have today, these tools that with a simple swab you can make a determination that I have a predetermination for cancer, for Alzheimer's—I know it runs in my family, Madam Speaker—if I have the marker for it. And if I had existed back then, would, you know, would the policies, the eugenic policies of Tommy Douglas decide that somehow this incurable disease should result in the imposition of that eugenics policies? He argued, and, again, I'm quoting from Mr. Douglas's thesis, that it's consummate folly, end quote, to let subnormal families, and, again, quote, bring into the world large numbers of individuals to fill our jails and mental institutions and to live upon charity, end quote.

So, Madam Speaker, we need, as a society and as a government, to obviously be very, very cautious about the idea of the state having control over this information as more and more of us decide to share this information. I know there's actually a massive

genetic undertaking in the country of Iceland, which is a very isolated community and a very homogenous community, and so there has been—actually a corporation has come in and has literally bought up the DNA rights and history of essentially the entire country in order to provide some of their own testing in that. And so what gives somebody the ability to do that, somebody to sort of turn over their genetic information to a corporation?

Now, the idea here, Madam Speaker, is that we obviously, under this legislation, we obviously want to protect individuals from policies that would take that information and misuse it, whether it's misusing it in the way that, obviously, that Tommy Douglas advocated in terms of sterilization or misuse it in terms of simply denying somebody life insurance. There are any number of ways.

Now, life insurance obviously seems—denying somebody life insurance does seem sort of, you know, less offensive than the Tommy Douglas option of forced sterilization, but it—again, it is an erosion of an individual's human rights, Madam Speaker.

So there are, I know, in Quebec—I know Quebec is actually taking a look at this legislation. There are concerns with this legislation. I know Quebec is currently undertaking a court review of this legislation to make sure that it meets requirements under the Charter, Madam Speaker, that it is—does what it sets out to do.

With those comments, thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): Good morning, Madam Speaker, and it gives me a great pleasure to stand up and speak towards Bill 225, The Human Rights Code Amendment Act, brought forward from the member from Minto.

Madam Speaker, it's interesting that as I sit here and I listen to the debate, and we listened to the debate the last time as well in regards to the many members in this Chamber that feel it's important to put a few words on the record in regards to the bill brought forward by the member for Minto (Mr. Swan).

It is interesting, Madam Speaker, and I will have to, you know, make a couple points, and I know that the member from Morris and the member from Rossmere and also my other members from Fort Richmond and Radisson as well, put their stories on the record this morning, and it was nice to hear

from them and also the member from Kildonan. I'd be remiss if I didn't mention the member from Kildonan.

It is very important when we have the opportunity, Madam Speaker, to stand up in this House and put words on the record and talk about pieces of legislation that are going to have effects on Manitobans specifically but also Canadians as well. I know that, you know, the member from Minto brought forward—brought this bill forward with his intentions to move this forward, and I'd like to repeat and mention something that my friend from Rossmere, my colleague from Rossmere mentioned this morning, and it's not that this legislation, you know, gets a green light or a red light, but I appreciate the words on the record that he put, talking about an amber light.

There is a few things that are going on presently nationally, federally, Madam Speaker, in regards to the Human Rights Commission, and there's very many reviews that are under way. I know that the present NDP opposition party, I know that they're constantly trying to put various pieces of either legislation or resolutions during their private members' times to try to be divisive, to be partisan, and it shows; it shows today. Today is another good example. Whereas our members on our side of the House are standing up to put a few words on the record in regards to Bill 225, and I know that on their side of the House, they've had a total of, you know, two and one sixteenth of a speaker, and what I mean by that is it's almost like it's always hurry-up defence with them, you know, and I know that the member from Minto would appreciate a little bit of a football analogy there.

I know that, you know, the member from St. Johns stood up today, and in her hurry to put a few words on the record to show that she's supporting her colleague from Minto, she actually stood up and said that the NDP team, which is a little bit of an oxymoron in itself, Madam Speaker, but she said, and I quote: NDP team stands up against Manitobans and Canadians, and this is what the member from St. Johns put on the record this morning. So I will verify that with Hansard, but it's sort of unfortunate that in their hurry-up defence that they want to—

* (11:00)

Madam Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have six minutes remaining.

DEBATE ON RESOLUTIONS

Res. 15—Protecting and Promoting French Language Services

Madam Speaker: The hour is now 11 a.m. and the time for private members' resolutions. The resolution before us this morning is on Protecting and Promoting French Language Services, brought forward by the honourable member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine).

The honourable member for St. Johns.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader): Madam Speaker, on House business. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: And, my fault, I should've said: standing in the name of the honourable member for Fort Richmond, who has 10 minutes remaining.

Mrs. Sarah Guillemard (Fort Richmond): C'est un plaisir en cette belle matinée de parler avec mes collègues et partager quelque mots au sujet de la belle langue française.

Depuis les deux dernières années, notre gouvernement a déjà accompli plus pour cette langue que l'opposition durant 17 ans. C'est tellement curieux qu'ils présentent cette résolution qui critique nos efforts et essaie d'instaurer la peur au sein de la communauté français.

La députée de St. John a écrit une résolution pour protéger et promouvoir la langue française. Cependant son document est écrit tout en anglais. Si ses intentions sont vraiment sincères, je suis sûre qu'elle aura pu facilement accéder des ressources ou même à des supporteurs dans son parti afin de l'aider a rédiger un document en français.

Madame la Présidente, j'ai grandi dans une famille anglophone et ce ne fut qu'en quatrième année que ma première opportunité d'apprendre la langue française présenta. De plus, ce n'était que pendant trente minutes chaque jour. J'ai non seulement appris de la grammaire mais aussi quelques mots très effectifs. Mais malheureusement ma prononciation n'était pas très bonne.

Mr. Doyle Pivniuk, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

J'ai lu cette résolution et j'ai immédiatement réalisé que la seule communauté française qui soit importante pour la députée de St. John est Saint-Boniface. C'est triste parce que les citoyens de Saint-Boniface savent qu'il y a beaucoup de communautés françaises au Manitoba. Si tu es fier de

cette langue, il est très important de reconnaître les autres communautés qui utilisent cette langue.

De nombreuses communautés parmi lesquelles Saint-Norbert, Saint-Vital, Saint-Adolphe, Saint-Claude, Saint-Pierre-Jolys, Saint-Jean-Baptiste, Sainte-Agathe, Île-des-Chênes, Saint-Georges, Sainte-Anne, sont fières de la langue française aussi.

Madame la Présidente, j'ai vraiment commencé les leçons de cette belle langue quand j'avais 18 ans. J'ai rencontré un jeune homme de France qui étudiait à l'Université de Manitoba. Au début, j'étais trop timide pour parler en français alors j'ai choisi de ne parler qu'en anglais. Après quelque mois avec ce bel homme, j'ai appris plus de mots et également commencé à parler de plus en plus.

Je suis très, très heureuse d'avoir eu la chance d'apprendre une deuxième langue. Et encore plus heureuse d'avoir marié ce beau français.

Depuis la naissance de nos enfants, mon mari Arnaud ne leur a parlé qu'en français. Quand il a parlé et chanté pour nos bébés, j'ai écouté et appris comment dire des mots simples. En 1998, j'ai vécu en République Tchèque pendant 18 mois avec mon mari et aussi notre premier enfant. Nos voisins étaient français et ne parle pas un mot d'anglais. C'est ainsi que j'ai appris comment communiquer en français avec des adultes, et en même temps, j'ai essayé d'apprendre la langue tchèque. La langue tchèque est un chantier en construction.

Nous avons aussi eu l'opportunité d'aller en France pour rendre visite à notre famille, et ce fut une occasion pour moi d'utiliser de nouvelles phrases et expressions. Toutes ces histoires représentent mon expérience avec l'immersion française.

Monsieur le Vice-président, le gouvernement du Manitoba a fait beaucoup de changements dans le système de santé, mais ce sont des changements nécessaires. Après 17 ans de négligence, le temps d'attente dans les centres d'urgence était horrible. Les membres de l'opposition savent que c'était un problème, mais ils n'ont pas eu assez de courage pour améliorer la situation.

Notre gouvernement, notre équipe avec des membres forts et courageux, va nettoyer le désastre créé par le dernier gouvernement NDP.

Translation

It is a pleasure on this beautiful morning to talk to my colleagues and share a few words with regard to the beautiful French language.

Over the past two years, our government has already accomplished more for this language than the opposition did over the course of 17 years. It's so curious that they introduce this resolution, which criticizes our efforts and tries to instill fear in the francophone community.

The MLA for St. Johns wrote a resolution to protect and promote the French language. However, her document is written in English. If her intentions are really sincere, I'm sure that she could easily have had access to resources or supporters in her own party to help her write a document in French.

Madam Speaker, I grew up in an anglophone family and it was only in grade 4 that I had the first opportunity to learn French. Moreover, it was only 30 minutes a day. Not only did I learn grammar but also a few effective words. Unfortunately, my pronunciation was not that good.

I read that resolution and I immediately realized that the only francophone community that is important for the MLA for St. Johns is St. Boniface. It's sad because the citizens of St. Boniface know that there are many francophone communities in Manitoba.

If you are proud of this language, it is very important to recognize the other communities that use it. Many communities including St. Norbert, St. Vital, St. Adolphe, St. Claude, St. Pierre Jolie, St. Jean Baptiste, Ste. Agathe, Ile des Chênes, St. Georges, Ste. Anne, are proud of the French language as well.

Madam Speaker, I really started to understand the lessons of this language when I was 18. I met a young man from France who was studying at the University of Manitoba. At first, I was too timid to speak French so I chose to speak only English. After a few months with this beautiful man I had learned more words and I started to talk more and more.

I am very, very happy to have had the opportunity to learn a second language, and even happier to have married that beautiful Frenchman.

Since our children's birth my husband, Arnaud, speaks only French to them. When he talked to and sang for our babies, I listened and I learned how to pronounce simple words.

In 1998, I lived in the Czech Republic for 18 months with my husband and our first child. Our neighbours were French and didn't speak a word of English. That is how I learned to communicate in French with adults, and at the same time, I tried to learn the Czech language. The Czech language is a project under construction.

We also had the opportunity to go to France to visit our family and it was a chance for me to use new sentences and expressions. All these stories are part of my experience with French immersion.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the government of Manitoba has made many changes in the health-care system but they are needed changes. After 17 years of neglect, wait times in ERs were horrible. Opposition members know that it was a problem, but they didn't have the courage to improve the situation.

Our government, our team with strong and courageous members will clean up the disaster created by the former NDP government.

English

Mr. Deputy Speaker, a language that is not spoken dies. We can debate the importance of protecting and promoting the French language, but taking the time to learn and speak it will do more for its preservation than anything else.

I think it's quite interesting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I have learned to value multiple languages because I pushed myself past the point of being intimidated by learning. We can do far more in preservation of languages and supporting of the French language or any other language that we value as a society by learning to speak it, by giving opportunity to the families and communities who have grown up with the language to use it within our daily lives.

There is an extra challenge here in Manitoba in that predominantly we are English speaking, and there are far more services available to our citizens that are delivered in English than in French or other languages that are quite important. But we know from our statistics that we are one of the largest per capita—we have the largest population of immigrants, new immigrants who are bringing beautiful languages to this province. This country does have two official languages, the French and the English, but we have far more opportunity to learn the beautiful languages around the world because of our policies on immigration.

Nous avons élargi la capacité bilingue de notre gouvernement par l'embauche dans un total de 805 positions en 2017, comparé à 744 l'année précédente.

Translation

We have expanded our government's bilingual capacity by increasing positions to a total of 805 in 2017, compared to 744 the year before.

English

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have so many opportunities here to learn the language, to support it in ways that are personal, that are effective, far more effective than debating what we've done as government. Our policies have been far more supportive of the French community in the last two years, as I said before, than what the opposition, when they were in government, had done in 17 years.

True value of a community, true value of a culture and their language should not be about bickering back and forth between parties. It should actually be shown by the efforts you put into learning their language and using it. It can be a very intimidating process, Mr. Deputy Speaker. My experience in the Czech Republic not only learning a little bit of a Czech language, but also being immersed in French because all of our neighbours could only speak French and communicate with us, it was an insight into the difficulties that sometimes visitors or foreign people coming to our countries can face when there's a language barrier.

It led me to be very interested in helping new immigrants to our own beautiful country and our own beautiful province to learn English, to get past the intimidation of using the language. Many of our new immigrants can read English. They can understand to a certain degree. But it's so intimidating to start using it, because as soon as a fluent English speaker learns that you have difficulty, many people will just shut down the conversation or they'll try to fill in those words and not allow you to continue. And sometimes it's easier to let other people figure out what you want to say as opposed to using this new language.

*(11:10)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I made sure that I emphasized with my EAL class that I would teach that we give infants far more leeway learning languages than we do adults. They spend the first year of their life listening, making sounds that aren't

really coherent, before they utter their first word. And they start off by using one word at a time to try to convey what they want to say. Then they move on to two words combined to try to give you a picture of what they're feeling. And eventually it moves into phrases and then conversation.

We, too, have to allow ourselves that time to comprehend and listen and learn and then take that risk of using one word at a time or two words together.

I would encourage everyone in this Chamber to learn the French language.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Bob Lagassé (Dawson Trail): Bonjour, Madame la Présidente—oh, Monsieur Député-président.

Pendant des 17 ans que le NDP était en pouvoir pour le gouvernement du Manitoba, ils ont dépensé, ils ont gaspillé et leur mauvaise gestion de sous qui vient dans les poches des Manitobains est la raison pourquoi on parle de ceci aujourd'hui. Les services que dépend tous les Manitobains et Manitobaines ont été mis en péril après 17 ans de mauvaise gestion par le NDP.

Le gouvernement Progressive Conserv-PC apprécie les contributions que les francophones apportent un—au Manitoba. Comme tous les Manitobains, les francophones ont 'sumi' une hausse de leur impôt et une 'dégradation' des services de première ligne à raison de mauvaise gestion de l'NDP.

La conséquence des décisions qui n'ont—ont été pris par le gouvernement précédé est que notre gouvernement a hérité était énorme. Alors, notre gouvernement prend des étapes nécessaires pour assurer que les services publics soient durables, ainsi que—qui efface pour tous les Manitobains, ce qui inclus les francophones.

J'aimerais commencer à parler des mots, histoire avec mon langue français et expliquer pourquoi c'est tellement important de garder la langue maternelle de plusieurs Manitobains une priorité dans notre gouvernement.

Je viens d'une communauté où le français est une langue maternelle pour une grande majorité des familles. Non seulement est le français une langue,

mais une histoire et aussi une culture qui contribue à la vie quotidienne des Manitobains.

En reconnaissant tout cela, nous avons continué notre appui pour la communauté francophone. Cela inclut des appuis pour la langue française, l'éducation et les services de santé. Nous sommes ici pour 'défendre' les droits et écouter aux 'concernes' des—de la communauté franco-manitobain.

Au cause du fait que c'est un de nos priorités, depuis l'entrée de notre gouvernement Progressive-Conservateur, nous avons accompli plus pour faire avancer la communauté francophone que le NDP n'y a fait en 17 ans en pouvoir. Un exemple de ceci est quand notre gouvernement a embauché le total de cinq—805 positions bilingues en 2017 comparé à 744 l'année précédent.

La continuation du français dans l'avenir est aussi important que le français d'aujourd'hui. Pour ma femme et moi, ayant cinq enfants, c'est un—c'était une nécessité d'avoir de nos enfants dans un programme scolaire français pour qu'on puisse garder et protéger la langue pour l'avenir. Deux de mes enfants sont couramment dans le programme au Division scolaire franco-manitobain. Une décision par ma femme et moi fait sans regret.

Notre gouvernement PC est un—engagé dans l'éducation du langue français et la francophonie au Manitoba. On est continuellement entraîné 'd'amourirer' notre éducation francophone et la peur—et la preuve de ceci est 'l'agumation' du financement pour la Division scolaire franco-manitobain de 3.2 % cette année seulement. Avec ce financement, on pourra supporter et assurer la qualité de ces programmes pour que le français continue dans l'avenir ici au Manitoba.

Tout ceci pour dire que les gens de ces communautés, les parents des élèves, et les élèves lui-même, les éducateurs et les 'éducatrices' n'ont pas besoin d'abandonner leur langue française, mais ce gouvernement n'a pas besoin de prendre ou dépenser énormément d'argent là-dessus.

Tout en 'dépenser' et gaspiller, le NDP a failli dans les formations 'académiques' de nos jeunes. Il résulta de cela que nos—que comparé à leur voisin provincial, la compétence en lecture et science et des études manitobains a été de retard et un-et-demi la compétence mathématique.

Le NDP a failli notre système scolaire et nos enfants. Nous—Sous la direction de l'NDP, le taux 'd'écourage' scolaire était le deuxième plus haut

des provinces canadiennes et sous la direction de l'NDP, les diplômés de l'université–universitaires au Manitoba avaient le rang de plus bas pour calcul au Canada.

Mauvaise planification par l'NDP a résulté en 480 salles de classes portables et millions de dollars en maintenance différée. L'NDP a fait des promesses mais leur 'initiative' a fallu à produire des réseaux.

Ça, ce n'est parce que les gens veulent pour les jeunes et les gens l'ont fait évident par choisir les 'Progressistes'-Conservateurs comme leurs représentants. Pour cela que on peut introduire le Budget 2018. Le Budget 2018 garde le cas sur un avenir plus stable pour de ceux et plus prospère pour les Manitobains. Le Budget 2018 'prévoit' 'davantage' d'allègements 'fisquiaux–fiscaux' pour les 'contribuables' manitobains.

Nous retirons l'argent du table du Cabinet et le remettons sur la table du cuisine des–de toutes les foyers manitobains. Notre gouvernement est résolu à protéger les femmes contre la violence et le 'haracèlement'. Il y a deux ans, nous avons présenté un plan pour redresser notre situation financier, 'restraiter' notre service et rebâtir notre économie. Notre plan est mesuré, et il est 'responsable' et il fonctionne.

Nous savons que seul le Manitoba de demain est mesuré de surpasser de le Manitoba d'aujourd'hui.

Le NDP a failli les Manitobains les plus 'vulnérables' rapporté par 'l'organisme' banques amirales du Canada. L'organisme banques amirales du Canada a signalé que, sous le gouvernement NDP, le plus vulnérables des citoyens de notre province ont été failli.

* (11:20)

Sous l'NDP, le Manitoba avait le plus haut taux au besoin de banque 'amirad' par habitat de toutes les provinces et plus haut pourcentage de jeunes aux besoins du banque 'amirad' au pays.

De l'année 2008, à 2016 l'usage de banque 'amirad' au Manitoba a 'argumenté' par 53 %. Dans chaque un de quatre années, 41 % de qui sont servis sont des enfants.

Les communautés francophones au Manitoba apprécient non seulement la langue, mais aussi la culture. Nos Festivals du Voyageur adorés par

toutes ne sera pas possible sans de français, leur communauté et leur culture. La devenu un festival–

Translation

Good morning, Madam Speaker–or Mr. Deputy Speaker.

During the NDP's 17 years in power as a government in Manitoba, they spent, they wasted and their poor financial management of the money coming from Manitobans' pockets is the reason we're talking about this today. The services all Manitobans depend on were put in jeopardy after 17 years of bad management by the NDP.

The PC government appreciates the contributions made to Manitoba by francophones. Like all Manitobans, francophones have seen an increase in their taxes and a deterioration in front-line services because of bad NDP management.

The consequences of decisions made by the previous government, and that our government inherited, were huge, so our government is taking the necessary steps to make sure that public services are long-lasting and that they're used by all Manitobans, including francophones.

I'd love to start talking about my history with the French language and explain why it's so important to keep the mother tongue of many Manitobans a priority in our government. I am from a community where French is the mother tongue of the large majority of families. Not only is French the language, but it's also the history and culture that contributed to the daily life of Manitobans.

By recognizing all this, we continued our support for the francophone community. This includes support for French language education and health care. We are here to defend the rights and hear the concerns of the Franco-Manitoban community.

Because it is one of our priorities since our PC government started, we have accomplished more to move the francophone community forward than the NDP did over 17 years in power. One example is when our government increased bilingual positions to 805 in 2017, compared with 744 the year before.

The continuation of French in the future is as important as French is today. For my wife and I, with five children, it was a necessity to have our children in a francophone school program so that we could keep and protect the language for the future. Two of my children are currently in the program in

the Division scolaire franco-manitobaine, and it's a decision my wife and I made without regret.

Our PC government is committed to French language education and the francophonie in Manitoba. We are continuously trying to improve francophone school programs and we've increased funding for the Franco-Manitoban school division by 3.2 per cent this year alone. With that funding, we can support and ensure the quality of this program so that French carries on for the future here in Manitoba.

All that to say that the people from all these communities, parents, teachers, students and educators do not have to abandon the French language, but this government doesn't have to spend a lot of money on that.

While spending and wasting money, the NDP failed with the academic performance of our students. The result of this is that compared to our provincial neighbours, reading, science and math skills are lower.

The NDP failed our school system and our children.

Under the direction of the NDP, dropout rates were the second highest in the Canadian provinces, and under the NDP leadership, university diplomas in Manitoba were the lowest ranked for calculus in Canada.

Bad planning by the NDP resulted in 480 portable classrooms and deferred maintenance. The NDP made promises but they failed to produce results. That's not what people wanted and they decided to have a PC government and that's how we can introduce Budget 2018.

It keeps the direction towards a more stable future and more prosperous as well for Manitobans. Budget 2018 will lower the fiscal pressure for Manitoba tax payers. We are taking the money out of the Cabinet pocket and putting it back on the kitchen tables of all Manitobans.

Our government is determined to protect women against violence and harassment.

Two years ago, we introduced a plan to improve the financial situation, to restore our services and rebuild our economy. Our plan is measured, responsible and it works. We know that only tomorrow's Manitoba will be better than today's Manitoba. Food Banks Canada reported that the NDP failed the most vulnerable Manitobans.

Food Banks Canada noted that under the NDP government, the most vulnerable citizens in our province were failed. Under the NDP, Manitoba had the highest need for food banks per capita among all provinces and the highest percentage of youth requiring food banks in the country.

From 2008 to 2016, the use of food banks increased by 53 per cent, and 41 per cent of the people using food banks were children.

Francophone communities in Manitoba appreciate not only the language, but also the culture. Our Festival du Voyageur, which is loved by all, would not be possible without French, their community and their culture. This has become a festival—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time is up.

The honourable member for Morris.

Mr. Shannon Martin (Morris): Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order.

Point of Order

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

Mr. Martin: Mr. Deputy Speaker, as a elected official—and all elected officials, I believe it's important that we have an opportunity to hear without distraction when my colleagues are speaking, when anyone in this House is speaking. And, unfortunately, I can hear music coming from the Chamber. I'm not sure where it's coming from. But I'd like you to remind all MLAs and all individuals within the Chamber that we are here to listen to legislators, we're here to listen to the discussions and the arguments and conversations being brought forward on the floor and that the playing of any kind of music in the background may be distracting and disrespectful for those speaking.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Well, on the point of order, I guess—I wasn't aware there was any music. I'm also getting some signs from the Clerk, too, that says that we haven't heard any music, so I'm not quite sure if it's coming from that side of the Chamber, or—is anybody else hearing the same music? *[interjection]* Okay.

Well, if anybody has the music, please shut it off, yes. And—it might have been also the earpiece, too, like—we're looking—I've—*[interjection]* Yes, I've just been informed that, you know, because of the

translation—I know I have to listen to it, too. I want to hear it translated into English. But sometimes it could also be that you're hearing that, too.

So, like I said, we didn't hear any music. I was listening to the translation, and that's where we might see—and that's where the sound might have come from. So I guess, at this point, this wasn't a point of order.

* * *

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Okay, we'll continue with debate.

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and just on that note, yes, I was hearing some music as well, but at that—that being said, it is now off and—rise today to put a few words on the record in regards to the resolution brought forward by the member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine) on Protecting and Promoting French Language Services.

And, once again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's nice to see that the member from St. Johns is bringing forward a piece of private member's business in a non-partisan way—not. It's just interesting how, on one hand, there's a lot of talk, but it's not really backed up by a whole lot of action. I read through the resolution, and it seems to me that this is more about the by-election in St. Boniface than actually protecting French language services or in regards to bilingual conversations and the languages here in this great province of ours.

I know that over the past 17 years of NDP reign that they were in government, there was many risks to public services that all Manitobans, including francophones, had relied on, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Nous apprécions les contributions duquelles les francophones apportent au Manitoba. Comme tous les Manitobains, les francophones ont subi un hausse de leur impôt et un 'dégradédétion' des services de première ligne à raison de la mauvais 'guestion' de le NDP.

Translation

We appreciate the contributions made to Manitoba by francophones. Like all Manitobans, francophones saw their taxes increase and front-line services deteriorate because of bad NDP management.

English

Good governments, Mr. Deputy Speaker, make the difficult decisions necessary to ensure that the protection of sustainable, quality services for their citizens are there each and every day.

Our government has inherited a tremendous debt burden because of the unwise, political—politically motivated spending and decision making by the previous government which, again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are seeing in evidence today as far as the partisanship in regards to the resolution brought forward again.

We have begun the hard work to—that was required to repair the damage, correct the course and move toward balance in a sustainable way.

Au fur et à mesure de toute cela, nous avons continué notre appui pour la communauté francophone. Cela inclut des appuis pour la langue française, l'éducation et les servis de santé. Nous sommes ici pour défendre les droits et écouter aux 'concernes' de la communauté francophone du Manitoba.

Translation

Throughout all that, we continued our support for the francophone community, including support for education and health care in French. We are here to defend the rights and hear the concerns of Manitoba's francophone community.

English

We have done more for the francophone-Manitoba community in one year, Mr. Deputy Speaker—matter of fact, in two years, than the NDP had done over their 17 years. For example, we amended The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act, the most significant commitment to the community since the 1998 Chartier report.

We have also expanded our bilingual capacity in government to 805 positions in 2017 compared to 744 positions the previous year. Our government will take the steps necessary to ensure francophones and all Manitobans have access to sustainable and cost-effective public services.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's interesting that, as my colleagues before me stood up and spoke to this resolution, it is interesting that the NDP opposition party feels strongly—or so they say—they feel strongly about protecting and promoting French language

services. Besides the person who the MLA from St. Johns—besides the representative of St. Johns who brought forward this resolution, there's been no other NDP members to stand up to put a few words on the record in regards to this resolution, which speaks volumes, because for years—I mean, since I was elected in 2011, I know that many of the present members that are still here from within those 2011 to 2016 NDP who served under Premier Selinger at the time, the MLA for St. Boniface—I know that they basically had fought quite hard to get rid of that member. And today, as previous days, they stand up and they put things like this resolution on the record, trying to promote themselves.

But you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think what's going to end up happening, much like what I said earlier today on the bill brought forward by the member from Minto, is I think that because of their hurry-up defensive tactics, I think they're forgetting the fact that the constituents, the good people of the constituency of St. Boniface, are not going to forget the fact that the NDP had a rebellion led by, you know, five, six, seven, eight rebels within the caucus. And there are probably more than that, but there was actually five official ones. And how many of those five rebels are still with us in the Legislature today? Well, there's one.

And it speaks volumes because even when they were having those in-party fightings, you know, in regards to the—promoting the French language services and the resolution brought forward by the member from St. Johns, I know that—

* (11:30)

An Honourable Member: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

Point of Order

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member from Tyndall Park, on a point of order.

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): There has been reference to the absence of some members of the NDP caucus in the speech by the honourable member from Lac du Bonnet. And I guess it's an inferred insult to the caucus by inferring that, because they are not here, therefore they don't care. It is a violation of our traditional rules.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: On that point of order, it's not a point of order. The member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko) was referencing to the members who

are no longer with the NDP government. And he agrees with me.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: And the other thing is what I also wanted—what—so also, what I want to say is, too, with the member from Lac du Bonnet, if he could stay relevant to what the topic is about, too, okay.

So, the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet.

Mr. Ewasko: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I appreciate the advice that you're giving.

And absolutely, I—you know, I know that the member from Tyndall Park was elected the same time I was in 2011, and I strongly encourage him to, you know, use the earpiece so that we can listen to the debate, and if there's some translation that needs to happen, even though I know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the member from Tyndall Park had some complaints in regards to Translation Services before. But you know what, I strongly feel that our staff here at the Legislative Building work hard on a daily basis, and I'd like to commend those people who work behind the scenes in Translation Services.

And unlike the member from Tyndall Park, who had some comments on the record earlier in regards to that, but, you know what, we're here to talk about the resolution brought forward today from the member from St. Johns, even though I know that members on the NDP side have not necessarily got up to put some words on the record in regards to in favour of the resolution, against the resolution. So I'm going to assume that because of that there are many in their caucus that are actually against this resolution, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because, again, like I said, the member from St. Johns brought forward this resolution, and it is absolutely a partisan resolution, and it's so partisan that I think that their members of their caucus absolutely don't agree with this, so that's why they're not signing up to speak to a put a few words on the record.

I know that my friend from Fort Garry-Riverview, the—I know that probably he would have liked to stand up and put a few words on the record as well, and maybe he will as this continues to go forward, this resolution, but I would like to remind the House that, actually, on March 20th, 2018, the—our honourable Minister of Francophone Affairs, the Minister responsible for Francophone Affairs (Ms. Squires), brought forward a proclamation. And the proclamation was the

Journée internationale de la Francophonie, 2018: whereas a vibrant francophone community has been present in Manitoba since the 18th century; and whereas the Manitoba government, which is to recognize the key role played by francophones in the founding and building of Manitoba and their importance to Manitobans' future; whereas the francophone community is a fundamental characteristic of the Manitoban identity, a precious heritage to be preserved and an asset to be shared and drawn upon; and whereas the Manitoba government continues to acknowledge the contribution of francophone communities to the province's economic and cultural diversity; and whereas the Manitoba government is committed to supporting the development of vitality of Manitobans' francophone community following the enactment of The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act—and there's a few more whereases in there, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I am running out of time.

My main point here is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that we in the government are here to support francophone Manitobans. We're getting it done, whereas the NDP—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr. Mohinder Saran (The Maples): I would like to put a few words on this resolution, and I rarely get a chance to speak up when people talk about discrimination. I think in this House that discrimination being exercised—and normally there are 17 members who are in opposition. I should get a 17th of the time clock to ask a question, but I am not.

The only people who cry for their own rights and—they're there taking up my constituents rights, my rights, and I am not able to speak. That's why whenever I get a chance, I stand up and I am going to speak on this bill—this resolution—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I just wanted to remind the member for The Maples, if he can be of relevant to the actual—the topic of—the honourable member for The Maples.

Mr. Saran: Sorry about that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I'm relating to—when we are talking about we as—there is discrimination against the French language. I am talking about the same kind of discrimination over here, and I'm going—trying to relate that to the discrimination, to this discrimination.

And, you know, when I came the first time and I came as a visitor, and I applied for immigration and there was five marks for the provincial language. And I did not know the provincial language, even English was intimidating me and still it sometimes intimidates me, and so I failed. I had to appeal and I had to ask for an inquiry, then I have to appeal, and after the appeal, then I had to move from Vancouver over here and then my appeal was heard. By that time, I bought a house and therefore they let me stay over here, and I'm thankful for that.

And also I talked about other languages as well. And I asked the minister, let we have a compulsory third language and—which can be taught in the schools and students have to be forced to learn their language. In they're learning their language, they will know our background. They'll know our culture, and if language dies, culture dies. That's the way it is.

And let me tell you, Deputy Speaker, Punjabi, I heard, is the second place language who is spoken in Canada. And over here in schools we don't have a chance to start that language because we are so worried about the budgetary things. But it's worth—if students learn more languages, then they will be—deal with the other countries more efficiently. Perhaps we can bring more business. We can bring more funds to this country.

And that protecting and promoting French language services, I think is important. But on the other hand, those immigrant communities, those need also their languages be taught over here so we can learn—our children can learn their forefathers language, their culture, their history. It's very important.

So I think only—let me tell you. I think the member for St. Boniface, he was fighting for a provincial language, but, unfortunately, due to some bullying he was thrown under the bus. I think that's a really unfortunate situation. A person has served this province so long and he could have retired slowly, slowly, but because some of the people want to make their—become the hero and cover their own wrongdoings, they thrown that person under the bus.

* (11:40)

And we are talking about visible minorities, and visible minorities are—they are—they try to put their own norms, their own values, and by their own values, they will twist it. They will accuse you of something which you did not do. These people are so

hypocrite, at one hand, they are asking for their rights. On the other hand—although I don't agree with the PCs; that's not my philosophy—but on the other hand, when I read in the paper that the Premier (Mr. Pallister) are—was intimidating some woman on this side, come on. That's the Premier's style; he intimidate also men; he intimidate also woman. Come on; be fair.

Like, we are not here, like, the—I think people—somebody ask the joke, like, does the politician take drama classes? I think that's what happened over here. We are taking—we are somehow try to exercise how to be actors so later maybe then we can become actors and have some film, whatever we can do.

So I think we have to be more reasonable. We have to be discussing really serious things and not just these rights. On one hand, we even talk about French rights; on the other hand, we are talk about animal rights, but on the other hand, we take their rights away—like, I may not get that chance to say it.

When we think in those terms, we have to be more reasonable, and we have to be more reasonable, have to know the norms of the other culture, how one thing said in one culture could be twisted in the other culture. And therefore it's important we have cultural-awareness training, not you impose one culture's norm on the other culture.

And I think this is really unfortunate over here, and especially for the immigrant MLAs, because they have been brought up in a different kind of environment, and immediately they are back down. Even these people don't try to understand where that thing is inspired, and they—on one hand, they try to fool the immigrants they are on their side, but on the other hand, they're attacking the same immigrant MLA and their immigrant population, and they are defaming not only one MLA, they are defaming the whole community.

And it's shameful; it's shameful because they want to become heroes. They want to have some points. Just to put another down, they want to come up. How shameful is that? And now they are talking—now we are talking about the French language, where we were before or we will be after. Now there's an election, and next time, election in The Maples, will we talk about Punjabi and Tagalog just at the same time, but other times we don't do anything at all?

We must be serious about these things. We have been paid, and we invest so much time on trivial things which does not mean anything—which does

not mean anything. We must have to talk about, seriously, are we seriously in favour of French language, or we are we trying to make fools of the constituents and the voters over there because now are elections. That way, everybody should talk about the French language and, after that, forget about that.

So I think when we talk about relevancy, I think even this bill is not relevant; it's a political—politically making the voters fools. So let we think about that, what is required, what is not required, and sometimes we have to be efficient, we have to do things which are necessary to save money for the taxpayers. But on the other hand, we have to be very careful how we treat the other cultures, not only just one culture, but how we treat the other cultures. When you put down the other cultures through their MLA, through some other trivial things, and that thing, sure. On the other hand, Mr. Speaker, being a man I cannot cry, otherwise I could have—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time has expired.

Ms. Janice Morley-Lecomte (Seine River): Good morning, Deputy Speaker.

It is my pleasure to put some words on record with respect to the private member's resolution, Protecting and Promoting French Language Services. Languages are important. Languages are the keys to which doors are open to opportunity, growth and other levels of learning. As a proud Canadian, I can say that French language has been part of my culture.

Deputy Speaker, French is more than a part of a culture. French is also how Manitobans identify themselves. One can easily look across our province and identify many rural and urban communities which have French heritage. We have St. François Xavier; we have Laurier; Ste. Rose, to name a few.

The traditions that have been passed down from families continue on today. Education, culture and lifestyles are reflective of tradition.

Au fur et a mesure de tout cela, nous avons continué notre appui pour la communauté francophone. Cela inclut des appuis pour la langue française, l'éducation et les services de santé. Nous sommes ici pour défendre les droits et écouter aux concerns de la communauté francophone du Manitoba.

Madame—or, sorry, Deputy Speaker—depuis l'entrée de notre gouvernement Progressiste-conservateur, nous avons accomplis

plus pour faire avancer la communauté francophone que l'NDP n'y a fait dans 17 années au pouvoir.

Translation

Throughout all this, we continued to support the francophone community. This includes support for the French language, as well as for education and health care services in French. We are here to defend the rights and listen to the concerns of the francophone community of Manitoba.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, since our Progressive Conservative government came to power, we have done more to help the francophone community move forward than the NDP did in 17 years in power.

English

Deputy Speaker, our government has ensured that French-speaking citizens have access to the services they need in both English and French. The St. Boniface QuickCare clinic offers services in both official languages. All staff at Centre de santé are required to be fluently bilingual due to its francophone designation and can offer services in both official languages.

Deputy Speaker, education is the base on which people can access many opportunities. Our government remains committed to helping post-secondary education by keeping it accessible, accessible through the Manitoba Scholarship and Bursary Initiative, Manitoba Bursary and Manitoba Student Aid and other grants which have more than \$80 million of direct support to go to support the Manitoba students in 2018 and 2019.

Our government listens to students.

Les étudiants ont clairement déclaré que des faits de scolaires doivent être abordables et accessibles. Notre gouvernement a commis de la 'serferer' qu'il soit.

Translation

Students clearly declared that tuition fees must be affordable and accessible. Our government is committed to ensuring that is the case.

English

I butchered that one.

Madam Speaker—or, sorry, Deputy Speaker, our government remains committed to French language, education and francophone cultural vitality throughout Manitoba. This is why provincial funding

for Division scolaire franco-manitobaine increased by 3.2 per cent of this year.

Deputy Speaker, our government cares about low-income and vulnerable Manitobans. One such service our government supports in St. Boniface is Centre Flavie-Laurent.

Les servis que sont offerts par le Centre Flavie-Laurent sont un bénéficié pour la société et notre gouvernement est heureuse de les appuyer par leur maintenant de leur versement annuel de 86 000 \$.

Translation

The services offered by the Centre Flavie-Laurent benefit society, and our government is happy to support this organization with annual funding of \$86,000.

English

Furthermore, this government will stand up for the rights and concerns of all the Franco-Manitobans in this community. We will do that by maintaining an ongoing dialogue through bodies like the Francophone Affairs Advisory Council.

Under Bill 5, we see support for more accountability and transparency by this government. Bill 5 allows all Manitobans to access French language services policies on the government's website and have an undertaking to review more policies every five years.

*(11:50)

This legislation will respect the deep roots of many Manitobans and the many Manitobans who have adapted the language and speak or use it in their daily lives.

I would like now to quote Ms. Jacqueline Blay.

Monsieur le Président, mesdames et messieurs les députés, pour la première fois depuis 1890 la communauté francophone du Manitoba n'éprouve pas en ce juin, en ce 18 juin 2016, le besoin de s'opposer aux actions de son gouvernement dans le domaine des droits linguistiques. Au contraire, elle choisit de les approuver et de les appuyer.

En effet, la Loi 5 sur l'appui à l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobain dont il est question aujourd'hui nous reclasse comme citoyens et citoyennes à égalité avec les Manitobains dans leur ensemble. Notre seule différence est que notre

langue maternelle, une différence que nous estimons être à l'avantage du Manitoba et du Canada.

Translation

Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislative Assembly, for the first time since 1890, the francophone community of Manitoba does not feel the need on this 18th day of June 2016 to oppose the actions of its government in the area of language rights. On the contrary, it is choosing to approve and support them.

In fact, Bill 5 respecting the enhancement and support of Manitoba's francophone community, which is being considered today, restores our status as equal citizens within Manitoba's population as a whole. The only difference is our mother tongue, a difference that we feel benefits Manitoba and Canada.

English

Deputy Speaker, French is a huge part of who we are. Our government has proven its commitment to Manitobans and to francophones in many ways. We support the community, not the political piece that has been put forward with this resolution.

When I think back to where I grew up, I think back to the community; I think back to my family and how French was an integral part of our learning. I have family members who have only learned through the French language and their language is equally good, be it in English or French.

My husband's first language was French and he learned English when he went to school. He, at that point, had to become bilingual to understand the teachers.

It is many family events that you can attend, traditions that have been passed down. Christmas—everyone loves tourtière. Everyone knows tourtière is part of Christmas, so—

An Honourable Member: They do know that, do they?

Ms. Morley-Lecomte: They do, they do.

An Honourable Member: Everybody knows that.

Ms. Morley-Lecomte: Travelling abroad, having another language, be it French, German, Italian, it is nice to know that you're able to communicate beyond the parameters that are limiting to one language. So we do support French language. It is not that we don't.

When I think back to my father and his language and his learning, he was also taught in French and he had to learn his French, to learn and read, and his appreciation for what he has learned has helped him when he is out travelling and when he is meeting with different individuals as well.

At this point I'd like to say that all Manitobans are thankful for the ability to be able to speak more than one language, not just French.

Thank you.

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): My pleasure to put a few quick words on the record about the very good resolution brought forward by my colleague from St. Johns. I couldn't help but hear the MLA for Lac du Bonnet begging for me to get up and address the resolution. It might be one of those instances of be careful what you wish for, Mr. Deputy, because we have brought forward this resolution in point of very serious concerns of what this government is doing to francophone communities and the services that they rely upon and support for the French language generally.

Actions do speak much louder than words and it's just a real shame that in all of these instances the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko), all the other people who have spoken today, using very eloquent French, I may add. I don't speak the language myself, but I certainly appreciate the skill involved. None of them saw fit to say anything as their government has ripped apart French services for the francophone communities across Manitoba, and our resolution speaks to that. That is part of everyone's job here as an elected official, is to raise concerns.

The member for Lac du Bonnet doesn't like it when we point out the flaws of decisions that his government has made and the fact that he sat on his hands and didn't say anything when these bad decisions were being made. I can't really help him with that, but I can put on the record just some of the things that are in the resolution itself, which he chose to ignore completely.

Let's start with, oh, I don't know, let's say, support for French education. As we have pointed out on numerous occasions in question period, this government removed, completely, the assistant deputy minister position for the BEF, the Bureau de l'éducation française, which, of course, completely

undermines a government's ability to actually provide French education services in Manitoba.

Sticking with French education, this government's cuts—which the member for Lac du Bonnet is perfectly fine with even though he went door to door promising everyone who would listen to him, same as all of his colleagues did—there would be no cuts from their government if they were elected. There'd be no cuts in jobs; there'd be no cuts in services. Lo and behold, we had a cut of the ADM position, and we had cuts of funding to all post-secondary education institutions, leading to no less than a 6.6 per cent increase in tuition and—at the Université de Saint-Boniface and, of course, they also cut the postgraduate tax credit. None of this was what they talked about during the election. All of it, they did afterwards. They don't want us to mention it now. Well, we're mentioning it because we're holding them accountable.

And the provincial government went further. After each and every one of these MLAs said, oh, there's not going to be any cuts; there won't be any job losses. Lo and behold, the government cut funding by \$50,000—more than that, actually—to the Centre Flavie-Laurent, which helps low-income families in St. Boniface and east Winnipeg access the basic necessities of life. But no, no, the MLA for Lac du Bonnet and all the others who've spoken today, they don't want to talk about that.

And, well, just to finish off, we actually had—we actually also had this minor, little issue of shutting down the bilingual QuickCare clinic in St. Boniface.

Nowhere do any of them mention these cuts that are going on. Very proud to speak in favour of this resolution. If the members actually want to practise taking action to match words, to match compassion and concern for the state of French language services in Manitoba, they'll pass the resolution. Why don't they try that for once?

Mr. James Teitsma (Radisson): Le gouvernement 'Progressive'—Conservateur et mes collègues apprécient les contributions de—que les francophones apportent au Manitoba. L'histoire de les francophones manitobains est forte liée à celle de notre province en entier, et cette communauté se caractérise d'une manière dynamique et résolue.

Translation

The Progressive Conservative government and my colleagues appreciate the contributions made by

francophones to Manitoba. Franco-Manitoban history is closely linked to that of our province as a whole, and this community is very vibrant and resolute.

English

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's my honour to speak a few words on the record about this resolution and I especially want to recognize the francophone community that lives within my constituency, within Radisson. I primarily—I find them in the Windsor Park area which, you know, may or may not be part of Radisson in the future; we'll just have to see. But in any case, in that community there is a number of excellent contributions that's—that are visible by the francophone community. And I think especially of one that is near and dear to my heart, the Centre Flavie-Laurent.

Les services qui sont offerts par le Centre Flavie-Laurent sont un bénéfice pour la société et de—et notre gouvernement est heureuse de les—l'appuyer par le maintien de leur versement annuel de 86 000 de dollars.

Translation

The services offered by the Centre Flavie-Laurent benefit society, and our government is happy to support this organization with annual funding of \$86,000.

English

It's our honour to support the work of Centre Flavie-Laurent and I do appreciate what they do for our community, and I think in this House also. I've spoken in the past of the work of la paroisse Saints-Martyrs-Canadiens, which also worships within my constituency of Radisson. And I think especially of a particular couple that are members there, the Blondeau family, and I can express appreciation to them especially for the work of their daughter Lise Malo. Lise has been kind enough to tutor me on my French, and for that I'm very grateful—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. When this matter's 'begain' before the House, the honourable member for Radisson (Mr. Teitsma) will have eight minutes remaining.

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, June 14, 2018

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