

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

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The Honourable Myrna Driedger
Speaker*

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-First Legislature

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, May 15, 2019

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

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

Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

**Bill 32—An Act Concerning the Leasing of
800 Adele Avenue, Winnipeg**

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister of Sustainable Development (Ms. Squires), that Bill 32, An Act Concerning the Leasing of 800 Adele Avenue, Winnipeg, now be read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Fielding: I'm pleased to table Bill 32, the act concerning the lease of 100 Adele Ave., Winnipeg. The objective of Bill 32 was to terminate the lease agreement between 5185603 Manitoba Limited and the First Nations of Southern Manitoba Child and Family Service Authority regarding the premise located at 800 Adele street in Winnipeg.

This lease is an untendered agreement for the rental of a facility that was never appropriate for child care. The building lease and its terms were not in the public interest. Given the landlord's refusal to agree to a reasonable termination agreement, we are taking this measure to terminate the lease.

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

**Bill 238—The Winnipeg General Strike
(Bloody Saturday) Act**

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): I move, seconded by the member from Minto that Bill 238, The Winnipeg

General Strike (Bloody Saturday) Act, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Lindsey: Today, 11 o'clock a.m., actually, marks the 100th anniversary of the beginning of the Winnipeg General Strike, a day when thousands of workers took to the streets of Winnipeg to fight for improved working conditions and wages and rights to collective bargaining.

In an attempt to end the strike on June 21st, 1919, the City requested the Royal Northwest Mounted Police and special constables to charge into a group of strikers. This act killed two individuals and injured many others, resulting in June 21st becoming known—known as Bloody Saturday.

I'm proud to bring forward this bill today to commemorate the individuals who were killed and all others who stood and fought for just causes.

Thank you.

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

Committee reports? Tabling of reports? Ministerial statements?

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Mary Ellen Clark

Hon. Eileen Clarke (Minister of Indigenous and Northern Relations): Madam Speaker, volunteers are the heart of many boards, clubs and community organizations, and today I'd like to recognize one of Agassiz's finest, Mary Ellen Clark of Neepawa.

Since her children became active in school and sports, Mary Ellen has been a dedicated volunteer and the backbone of many organizations and committees. Her success and accomplishments have been many, earning awards and recognition for 'outstandard' contributions to her community.

After a breast cancer diagnosis and treatment in 1995, Mary Ellen became involved in the local cancer support group. It later developed into the Palliative Care Program in Neepawa, where she works today as the volunteer co-ordinator, and

recently was recognized by CancerCare Manitoba for 20 years of service.

Mary Ellen has been very involved with the Neepawa Natives Junior A Hockey Club, and was billet co-ordinator for 10 years, a billet mom for 15 years, and always had three players in her home for six months of the year. Throughout the years she has provided a home away from home for 75 players and still hears from many of them. In 2010, Mary Ellen was named RBC Local Hockey Leader and recognized in the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto. In 2012, she received the Neepawa sportsman of the year award and was also the recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal.

Mary Ellen has had a significant role and fantastic success as the lottery chairman for the Neepawa and District Medical Committee. Since its beginning in 2005, she has helped raise \$1.2 million for the Neepawa personal-care home and the medical clinic. The clinic just celebrated the addition of the new facility which now accommodates eight doctors. She continues to be a member of the medical recruitment committee for Neepawa and area.

I've only listed a very few of Mary Ellen's extensive list of awards and community involvement. She has made a huge difference to the community which she lives in and has touched many lives in significant ways.

I'd like to share my personal appreciation to Mary Ellen for her dedicated compassion to my friend Diane, for being by her side through both her fights with cancer and providing comfort and peace in her final days.

Mary Ellen, you're an inspiration to all who know you and love you.

Madam Speaker, I'd ask that all members of this House join me in recognizing Mary Ellen for all she has accomplished and for being a dedicated volunteer in her community and our province.

Thank you.

Madam Speaker: The honourable Minister of northern–Indigenous and Northern Relations.

Ms. Clarke: I ask leave to have the names of her family members in attendance recorded in Hansard.

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

Dave Clark, Donna Clark, Mary Ellen Clark, Heather Graham

Abortion Rights

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): Straight out of Handmaid's Tale, recently Georgia passed a bill restricting abortion after six weeks, and if women do choose abortion, they risk life in prison.

Yesterday, 25 men in Alberta's legislator voted in favour of a total ban on abortion, even in the case of rape or incest. Kentucky, Mississippi and Ohio have brought in new abortion restrictions, with 22–28, rather, additional states considering similar laws.

Canada is not immune to this anti-choice, right-wing conservative movement. Last week in Toronto, at an anti-abortion rally, MPP Sam Oosterhoff said he wants to make, and I quote, abortion unthinkable in our lifetime.

Madam Speaker, in this very House we have a Premier (Mr. Pallister) and his ministers who literally can't even say the word abortion and who actively restrict access to the abortion pill. Or we can look to the members for Radisson (Mr. Teitsma) and Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen), who both spoke at anti-choice rallies.

* (13:40)

These are dangerous precedents, 'emboldening' men's misogyny to legislate controls over our bodies and movements. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Fontaine: Let me be perfectly clear. If you think it is okay to legislate our abortion rights away, let alone the rights of victims of rape or a 12-year-old girl raped and impregnated by her own father, you are on the wrong side of history. Now is not the time to be complacent but, rather, to organize.

So my message is for both US and Canadian voters who believe in women and girls' reproductive rights, to vote out these misogynistic, archaic male legislators and support candidates who understand abortions are human rights for women and girls.

Miigwech.

Northern Manitoba Walleye Championship

Mr. Kelly Bindle (Thompson): Madam Speaker, northerners are proud to live in the beautiful boreal forest with outcrop bedrock, pristine lakes and an abundance of fish and wildlife. We love our endless summer nights and dazzling northern lights and we

want to share our blessings by showcasing them to visitors because we know once you've experienced the North and northern hospitality, you'll always want to come back.

When northerners move away, they encourage others to travel north to see it for themselves. Northerners like Dino D'Andreamatteo, who grew up in Thompson, wanted to give back to the North by hosting others there. Dino, an avid competitive sport fisherman now living in Winnipeg, had an idea a few years ago to promote northern tourism by hosting a northern walleye fishing tournament at Paint Lake, 30 kilometres south of Thompson. He shared his idea with his fellow fishing buddy, Eric Labaupa from Kickerfish, and the Northern Manitoba Walleye Championship was born.

Dino and Eric used their knowledge and connections from participating in walleye tournaments in the past to solicit sponsorships and apply for permits, and hosted the first ever Northern Manitoba Walleye Championship at Paint Lake in 2017. The event was such a huge success, seeing 47 boats with teams of two entering not only from the North, but from all over the province and outside, that they decided to make it an annual event.

With volunteers from northern-Norman Northstars hockey team and others helping to measure, weigh in, revive and release the limit of six fish, everyone had a great time and those new to the competition also learned some valuable skills that they could apply at the next competition.

At the second annual northern walleye tournament last year, 51 teams entered, coming from as far as Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta. These teams travelled to northern Manitoba a few days in advance of the tournament, stayed in hotels, ate in restaurants and scouted the lake for promising fishing holes. No doubt they shared the experiences with friends back home, helping to further promote northern Manitoba.

Dino and Eric will be hosting the third annual northern walleye championship at Paint Lake on September 1st, 2019, and you can sign up now at www.kickerfish.ca. With roughly 50 teams expected—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

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

Mr. Bindle: With 50 teams expected and 10 teams already entered, it promises to be another great experience. Please join me in welcoming Dino D'Andreamatteo and Eric Labaupa to the Chamber today and thank them for promoting northern tourism.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Emerson, and I should—

Altona & District Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson): The Altona & District Chamber of Commerce is the—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Order.

I would just indicate that there was a trade made between the member of Assiniboia and the member for Emerson, and they have switched places in the order of prevent-presenting their member statements.

Mr. Graydon: Well, thank you for that, Madam Speaker.

The Altona & District Chamber of Commerce is the voice of business and provides leadership in building and maintaining a vibrant economy, as well as enhancing the quality of life in the community. The role of the chamber is to encourage a healthy and prosperous business community; provide support, resources for business owners and organizations; and promote economic growth in the region and advocate for a healthy business environment.

Each year the Altona & District Chamber of Commerce presents Citizen of the Year, Volunteer Recognition, Youth Recognition and business awards, and this year was no different. The recipient for the business excellent award with 11 employees or more was Buffalo Creek Mills Ltd. that has operated in Altona since 2014. It's an oat-processing company, purchasing oats throughout western Canada, providing product to markets in Mexico, USA and Canada.

The recipient of the business excellent award, 10 employees or less, CrossFit Outland, is fully coached fitness facility with over 100 adult members. They also support and host various programs, such as the World of Choices, big brother and sister, and—to name a few.

The Citizen of the Year award was presented to Melvin Klassen, who has served as a teacher, a principal, mayor of Altona, has been awarded the

Order of Merit by the—Manitoba Credit Unions for his many years of service to that organization. And he has served on the association of the Manitoba municipalities for many years.

The Volunteer Recognition award recipient was Ben Dueck, who has served on several boards, and was active in assisting and creating one of rural Manitoba's baseball gems, Access Field.

And the Youth Recognition Award recipient was Yan Rosie—Jossie Yan, a grade 12 student at the W.C. Miller Collegiate. She is the student council president, co-chairs the 2019 grad committee and, as well, helps out in many family restaurants.

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Labour Rights

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): Yesterday, Winnipeg bus drivers engaged in collective action to protest slow contract negotiations and poor working conditions. Drivers did not enforce fares as a way to send costly message to the City of Winnipeg.

Their timing, Madam Speaker, could not have been better, as today marks the 100th anniversary of the beginning of the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike. And this strike is a testament to the power of organized workers who have the power to make change.

Collective action and bargaining has been hard fought in our province and must be upheld. Workers have a right to demand fair wages and working conditions and to strike when those needs aren't met.

But this government has systematically tried to undermine workers' rights in the province. They've brought in a list of bills that will make life harder for working Manitobans: bill 29, The Health Sector Bargaining Unit Review Act, which made changes to the collective bargaining process; Bill 4, The Public Sector Construction Project Act, which will put a freeze on public sector wages; Bill 18, The Labour Relations Amendment Act, would require the employers and unions to bear the cost of mediators; and now there is Bill 12, The Workplace Safety and Health Amendment Act, which eliminates things like the position of chief prevention officer, who is meant to ensure progress and accountability on workplace health and safety.

We need a government that stands with workers, not one that fights to take away their rights. It's time to stand in solidarity with workers in this province and vote out this PC government.

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: Prior to oral questions, we have some guests in the gallery that I would like to introduce to you.

Seated in the Speaker's Gallery, we have with us today our 2019 Visitor Tour Program Summer Tour Guides, who will be working full time until the end of summer on Labour Day: Maia Bacchus, Claire Normandeau, Maria Sytnick, and Jordyn White.

They are accompanied by the Tour Office, Daisy Giesbrecht and manager, Vanessa Gregg.

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

And I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery, where we have with us today Val Christie, Paul Brault, Ginger Kithithee, Mike Kotowicz, Veronica Bateman, Marilyn Sandy, Serena Woodhouse, who are members of the Westgrove Learning Centre in Charleswood.

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

Increase in Syphilis/HIV Cases Addiction Treatment Strategy Needed

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Madam Speaker, many of us in the Chamber and across the province know the impact that addictions have had on our families, on our communities and on our province.

We know, also, that the addictions crisis has become a public health crisis in the past number of years. And I'd like to table for the House today a document that we've obtained that shows just how bad this public health crisis is becoming under this government's watch.

It's a disturbing alert from the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, and the message is shocking. It's a massive and unprecedented increase in the rates of syphilis transmission across our city and province, and it is tied to meth use.

* (13:50)

The rate of syphilis has gone up nine times since 2016. The rate was previously 9.9 per 100,000 people. In 2018 it is 87 per 1,000 people.

What steps has the Premier taken to address this public health crisis?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, I agree with the member's preamble in part, Madam Speaker. It is a circumstance that is becoming more and more of concern, certainly to many Manitobans. But the government has been very dominant in acting immediately and acting aggressively to address causative factors, not just consequential factors, as the members opposite seem to emphasize.

We've doubled treatment beds available through Addictions Foundation of Manitoba. We've added mental health beds at HSC. We've joined the Emergency Treatment Fund, a partnership with the Government of Canada. And, Madam Speaker, we'll continue to take significant actions to address a very serious health concern.

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

Mr. Kinew: Madam Speaker, the graph in the document that I just tabled is quite striking. It's shaped like a hockey stick, with 2018 representing an almost vertical increase in the transmission of syphilis.

The WRHA expects more than 600 cases of syphilis in 2019. That's a 600 per cent increase over just two years ago, Madam Speaker.

There are also concerning cases of congenital HIV—three cases of congenital HIV in Winnipeg—and 21 reported cases of congenital syphilis since 2015, with the vast majority of those occurring in 2018. So these are babies who are being born with these illnesses.

Importantly, this note says there should be zero cases of congenital syphilis and zero cases of congenital HIV in the province. And it puts an exclamation point on the sentence in that note.

Again, this is what's taking place under the Premier's watch. He is not doing enough to stem the public health crisis.

Why is he not acting?

Mr. Pallister: Well, the member's accusation is false, Madam Speaker. And, of course, we are acting. And we've gotten over 2 million needles to users in respect of the—enhancing their ability to access the drug of their choice.

Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, the problem will continue to grow if people continue to choose to

use meth and other drugs, and that's an unfortunate choice. That's why harm reduction is only part of the strategy. And, of course, education and assisting people who want to get off this treadmill to tragedy is a key part, as well. And we're engaging in investments in that respect.

We are taking action, continue to take action. And, Madam Speaker, we take this issue very seriously.

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

Mr. Kinew: Well, we see right there part of the problem, Madam Speaker.

I would like to correct the Premier: addictions are a disease, not a choice, Madam Speaker. And until the Premier begins to acknowledge that, his response to the addictions crisis will be completely lacking, lacklustre and leaving Manitobans wanting more leadership.

We see a serious public health outbreak occurring under this government's watch. And are they alerting Manitobans? No, they are not. It has been the responsibility of the opposition to bring this important public information to the public.

Will they support harm reduction initiatives? Will they support a safe consumption site? Will they support other steps that would reverse the transmission of these very serious illnesses? No, they do not. Time and time again, they refuse to take action.

Now that Manitobans are becoming increasingly sick and that this is spreading across the younger and middle-aged population of our province, will the Premier finally set ideology aside and begin to take action, including harm reduction, to counteract the addictions crisis?

Mr. Pallister: Well, the member's quite wrong, again, in his assertion, Madam Speaker. We do disagree on the issue of so-called safe injection sites; there are not such a thing as safe injection sites for meth, as the member has continued to advocate.

There was—highest usage in the world is in Australia, according to many of the recent studies. There were two major studies done in Australia, for example, just in the last year and a half at millions of dollars of cost. Task forces at work—did extensive work. There were 80 recommendations in just those two reports. None of them recommended making it easier for a meth addict to get meth.

So we do disagree on that approach. We agree on many others. And rather than look for points of disagreement, as the member has just done, I hope that he would actually encourage our continued efforts as we have taken them to address issues of harm reduction and to, in a meaningful and effective way, help people get off the treadmill of tragedy that he's advocating for, and get on the road to recovery.

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: Prior to moving on to the next questions, we have some students in the gallery that I would like to introduce to you. And I notice that they might just be leaving, but we have students from William Whyte Community School, located in Point Douglas.

And we welcome you to the Manitoba Legislature.

Thank you to the leader of the opposition for indulging me in making that announcement.

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

Health-Care Reforms Nursing Ad Campaign

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Very happy to acknowledge the William Whyte students. My mother-in-law was actually the principal of that school just a few years ago, Madam Speaker. So hello to our guests today.

We know that the Premier does not listen to the experts when it comes to addictions or public health. That much is clear in the shameful answers that he's just given. But we also know that he's not listening to nurses, who, time and time again, are telling them not to close the emergency rooms at Seven Oaks and Concordia hospitals.

What's even more disrespectful than this government refusing to listen to the nurses, was that misguided ad campaign that they launched depicting nurses having a day at the spa when we know the reality in Manitoba is that nurses are being worked off their feet with shift after shift of mandatory overtime.

I'll table the FIPPA documents today that show that this government, this Premier, spent \$40,000 on that ad campaign, Madam Speaker.

Will the Premier admit for the House today that that \$40,000 would've been better spent at the bedside and not cutting health care?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, we have on this side of the House tremendous respect for nurses, and we know that nurses have a tremendous respect for patient care, which is never referenced in the member's questions, Madam Speaker. He never concerns himself with patient care. But nurses do, and we do.

And, Madam Speaker, the official opposition today, when they were government, spent far more money telling nurses they should be afraid and that 1,000 of them got fired, when they knew that that was false. It was a blatant lie, was an absolute forgery, was a—it was a mistake in not just wording but intent. It was an attempt to use nurses and the profession of nursing for political fodder, and, unfortunately, that's too often evident in the member's preambles.

I'll only say this, Madam Speaker: we'll continue to work with nurses who want a better health-care system that works better for patients.

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

Mr. Kinew: Well, when it comes to respecting nurses, I take seriously the fact that my colleagues here on the NDP side of the House do very much respect nurses, because they're able to publicly show that support. That's why my colleagues in the NDP were able to stand with the nurses on the front steps of the Legislature when not one of these MLAs was willing to show their face and join the nurses on the rally that was held out front just a few weeks ago.

Now, why were they ashamed? Well, we could choose from one of many reasons. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: Perhaps they don't have the courage to stand behind their Premier's decision to close the emergency rooms in Winnipeg. Perhaps they don't have the courage to stand behind the last Conservative government's decision to fire hundreds of nurses. Or perhaps they're all just embarrassed that their government spent \$40,000 on a terrible ad campaign that made nursing look like a day at the spa in Manitoba when we know that these nurses are fighting for our family members each and every day.

So which one was it?

Mr. Pallister: Well, we spend a tiny fraction as government, on advertising and ourselves, as the previous government did, Madam Speaker. And Manitobans understand, and they remember well the

NDP ad campaigns, the close to \$2 million that was spent with steady growth signs, when there were no signs of steady growth.

The fact remains, Madam Speaker, our concerns are for improving what were the worst wait times in Canada at Concordia and at other Winnipeg hospitals. The member says, retreat, go back, surrender, nothing can be done. We believe something can be done. But if Manitobans decide they want a new government that wants to do nothing about health-care wait times, they have the NDP for that, Madam Speaker. They broke the system that we are now doing everything we can to fix.

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

Mr. Kinew: Well it's refreshing to hear the Premier start to acknowledge that we're probably going to form the next government, just as it's been refreshing—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Kinew: —just as it's been refreshing to see—
[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

* (14:00)

Mr. Kinew: —he and his Minister of Health acknowledge that their plan to close emergency rooms is terribly misguided and will be an absolute disaster once they close the ERs at Concordia and Seven Oaks.

But again, the issue at hand is this \$40,000 ad campaign that the government spent on creating Photoshopped images of nurses at the spa, going skiing and doing yoga. Nurses found this incredibly disrespectful when this government is putting their livelihoods on the line each and every day, it's causing them immense stress and is forcing them to work mandatory overtime, taking away their freedom.

Will the Premier simply stand in his place and apologize to nurses for the ads and apologize to Manitobans for wasting 40,000 of their dollars on that campaign?

Mr. Pallister: I shouldn't accuse the member of Fort Rouge for doing nothing, Madam Speaker, because that's not accurate, and I retract that statement.

Actually, he did a lot in the last few days. He demonstrated that he'd rather suppress the rights of

Steve Ashton to run as an NDP candidate. The longest serving NDP MLA in the history of Manitoba not able to run, not because he covered up anything but because he told the truth about the member's record. To tell the truth about the member's record in the NDP, that's not a good thing anymore, apparently.

So, Madam Speaker, when the member speaks about shame, he knows about shame. When he speaks about a lack of courage, he demonstrates a lack of courage. And when he talks about disrespect, he shows total disrespect to the rights of Manitobans to be able to know the facts about their candidates in elections and not have those facts suppressed by him personally. It's a shame.

Abortion Services Minister's Position

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): Over the last several weeks, [interjection] culminating in yesterday's Alabama bill—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

Ms. Fontaine: —culminating in yesterday's Alabama bill, we are witnessing regressive policies and strategies and legislative frameworks against our right, as women and girls, to access abortion in the US. We live in a country that still supports women and girls' reproductive rights, however, we are seeing an increase in anti-choice rallies. We saw Manitoba and Ontario politicians participating in those anti-choice rallies.

Does the Minister for Status of Women believe that women should have the right to make decisions over their own bodies and access abortion?

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister responsible for the Status of Women): I see that the member opposite is once again proving that she is more interested in playing politics with the lives of women and girls than she is in helping women in the province of Manitoba.

Our government has taken a different approach. We are working towards making life better for all women. We're expanding health services for women throughout the province. We are making life more affordable, unlike the NDP, who, what did they do when they had the chance? They jacked up taxes that disproportionately hurt single mothers the most in the province's history.

That is their record for standing up for women. Where they failed, we going to get it right.

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

Mifegymiso Coverage

Ms. Fontaine: This is a political issue. This is actually women and girls fighting for our basic human rights to access abortion and do what we want to do with our body. That is political, and we know that here in Manitoba we have a Premier (Mr. Pallister) and his ministers who can't even say the word abortion and who are actively restricting access to the abortion pill and yet attempting to claim to stand on the side of women and girls. It's utter nonsense.

Today of all days is a day for the Premier and his ministers to get up and affirm commitment to access to abortion, including the abortion pill.

Ms. Squires: Well, Madam Speaker, let's review members opposite track record for protecting women. When they had women that worked for them in their own caucus appear to them, knock on their door and say that they were being harassed, what were they told? They were told to shut up and suck it up. That's that member's record. That's her record for protecting them.

Let's review the record for most recently when the labour union leader knocked on the door of the NDP and said, I am being harassed at work and I need protection. What was she told? She was told, we don't have a policy to—protecting women.

That is the NDP's record for protecting women. We are standing up on this side of the House to protect the women in the province of Manitoba, for equality for all women.

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

Ms. Fontaine: Health Canada continues to remove barriers to access the abortion pill. They removed the requirement for a physician to be certified before writing a prescription. They removed the requirement for a woman to receive an ultrasound prior to receiving the prescription.

All of these changes put in place so that women and girls can access the abortion pill, which I have said repeatedly in this Chamber is a game changer in respect of our reproductive health. And all that this minister and the Premier can do is deny the fact that they are restricting access to the abortion pill.

Today, of all days, when we see what's going on to our neighbours in the south, will they stand up and commit fully to women and girls' reproductive health and universal coverage of the abortion pill?

Ms. Squires: The other thing that our government is doing—and under the leadership of the Minister of Health—is expanding health services for Manitobans throughout the province. We're spending \$414 million more on health-care services so that people throughout the province of Manitoba can access health-care services. This includes women throughout the province of Manitoba, and we are working towards ensuring that all Manitobans can live free and equal in our society.

Concordia and Seven Oaks Hospitals Request to Retain ER Services

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): Last week, this minister had the audacity to state publicly that nurses fully endorse their plan. This is simply false, Madam Speaker. Nobody believes this government, and I'll table for the House today a letter that actually outlines a dialogue between the nurses and Dr. Peachey, showing clearly they do not support their plan. And I'll quote from the letter: We are here to strongly oppose the closure of Concordia emergency and the Manitoba government's hospital reorganization. End quote.

Their plan sound—doesn't sound so peachy now.

Will the minister and the Premier stop putting politics before patients? *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Smith: Will they keep Seven Oaks and Concordia ERs open?

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): Madam Speaker, the member's assertion is false. There is broad-based support for our government's transformation of the health-care system. Certainly there are those, including a few over there, who say go back—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Friesen: They say stop doing anything. They say return to the failed approaches of the NDP, but Manitobans don't want to go back to being the last on the list with the highest wait times and with the most disorganized system.

That is why we are transforming the system.

We have confidence in the recommendations that we're receiving from David Peachey and from the excellent work that he has done, including meeting with both Manitoba Nurses Union leadership and 17 nurses.

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

Mrs. Smith: Manitobans don't believe this government. Nurses have clearly expressed that the Premier's (Mr. Pallister) plan is not working. He's caused nothing but straight chaos in the health-care system. As one nurse explained, and I quote: Taking vital signs is being missed; dressing changes are not being done; patients are not being turned over; bedsores, pneumonia and blood clots are developing. End quote.

We have continued to say, time and time again, these changes are not in the best interests of Manitobans or the patients.

How are Manitobans supposed to trust a report being released this week by the minister when he continues to make misleading comments to Manitobans?

Mr. Friesen: The member is wrong. We continue to express that there is broad-based support for the changes we're making. There is an acknowledgement in Manitoba that the system is made stronger by transformation, by coming together.

Why can Calgary have one emergency room that provides an emergency-room system that provides way lower wait times for their people? Manitoba needs less ERs, and urgent care has become an important part of that configuration.

*(14:10)

The failed approaches of the NDP are not something that Manitobans want to go back to. Our confidence is in this plan. We continue to listen to nurses. Their opinions were heard. Their advice will be folded into the recommendations.

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

Mrs. Smith: And I'll reiterate again: Manitobans do not believe anything that comes out of this minister or this Premier's mouths on health care.

Seventeen nurses are not alone. There are many Manitobans and many other nurses who are urging this government to listen to the front-line staff. But are they? No. But, finally, they have a chance to sit

down with the minister, and what does he go over? He goes over and misconstrues their statements. This is just plain insulting. He should apologize to those nurses.

It appears that politics is driving the health-care decisions of this government, rather than patient care.

Will the government put patients first and commit to keeping Seven Oaks and Concordia ERs open?

Mr. Friesen: Madam Speaker, I know the member for Point Douglas is personally embarrassed because she feigned indignation and said that David Peachey, in his quality assurance assessment, wouldn't meet with nurses, and then she found out that he had met with Manitoba Nurses Union and 17 nurses in a constructive panel discussion, after which he clearly said he wouldn't speak for the nurses.

I know she's embarrassed about that. But she should also understand that we put our faith in this—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Friesen: —quality assurance exercise going on. The question is not whether government is—would be doing this exercise. The question would be why wouldn't it be doing an exercise to ensure quality?

Better health care sooner for Manitobans. That is our plan. That's our goal. That is the road that Manitobans want us to be on. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Health-Care Reforms Peachey Report Recommendations

Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition): For the last three years, this government has been shelling out millions of dollars for reports whose recommendations they ignore, then do whatever they wanted to do all along: fire people, freeze funding, all while taking in ever-increasing transfer payments.

The letter that Darlene Jackson wrote to the Minister of Finance—sorry, the Minister of Health quoted a nurse who said, quote: I have 26 years of experience and I will honestly admit this is the worst I have ever seen. End quote.

The—she went on to say that thousands of deletions have only made staffing shortages worse

and that patients are actually offering to change their own bandages because nurses don't have the time.

Seventeen nurses told Dr. Peachey that they opposed his plan, and he came away saying everything was fine.

This sort of disconnect from reality is the sort of behaviour we've come to expect from the Premier, but is far from welcome in a supposed independent expert.

Will the Premier admit that he made a mistake rehiring Dr. Peachey, and scrap the plan that he developed for the NDP?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Manitobans now have two options, two political options, if they wish the health-care system to remain dead last in the country. They now have the second opposition joining with the first opposition to say go back, retreat, don't do anything, it's just too scary to do the heavy lifting.

But they have one option if they want a government that is willing to try to improve a system—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —that has failed patients and is—and was increasingly failing patients in the province. And that option would be this government, Madam Speaker.

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

Addiction and Mental Health Services Implementation of VIRGO Report

Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition): A year ago this week, the VIRGO report was released, a report into mental health and addictions. And I have spoken with many people across this province who are desperately frustrated because it is so hard to get access to either mental health or addictions treatment.

It's not clear how any of the recommendations in this report are going to be implemented when this government is dismantling the very structures that are supposed to implement it.

This government is dissolving AFM and eliminating the mental health branch from the Department of Health. These responsibilities are being passed to Shared Health, which is still under construction.

How is this government going to implement the VIRGO report when there is no one in place to do it?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): It's just a false preamble—by design or by ignorance, I'm not sure which, but either way, false.

Rapid Access to Addictions Medicine, Strongest Families Institute, Rapid Access to Consultative Expertise: we've moved on a dozen-plus initiatives that were recommended by the VIRGO report. We're continuing to make those changes which are necessary to take a system that was broken and heal that system, Madam Speaker.

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

Timeliness of Election

Mr. Lamont: It's truly strange that the Premier is dead set on having an election and ignoring the fixed-date election law when the health-care system is in such a shambles. There was a recent report that addictions and mental health are both getting worse across all categories, but in the midst of this, the Premier wants to dismiss these concerns or change the subject or blame someone else for all of his own mistakes.

I've spoken to countless people whose biggest concern is that this Premier doesn't listen or only listens to the man in the mirror. If the Premier calls an election, it will derail the work of the Meth Task Force.

Why does the Premier even want an election when he clearly has no interest in governing?

Mr. Pallister: I understand the member's reluctance to go to the polls, Madam Speaker. He's advocating for higher taxes on Manitoba small businesses. He's advocating for higher taxes on working families. He's advocating for higher taxes on seniors trying to make a go of it on a fixed income. He's advocating for higher costs for people who want—have to go to work or volunteer. He's advocating for higher taxes for basically everything. In fact, he's got a one-size-fits-all solution for every single problem: higher taxes.

We don't agree with that, and if the member is going to continue to be afraid, I would expect, knowing his positions as I do, that that fear would be well justified.

City of Winnipeg Review Independence of Review

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): Last month, at a chamber of commerce breakfast, the Premier promised that a review of the City of Winnipeg would be independent and he said it would be an arm's-length exercise.

Unfortunately, that's just not true. What the Premier really meant is the review would be just within the length of his arm because it's going to happen just down the hall from his office, conducted by his Finance Minister and his employees and overseen by members of his Cabinet. It's nothing but a political exercise, Madam Speaker. It's what the mayor warned would happen and it's what we were concerned about too.

Why has the Premier now, again, broken his word, this time by approving a partisan political investigation to attack the City of Winnipeg?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Madam Speaker, I understand the member's confusion; I do. He was part of a government for many years that overtly politicized the Treasury Board under its operation.

We do not do that and so I stand by my comments.

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

Mr. Swan: Well, I'm not sure the Premier was listening to the question. He doesn't listen to anybody, so I'm not sure why he'd be listening in question period.

The members of Treasury Board are Cabinet ministers and PC caucus members. The Finance Minister, of course, chairs Treasury Board and reports to Cabinet, chaired by this Premier.

The Premier promised, in front of a room of people, an independent arm's-length review, but now we find out that it's actually going to be a political, partisan investigation conducted just a few doors down from him. And the mayor warned this would happen, calling it a partisan, politically motivated exercise and far from being independent, but the Premier, again, didn't listen.

I ask him again: Why is this Premier conducting a partisan, political investigation?

Mr. Pallister: I don't mind the simple-minded, dull and ill-informed comments of the member, Madam Speaker, being repeated because they give evidence

to the member's lack of research and preparedness here today.

He accuses me of the same thing he accused Greg Selinger of, Madam Speaker, so I don't mind that accusation either.

The fact is, I've heard his comments. They're not based on fact and so it's difficult to respond to them, but I would say this to the member: Treasury Board is well equipped to do an analysis and research into an important issue; that's what we've asked them to do. And if the member has a better idea than using Treasury Board, like, for example, outsourcing consultants outside of government, we might consider his suggestion. But we think, actually, we have the expertise to do this one inside government, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

I would indicate for the House that comments about mental abilities, like simple-minded, have not been allowed by Speakers in the past, and it would be considered unparliamentary for language like that to be used in the House.

Mr. Pallister: I apologize for the comments, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: That should take care of that issue.

Mr. Swan: Well, there must be an election coming; the Premier's actually apologized for something.

You know—[*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

Mr. Swan: —certainly the Premier needs to know that there are things—[*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Swan: —called orders-in-council which are actually reported, and that's where the information's come from. And the Premier can take umbrage with the questions I'm asking, but I was quoting the mayor of the City of Winnipeg—the City of Winnipeg, where more than half of all Manitobans live.

* (14:20)

And we know what this is all about. This is the Premier trying to deflect attention from his cuts, from tearing up the long-standing 50-50 cost-sharing agreement for public transit, yanking \$40 million away from the City for roadwork after it set its

budget. He's trying to start a diversion by provoking a fight.

Will the Premier actually ask–answer the question: Why has he broken his word again by directing a partisan, political investigation of the City of Winnipeg when he said he wouldn't?

Mr. Pallister: Well, perhaps, Madam Speaker, we've just seen, given the member's failure to move away from here and go federal, a launch of a new civic aspiration. Perhaps he's looking—[*interjection*]—perhaps he's looking to deal with the issues that I believe our government is facing at the civic level. [*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: There's no benefit, there's absolutely no benefit, to be derived by sweeping these important issues of permitting and inspections under the carpet. We've led North America, according to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, in addressing unnecessary red tape and blockages to capital investment.

And, Madam Speaker, we plan to continue to do that by researching and finding ways to do things better, whether it's in the City's processes or our own. So we're expanding our already ongoing review of Manitoba Hydro, of the Fire Commissioner's office, to include related permitting and inspections. They all go together.

The member wouldn't understand private sector capital investment, but it goes where it's wanted, and we want to make sure it goes to Manitoba because that's how you create jobs, Madam Speaker.

Conservation Officers Equipment and Staffing Improvements

Mr. Alan Lagimodiere (Selkirk): Madam Speaker, every day Manitoba's conservation officers are on the front line working hard to keep our environment safe and sustainable for generations to come. That's one of the reasons I brought forward a bill to formally recognize the importance of our conservation officers. Our government understands the need to strengthen this vital front-line service.

Can the Minister of Sustainable Development please tell the House what our government is doing to support our conservation officers here in Manitoba?

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Sustainable Development): I thank my colleague from Selkirk

for that question, I—and I congratulate him for his work on honouring conservation officers.

Our government values and honours our hard-working conservation officers and improving work conditions after they were left in complete disrepair by the NDP.

In addition to investing in a new public safety system—instead of buying parts on eBay like the NDP did, we are investing in a new system—we're hiring more officers; we have eight that are in training right now and look forward to welcoming them to the forces.

We're also equipping them with vital equipment and gear such as gloves, something that was denied to our conservation officers under the NDP.

Lifelight Air Ambulance Public Operation of Service

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): The government has had many, many months to make up its mind with respect to the RFP to have a non-government operator of the Lifelight Air Ambulance service.

The result has been a lot of uncertainty and disruption. This has already caused uncertainty and problems with respect to pilots, doctors and nurses, resulting in extra costs.

When will the government restore stability to the Lifelight Air Ambulance service by indicating that its status will remain as it has been for many years: a first-rate, excellent, publicly operated Lifelight Air Ambulance service?

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): There's a process that's set up, and we want to ensure good value for taxpayers' dollars are accomplished with this. We also want to make sure that good servicing is a part of it. That's all part—this process to make Manitoba a better place.

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

Mr. Gerrard: Madam Speaker, the government has added to the instability of the Lifelight Air Ambulance service. I understand that there is now an urgent need to address not only pilots, doctors and nurses providing service, but also the aircraft maintenance engineers as well.

The government could quickly resolve these issues by announcing that it will keep the Lifelight Air Ambulance services as a high-quality, public

service of which all Manitobans can be proud and that will ensure individuals in need in northern Manitoba can get the service they need.

Will the government say so today?

Mr. Fielding: There is a process in place. We think it's important to get evidence. We—it's important to understand what costs are and, more importantly, the most important thing, for Manitobans, we want a comprehensive service, a service that's going to support Manitobans. That's what this process is about, and we're going to find out through that process, through the RFP. It's laid out; it's comprehensive; and it's open and transparent, something that the NDP government knew nothing about when they were in government.

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

Keewatin Air Proposal

Mr. Gerrard: Yes, Madam Speaker, numerous compounding factors have contributed to the uncertainty. I understand that Keewatin Air, which may be one of the private sector applicants to take over the Lifeflight Air Ambulance service, had a recent plane crash on April 24th in Gillam.

Apparently the aircraft left Winnipeg with an insufficient quantity of fuel on-board the medevac flight, as the document I table indicates. This accident is a further reason for uncertainty for people to be part of the medevac team.

I ask the minister: Is Keewatin Air, or one of its associated companies within the Exchange Income Corporation, involved in any way with a proposal in response to the government's RFP?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): On the medevac issue, the member is attacking the human beings who were involved in the preparation exercises. These are civil servants he's attacking in his preamble. That investigation's under way, and there shouldn't be an advance finding by the member or anyone else of any wrongdoing or incompetence by civil servants who may or may not have been doing their job effectively or well. So I would urge the member not to presume wrongdoing while investigation of the incident is still under way, Madam Speaker.

Education System Review Resource Supports

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Madam Speaker, I've had the pleasure to join teachers, parents and

community leaders at many meetings across Manitoba. What I've heard over and over and over again was they want the resources to support small class sizes, and they need more supports to support increasingly complex student needs. What I didn't hear at all was calls for funding below the rate of inflation. In fact, I heard exactly no one actually ask for funding that doesn't even keep up with a growing student population.

So I'd like to ask the minister: Why isn't he listening to Manitobans, and why is he set on making cuts to our education system in Manitoba?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Education and Training): I want to congratulate the member on his reappointment as Education critic. He probably—when he was at the consultations—has never seen an exercise of so many Manitobans being listened to when it comes to education, and, in fact, I've been very pleased to see the media reports that there are hundreds of Manitobans coming who want to engage in the discussion, who want to talk about the future of education, want to talk about how we can get better results from our children.

I know there's lots of members talking on the opposite side, still. Maybe they could go to the consultations and talk too.

But when they were there, I'm sure that he saw for the first time Manitobans being asked their opinion, because our government listens. We want to hear from them. I hope he learns something from that exercise, Madam Speaker.

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

Co-Chair's Attendance at Meetings

Mr. Wiebe: Well, in fact, Madam Speaker, I've met with hundreds of teachers, parents and community members about the review. But the one thing that I haven't seen, and the one person who I haven't got a chance to meet yet, is Janice MacKinnon, one of the co-chairs of the commission. In fact, I haven't seen her at a single meeting.

Just last night, though, I did see that she was active on social media, that she's in Alberta, tasked with leading a rushed financial review by that Conservative government to make cuts over in that province.

So I ask the minister: Why has the co-chair of his education review not been to a single public consultation meeting?

Mr. Goertzen: Well, I should be surprised that the member opposite is attacking a former NDP MLA. But then, I guess, given their history, maybe I shouldn't be surprised.

Mrs. MacKinnon, of course—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Goertzen: Mrs. MacKinnon, along with all the commissioners, the high-quality individuals who have a broad base of experience—I'm not surprised that their expertise is being asked for—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Goertzen: —across the country. Far from that being a weakness, I would—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Goertzen: —consider that to be a strength of the people that we've appointed, Madam Speaker.

* (14:30)

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

Mr. Wiebe: Well, Madam Speaker, I would expect that the co-chair of the education review would be at least at some of the public consultation meetings to hear directly from those teachers, parents and those other concerned citizens.

The last thing that this minister, I would think, wants, is the appearance that he just hired someone for their prior political affiliation and not for their engagement in the actual work that needs to be done.

As it stands, Dr. MacKinnon has not attended any of the consultation meetings. Now she's heavily engaged in a—planning consultations to cut public services in Alberta.

I ask the minister once again: Why is the co-chair of his education review missing in action?

Mr. Goertzen: Madam Speaker, we have had thousands of Manitobans who have come to public hearings to talk about education, to talk about how young people can get better results in the future, to talk about how, over the last 17 years, the NDP government failed to get better results in education.

I could understand that the member for Concordia is sensitive about that. He doesn't like that. He doesn't like seeing Manitobans engaged. He doesn't care about results. He doesn't want to thing—see things get better. He wants to live

in a world of negativity where he can point fingers and try to be negative about everything.

I'll let him live in that world. We're going to live in the world of getting better and improving, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

PETITIONS

Daylight Saving Time

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

And the background to this petition is as follows:

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

(2) According to the Manitoba Public Insurance news release, collision data collected in 2014 showed that there was a 20 per cent increase in collisions on Manitoba roadways following the daylight saving time change when compared to all other Mondays in 2014.

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition has been signed by Gary Dellebucier, Quikar Michaud *[phonetic]* and Jordan Templeton and many, many more fine Manitobans.

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

Early Learning and Child-Care Programs

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

Madam Speaker, this petition is signed by Harjinder Sangha, Kam Sangha and many other Manitobans.

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

Signed by Shirley Nevin, Wendy Hickson, Shreyanh Gosni and many others.

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

And, Madam Speaker, this petition is signed by Maria Cullum, Rosemarie Todaschuk, Heather Keppler and many other fine Manitobans.

* (14:40)

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

Signed by many Manitobans.

Thanks.

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

The background to the position is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

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

Madam Speaker, this petition has been signed by many, many Manitobans.

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

And this petition, Madam Speaker, has been signed by Lindsay Slater, Joel Gagnon, and Janelle Aubin, and many other Manitobans.

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

And the background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition was signed by Glen Pépin, James Mickelson, and Brianna Hutchison, and many, many more.

Tina Fontaine—Public Inquiry

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

These are the reasons for this petition—oh.

* (14:50)

(1) Tina Fontaine was murdered at the age of 15 years, and her body was found in the Red River on August 17th, 2014.

(2) Tina Fontaine was robbed of her loving family and the Anishinabe community of Sagkeeng First Nation.

(3) Tina Fontaine was failed by multiple systems which did not protect her as they intervened in her life.

(4) Tina Fontaine was further failed by systems meant to—which did not protect her—sorry, I apologize. Let me start that again.

(4) Tina Fontaine was further failed by systems meant to seek and pursue justice for her murder.

(5) Tina Fontaine's murder galvanized Canada on the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls, MMIWG, as she quickly became our collective daughter and the symbol of MMIWG across Canada.

(6) Manitoba has failed to fully implement the recommendations of numerous reports and recommendations meant to improve and protect the lives of indigenous peoples and children, including the Manitoba Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples and the Phoenix Sinclair inquiry.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Premier of Manitoba and the Minister of Justice to immediately call a public inquiry into the systems that had a role in the life and death of Tina Fontaine, as well as the function of the administration of justice after her death.

(2) To urge that the terms of reference of a public inquiry be developed jointly with the caregivers of Tina Fontaine and/or the agent appointed by them.

Signed by many Manitobans.

Early Learning and Child-Care Programs

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

(4)—oh, strong economy, sorry.

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

And this is signed by Sharmy Ganesan, Ashleigh Daudsha [*phonetic*], Hannah Wright and many other Manitobans.

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

And, Madam Speaker, this petition is signed by William Cottingham, Tristan Halliday, Brenda Frieze and many other Manitobans.

Quality Health Care

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

And the background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

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

adequate number of nurses and other health-care professionals to meet Manitoba's needs.

And this petition is signed by Andrei Oprea, Tom Henderson, Karl Sorensen and many other Manitobans.

House Business

Madam Speaker: The honourable Government House Leader, on House business?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): On House business.

I'm sorry to delay the opposition from delaying their own motion, but I would ask for leave of the House to revert back to tabling of reports to table the—committee reports, to table the report on the hiring of the Ombudsman.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to revert to committee reports? [*Agreed*]

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs Sixth Report

Mrs. Sarah Guillemard (Chairperson): I wish to present the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Your Standing Committee on Legislative—

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS presents the following as its Sixth Report.

Meetings

Your Committee met on the following occasions in the Legislative Building

- August 27, 2018 (3rd Session – 41st Legislature)
- May 9, 2019 (4th Session – 41st Legislature) (in-camera)

Matters under Consideration

- Recommendation for the appointment of the Ombudsman for the Province of Manitoba

Committee Membership

Committee Membership for the August 27, 2018 meeting:

- Mr. ALLUM
- Mr. CURRY

- *Hon. Mr. FIELDING*
- *Ms. FONTAINE*
- *Hon. Mr. GERRARD*
- *Mrs. GUILLEMARD (Chairperson)*
- *Mr. JOHNSTON*
- *Mr. LAGASSÉ*
- *Mr. MARTIN (Vice-Chairperson)*
- *Hon. Ms. MAYER*
- *Mr. SWAN*

Committee Membership for the May 9, 2019 in camera meeting:

- *Hon. Ms. CLARKE*
- *Mrs. GUILLEMARD (Chairperson)*
- *Ms. KLASSEN*
- *Mr. LAGASSÉ*
- *Mr. MARCELINO (Tyndall Park)*
- *Mr. MARTIN*
- *Mr. NESBITT*
- *Mr. SMITH (Southdale)*
- *Hon. Mrs. STEFANSON*
- *Mr. SWAN*
- *Mr. WIEBE*

Your Committee elected Mr. SMITH (Southdale) as the Vice-Chairperson at the May 9, 2019 meeting.

Motions:

Your Committee agreed to the following motion at the August 27, 2018 meeting:

- *THAT a sub-committee of the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs be struck to manage the process of hiring a new Ombudsman for the Province of Manitoba, under the terms and conditions as follows:*

(a) the sub-committee consist of four Government Members, two Official Opposition Members and one Second Opposition Party Member;

(b) the sub-committee have the authority to call their own meetings, the ability to meet in camera, and be able to undertake duties it deems necessary in order to fulfil its responsibilities in the hiring process;

(c) the sub-committee must report back to the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs with a recommendation that has been agreed to by all members; and

(d) the Committees Branch staff as well as the Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services

staff be authorize to attend all meetings of the sub-committee.

Your Committee agreed to the following motion at the May 9, 2019 meeting (in camera):

- *THAT the report and recommendation of the Sub-Committee be received.*
- *THAT the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs recommend to the President of Executive Council that Jill Perron be appointed as the Ombudsman for the Province of Manitoba.*

REPORT FROM THE SUB-COMMITTEE

Your Sub-Committee presents the following as its First Report.

Meetings:

Your Sub-Committee met on the following occasions:

- *November 5, 2018 at 10:00 a.m.*
- *December 18, 2018 at 2:00 p.m.*
- *March 5, 2019 at 3:00 p.m.*
- *April 16, 2019 at 8:30 a.m.*

All meetings were held in camera in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration:

- *Recruitment and Selection of the Ombudsman*

Sub-Committee Membership:

Sub-Committee Membership for the November 5, 2018 meeting:

- *Hon. Mrs. COX*
- *Mrs. GUILLEMARD*
- *Mr. LAGIMODIERE*
- *Ms. LAMOUREUX*
- *Mr. MARCELINO (Tyndall Park)*
- *Hon. Mrs. MAYER*
- *Mr. SWAN*

Your Sub-Committee elected Mr. LAGIMODIERE as the Chairperson and Mrs. GUILLEMARD as the Vice-Chairperson during the meeting on November 5, 2018.

Sub-Committee Membership for the December 18, 2018 meeting:

- *Mr. ALLUM*
- *Hon. Mrs. COX*
- *Mr. LAGIMODIERE*
- *Ms. LAMOUREUX*
- *Hon. Mrs. MAYER*
- *Mr. SMITH (Southdale)*
- *Mr. SWAN*

Prior to the proceedings on December 18, 2018, Mr. LAGIMODIERE resigned as the Chairperson.

Your Sub-Committee elected Mr. SMITH (Southdale) as the Chairperson and Mr. LAGIMODIERE as the Vice-Chairperson during the meeting on December 18, 2018.

Sub-Committee Membership for the March 5, 2019 meeting:

- Mr. ALLUM
- Hon. Mrs. COX
- Ms. KLASSEN
- Mr. LAGIMODIERE (Vice- Chairperson)
- Hon. Mrs. MAYER
- Mr. SMITH (Southdale) (Chairperson)
- Mr. SWAN

Sub-Committee Membership for the April 16, 2019 meeting:

- Hon. Mrs. COX
- Ms. KLASSEN
- Mr. LAGIMODIERE (Vice- Chairperson)
- Mr. MARCELINO (Tyndall Park)
- Hon. Mrs. MAYER
- Mr. SMITH (Southdale) (Chairperson)
- Mr. SWAN

Staff present for all Sub-Committee meetings:

- Deanna Wilson, Director, Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services
- Monique Grenier, Clerk Assistant/Committee Clerk

Agreements by the Sub-Committee:

Your Sub-Committee reached the following agreements during the meeting on December 18, 2018:

- The Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services will deal with all the logistics and paperwork involved with the hiring process of the Ombudsman, which includes the Advertising Plan, Selection Criteria, Advertisement and Interview Questions.
- The Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services will conduct the paper screening of applications received and report to the Sub-Committee, five (or more) qualified candidates for review.
- The Sub-Committee will review the list of qualified candidates and determine which

applicant(s) to be interviewed by the Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services.

- The Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services will conduct interviews and report to the Sub-Committee, the interview rating results for consideration and selection.
 - The Sub-Committee will review the interview rating results and determine the candidate to be recommended for the position of Ombudsman.
- Your Sub-Committee reached the following agreements during the meeting on March 5, 2019:
- The Sub-Committee agreed to interview the top six candidates that held screening results of 11 and above.
 - The Sub-Committee agreed that in the event the number of candidates drops below four, the next two candidates that held screening results of 10 will be interviewed.

Your Sub-Committee reached the following agreements during the meeting on April 16, 2019:

- Pending successful reference checks, the Sub-Committee agreed to recommend to the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs that Jill Perron be appointed as the Ombudsman for the Province of Manitoba.
- In the event the successful candidate declines or is no longer available, the Sub-Committee agreed to meet again to discuss further options.
- The Sub-Committee reviewed and adopted a document entitled "Terms of Reference for Hiring of Independent Officers of Assembly" dated April 16, 2019, prepared by the Legislative Assembly Staff. The document is set out in the Schedule to this report.

Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services Activities:

As agreed to by the Sub-Committee on December 18, 2018, the Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services was tasked with all the logistics and paperwork involved with the hiring process of the Ombudsman.

On March 5, 2019, the Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services reported to the Sub-Committee a list of thirteen qualified candidates for review and selection to be interviewed.

The Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services considered applications for the position of the Ombudsman as follows:

- *Two hundred and twenty-two were received for the position.*
- *Three individuals were interviewed for the position on March 13, 2019.*
- *Three individuals were interviewed for the position on March 14, 2019.*

On April 16, 2019, the Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services reported to the Sub-Committee the interview rating results of the six candidates.

SCHEDULE

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba Terms of Reference for Hiring of Independent Officers of the Assembly April 16, 2019

Purpose:

On August 27, 2018, the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs passed a motion to strike a Sub-Committee to manage the process of hiring a new Ombudsman for the Province of Manitoba. The Sub-Committee, consisting of four Government Members, two Official Opposition Members and one Second Opposition Party Member, has the authority to call its own meetings, the ability to meet in camera, and be able to undertake duties it deems necessary in order to fulfil its responsibilities in the hiring process. The Sub-Committee must report back to the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs with a recommendation that has been agreed to by all members.

The Sub-Committee will be assisted in their duties by the staff from the Committees Branch and the Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services who are authorized to attend all meetings of the Sub-Committee.

Roles and Responsibilities:

1. *The Sub-Committee assigns the Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services to deal with all the logistics and paperwork involved with the hiring process of the Ombudsman.*
2. *The Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services will:*
 - (a) *devise a hiring process which includes an advertising plan, a paper screening process, an interview process and a selection process;*

- (b) *draft an advertisement, paper screening criteria and selection criteria;*
- (c) *print the advertisement as set out in the advertising plan;*
- (d) *conduct the paper screening of applications received;*
- (e) *report to the Sub-Committee, five (or more) qualified candidates for review and selection to interview;*
- (f) *conduct interviews on candidates selected by the Sub-Committee;*
- (g) *report to the Sub-Committee, the interview rating results on the candidates selected by the Sub-Committee; and*
- (h) *conduct reference checks on candidate(s) and report to the Sub-Committee any issues or concerns identified.*

3. *The Sub-Committee Members will individually have the ability to view the list of qualified candidates along with their background paperwork confidentially at the Legislative Assembly Human Resources Services Office prior to the Sub-Committee's review.*

4. *The Sub-Committee will review the list of qualified candidates and select which applicant(s) to be interviewed by the Legislative Assembly Human Resources Services.*

5. *One representative from each recognized political party shall be entitled to observe the interviews while having participation in the scoring process.*

6. *The Sub-Committee will review the interview rating results and pending successful reference checks, determine the candidate to be recommended for the position of Ombudsman.*

7. *The Sub-Committee must provide a report to the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs that includes a recommendation for a new Ombudsman for the Province of Manitoba.*

* (15:00)

Mrs. Guillemard: I move, seconded by the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Reyes), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

Madam Speaker: Grievances? The House—yes—

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

OPPOSITION DAY MOTION

Madam Speaker: The House will now consider the opposition day motion of the honourable member for Flin Flon.

I will now recognize the honourable member for Flin Flon.

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): I move, seconded by the member from Minto, that on the 100th anniversary of the 1919 general strike, the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba call on the provincial government to recognize and commemorate all workers who fought for labour rights that bettered working conditions for all Canadians, especially those who were killed during the strike, by taking concrete steps to promote increased unionization in the public and private sector, enshrining the right to collective bargaining in legislation, legislating a living wage for all Manitobans, and investing in measures to ensure and enhance safe working conditions.

Motion presented.

Mr. Lindsey: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and it gives me great pleasure to rise in the House today to introduce this motion, which will really do something, as opposed to just having a motion that feels good for the moment. We really—we want to encourage the government to do the things that we talked about in this motion, which is to really stand up, not just for workers' rights, but stand up with workers in this province for those rights.

You know, the 1919 strike, we saw Conservative and Liberal governments of the day stand against Manitobans. Thirty thousand Manitobans took to the picket line, took to the streets, took to the strike action, because of the way they were being treated.

And now here we are, 100 years later, and we really want to ensure that, particularly governments of the day, honour all those working women and men that stood in solidarity with each other.

Mr. Doyle Pivniuk, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

You know, it wasn't just unionized workers that participated in that 1919 strike, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It was working people in the province, union and

non-union, who stood up and said, enough is enough; we're going to stand together.

And out of that labour movement back then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, things like eight-hour shifts were born. They certainly weren't born right at that particular moment in time. It took more negotiating and more pressure on governments to actually change working conditions. And working people really, for 100 years, had been fighting incremental battles to make workplaces better and to really recognize their rights to collective bargaining and their rights to strike when that bargaining's not successful.

Now we've seen recent federal governments that, really, passed legislation that was unconstitutional, when they legislated postal workers back to work. That's not action that government should be proud of. It's not action that we should recognize in this House as being right, good and proper.

What, really, we're encouraging this government to do, is to actually enshrine some of those rights in legislation in Manitoba, so that from this day forward workers will be able to stand and say, yes, somebody was actually listening; somebody actually cared that workers died in 1919 doing nothing more than standing up for their rights in this free country of ours.

So, really, I mean, it would be nice, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if maybe June 21st was declared a Manitoba holiday to recognize truly the significant events of that particular day. I mean, today it's a hundred anniversary of when the strike started, but in June it will be the 100th anniversary of when governments decided to attack workers with clubs and guns. It'll be 100 years in June since two workers, in particular, died and so many others were injured.

So, really, what this motion is about is about encouraging this government, this particular PC government, to abandon its present attack on working people in this province. It's encouraging this PC government to actually stand up and recognize workers' constitutional rights, recognizing workers' constitutional rights to strike.

So, really, something concrete and good should come out of this motion, I hope. You know, it's not a phony thing to stand up—for me to stand up and support working people because that's who I am. I was a strong union member, advocating for working

people's rights when I was a worker in an industrial plant.

I continue to stand with my working sisters and brothers, particularly unionized ones, but also those that want to become unionized and those that should become unionized so that they can enjoy the benefits that should be available to all working people but are not.

And the best way for working people to enjoy those benefits I speak about is to become unionized and, really, that's the best thing for the province, it's the best thing for this government, to stand up and say, yes, you're right; we recognize that unionized workers are productive workers. They're well-paid, they have health care, they really are the backbone of this great province. It was working people that really built this province on their blood and sweat.

And so it would be nice to have a day to recognize those forefathers and foremothers that took to the streets in solidarity. When I first got involved, the concept OBU—One Big Union—was foreign to a lot of workers. They'd forgotten where they came from, and I really took it upon myself to fully understand that concept and, really and truly, whether all workers have the same union name, the concept of the One Big Union is workers standing with workers to support workers, not a bad concept because solidarity wins the day.

What would be really nice, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is if the government of the day recognized the importance of the historical event of 1919 but, more importantly, recognized the historical opportunity that they have as a government, as a PC government, to stand up and say, yes, we actually appreciate workers in this province, and here's what we're going to do to show that. It's not false words; it's—let's pass some legislation that actually supports workers rather than passing legislation that tears workers down.

* (15:10)

And it's unfortunate that that's the legacy that this particular PC government is going to leave behind for themselves, is they were against working Manitobans. But today—today—we offer them the opportunity to change, and we can all change; we can all do better.

So I encourage this government and every member in this House to do better, to stand in solidarity with Manitobans who get up, go to work and build this province and make this province better every day of the week. While they're busy making

this province better, let's make this province better for them.

So this resolution, I want it to be not just empty words on a paper that gets read and talked about and forgotten. I really want to encourage the government to look at what's there. Things like a decent living wage so that working people can feed their families—living wage so that working people can send their kids to school. That should be something that we all aspire to, and I encourage this government to really look at this resolution and then act. Act on the contents of the resolution so that they can be the ones that can stand up even in an election and say, you know what, we were wrong with some of the things we did to attack workers. We're going to change that. We're going to enact strong health and safety language; we're going to actually have a department of labour; we're going to train the minister so he understands what labour's all about, if he didn't come out of labour; we're going to make sure that as a government, we've done the right things for the people of Manitoba rather than leaving the legacy of doing the wrong things for the majority of Manitobans.

So that's really what I want to come out of this particular motion is to recognize the strength that working people have in this province; men and women, when they walked off their jobs and said, we deserve better. And I want this government to stand in solidarity with workers, as we do, and say, you deserve better, and we as a government, we as the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, will work together to get you the life you deserve and the working conditions you deserve.

Thank you.

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

Mr. Blair Yakimoski (Transcona): It is truly an honour to speak on this historic day because, as was mentioned by the member from Flin Flon, 100 years ago today, the Winnipeg General Strike began. It's almost hard to believe it was that long ago—100 years ago—that this historic event occurred as the conditions of the—after the First World War—changed for those returning from serving their country. Many of them found their jobs replaced by immigrants; many who came from this—in the second wave of Ukrainian immigration were labourers. The post-war economic landscape was experiencing massive inflation, job losses, and we did not have the social safety nets we do now.

As I said a week or so ago, I congratulate, and I think I would support the resolution from the member from Burrows. I congratulate her for bringing this forward, but this isn't that. This is the NDP finally realizing that although their history is tied to the 1919 general strike, they couldn't stand that the hard-working member from Burrows beat them to the punch. They couldn't stand that she did her work—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Yakimoski: —and she engaged with the local unions to bring them here.

I would like to look around; they're not here. I don't know where they are, but they were here a couple weeks ago when they had the opportunity to support—because we—I think we all agree the 1990 general strike and the acknowledgment is really a non-partisan; it's an important day. It changed not just Winnipeg; it changed Canada. It's unfortunate. This isn't that.

It—I know that in Ottawa, as I mentioned, Daniel Blaikie, a year ago he brought this forward. He knew in advance that he should be talking about this. He should be telling people the story and he should bring it forth but his colleagues here chose to sit on their hands. They chose to wait and wait and they got beaten to the punch.

I'm sure Daniel would have appreciated the support provincially in wanting to bring attention to this momentous event, and I wonder why the provincial NDP chose not to bring this forward.

The member from Flin Flon says we are attacking workers' rights. I disagree. I disagree strongly. I think workers' rights are very much supported and we've allowed them that because I think workers deserve the right to choose to join a union or choose not to join a union by voting with a secret ballot. We do know the secret ballot is a pillar of our democracy.

I think the member from Flin Flon would agree. I think him and I would both agree on this, that a vibrant economy, a growing economy, a strong economy, as the Premier (Mr. Pallister) might say, capital at risk drives the economy. I think that would be a—beneficial to Manitoba's economy and, when the economy grows, workers benefit from a robust economy.

It appears it's already happening. I'm going to consult my notes. Oh, private sector's capital spending increased by 10 per cent in 2018, the highest amongst the provinces. Since 2016, private sector capital spending in mining, oil and gas extraction—important to Flin Flon, no doubt about that—increased by almost 23 per cent annually, the highest among provinces.

Manitoba posted the strongest provincial growth rate over the past decade, averaging 2.2 compared to 1.6 real GDP growth in Canada overall—manufacturing employment, up 6.4 per cent so far in 2019, the highest among the provinces and the best since 2000.

We know around the year shortly after the year 2000 we had those dark, dark days, the days, the decades of debt, decay and decline. We know exports to the US are up. Manitoba's population is up. Manitoba's housing starts are up. Retail vehicle sales are up.

So it's truly unfortunate that the members chose not to allow this to come to a vote and support it when they had a chance. Again, I congratulate the member from Burrows, and I think it's really too bad that they chose to play politics with this, but that's what they—they could have brought this forward and—but they chose not to. They sat around.

Again, as I'd mentioned during the member from Burrows' resolution, the—couple weeks ago, I am very much looking forward to this summer's productions on a lighter note, the musical, the movie, talking about seeing Winnipeg on the big screen. I very much look forward to that.

I thank you very much for allowing me the time to get up and talk about this for a few minutes. I will take my seat now and thank you very much and I'll let someone else have the floor.

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): And, boy, did that previous speech miss the mark in so many ways. And so I do hope to put some words on the record just what this particular day means to me and to our caucus and particularly to the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey), who's brought this forward. And it really is an amazing milestone in Manitoba and a day for us to celebrate but also to think back, with a certain degree of mourning, for those people who sacrificed their lives, in this case for many of the freedoms that we take for granted here in this Chamber.

* (15:20)

You know, it occurs to me, and looking back and learning more as we have over the last number of months and certainly even over the last year as we've gotten ready to mark this occasion, it occurs to me, being in this very political place, the political themes that come out very clearly of the 1919 strike. And, I mean, very clearly we can link our political movement—our political party—directly to that action that happened in 1919.

Of course, many know that J.S. Woodsworth, one of the strike leaders, of course, was one of the founders of the CCF. But more importantly—or just as importantly, I should say, Mr. Speaker—it was that combination of labour, of activists on the street and of political leadership that came together with labour to form the CCF and become the NDP. And it's the party that I'm very proud to be a part of. And it's amazing that we can draw our roots directly to the strike.

Likewise, members opposite would be able to trace their party history very much to the Citizens' Committee of 1,000, where it was very clear that they were there to break the strike, to step on workers' rights and to really quell any kind of dissension that they saw. And whether it be influencing the media and their control there or just any of the control that they exerted as employers and as the masters in that political system, they exerted that force then, as they do now.

But, you know, maybe on a more non-partisan note, you know, it actually—the strike moved the needle in terms of how we talk about workers' rights in this province and indeed, across the country and I would say even that extends throughout the world. And so we can all thank the strike—strikers that day, who began this day and continued on the strike for many weeks, for things that we take for granted; for, you know, for things like safety and health in the workplace; when we look at things like the right to collective bargaining.

I would even say, Mr. Speaker, in a Legislature where we have the Premier (Mr. Pallister) often scrambling to come up with ways that he's tied to the labour movement—I think he's called himself an old union guy—is the words that he's used—it shows where the needle has moved in this province and how much even Conservatives now wish to be part of that movement and wish to claim some piece of labour's power in this province.

Of course, we know, Mr. Speaker, that those are simply words. And we know that when the rubber

meets the road, that it's unfortunate that members opposite continue to govern as if they were those—tied to those strike breakers back in 1919. We know very specifically with this government, one of their first acts coming in three years ago, almost to the day now, that they announced no department of labour. Get rid of the department of labour. Why would we need that? They eliminate things like the advisory committee on workplace, safety and health.

Again, one of their first acts when they came in as government was to say, we're going to freeze the minimum wage and then we're going to tie it to the rate of inflation, ensuring that workers in this province will never get ahead and that there'll never be a more equal balance between workers and—in terms of what they're paid here.

Again, one of the first things this government did was to interfere with the collective bargaining process at the University of Manitoba. And we stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the profs and with the folks at the university to come forward to say, it shouldn't be this government and it shouldn't be this Premier who interferes directly in the negotiating process. And we were happy to do that.

And, of course, we know Bill 18, which—would require employers and unions to bear the cost of mediators in terms of ensuring that there is no job action and that workplaces continue to work.

So it is just words from the other side. It's not action. Despite the rhetoric and the wish by the members opposite to again grab a piece of the labour power in this province, they fall short every single time.

And that brings me, of course, to our Liberal friends in the Legislature, who are now—at the eleventh hour—deciding that they also want to be best friends with labour. They want to stand with our labour friends and they want to join us and come on board. As I said, the needle has moved and I welcome them. I welcome all members to stand with labour, to actually listen to them and to do the—to perform the legislative duty that they are asking us to do, to protect workers and, in fact, enhance workers.

But what do we see from our Liberal friends? Instead of standing with workers, of course, we know the federal Liberal government legislated postal workers back to work. And I can say, Mr. Speaker, one of the proudest moments that I've had, as my time as a legislator but also as a human being, was standing with postal workers

at the museum for human rights, including my father-in-law, who, the last time he protested against an unlawful job action was actually hauled off by the police. This time, he was a little more well-behaved but only by a little bit. And we had to hold him back at certain times, because he was that fired up, knowing that this Liberal government, once again, was stepping on their rights as workers.

So, once again, you know, 100 years, Mr. Speaker, you know, we can, I think, come together as legislators, focus on what the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey) has brought forward here, and that is a time to recognize the incredible sacrifices, to mourn with the labour community who lost people in that terrible tragedy, in the strike.

And it is a time that, I think, all of us could come back together and say, these are issues that are still alive today. As I said, Mr. Speaker, we know that income inequality has gotten worse. We know that workers are continually under pressure in the new economy. And it is time for us, as legislators, to come together and to say, as the new—the economy changes, as workers become more precarious—how can we protect them? How can we enhance their rights, not take away rights from them?

And so this could be the beginning of that conversation. This could be an opportunity to lay down our swords, politically, and to say what is best for working people in this province. And we'll let them join us; we'll let them be union members for a day or for a week or for a month, if they will not just talk the talk but, in fact, walk the walk, here in this Legislature, and stand with workers.

We all take inspiration from this incredible historical event. We can all take inspiration from the workers who stood up, at that time, as they do and they continue to do today. When I stand shoulder to shoulder with nurses in front of this building, when I stand shoulder to shoulder with health-care workers in front—on the front steps of Concordia Hospital, I know that the power of the people continues to be important.

And it's labour who continues to emphasize and to organize that power. And so, to them, I thank them. I stand with you in solidarity. United with labour that we, as a political party, respect and continue to honour that historic relationship that our party has with labour, not simply as brothers and sisters, which we certainly are, but, really, as equals

in this journey in standing up for all working people in this province and beyond.

So I will simply end, Mr. Speaker, by saying another great CCFer and an NDPer who once said: Courage, dear friends; it's not too late to build a better world.

And it certainly isn't. And if only members on the other side would simply not just use their words but, in fact, their actions, to improve working people's conditions, I think we could have a better province, a more prosperous province, and a province that will serve all working people, not just in this century, but in the next century and for all time going forward.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Scott Johnston (St. James): I don't think that one party has a monopoly on recognizing the significance of the event that happened in 1919. I think we fully understand that there was monumental changes that were made based on that event. I think we all, in the House, recognize that.

And, as far as us being strikebreakers in 1919, I think that's a little bit of a stretch. We weren't born.

But I am pleased to rise and put some brief comments on the record with respect to this resolution, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I'm also very comfortable in doing so, again, so soon, as we spoke in the House to the member from Burrows' resolution also.

* (15:30)

As you know, 100 years ago today, on the 15th of May, 1919, almost 30,000 workers walked off the job and shut down the city of Winnipeg. This was the start of the Winnipeg General Strike in 1919 which has become one of the most famous and influential strikes in labour history, not only Manitoba's, but Canada's. This was a turbulent time in Canadian history. This was massive unemployment, inflation and also too, with the success of the Russian Revolution in 1917, many landed communists, as well as the start of early socialists rose revolutionary industrial unionism, which contributed to the post-war labour unrest which fuelled this landmark strike.

Following the breakdown of negotiations between management and labour in the building and metal trades, bargaining happened to co-ordinate for essential services, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This exercise is only possible due to the advancement

which ultimately came from the Winnipeg General Strike.

The lessons learned and legislation in place allows for labour to safely come to the table and negotiate for their members. Madam Speaker, I can remember many times sitting down with MTS as a school trustee, working together to find solutions to our differences and bargain in good faith. Each step along the way was done to find a result which tried to satisfy both parties. From my own experience I can remember many late nights in conciliation and trying to find a good agreement for both the school division, which I represented, as well as the members of the unions and the employees, faithful employees, that we had in our school division.

Ultimately, it was through negotiations. No decisions could be made due to the labour relations legislation in place. Thanks to the Winnipeg General Strike we were also able to go to arbitration to satisfy solutions.

This third-party process was able to remove the differences between two organizations and, in my experience, we would set—we would wind up with a solution that would usually satisfy all involved. Not everybody got their way. It's not a hundred per cent, but that's negotiation; you come to a conclusion based on give and take. Our negotiations were only enabled due to the legislation in place which originated from the experience we received from the general strike.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, our government believes that unions play an important role in the labour force and know the importance of basic democratic rights.

Since the strike, many labour reforms and improvements have made—or have led to significant change, making Manitoba and Canada among the safest places to work in the world.

Our government recognizes the important contribution labour has made to this province. That is why we were in favour of the member of Burrows' resolution which recognized the 100th anniversary of the general strike earlier this month. In fact, Madam—in fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the previous Filmon government was the one who, in 1994, installed a commemorative plaque in the hall of this Legislature recognizing the 1919 strike.

However, Winnipeg essentially came to a halt and workers were brought into the forefront. Following over a month fight with the citizens committee who opposed the strike, as well as the

arrest of multiple strike committee members, the strike came to an end.

This is something that is certainly deep in Manitoba's history and is certainly something that we will never, ever forget, both labour and management.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm certainly very comfortable in putting some words on the record that does indicate our—certainly our understanding of the significance of the 1919 strike in Manitoba.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows): I'd like to thank the members from Transcona and St. James. It's nice to know that hard work does pay off.

I rise today to talk very briefly about the Winnipeg General Strike. I believe that unions play an important role in our society today. Unions have stood as protectors for us over the many years, and it is a true honour to speak to how the 1919 strike made history in Canada by uniting workers with a common goal.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this common goal was all about the well-being of the worker. It was about fighting for a living wage, for working conditions and collective bargaining.

This strike laid the groundwork for the union movement that we have today and let there be no doubt it was an historical moment for our entire nation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, our labour movement and the value of looking for ideas on how to improve the quality of life for Canadians is not just for the workers, but it's much beyond that. Our unions today advocate for workers and for strong, socially progressive policies, and they have made a real difference in the lives of every Canadian.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, before I conclude my remarks, I feel compelled to say that I hope the NDP can learn from this demonstration that they should stop with the pettiness and partisan politics. It is not about who gets the credit and that is why not only will we be voting in favour of this motion, but we will do nothing to postpone the vote, as we would like to see the vote happen and have the motion passed today.

Thank you.

Ms. Flor Marcelino (Logan): I thank my colleague, the member from Flin Flon, for presenting this resolution, as well as my colleague, the member

from Burrows, who presented a bill last week, I believe, and—although I'm sorry I missed it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the late '80s to early '90s, my husband and I participated yearly in May Day rallies. I remember for many years, Nick Ternette was one of the rally marshals. With megaphone in one hand, he would walk briskly around the edge of the streets to make sure there was order and jubilation among rallyists.

And then, for several years, during the following month the peace rally was held. Many of the attendees on the two rallies were familiar faces. It was propitious, happy time then to meet Winnipeg's community activists, from the very young to the very old but still possess enthusiasm, passion and strength to walk the talk, literally and figuratively, for workers' rights, community issues and world peace.

For several years, I brought my little children at the peace rally. The bigger ones walked and the small one rode a stroller. It was a big sacrifice for me bringing the kids to the rally, as I ended up carrying the baby in the stroller so the little ones walking can take their turns in the stroller when they get tired walking.

Normally, the parade route that started at City Hall proceeded on to Portage Avenue, then turned left to Memorial Boulevard and ended at the steps of the Legislature.

One time, the route was deviated to proceed to the old side of what was once the Victoria Park, where thousands of strikers congregated, male and female workers who fought for their rights during the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919.

While at this, it is worthwhile to seriously consider erecting a concrete memorial to honour this momentous event in Winnipeg's history and the history of the labour movement in Manitoba and in Canada.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I joined a small group of labour movement adherents in the early 2000s and we had regular meetings for study and activity planning. There were events held and initiated where labour leaders from other countries were invited as speakers to labour conferences, along with conferences and fora attended by workers in Winnipeg and other Canadian cities.

One year, one of the—still in the '90s and early 2000s—one year, one of the MayWorks activities was a visit to the gravesite of Mike Sokolowski. I chose

to go to that event. There were only a few of us who went to see Mike Sokolowski's unmarked burial site.

It was difficult to locate his gravesite in the pauper section at Brookside Cemetery. The little numbered markers in the ground had to be located, cleared of soil and grass, then checked to see painstakingly if it is a grave number 45-0450. After several hit and miss, we found the number.

* (15:40)

On June 14, 2005, I attended a simple but solemn ceremony when a headstone was placed on Mike Sokolowski's unmarked, unnamed grave, thanks to the great work and efforts of Rick Thain of the City of Winnipeg's administrator of cemeteries and chairman of Brookside 125 committee and that of Winnipeg's Danny Schur, director of the acclaimed Strike! musical and the forthcoming film on the same subject, entitled Stand!

Mike Sokolowski was one of the Bloody Saturday victims, was fittingly remembered on the three-foot-wide monument entitled, quote, forgotten immigrant, end quote. Part of the headstone inscription reads, quote: The Winnipeg General Strike was one of the watershed events of 20th century Canadian history that lasted for six weeks but divided the city along ethnic and class lines for decades thereafter. While today viewed as a struggle for better wages and collective bargaining, the strike had an anti-immigrant uncurrent and culminated in riot and bloodshed, unquote.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as Manitobans, especially as residents of Winnipeg, we need to ask ourselves what are the legacies of the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike? Likewise for members of the working class: how can we best celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Winnipeg General Strike?

The confluence of events which culminated in the General Strike had its early origins with the country being lifted from recession and enjoying improved economy by the time World War I ended. Yet it did not translate into improved working conditions and wage increases for workers. In 1918, it did not help that the federal government of the day, headed by Prime Minister Robert Borden of the Unionist Party, completely banned strikes or lockouts in industrial disputes.

As we know by now, only two political parties have ruled in Canada since time immemorial: the Conservatives and the Liberal Party. In the

December 1917 federal elections, the Liberal Party, under the leadership of Sir Wilfred Laurier, was the official opposition party. By deduction, Prime Minister Borden's government was Conservative. Additionally, two ordinances outlawed immigrant organizations and other, quote, alien, unquote, organizations, including the international workers of the world. All of these actions by the Conservative federal government compounded and fuelled workers resentment and militancy—and stoked militancy.

Real wages declined during this period of high inflation. It was also during those years when union membership of Canada nearly tripled between 1915 and 1919 that strikes began occurring. In Winnipeg in 1917 it was recorded that more days were lost to strikes than in the previous four years combined.

Quoting from the article of Paul Moist, start of quote: All of these moves by the federal government combined to fuel worker resentment and militancy. Real wages declined during this period of high inflation. Estimates were that one in five workers walked picket lines in Canada and in the United States during this period.

Three distinct events occurred in Winnipeg in 1918 that helped explain the conditions which gave rise to the 1919 general strike. In May that year, four civic unions struck over the issues of union recognition and wages.

These included waterworks, power and light and teamsters workers. A brokered tentative deal a few days into the dispute was surprisingly defeated by a narrow vote of City Council, which sought a permanent no-strike clause for all civic engagements. This move escalated—

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

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Well, I'm very happy to rise on the 100th anniversary of the Winnipeg General Strike because I'm the leader of the NDP in Manitoba, to which there is a direct line going back to the leaders of the Winnipeg General Strike, and my colleagues are the members of the New Democratic Party, to which there's a direct line going back to the folks who stood up for a living wage, for workers' rights and for the freedom to collectively bargain in Manitoba.

And I'm also proud to stand up as a leader of the opposition which is opposed to a government which 100 years later still stands against the very things

that the leaders of the Winnipeg General Strike fought for. And so it's kind of fitting, and yet it's also a little sad, that working folks in Manitoba and the house of labour and unions in Manitoba are still engaged in fighting against corporate and government interests which seek to stamp out the rights of working people.

And so we got a job to do, and, certainly, helping to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Winnipeg General Strike is very, very important. And I think it's very important that we honour the strike in a very real, in a very authentic and a very direct way. You know, sometimes when people talk about the strike, they want to kind of gloss over it, and you know, they want to make it into, like, some happy, smiley thing that even Liberals can get behind during the same year that they legislate working people away from their right to collectively bargaining—to their right to collectively bargain. I don't abide by that. The people of the Winnipeg General Strike were working class folks, were poor people in the city of Winnipeg, who were willing to go to jail, who were willing to die for their right to collectively bargain.

And I think that we have to remember that spirit, the intensity and the strength of conviction that these folks had in being willing to stand up and fight for their rights.

You'll know that I came to the Legislature as a boy for the first time with a picket sign in my hand, and so, certainly, I'm no stranger to coming from a position where you have to fight for your rights or you have to fight, even, for your ability to be heard. And so, for me, it's very important that we continue on this spirit, we continue to argue in favour of these important labour rights.

When we talk about the living wage, we know that we should have a \$15-an-hour minimum wage in Manitoba. It's something I committed to in the leadership campaign and remain committed to doing in a first term in government. And that was the same fight that was being fought for 100 years ago; 100 years later, at a time of globalization, at a time of Trump's tariffs, at a time of automation replacing many people's jobs, we still have a government that's unwilling to pay workers in Manitoba a living wage.

To me, it makes absolutely no sense to be in opposition to a living wage. It makes absolutely no sense to index a minimum wage at below the poverty line for this simple truth: nobody who works full time in Manitoba should have to live in poverty; no

one who lives in Manitoba should have to live in poverty. The government still has not come up with a rationale to justify why some person working full-time hours in Manitoba should still have to live below the poverty line.

*(15:50)

We know that the right to collectively bargain was something that was being fought for in the streets of Winnipeg 100 years ago today. And yet what is this government up to, today? Well, they are legislating away the rights to collectively bargain, both through their past bills 28 and 29, through other measures like removing a card check certification in Manitoba, and even removing the input that labour and workers—and even business people, to be quite honest—have said are important contributions to collectively bargaining in this province. So it doesn't really make sense why they'd want to turn back the clock in this government, and yet that's precisely what they've done here.

One of the other major issues that was being taken up by folks during the Winnipeg General Strike was, of course, health and safety concerns. We know that the situation of working people 100 hundred years ago was very dire. We know that many people lost their lives in the workplace. In some of the literature that's been created to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Winnipeg General Strike, I've read many terrible stories of workers, men and women alike, who lost their lives in manufacturing situations, in laundry facilities and so on.

And so, indeed, those striking, as part of the Winnipeg General Strike in 1919, were also asking for another very simple proposition to be fulfilled, and that is this: that Mom or Dad, when they go to work in the morning, should be able to come home safe and alive at night. When Mom or Dad go to work at night, they should be able to come home safe and alive the next morning.

And we know that the health and safety file under this government has been eroded. The input of workers has been eliminated, that the respect for expertise in designing those standards has been reduced, and, of course, enforcement has been cut and is now being legislated away. And so this government is moving in the wrong direction again. So it's no surprise that this government has not taken an active, visible or vocal role when it comes to celebrating the 1919 general strike.

But I've got good news for you. Many young Winnipeggers do care about this issue and are taking a very active role in honouring and celebrating the centenary of the 1919 general strike. Just a few hours ago I was at Kelvin High School in the beautiful, wonderful, amazing constituency of Fort Rouge, and listening to their presentations, and seeing some of the displays that they've put together honouring the leadership and the courage and the foresight of those who stood on the front lines of this important period of labour unrest.

And this strike, which, of course, led to many of the important improvements in working conditions, and in work-life balance, that we now sometimes take for granted today.

And so, in this time that I spent with the students at the Kelvin High School, we did have a very frank and open and honest discussion about what the working world is going to look like for them. And it certainly is a big concern that kids in high school in Manitoba today recognize that many of the jobs that they are being trained for, and being told to prepare for, will be replaced by technology.

And so many of those young people are looking back to the strike of 1919 and recognizing how that was a response for society at that time, to try and balance the developments of the Industrial Revolution with the increased living standards which would follow a few decades later, following the world wars; how that period of transition is in some ways very similar to the transition that we're now seeing in our economy as a result of the rapid acceleration of digital technology, and the influence and confluence of social media and mobile devices across our world.

And so these young people are looking back to the Winnipeg General Strike and finding inspiration. They're finding a path forward. And, of course, they're very interested in learning more about how they may be able to work together, how they may be able to model solidarity, how they may be able to stand up and demand a better future than the one that is being offered to them by the multinational corporations of the world that seem intent on eroding the right to collectively bargain, that seem intent on eroding our democracy, and seem intent on reducing the ability of working people around the world to be able to provide for themselves.

And so, certainly, insofar as we can look back 100 years in the past and find inspiration and find courage and find motivation for us to continue to

stand up each and every day to fight for the good people of Manitoba, then it is entirely fitting that we pass a motion like this in the House today.

And so one of the things that I really took great pleasure in seeing there was, as I walked around some of the displays in Kelvin, over and over again, I saw the image and the face of J.S. Woodsworth on many of those school projects that those students had put together. And, of course, we know Mr. Woodsworth was a great leader during the Winnipeg General Strike who went on to become a political leader and a founding leader of the CCF, and CCF became the NDP, and we know that the NDP sprung many great leaders here in this province, including Premier Ed Schreyer, who was first elected 50 years ago this June 25th. Many other great premiers followed, and I'm very proud to say, on behalf of my team, that we are carrying on that lineage, honouring the past, standing up for tomorrow, but, most importantly, standing up for working people in Manitoba.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): I'm very pleased to speak to this resolution today, and, as been mentioned there is the 100th anniversary of the 1919 strike, which 30,000 workers walked off the job. And I want to say that historically, you know, ever since the Industrial Revolution—and, no, I was not at the Industrial Revolution—but labour rights have been a major issue on a world-wide basis, dating back to those days, the issues coming out of the Industrial Revolution, and they exist in one way or another to this day.

For example, in terms of today's issues, we have—many of you probably heard of rare earth minerals mined in China under very, very difficult situations. People are—younger people are working there taking out these rare earth minerals, and they're contracting cancer at very young ages, and these minerals are being used in the hybrid cars that people are buying more and more. And this type of activity probably wouldn't be allowed in Manitoba or in Canada in the environment we have here.

But the fact of the matter is that different jurisdictions have different levels of rules and regulations, and if we were just to allow the law of the jungle and free enterprise to be totally unfettered, as some people would want to do in the Conservative Party, we would be going back in time to—and have to give up some of the regulations we have right now.

And so it's a constant back and forth. We have seen, just since I've been here, you know, Conservative governments come in and they start unwinding whatever rules and regulations we have, and then the NDP comes in and brings some of the same rules and regulations back. The last series of regressive moves taken by this particular government, starting three years ago when they came into power in Manitoba, was to eliminate the whole labour department. Like, who would've think that would ever happen, right? But it did. It did. And things like that could happen again.

One of the things that I felt make a lot of common sense was the project labour agreements. And they rage on and on and on about those things, but the reality is that project labour agreements have been around for many, many years.

And, matter of fact, Duff Roblin himself changed the tendering equation from considering cost only to cost plus quality. And Duff Roblin did this to prevent fly-by-night contractors from bringing in poorly trained and unqualified labour to critical infrastructure projects. I mean, it's just common sense that if you're—I think James Bay is another example.

*(16:00)

There are projects like—lots of projects throughout Canadian history where, without a project labour agreement, what happens is you have contractors who are not, maybe, very well qualified, producing a part of the project. And, of course, then when the project—when they make the mistakes that they do and produce poor quality, what happens it slows the entire project down.

And so what governments have done is they have a project labour agreement. There's agreement not to strike during that period. They make sure they get the highest quality components, the highest quality contractors for this project and, at the end of the day, it often results in better results.

For example, when the Gary Doer government widened the floodway, it's well known that this particular project came in on time—actually early, I think, but certainly under budget, and that was with a project labour agreement.

Duff Roblin, when he set up the project labour agreements—*[interjection]*

Well, the Conservatives want to argue. The reality is check into what Duff Robin did. I mean,

were there any—I haven't heard them make any speeches here in the last, you know, number of decades, about what went wrong with Duff Roblin's project labour agreements. You know, there may have been problems with it but my point is the reason he did what he did was make certain that we got a project done properly.

All of these projects have—the contractors have to submit to bonding requirements and so on and this is all to the benefit of the public purse. It's public money that we're dealing with here. We want to have the best project that we can and we want to have the workers have a living wage while they're producing the project and we want to make sure that there's a safety requirements that are associated with it and, to me, on a project—big projects of that size, it's just common sense to have a project labour agreement.

However, you will have ideological approaches taken by the Conservatives that say well, you know, just because, I mean, a small part of their support base thinks we should go a certain way, then they run out there and try to satisfy them and eliminate the project labour agreements, and that will be to the detriment of the taxpayers of this province at the end of the day and the—the taxpayers of the province and to the government itself.

Madam Speaker in the Chair

Now, you know, there have been many, many changes in—and for the good over the years, since the 1919 strike and a lot of the improvements that have come about have come about because of the labour leaders of the past of which, you know, as our leader said, actually transformed over time from the ILP over to the CCF over to the NDP in '64. And it's very necessary for this movement to continue for the very simple reason that if we were not to continue, you would have Conservative governments just taking apart all of the—all of the good things that have been done by these former leaders and leaders of the unions themselves, Madam Speaker.

So, once again, this is a very important milestone marking the 100th anniversary of the strike and I know that there are many other members of my caucus who want to speak to it, and I certainly will defer to the next speaker.

Thank you.

Madam Speaker: If I'm looking at my rotation correctly, oh—the honourable second—the honourable Leader of the Second Opposition.

Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition): It's a great pleasure to speak to this motion and I thank the member for Burrows (Ms. Lamoureux) for bringing it forward.

It is 100 years ago since the general strike. It was an incredibly important event. In fact, if we were to cast ourselves back in time to 100 years ago today there would be many different things around the world that were happening that ultimately marked what—changed the direction of history both for Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, and for the world at the time.

At the time, the editor of the Free Press was not in Winnipeg because he was at the treaty talks of Versailles, where people were arguing over how to settle the First World War in a way that ultimately led to a second. And in Winnipeg, the general strike was a deeply divisive and terrible—in some ways—terrible for the scars that it left on our city, as much as for the sacrifice and the achievements that were carved out during that strike and afterwards.

I did want to say it's—I know that there's been a fair bit of—people have asked, well, why is it that the Manitoba Liberal Party—sorry, Manitoba Liberals would be bringing this forward because, clearly there is a link between labour and the NDP and the leadership of the strike that went on to lead the CCF, which became the NDP, but at the same time, of course, that there were major contributions. There were Manitoba Liberal governments who actually introduced progressive legislation that made differences as well.

I was—I had the honour to attend the day for—the Day of Mourning for workers at the Union Centre, and Doug Smith talked about the history of—leading up to the strike because there had been some truly horrific accidents and a complete lack of oversight of workers' safety in Winnipeg and in Manitoba; that there was—there were no inspections and people were—workers were killed on the job and—but nothing happened. It was truly heartbreaking, but as Doug Smith mentioned that T.C. Norris, prior to the Liberal—the general strike, managed—made more progress in a year than they'd seen in the previous 15 under the Conservatives.

The other is, of course, that it was 100 years ago today that was the general strike and as the leader of the opposition has often said, that it was 50 years ago was the first NDP government was elected. So then, obviously, there was a period of time, of 50 years, when some governments other

than the NDP were passing laws to raise people's wages, to protect workers, you know, to bring in the unemployment insurance, minimum working hours, the vote for women, outlawing child labour and a vote for First Nations in Manitoba. And it was, in fact, many times it was Manitoba Liberal governments who made these changes. There were people who worked in this building who made colossal national contributions to progress on a national scale.

In fact, the deputy treasury minister for the Province for 26 years, Ralph McNally [*phonetic*] Pearson once shared my office and he was an architect of both equalization payments and the creation of unemployment insurance in Canada.

And the other is that while we're recognizing the history and progress of labour movements and for workers in Manitoba, we also should have mentioned that Duff Roblin, who is a Progressive Conservative premier, who recognized that workers needed to be protected and also that when it comes to spending public money, that we need—that—to make sure that we don't have fly-by-night operators, that we have quality operators, that work agreements would be brought in to ensure that people are paid properly and the job is done well.

I would add, I know that there's been—there have been objections made that the federal government has legislated postal workers back to work. I would note that there seems to be some amnesia on the part of the opposition, who actually legislated workers back to work a number of times.

An Honourable Member: What are you talking about?

Mr. Lamont: If you go to the record of the Labour Board, you would see that there are nurses who had to be legislated back to work—[*interjection*] and there were a number of times—and there—the other things, the number of times that people had to threaten to strike before they could actually get anybody negotiating with them.

And, frankly, I've seen that. I've not only—I've talked with MGEU workers, who were—spent—when I was actually running for leader. I talked to MGEU workers who had been without a contract for four years and at that time, the Pallister government had only been in office for 18 months.

And, of course, nurses who've had to go without contracts for four years, which is again, under the previous NDP government. I know that there was the

mention of the floodway but—and I know everybody like—everybody likes the MTS centre but it was built on the condition that it not be unionized and, you know, there are also conditions beyond that with—there—I know that it's 50 years that the NDP was—since they were elected but it's been 25 years since they were meaningfully progressive because between 1981 and 2012, Manitoba was the only province where mothers with children got poorer.

* (16:10)

And I know the 'moimber' for Concordia mentioned the former Finance minister for Saskatchewan. She was also an NDP, and—which is something that I know that the PC government, and other Conservative governments have taken pleasure in hiring her as a way of sort of a sop. But, in fact, she's written for the Fraser Institute.

But does—the NDP Saskatchewan government embarked on austerity in 1990, long before the federal Liberals were elected in the 1990s. And that government, like the NDP government in here, balanced the budget while freezing social supports for over a decade, so that in 2012 the welfare rates in Manitoba were the lowest in Canada.

They were, in fact, lower than they were in 1986. And in fact, there were a number of social supports for people on welfare which are lower today than they were 27 years ago.

So, again, I—it's important to remember all those fights. It's also important to remember that there are—that nobody has a monopoly on progressive views or, for that matter, for helping out the labour movement, as certainly, Duff Roblin recognized.

It's also important that we are living in an era of record inequality, and that this government has ended up calling the University of Manitoba in order to interfere with their labour negotiations that cost millions of dollars, that they've sought to undermine the rights of workers in endless ways.

But there are actually tens of thousands of people who are working for this government who are working for well under minimum wage, well under a living wage, just as they have been for years. That would include—and in fact, many of them, when I spoke them, said they were unionized, but it hasn't been able to help because so many people have unfortunately—are actually not able to strike.

So I do think that this is an important thing to recognize. And, frankly, there are many, many reasons that people should be indignant. And people should be standing up, certainly, to this government. Because it's truly—it's—what is happening right now is that we're seeing a race to the bottom in terms of stripping away work protections.

And the idea that we can compete with people on the basis of deregulation, or looser regulations and protections on the environment, looser regulations and lower wages, is no way to go. Because we do not—the race to the bottom is not a race we want to win.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): I am pleased to get up and support the resolution that was introduced by my friend from Flin Flon today. And I'm proud to do it because it springs organically from the very working-class culture that our party represents. And so, it's important to us to make that distinction. And I regret very much that others are not able to understand the distinction.

So I thought maybe a fable once told by somebody else—Tommy Douglas—might help members to understand the nature of the debate that we're having here today. And that fable is known as Mouseland. And I know, Madam Speaker, that you're eminently familiar with Mouseland.

And once upon a time, there was a community of mice. And, initially, they were governed by the black cats, represented by—in the fable, the Conservative Party. And the mice were told that the black cats were going to serve their interests. But sooner—soon enough, mice found out that, in fact, the black cats were intimately and directly opposed to the interests of the mice.

And so, then the mice were told, well, maybe they should vote for the white cats. In the fable—I know members are having a caucus meeting over there, it being led by the—I'm sure—by the guy who wants to be Premier after this guy's gone, but would it be okay if I spoke here today, Madam Speaker?

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Order.

I would ask the members—it is getting a bit loud in here, if the members could maybe take their conversation to the loge or bring down the level of the conversation. It is getting a little bit difficult to hear the member in debate so I'd appreciate everybody's co-operation, please.

Mr. Allum: Thank you so much, Madam Speaker. I'm glad that you asked the black cats to actually listen, quietly.

And so, then, the mice were told, this community of mice, that they should vote for the white cats, represented by the Liberal Party in this particular fable. And that the white cats would attend to their interests.

But, in fact, they soon found out that the white cats were no more interested in defending the rights of mice than the black cats were. And the reason for that, Madam Speaker, is that they were both cats. There was no difference between the two, the black cats, the white cats. Mouseland, if the Minister of Infrastructure (Mr. Schuler) had any sense of history, he would know it, instead of looking across the floor to me like he can't understand it. He would know that in this particular fable the black cats were the Conservatives, the white cats were the Liberals, and neither of them were on the side of the mice.

So one mouse gets up, and he says, Madam Speaker, maybe the mice should just govern themselves. *[interjection]* And what happened, my friend from Minto says, what happened to that mouse? He was thrown in jail for sedition. But the idea—the idea that the mice could govern themselves could never be betrayed, could never be lost. That's what we stand for in this House. That's why we're different than these folks.

But I'm also proud to support this particular motion because I want to say, quite directly, to all members of the House, that the Winnipeg General Strike is not a heritage moment for everybody to feel good about one another. It's not. It's a seminal moment in Canadian history and in Manitoba history, where workers stood up for themselves. They weren't going to be intimidated by the black cats. They weren't going to be intimidated by the white cats. They were real—you know this, Madam Speaker, real blood was shed in the Winnipeg General Strike.

Real oppression occurred as the specials brought in their batons and beat the tar out of workers trying to protect their rights and their interests and the interests of their families. Real people died in the Winnipeg General Strike. So, if somebody wants to waltz in to this House and say, this is just a heritage moment where we're all going to sing Kumbaya, I have a message for them. It ain't going to happen. You're not waltzing in here. This is the workers' moment, and we're going to stand behind those

workers every single day that we have since 1919, into 2019 and into 3019, if it comes to that. *[interjection]*

My friend from Lac du Bonnet says that I'm imitating Dr. Seuss. Maybe he doesn't understand the fable of Mouseland quite yet, but I'll send him the text for it so that he understands it completely.

But, Madam Speaker, on this side of the House, in the NDP, it's been our cause to fight and help and assist and advocate for real working people. *[interjection]* I'm not sure what the Leader of the Second Opposition (Mr. Lamont) just mumbled to me, but let me put it this way to him, let me—the Conservative money—the Conservative Party in this country and in this province are old money. Hugh Allan behind the Canadian Pacific Railway paid Sir John A. Macdonald a boatload of money, about 350,000. A ton of money in those days. That ended up in the Pacific Scandal.

That's how old money works in this country, and the Liberal Party is associated with the likes of, let me see off the top of my head, Power Corp, for example and Paul Temmera *[phonetic]*, who kept—and SNC-Lavalin, again, another good example. They are part of the new money but the same with the black cats and the white cats. Old money. New money. We stand with working-class families for their rights, their interests, and we're never, ever going to roll over. We're not going to back down, and I won't play nice in the sandbox about it because this is something that is incredibly meaningful and we won't have that moment co-opted. We won't have it co-opted. We won't be—have it appropriated by Liberals or Conservatives who pretend to be on the side of workers and then are willing to stick them in the back at the first moment, if it comes to that.

So, Madam Speaker, I'm proud to be a New Democrat. I'm proud that my dad was part of the CCF. I won't have anybody come in, waltzing in here to take that away. We're going to stand with workers. We're never lying down. That's the reality. That's the truth, and every member of this House, get used to it.

* (16:20)

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): Well, I wish I would have gone earlier. That's going to be a hard act to follow.

I definitely want to just put a couple of words on the record in respect of the 100th anniversary of the 1919 strike.

First and foremost, I want to acknowledge those of us on this side of the House that come from a long line of courageous, progressive, committed, dedicated individuals who have fought for labour rights. I'm proud to belong to a party that has that history. I'm proud to belong to a party where, a hundred years ago, women also took a leadership role in labour rights, fighting not only for themselves and those men that they worked with, but for their families.

I was recently at a talk by an individual, and this individual—who also comes from labour, from the US—somebody—one of the participants in the audience asked a question about women and labour and all of that. And he said something to the effect of, well, we have to—what did he say—he said, we have to teach leadership, or we have to nurture leadership in women.

Now, up until that point, I really appreciated everything that he said. And, of course, it does—it is—his talk was obviously founded in American labour movement and history and the current context in which they find themselves. Up until that point, I rather enjoyed his speech.

But I do want to just take a moment, because it is often not a part of the narrative, that women have always played in labour, and continue to play in labour, in leadership roles, whether or not it's actually recognized as leadership. I would argue that women have a fundamental place in labour, in respect of leadership, but also are the catalyst to a lot of change that affects workers' rights, and the way that we govern ourselves as labour family and relatives.

And so, I want to just take a moment to acknowledge the women of a hundred years ago who are not named, who, unfortunately, are rarely actually even seen in pictures. It's important for me, as a staunch feminist, to ensure that we remember women who came before us and those women in the labour movement. I don't want us to forget that it was not only just men, but it was women who took—and who went to extraordinary lengths to assert their rights, and their space, within this movement.

And so I also just want to, in my final couple of seconds here, I want to acknowledge all of the women today that are in the labour movement. I'm

blessed to work with some amazing women in the labour movement who—actually—for many, many years—I participated last year on a panel on the right to abortion and abortion access. And they had a woman, who was actually the first panelist, who spoke about the history of fighting for abortion rights within the labour movement and getting labour movement on side, to fight and to continue to support women in accessing abortion.

And that woman had an amazing amount of knowledge—institutional knowledge—and she spoke about that women within the labour movement have been fighting for the right to abortion and the right to access abortion and the right—and to support women in respect of abortion for well over 30 years.

And that fight continues still today, so I want to acknowledge all of those women that came before me in the fight for abortion rights, no more so than today, as we've seen in the last, you know, 24 hours, what is wholly regressive, oppressive and egregious in bills designed by men for men's misogyny in dictating what we can and cannot do with our bodies, and actually not only dictating what we can or cannot do with our bodies, but if we choose to have an abortion, actually threatening us with life in prison.

And so, you know, I thank the women that came before me. I thank the women that I know and that I work with today. I thank the women in labour that have stood with me and the member for Point Douglas (Mrs. Smith) in respect of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. There's been a real partnership in the last many years supporting a lot of the work that we do for MMIWG, including the member for Point Douglas's no-stones-urned concert in honour of MMIWG and also our Christmas party that we put on for MMIWG, and so I thank labour, I thank the women who have walked with us and supported us in that.

So, again, I'm glad to put a couple of words on the record. My comments are solely in support of and in recognition of and in honour of the women from the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike who are often forgotten and who are often not found within any of the narrative or discourse, and so to them I say miigwech.

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): It's a pleasure to get up and stand and speak in support of this opposition day motion that's been brought forward by my colleague, the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey), and to actually be able to do this on the actual day, which is

recognized as the 100th anniversary of the day that the Winnipeg General Strike really began.

And I guess I pick up where my colleague, the member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine) left off. It's now recognized that, actually, the events on this day 100 years ago actually started when the women, who were telephone operators, were the first ones—the very first ones to walk off their job in the morning, which touched off workers from all walks of life, from all different occupations, different professions, different backgrounds, who stood together to try to get something better for workers.

And I've been surprised this afternoon by some members of this House, surprised that we're debating this politically in the Legislature. Well, there's a reason why we're debating this in the Legislature, and that's because labour laws are such an important thing in determining how people are treated, how workers are kept safe, how there's a balance between employers and employees.

So we don't apologize for raising these issues in the Legislature. We don't apologize for coming into this Legislature and seeking a better deal for Manitoba's workers.

And, you know, I'm proud to be a son of a unionized worker, I'm a husband of a unionized worker, and now I'm even a father of a unionized worker, as my daughter has a part-time job and she actually has the benefit of a collective agreement, and she has found that working in that job is a lot more pleasant than working in retail without the benefit of a collective agreement in terms of the way that employees are treated, the way that she's trained, and the way that truly she's respected in her job.

Now, in some of the comments of some of the speakers today, I see how little, in some ways, we've moved in the last 100 years, and I want to talk about a couple of things that I've heard echoed by especially the government members, who were handed their speaking notes prepared by the council of 1,000, I presume, and told to get up and read them.

* (16:30)

One of the great thing—the thing which continues is that whenever workers and others stand up for their rights, it is very easy to blame immigrants and, unfortunately, that seems to be something which continues to happen to this day by various governments in Canada, the United States, in Europe and elsewhere.

And I suppose you could say the immigrants played some role in the strike. There were many people of eastern European heritage, including Ukrainians, who were part of the strike. But, in fact, most of the individuals who played a key role in organizing the strike and being part of the strike were tradespeople and labourers and telephone operators and police officers who did not fit the eastern European alien language that the government of the day—the Liberal government of the day, I will add—argued in this province.

They were actually people who, if they were born outside of Canada, came from Manchester and Birmingham and Glasgow and Edinburgh and Dublin and Londonderry. And they were, most decidedly, loyal British subjects. Ireland was still under British rule at the time. And they did not fit the narrative, so the governments of the day simply made up the narrative that, clearly, it was all the fault of these eastern European immigrants who didn't speak the language, who didn't seem to dress the same way. And they were very easy scapegoats. Many of those eastern European workers were actually detained. They were jailed for longer than their Anglo-Saxon brothers who—and sisters—who were jailed for their part in the strike.

One of the other issues, of course, was that—and I heard the member for St. James (Mr. Johnston) talk about the fear of the Bolshevik revolution coming to Winnipeg—and that was another line that was used by the powers that be of the time. Of course, they were worried about the Russian Revolution. They were worried about soldiers who came home from the First World War after having risked their lives and their health. Many came home with physical disabilities, with mental health issues. And they came back expecting that the country they fought for would actually support them.

And those soldiers, those veterans, actually were front and centre in terms of walking off the job and participating in the strike. These were not Bolsheviks; these were not socialists. These were simply people who believed that they had the right to organize in a union if they chose to do so. People who believed that workers should be entitled to guarantees of a reasonable period of work in a week. Workers who should be entitled to safe working conditions, and workers who should be entitled to a fair, living wage for putting in their efforts.

And I suppose, if that makes you a socialist, well, then, I guess we're all socialists on this side of

the House because we continue to believe that those things are important.

Another thing that comes out of the speeches today is that even now, 100 years later, we have a government—a Conservative government—that seems to want to believe that employers and employees have an equal ability to bargain and there's a level playing field. Well, not the case, Madam Speaker—not then, and not now. And we see how this government has tried to make the playing field even less level.

For example—just one of the examples—by doing away with automatic certification. When a union is able to sign up 65 or 85 or 100 per cent of the employees who say they want to be represented by a union, this government had to interfere. This government had to intervene and now allow every employer the chance, now, to try to threaten, to discourage, to scare employees into voting no to being represented by a union. And that's shameful. And that's one of the first things that we're going to fix when we're back in government.

And, of course, I've heard—and you know, we've heard some fascinating lines put on the record by the Liberal leader, who wanted to step up, who seems to want to believe that the NDP had ordered workers back to work. And we all looked around each other and said, we're not sure what legislation the Liberal leader is talking about. And it turns out there is no legislation in Manitoba.

What I did hear the Liberal leader say is that the Manitoba Labour Board has, from time to time, ordered employees participating in an illegal strike to follow the law. And I don't know if he believes that that's the same as a government legislating workers back to work. That would be like someone who is—who's ordered to do something or not to do something by a court, when they don't follow the law of the country, to somehow make it the Liberal Party's fault. So I'm hoping the Liberal leader will educate himself a little better and not muddy the waters and put comments like that on the record because, frankly, it's embarrassing.

So, you know, it's an honour to stand here today with my colleagues, to speak in favour of collective bargaining, to speak in favour of workers, to recognize that when we have—we have a strong labour movement, we have a stronger city, we have a stronger province and we have a stronger country.

Unions have fought for weekends, for paid holidays, for maternity benefits, for paternity benefits, for other benefits that allow people to have a balance between life and work. What was important a hundred years ago is still important today, and that's why I'm very proud to support the motion put forward by my colleague, the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey).

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I, like my colleagues, the MLA for St. Boniface and the MLA for Burrows, for supporting this resolution.

I want to start by congratulating the MLA for Burrows for bringing in the first resolution of this session, to recognize and to remember, in a favourable light, the general strike of 1918 as a very significant moment in the history of Manitoba.

I want to thank the MLA for Flin Flon for following in the footsteps of the MLA for Burrows and bringing in this expanded resolution, which is, again, an important one.

The—it is not always adequately remembered the many times when Liberals have stood up for people who are workers in the labour union, even going back to the first minimum wage bill in 1917 was under a Liberal government. The Workers Compensation Act was brought in under a Liberal government in 1917, and there were a variety of other progressive measures brought in by that same government.

There are a number of things that stand out as an example of Liberals standing up for workplace safety. I've—was a—the first to work with people—workers in unions in Manitoba to improve the safety of needles used in health care, and that eventually resulted in changes in the early 2000's to improve the safety for health-care workers.

In recent times, I have worked closely with Barry Swan to make sure that his concerns about the death of his son, Todd Maytwayashing, are adequately brought forward, and there recently has been a workplace safety and health report. And there has been a decision by Crown prosecutors to bring justice and to bring in a number of charges related to that unfortunate accident.

I have been out, as have other Liberals, in support of many workers' actions or push for change. I remember being with the current Member of Parliament for Winnipeg North, Kevin

Lamoureux, and going out to various rallies for when there were layoffs in Aveos and people weren't adequately treated. I think that was in 2012.

I was at a strike at Brandon University. Teachers and professors were striking. That was because the NDP government was causing problems there, and so I went out to support that.

* (16:40)

There was an interesting legislation brought in by a Liberal government in 1956, which set the rules for bargaining between teachers and school boards, and that lasted for about 50 years before it was changed, and that's a remarkable record because it was good legislation for the time and served to work well under governments of all stripes.

Ernie Gilroy, who's a Liberal, worked to implement the project labour agreement on the floodway and successfully completed the expanded floodway, and that has been appreciated by people in Winnipeg, the extent to which Ernie and others were able to work with both employers and employees and produce a construction project which actually has helped and will be helping people in the city of Winnipeg for many, many years to come.

There are many, many other examples of where Liberals have been working with and supporting people who are workers, who are calling for more progressive action, and where we have called for much better attention to the inequalities that have arisen under both NDP and Conservative governments, and where we continue to call for improvements and a better province, not just for some, but for all.

Madam Speaker, it is important that we honour the memory of the Winnipeg General Strike in 1919, that we remember that it was an important point in Manitoba history and that it is fittingly remembered this year, particularly because it's the 100th anniversary.

Thank you, merci, miigwech.

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to have the opportunity to say a few words. I have no notes. I hope the member from Minto is pleased about that, and as a conservative I just want to make sure there's no misidentifying as anything else other than a small-c conservative here.

But there are lessons that we all can learn from the events of 1919, but context is important. The

worst war in history had just finished, as many people have already noted. There's a huge influx of soldiers who needed employment. There was the Spanish flu that killed, apparently, more people than the actual war—that's hard to believe, but that's what some people say—the fact that the entire world order was changing. Russia was an ally of Canada in 1917 and became not an ally in the same year.

In fact, there were massive investments of materials sent to the far east in Russia. There was gold as collateral, but when the czar fell, which seemed impossible—well, the First World War seemed impossible; the kaiser fell—that seemed impossible. The whole world order was changing. People were dying; people were injured, as has been mentioned.

There were—the people who came back from the war came back to a very different country, very different city, Winnipeg, with a very different ethnic mix. Mostly, it's already been said, it's Eastern European, was the race. By today's standards, just blatant racism.

Class war—you know, class issues, absolutely. Everything was at an extreme. The living conditions for most people were abhorrent. Most people did not live that long. Retirement savings plans weren't top of mind, because you weren't sure you would be alive next week. The people with capital, often associated with the railways, paid well, but then they found ways to deduct the pay from the workers. And that causes tension. The work was dangerous. People get injured.

And the government found itself in a situation where it was out to declare martial law in Winnipeg. And the Winnipeg police force and firefighters, at the request of the government, stood on duty. They supported the strike, but they became what we call an essential service. Without the police, the whole thing—like, our whole city could have fallen to bits.

That prevented martial law from being declared. And how do we get into that kind of situation? It's when we have two groups of people who are not communicating, or many groups of people who are not communicating, where we don't have the proper structure in society to make sure that people feel their voices heard.

When there is massive inequality, yes, but the reverse is true: if people can't get return on their investment capital, they're—people are not going to invest. Or, if they are not repaid, that—for a previous

investment—that causes a chain reaction, because they can't pay the people who work for them.

And I—this was happening on a global scale. We had 4,800 Canadian soldiers in the Far East, in 1919, in Vladivostok—[interjection]—yes, Canadian soldiers, during this Winnipeg strike. So—and they were there. Yes, we like to think that they were there for altruistic reasons, but they were there, really, to preserve the investments of—capital investments and material that was sent to help the czar fight alongside Canadians and British and Americans against the Germans.

So there were simply, well, they—and they—and Bolshevism is—was—a scary thing, to the establishment for sure, but to most people, they were, rightly or wrongly, there were suggestions that Bolshevism came with some of the immigrants that came from Eastern Europe.

* (16:50)

And, because there wasn't the communication that we enjoy today, the education that we have, a minimum amount of education—people fear for their safety. They also feared for their property. But a very valuable lesson is the government cannot be taking lives of citizens, ever. And two Winnipeggers, two strikers, two Canadians died. That's not—at the government hands. That's not acceptable, ever.

Interesting to note that Communism—Bolshevik—the Bolsheviks started their—started in—with the Russian Revolution, was the leading cause of death in the 20th century—Communism. So that extreme economic model, extreme form of government, was the worst thing ever for people who were affected by it. And even having a few Bolsheviks in the mix is a scary thing.

And, given that people weren't communicating the way that we would have expected or assumed in today's age, it is just in hindsight sad to see that things went to the extreme that they did in 1919. And let's make sure it never happens.

The working conditions of people have improved. There's a universal respect for unions. And, as—actually, as a president of the largest—former president of the largest union in Manitoba, the University of Manitoba Students' Union, for a couple years, that is a very respectable thing.

Now, there's labour unions, private sector, private sector. But, if we can create a framework in a place like this, where a—our democratic society

where people are treated fairly, reasonable solutions can be found and, hopefully, we can all work towards that so that 1919 doesn't happen—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas): It's an honour to stand here today to put a few words on opposition day motion regarding the 100th anniversary of the 1919 strike.

Today marks 100 years since the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike. Over 30,000 workers took to the street to bring attention to labour issues and the importance of labour rights. However, it's unfortunate that, on the anniversary of the strike, both the PCs and the Liberals have fought against workers' rights.

For example, the Liberals' counterpart in Ottawa legislated postal workers to go back to work, even after they went on strike.

This PC government is tirelessly working to roll back labour rights and make life harder for working Manitobans. During this government's time in office, they have consistently cut standards that protect workers and diminished the rights of employees. They have already eliminated the department of labour, 'eliminated' advisory committee on Workplace Safety and Health, cut automatic certification and weakened child labour laws.

They also froze the 'minim' wage for two years, interfered with the collective bargaining process at the U of M and imposed wage freezes on Manitoba workers through unconstitutional legislation. They brought in Bill 4, which will put a freeze on public sector employee wages.

The PC's Bill 18 would require that employers and unions bear the cost of mediators. It also affects the ability for unions to adequately perform their duties. And now they have introduced Bill 12, which eliminates the position of the chief prevention officer, a position that ensures continuous progress and accountability on Workplace Safety and Health. It also imposes a new, arbitrary time limit for a worker to defend themselves.

Increased penalties serve no purpose if they were not supported by inspections and enforcement. But Bill 12 is sadly not a surprise, considering this government's poor record track already.

In regards to the federal Liberal government—basically violated the workers of Canada's Post constitutional rights by pushing emergency back-to-

work legislation. Not only did they introduce this unconstitutional legislation, they did so without seeing it through all proper stages. Their own Crown corporation was simply fighting for better pay, job security, guaranteed hours, and equality was violated—and was violated by these rights. The strike was also fighting to address the rise in workplace injuries, something that the federal government apparently doesn't prioritize.

Free collective bargaining is also a Charter right, one of which the federal Liberal government also violated all of Canada Post employees. Charter of Rights and Freedoms allows workers the freedom of association and expression. Governments can't just pick and choose when they feel like supporting organized labour. Their actions weakened the union's positions by saying they will go to the table, then suddenly turning and threatening to legislate the workers back to work.

The federal Liberals turned their back on Canadian workers, a move we have not seen by the provincial Liberal Party in the past—that we have seen, I should correct myself. These actions by the federal Liberal government are alarming; if they deal with their own Crown corporations in the manner, who knows what they're capable of towards their own union?

I also want to put on record that they brought in Bill 4, which will put a freeze on public sector employee wages. The PCs' Bill 18 require that employers and unions bear the cost of mediators.

And, with that, Madam Speaker, it's an honour to stand on this side of the House where I truly believe, through—that we stand for workers' rights.

Thank you.

Madam Speaker: To clarify for the House, according to our rule 30(15), the House shall not adjourn until all members wishing to speak on the motion have done so.

Are there still members wishing to speak on the motion?

Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Madam Speaker: The question before the House is the opposition day motion in the name of the honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey).

Do members wish to have the motion read?

Some Honourable Members: No.

* (17:10)

Madam Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Division

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

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

Some Honourable Members: No.

Yeas

Madam Speaker: I hear a no.

Allum, Fontaine, Gerrard, Kinew, Lamont, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Marcelino (Tyndall Park), Smith (Point Douglas), Swan, Wiebe.

Voice Vote

Madam Speaker: All those in favour of the motion, please say yea.

Nays

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Friesen, Goertzen, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Martin, Mayer, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pedersen, Reyes, Schuler, Smith (Southdale), Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wishart, Wowchuk, Yakimoski.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Recorded Vote

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader): Madam Speaker, a record vote, please.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 14, Nays 32.

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

Madam Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

The question before the House is the opposition day motion.

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, May 15, 2019

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