

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

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Third Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALTOMARE, Nello, Hon.	Transcona	NDP
ASAGWARA, Uzoma, Hon.	Union Station	NDP
BALCAEN, Wayne	Brandon West	PC
BEREZA, Jeff	Portage la Prairie	PC
BLASHKO, Tyler	Lagimodière	NDP
BRAR, Diljeet	Burrows	NDP
BUSHIE, Ian, Hon.	Keewatinook	NDP
BYRAM, Jodie	Agassiz	PC
CABLE, Renée, Hon.	Southdale	NDP
CHEN, Jennifer	Fort Richmond	NDP
COOK, Kathleen	Roblin	PC
CROSS, Billie	Seine River	NDP
DELA CRUZ, Jelynn	Radisson	NDP
DEVGAN, JD	McPhillips	NDP
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni, Hon.	St. Johns	NDP
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	PC
GUENTER, Josh	Borderland	PC
HIEBERT, Carrie	Morden-Winkler	PC
JACKSON, Grant	Spruce Woods	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake-Gimli	PC
KENNEDY, Nellie	Assiniboia	NDP
KHAN, Obby	Fort Whyte	PC
KINEW, Wab, Hon.	Fort Rouge	NDP
KING, Trevor	Lakeside	PC
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Dauphin	NDP
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Tyndall Park	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas-Kameesak	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom, Hon.	Flin Flon	NDP
LOISELLE, Robert	St. Boniface	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Malaya, Hon.	Notre Dame	NDP
MOROZ, Mike	River Heights	NDP
MOSES, Jamie, Hon.	St. Vital	NDP
MOYES, Mike	Riel	NDP
NARTH, Konrad	La Vérendrye	PC
NAYLOR, Lisa, Hon.	Wolseley	NDP
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
OXENHAM, Logan	Kirkfield Park	NDP
PANKRATZ, David	Waverley	NDP
PERCHOTTE, Richard	Selkirk	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Turtle Mountain	PC
REDHEAD, Eric	Thompson	NDP
SALA, Adrien, Hon.	St. James	NDP
SANDHU, Mintu	The Maples	NDP
SCHMIDT, Tracy, Hon.	Rossmere	NDP
SCHOTT, Rachelle	Kildonan-River East	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield-Ritchot	PC
SIMARD, Glen, Hon.	Brandon East	NDP
SMITH, Bernadette, Hon.	Point Douglas	NDP
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	PC
STONE, Lauren	Midland	PC
WASYLIW, Mark	Fort Garry	NDP
WHARTON, Jeff	Red River North	PC
WIEBE, Matt, Hon.	Concordia	NDP
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, March 12, 2024

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

The Speaker: Routine proceedings, introduction of bills.

An Honourable Member: Can we sit?

The Speaker: Oh, yes—please be seated.

Now, routine proceedings, introduction of bills.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

**Bill 15—The Credit Unions and
Caisses Populaires Amendment Act**

Hon. Adrien Sala (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister for Economic Development, Investment and Trade, that Bill 15, The Credit Unions and Caisses Populaires Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les caisses populaires et les credit unions, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

MLA Sala: I am pleased to introduce this bill today, which addresses several issues in the current legislation, including the move to virtual or hybrid meetings, protecting employees from abusive behaviour and strengthening privacy provisions.

These amendments were developed in consultation with Credit Union Central of Manitoba and will help ensure that the legislation keeps up to date with current developments.

Honourable Speaker, I'm very pleased to present this bill to the House for consideration.

The Speaker: The—is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the bill? [*Agreed*]

* * *

The Speaker: Is it the—the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Sala)—[*interjection*] Sorry.

The honourable Minister of Justice.

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): My apologies. Thank you, Honourable Speaker. We'll get this right today.

I move, seconded by the honourable member—sorry—the Minister of Health—that bill number—okay.

I move, seconded by the Minister for Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care, that Bill 16, The Regulatory Accountability Reporting Act and Amendments to the Statutes and Regulations Act, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House. That's—yes. First reading.

**Bill 17—The Workplace Safety and Health
Amendment Act**

Hon. Malaya Marcelino (Minister of Labour and Immigration): I move, seconded by the Minister of Sport, Culture, Heritage and Tourism (Mr. Simard), that Bill 17, The Workplace Safety and Health Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la sécurité et l'hygiène du travail, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

MLA Marcelino: I am pleased to introduce Bill 17, The Workplace Safety and Health Amendment Act.

The purpose of this bill is to re-establish the advisory council on workplace safety and health that was repealed as part of a government-wide reduction of standing committees in 2018.

The minister-appointed 13-member advisory council will advise the minister on matters pertaining to occupational health and safety, legislative and regulatory changes and the appointment of consultants and advisors.

The council will also undertake a review of The Workplace Safety and Health Act every five years. This aligns with a mandate commitment and ensures that worker and employer groups in Manitoba have a direct connection to the department on important workplace safety and health issues.

I am pleased to present this bill in the House for its consideration.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: Oh—is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? [*Agreed*]

Maybe we're all having a bad day.

The honourable Minister of Justice.

Bill 16—The Regulatory Accountability Reporting Act and Amendments to The Statutes and Regulations Act

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Okay, thank you very much, Honourable Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Minister for Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care, that Bill 16, The Regulatory Accountability Reporting Act and Amendments to The Statutes and Regulations Act, be now read for a first time.

Motion presented.

The Speaker: Is it—the honourable Minister of Justice.

Mr. Wiebe: I'm pleased to introduce The Regulatory Accountability Reporting Act and Amendments to The Statutes and Regulations Act.

This bill establishes The Regulatory Accountability Reporting Act. Each year under this act, the government will report on its red tape and regulatory accountability initiatives.

Bill 16 will align our approach to red-tape reduction with other jurisdictions like Alberta and Saskatchewan, focusing on transparent reporting and results, not mindless counting that creates more red tape than it solves.

The bill also amends the statutes and regulations act to make the public consultation process for proposed regulations more efficient and effective.

This government is committed to the principles of regulatory accountability, true public engagement on the law-making process and delivering better results for Manitobans.

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

Committee reports?

TABLING OF REPORTS

The Speaker: And I do have a report to table. In accordance with section 28(1) of The Auditor General Act, I am tabling the Auditor General's report titled Managing IT Security for Remote Access.

Any further tabling of reports? Ministerial statements?

The honourable member for Selkirk—*[interjection]* Lakeside.

The honourable member for Lakeside.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Rutherford Farms

Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside): Today it is my pleasure to recognize Rutherford Farms, Rutherford family and their hard-working team. In fact, we are joined today in the gallery by Rick, Shae and Wendy Rutherford, Corey Park, Emily Laudin, Gueno Chicouene and Amy Spruyt.

Rutherfords have been farming in Grosse Isle, Manitoba, for almost 100 years. Early adopters of steam tractors, they were no strangers to the use of technology on the farm.

Started by Alex Rutherford, and with son Jack joining him in the 1940s, Rutherford Farms produced their first certified seed crop of Selkirk wheat in 1950. Since then, the Rutherford family has grown and produced pedigreed seed, celebrating 75 years of seed production next year.

Rick Rutherford, son of Jack, began farming in 1978. Rick understood that the farm had to grow in order to be sustainable, so he rebuilt the small family seed plant in 1980, later expanded it in 1997. Rick and his team of dedicated employees have grown many varieties of high-quality seed, retailing to many local farmers, as well as shipping across Canada and the US. Rutherford Farms' innovation and dedication to technology and sustainable farming practices allowed them to grow, bring their innovation to a wider market. In addition to a long-'stamling'—standing family lands in Grosse Isle, they've recently added land in Gypsumville, bringing their total holdings to 13,000 acres.

Rutherford Farms' history of technology use and data collection caught the attention of Enterprise Machine Intelligence and Learning Initiative. With the EMILI group, Rutherford Farms has 'becun' a real-world test site for technology, ag and otherwise.

* (13:40)

With testing of new technology at the field-scale level, they are helping push viable technology forward in Manitoba and Western Canada. Through this collaboration, Rutherford Farms was declared Manitoba's first smart farm.

Rutherford Farms annual Harvest on the Crescent started in 2021 as a way for the ag industry to give back to the community. To date, over \$100,000 has been raised for Harvest Manitoba.

Thank you to Rutherford Farms.

Brooklands Active Living Centre

Hon. Malaya Marcelino (Minister of Labour and Immigration): I rise today to recognize the very good work spearheaded by the Brooklands Active Living Centre. A proud pillar of the community since 1982, the active living centre is a charitable, non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of seniors through wellness initiatives like yoga and exercise, social events and outings, education classes and food programs.

For Brooklands, the value of community is of high importance. Twice a week at the centre, members 'congregate' and connect with one another over a meal. They participate in friendly competitions like floor curling and build new skills through sewing and quilting.

When Brooklands' long-time neighbour, the Westlands Non-Profit Housing Cooperative fell victim to severe flooding, causing extensive damage to the building, it forced their tenants to leave their residences and, for some, experience housing insecurity. Since the flood, Brooklands Active Living Centre has been a proud collaborator and key advocate for the co-op's repairs, working to re-secure these affordable housing units for seniors, and everyone is hoping that we'll be able to move back in soon.

In an effort to maintain Westland's connections to the community during their renovations after the flood, Brooklands Active Living Centre hosts a weekly coffee chat, providing opportunity for our Westland seniors to build and maintain relationships with their neighbours. This is just one example of the incredible community leadership and advocacy that the centre consistently demonstrates for the betterment of our constituency.

I want to welcome and thank Alice Steinke, Charlotte Leclaire, Christine Reuther, Kristy Scott and Arlene Sawicz, as well as the volunteers and members of the Brooklands Active Living Centre, for continuously setting an example of how we can all work better together, and I would like to add their names to Hansard.

Thank you.

Alice Steinke, president; Christine Reuther, vice-president; Kristy Scott, secretary

Charlotte Leclaire; Arlene Sawicz

ROGerKimLee Music Festival

Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli): Honourable Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of a small but growing local music festival and its founders, Dawn Mills and Derrick Cundy. The ROGerKimLee Music Festival is an annual event that is held in the town of Eriksdale.

Derrick and Dawn were looking for a way to celebrate and honour three friends and Manitoba residents and musicians, Roger Young, Kim Russell and Lee Oreniuk, who had just recently passed away. These men are the namesake and inspiration for the ROGerKimLee Music Festival, and it's a festival that started modestly as a weekend companionship and good music. The response from family and friends and community has been outstanding. So, the seed was sown and the decision to make the ROGerKimLee Music Festival an annual event was made.

From the first event, at Derrick and Dawn's shop, which is RKL, now in its fourth year, is held at the Eriksdale Sports Grounds and—in McEwen Park. The stage is shared by professionals, local, regional, young and emerging musicians and also seasoned performers. A wide gamut of musical genres can be heard echoing through Eriksdale during its now three-day event.

While music is the primary attraction to the RKL—now features makers' music, various musical workshops including guitar making, natural and foraging walks and an automobile show and shine, and, of course, great food.

The ROGerKimLee Music Festival believes music to be a powerful force for positive social change.

It's my pleasure to recognize the ROGerKimLee Music Festival, its founders and its committed volunteers for building and sustaining this culinary, enriching event for Eriksdale and the Interlake as a whole.

The Speaker: The honourable Minister of Education—honourable Minister of Agriculture.

Marcos Bardelli

Hon. Ron Kostyshyn (Minister of Agriculture): Today I would like to honour Marcos Bardell [*phonetic*]. Marcos brews beer at Obsolete Brewing Company in Dauphin, Manitoba. He does a great job and the brewery is already making a name for itself.

Marcos is an expert in his craft. He began brewing in 2009 back in his home country in Brazil. Honourable Speaker, 2015 he managed the brewing for a

larger brewery in Brazil. After a decade in the business, the opportunity in Dauphin caught his eye.

The project took Marcos and the team, Obsolete Brewing, 10 months to get off the ground. Since opening the doors in September, Marcos has made award-winning brews. And most recently, in February, Marcos was named a brewer—a year by the brewers of journal Canada.

It's wonderful to see Dauphin and rural Manitoba attract talented young people like Marcos. Congratulations to Marcos and the entire team of Obsolete. Good things are brewing in Dauphin and across this province.

Thank you so much.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Seeing no further members' statements, before we move to oral questions, I would like to introduce some guests in the public gallery.

I'd like to draw attention to—of all honourable members to the public gallery, where we have with us today 20 grade 7 and 8 students from Arthur E. Wright Community School, under the direction of Navreet Wander, Mrs. Bains; student teacher Maddy Mandryk; EAs Ms. Shanna and Ms. Ramdeep [*phonetic*], who are the guests of the honourable member for Union Station (MLA Asagwara).

On behalf of all members, we welcome you here today.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Bail Monitoring Unit Timeline for Launch

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition): I, too, would like to reach out and say thank you to the Rutherford family for being here, because I had attended the Sundaes on Tuesdays event in conjunction with Rutherford Farms and the Oat Growers Association of Manitoba.

Honourable Speaker, the NDP Premier said last week he does the work first and puts out press releases later. But that's not true. The Minister of Education, we know, is not doing his homework; either is the Premier.

But Chief Danny Smyth of the Winnipeg Police Service has since clarified that the bail monitoring unit announced by the NDP will be months in the making. I table that assurance here today for the members, Honourable Speaker.

Clearly, the Premier misspoke. Will he withdraw his comments today?

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): We've done important work with law enforcement to keep communities safe, and those investments are going to continue to come online.

One thing that really concerns me about the Leader of the Opposition's conduct, however, is that trans children are not safe with him in the political sphere. That's based on the comments he made in *The Globe and Mail* earlier today. He said that when it comes to the sort of hateful transphobic rhetoric that the PC party peddled in the last election, not only does he want to revive the issue, he wants to, quote, put an exclamation mark on it. That is wrong. We should all be united across party lines in standing with support for LGBTQ children.

Will the Leader of the Opposition clarify his intention right now?

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

Mr. Ewasko: Honourable Speaker, members on this side of the House know it's dedicated law enforcement and community organizations, like the downtown community safety patrol, are doing their work to make communities safer.

Members on this side of the House thank them for their dedication, and this is in contrast to the Premier and the NDP who constantly are taking the credit for the hard work of others.

The Premier clearly made promises six months ago that he knew he wouldn't be able to keep because he was willing to say anything to be elected.

* (13:50)

Will he apologize for his misinformation today, Mr. Honourable Speaker?

Mr. Kinew: I'm compelled to point out the fact he didn't answer the point that I raised. On the subject of saying anything to get elected, the hate-filled campaign that the PCs ran in 2023 relied on transphobic sentiment. And the PC Party leader of the day is hoping to put an exclamation mark on these remarks now.

But I know why he doesn't raise it here, because they don't have the courage to make those comments here in the Legislature. They want to whisper this on doorsteps. They want to use it to sell memberships in their leadership campaign. But for us, this is a serious issue.

Every time they raise this issue, we will answer. This is not just about trans children in our schools. This is about our colleague from Union Station. This is about our colleague from Kirkfield Park. This is about Manitobans who deserve respect as a basic modicum from political leaders.

Clarify now, via the Chair, whether you stand by these transphobic comments.

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

Mr. Ewasko: Honourable Speaker, 172 days ago, this Premier stood on debate stage and promised meaningful bail reform within 100 days. He said he didn't need the federal government, he could implement stronger conditions on bail, but he has failed to deliver.

The bail monitoring, obviously, will not be ready for months. The fact is, contrary to his claims, the Premier is so far, Honourable Speaker, weak on crime.

Will the Premier stand in this place and apologize for his broken promises and his failure to protect Manitobans?

Mr. Kinew: We're tough on crime. We're tough on the causes of crime. That's why we've already implemented new bail standards for prosecutors in Manitoba, and we've provided new funding for law enforcement.

However, let's monitor the comments that the Leader of the Opposition will not make. He goes to the national newspaper of record and says that he wants to put an exclamation mark on transphobic sentiment, on a divisive campaign that seeks to divide Manitobans, instead of bringing us together for one future.

Again, we will answer these charges, these calls that the member for Lac du Bonnet makes every single time he makes them.

The reason that we will stand up for trans kids in Manitoba is the same reason that we took the approach that we did when it came to the ceasefire in Gaza. It's the same reason that we said no to the Sio project that would have affected his constituents and many others.

It's because we believe in one Manitoba where everyone should be treated equally and where everyone—

The Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Downtown Community Safety Patrol Request for Brandon Program

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): Honourable Speaker, this Premier is celebrating prematurely in declaring victory before he's put in any work. The work to reform day in and day out is being done by dedicated law enforcement officers and community organizations such as the downtown community safety patrol.

While the NDP refused to support them in opposition, I hope this Premier has come to his senses.

Can the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) confirm that his office will continue this amazing community-protecting work that was initiated by our government?

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): Actually, the work of the DCSP was initiated by people on the front lines like Mitch Bourbonniere. We'll continue to thank them. We'll continue to support them. We won't try to take credit for their good work.

Our team has invested in law enforcement. We've implemented new standards when it comes to prosecution. But I do feel compelled to ask the member from Brandon West whether he agrees with the hateful rhetoric that was the subject of the PC campaign.

Again, we know that the member opposite, from Lac du Bonnet, wants to put an exclamation mark on transphobic commentary. Is that something that the member for Brandon West supports as well?

The Speaker: The honourable member for Brandon West, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Balcaen: Honourable Speaker, in my years with the Brandon Police Service, I saw many community safety changes come to Brandon. The Mayor of Brandon sees the value of the DCSP program and has advocated for it with me, the Premier and the Minister of Justice.

I was hoping to see the development of a similar downtown community safety program for our city. The minister must realize the necessity for this program and not put his ideology ahead of the needs of Manitobans.

Will he commit today to the need for a program such as the downtown community safety program in Brandon?

Mr. Kinew: We support the important work of the downtown community safety patrol. We have a good relationship with Mayor Fawcett and certainly we

would welcome the member's continued advocacy on behalf of our shared constituents.

I'd also point out that members of our team have walked in the past with the Brandon Bear Clan Patrol. So we're definitely committed to this sort of street-level outreach that takes place to help make communities safer.

But we all have to stand together when it comes to keeping people safe in our communities. It's very clear that the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko) wants to target trans children to sell some memberships in the upcoming PC leadership campaign.

So, I'll put the question to every single member of the PC caucus, beginning with the member for Brandon West: Does he support putting an exclamation mark on this transphobic, divisive commentary?

Mr. Balcaen: Well, I'm also proud that I support the Bear Clan and walked with them. This is certainly not a partisan issue; this is about safety in my city and all of Brandon constituents.

I would hope that my colleague for Brandon East was raising this issue at their Cabinet table, but I haven't heard anything from either him or the Minister of Justice, so safety clearly is not a priority for the NDP.

A good idea is a good idea, and without question, this program has worked in Winnipeg. This minister needs to put the partisan lens aside for a moment and recognize that when something works, we should replicate that success in other communities.

Why does this minister oppose community safety in Brandon?

Mr. Kinew: The minister, who happens to also serve as the MLA for Brandon East, has raised the important issue of community safety in Brandon many times. The people of Brandon have a strong advocate at the Cabinet table.

And I want to indicate that we're very welcome to hearing this sort of advocacy for the member from Brandon West, because it is indeed a non-partisan issue, when we talk about keeping people in our community safe.

But that's why we have to reach across the partisan aisle and not try to inflame transphobic rhetoric. I was very proud when anti-LGBT book bans were on the docket for debate in the Brandon School Division, that the community of Brandon rallied together and opposed it and said, this is not who we are.

Will the member for Brandon West do the same and condemn his anti-trans leader's rhetoric?

Child Welfare System Call for Public Inquiry

The Speaker: The honourable member for Roblin (Mrs. Cook). *[interjection]* Sorry. The honourable member for Midland.

Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland): Honourable Speaker, yesterday I asked this NDP government about a voicemail by Myah-Lee Gratton to her CFS worker, pleading for help, that went unanswered. Tragically, she passed away.

The Minister of Housing, Homelessness and Addictions shamefully called this casework. The family deserves answers and for the minister to treat this situation as more than just casework.

If she's not going to take this seriously, will the government at the very least call a public inquiry today?

Hon. Bernadette Smith (Acting Minister of Families): February 11th was a tragic day for all of us here in this province.

And you know, I want to say to the member, they continually bring this up in the House here. These are, you know, a two-year-old, a four-year-old, a seven-year-old. I misunderstood when she said the name because the name wasn't pronounced properly yesterday, so I take full responsibility for that.

* (14:00)

But I want to say to the member, we are all grieving. This is something that our government is taking as a priority, you know, our Premier (Mr. Kinew) went to the vigil, our Premier went to the funeral, the Premier has met with the family.

There is an ongoing investigation, and I can assure that member that our Families Minister is working on—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Midland, on a supplementary question.

Mrs. Stone: When pushed on the matter of children in care, the Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine) was too busy to make the time to discuss what we can do better to serve vulnerable children in Manitoba.

Yesterday, her colleague made reference to the transfer of jurisdiction at Peguis First Nation as a sign

of the right way to do things. I would like to remind the minister, this occurred under our PC government. I would like to table a media story that quotes former minister Quires [*phonetic*] as—Squires, as saying, we're really looking forward to working with them as a province, to ensure that the child-welfare system is truly transformed. End quote.

Is the minister too busy taking credit for our PC government's work to immediately address vulnerable children in care?

Ms. Smith: You know, what I want to say to that member is that we are working with First Nation communities. You know, as a First Nation person myself, and as someone who was in care of the CFS system, I want to say to that member to get on board and start working with us and not against us.

Because it's going to take all of us to get our children back to where they need to be. And I recognize that not all children can be in the care of their families, and I want to uplift, you know, all of the foster parents and all the caregivers that are opening up their homes to, you know, these children that are such sacred beings to all of us.

And I want to say to that member to—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Midland, on a final supplementary question.

Mrs. Stone: Honourable Speaker, AMC has said that this case is symptomatic of systemic issues within the child-welfare system that require immediate attention. Let me repeat: immediate attention. Systemic issues require an examination of the entire system.

So why is this minister and this NDP government fighting a public inquiry to give the family, the community and Manitobans answers that we all deserve?

Ms. Smith: We know that this is a complex issue. We know that the RCMP are conducting a full criminal investigation. We also know that MACY is also conducting a review after the investigation is complete.

What I'll say to that member is to quit using this as a political pawn. You know, these are families that are grieving: four-year-old, seven-year-old, a two-year-old.

We need to work together. Like, there's violence happening in our city. Let's come across party lines here and let's figure out solutions together and quit bringing this to the floor. And let's, like, come together as leaders in this province and show real leadership.

The Speaker: The honourable member for—[*interjection*] Order. Order.

Animal Overpopulation Request for Funding to Address

MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie): In an open letter sent to the Premier (Mr. Kinew) yesterday, which I table, 45 animal welfare organizations from across the province called a state of emergency for animal welfare in Manitoba. The letter states that Manitoba is experiencing ongoing animal overpopulation issue.

In the last two months in Manitoba, six communities have been forced to perform dog cullings to violent attacks. This is unacceptable, and it's unnecessary loss of animal life and a drain on the animal welfare volunteers.

Will the Premier do the right thing and commit to requesting funding today?

Hon. Ron Kostyshyn (Minister of Agriculture): Thank you so much, Honourable Minister, and thank you for the question, member opposite.

Obviously in the last number of years, we've seen a rise in animals' high population numbers. I want to ensure the member opposite we've just recently met with the Winnipeg human rights—or humanity organization to deal with animals that are in unoccupied areas.

I want to ensure the member opposite we will continue to work on behalf of animals that have been abandoned, and continue to be abandoned, for the betterment of the province and its people.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Portage la Prairie, on a supplementary question.

MLA Bereza: Without volunteers, our animal welfare system would completely collapse. This declaration of a state of emergency should be taken seriously.

As stated in the open letter, Manitobans have been attacked, maimed and even killed due to animal overpopulation. Manitobans deserve to feel safe. Volunteers defer—deserve to feel supported. And animals deserve to be free from suffering.

So I'll ask again: Will this NDP Premier do the right thing and commit to this funding today?

Mr. Kostyshyn: The importance of safe communities and opportunity where animal populations in Manitoba's—our intent is to work with those organizations to make that a safe community. We have provided \$150,000 to work

with the Winnipeg Humane Society, and we continue to communicate.

In fact, last week we had the board of directors sitting at our—in my office along with the chief veterinarian officer to strategize moving forward for the betterment of the—unfortunate—the animals that have been somewhat left alone.

But I want to assure you, it's six months or five months we've been in government; I wonder what the last seven years, the previous government, what did you do to address the problems that we're being faced with here?

The Speaker: The honourable member for Portage la Prairie, on a final supplementary question.

MLA Bereza: I'll start off with this: what about the rest of Manitoba? Just this morning, one of the signatory organizations, Feed the Furbabies Canada, updated on social media that since they sent the letter yesterday, another child has been attacked, a seventh community has been forced to call a cull and they still have heard nothing from this NDP government.

I know some of the members opposite have been animal welfare advocates for years. How is—now is the time to stand up, do the right thing without delay.

Since this Premier (Mr. Kinew) won't commit, I'll ask the minister again: Can you at least respond to these organizations in their time of need, or are the NDP just—

The Speaker: The minister's time is expired.

Mr. Kostyshyn: In 2023, 1,730-ish animals were seen in 23 northern, remote Indigenous communities, with nine—1,198 of them being spayed and neutered and looked after by the people.

These are opportunities that we, as this government, decided to make the move.

I ask again to the member opposite and the PC Party across from me: What did you guys do in seven and a half years of government? Do you stand behind what we need?

We are here to work with all people. *[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kostyshyn: We don't designate certain areas, and we work with the Winnipeg Humane Society.

Thank you for the question and I hope you'll take—

Provincial Standardized Testing Government Position

Mr. Grant Jackson (Spruce Woods): Day 161 of this government and the flip-flops just keep on rolling. The Education Minister came out of nowhere and announced he was cancelling all provincial exams, only to have his deputy minister send a memo saying they're back on.

Who is running the Education Department for this government, and what is this minister's actual view of provincial exams? Are they good for students or not?

Hon. Nello Altomare (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning): I want to thank that member for the question. It's an important piece because, as you know, people really care about their public schools.

I will say that we're a listening government, and it's exactly what we model when we're in schools. Schools listen. They're really good at conducting themselves and ensuring that parents have a voice in the system, that all stakeholders understand the directions that we're heading in and that's something that we're going to continue to do.

* (14:10)

We have all day for listening to the people that want to see our schools perform at the very highest levels.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Spruce Woods, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Jackson: Well, it's a very simple question, Honourable Speaker, and appreciate the minister's comments, but Manitobans want to know what the opinion is of the person who's at the top, who's leading this department. So I'll ask it one more time, and it's hopefully going to get a straight answer.

Does this Minister of Education believe that standardized tests are good for students, yes or no?

MLA Altomare: Again, I want to thank the member for that question, and I do want to ensure the following, Honourable Speaker. This is something—we're not going to politicize this issue. As a matter of fact, Manitobans, when we come into this House, expect us to lift the level of discourse when it comes to public schools. We will continue to do that.

And what we're modelling is, we're modelling the fact that we've heard the concerns regarding provincial assessments, and we're going to look at that again so that not only are we going to reinstate them, but we're going to get it right because the previous government left it completely bare of resources to ensure that they did it the right way.

So thank you for that question, and we'll have more to say moving on.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Spruce Woods, on a final supplementary question.

Mr. Jackson: Well, he's got more to say; it's a good thing we get three questions in a set, I guess.

The minister's justification for this flip-flop is a bit hard for Manitobans to believe. He was critic before he was minister, and before that he worked in the public education system.

Now, despite campaigning on his reputation as a teacher and principal, in the Free Press today he claims he regrets not having spent more time working on this file before announcing the cancellation.

After a lifetime working in the education sector, how are Manitobans to believe that he is not well enough informed on this issue?

MLA Altomare: I do want to thank the member for that question because it's a good one. I will say this, that, absolutely, we're going to take responsibility for every decision that we make. This is something that we model in schools, and this is something that as minister I'm going to model to the system.

The other thing that I'm going to say is, of course, assessments play an important role in a student's life at school. We want to ensure that that piece continues. That's why we revisited it, adjusted our plan.

But moving forward, Honourable Speaker, I want to assure Manitobans that when we come up with our new modern assessments, that were not touched for over 20 years, we're going to have it to a point where it—not only will it be modernized and current, we're also—

The Speaker: Minister's time has expired.

MPI Special Risk Extension Policies Insurance Coverage for Carriers

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): For-hire truckers and carriers help our economy move. They deliver our Amazon packages, contribute more than \$2 billion to Manitoba's GDP and help rural constituencies like

mine get their mail, goods and services every single day.

Since this fall, the minister's office has put a pause on special risk extension coverage. These essential businesses are being told to wait and stay grounded when asked about insurance coverage that they need to operate.

Will the Minister responsible for MPI commit today to immediately fixing the issue and stopping his NDP government's failure?

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister responsible for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation): Well, I want to thank the member opposite for the question.

We had an opportunity just the other day, here in the Legislature, to come together at committee to ask the experts at MPI about some of the challenges that they've been facing under the former government and how those decisions of the former government impacted the work that they do.

We've got a lot of faith in the people that work at MPI, and we have a great new CEO who's ready to get to work to fix so many of the problems caused by the previous government. But what this member would've learned at that time is that those decisions by this former government have had a real impact on customers.

I think that's what he's describing in his question.

The Speaker: The member's time has expired.

The honourable member for La Vérendrye, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Narth: We just need answers. We've raised this issue for the minister's attention.

He is responsible for this Manitoba Public Insurance and it is illogical that he is abandoning for-hire trucking carriers by freezing special risk extension policies.

These businesses want to serve Manitobans. These are good jobs and necessary for our economy. When this minister denies these Manitobans the coverage that they need to operate, he's impacting not only these businesses, but everyone that relies on those services.

Will he commit today to addressing this terrible oversight?

Mr. Wiebe: Immediately upon taking on this role, we moved quickly to replace the board hand-picked by the former government at MPI.

We brought in a team that was dedicated to ending the strike, to getting us back on track at MPI, to start dealing with the years of mismanagement brought to them by the former government.

We tasked them with getting us back on track and starting to focus on delivering service, good customer service, back to the people of Manitoba.

I know that the member opposite is concerned with some of the changes and some of the problems caused by the former government. We're going to work hard to make—

The Speaker: The minister's time has expired.

The honourable member for La Vérendrye, on a final supplementary question.

Mr. Narth: The minister has a lot to say today, but his office has already confirmed what we feared.

In response to a matter raised to his office, Manitobans were told, and I quote, it is recommended that they explore alternative insurance providers. His office is telling Manitobans that MPI is no longer providing the insurance they need—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Narth: —to operate their businesses. I'd like to table the letter from his office.

Why is this minister undermining our public insurer by forcing businesses to use private insurance from other jurisdictions?

The Speaker: The member's time has expired.

The—*[interjection]* Order. Order. Order.

When the Speaker is standing, I expect members to cease talking. Those are the rules. Please follow them.

Mr. Wiebe: Well, I want to be clear that on this side of the House, we believe in publicly owned auto insurance for all Manitobans.

You know, the members opposite tried their best to wreck MPI when they were at the helm. They tried everything that they could to drive it into the ground, to show Manitobans that public insurance wasn't the right way to go.

Well, we strongly disagree with that sentiment. We will stand with Manitoba Public Insurance. We will stand with the great employees of public—Manitoba Public Insurance, and we'll stand with the customers throughout Manitoba who rely on affordable Autopac every single day.

The Speaker: Order, please. The member's time has expired.

Hospitality Sector Labour Shortage Employer Specific Draws

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): We know that there are severe labour shortages right across the province and employers desperately need skilled workers to fill positions in many labour sectors.

The hospitality industry took a huge hit during the pandemic; we all know this. And they really rely on employer-specific draws, which there haven't been any of since October.

Can the minister explain to the House why she is doing this, and has she done any analysis on the impact this will have on our restaurant industry?

* (14:20)

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Economic Development, Investment, Trade and Natural Resources): We're very happy with the question. I just want to thank the member for that.

It's very important to understand that our government is working hard to stimulate and grow our economy in Manitoba that works for all Manitobans. We've done a lot of work over the last few months to understand the gaps, and we're addressing those gaps.

We've got a plan to increase the skilled labour in Manitoba and make sure that those workers not only are safe in their jobs, but they're valued and that we're addressing those gaps in the labour market so that we have an economy that works for all Manitobans.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Tyndall Park, on a supplementary question.

Labour Shortage and Immigration Certificates Issued in 2023

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): Immigration in Manitoba is very concerning right now not only for the applicants, but for the employers who desperately need to fill labour shortages across our province. Concerns have been raised with the number of people coming under the program.

Will the minister share with us today if the Province of Manitoba has used every single certificate that they were provided in 2023?

Hon. Malaya Marcelino (Minister of Labour and Immigration): Thank you, member opposite, for your question.

Our immigration department is working really, really hard to be able to process all the federal allotments that we've been assigned for this year, and I—our office is constantly in meetings with different employers to make sure that we can ensure that they have the labour supply that they need.

We just finished having one with McDonald's and with Tim Hortons franchise owners, just on a Thursday, with the MLA for Burrows and the MLA for The Maples. These folks represented 4,000 people. And our Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program will be happy to continue working—

The Speaker: Minister's time has expired.

The honourable member for Tyndall Park, on a final supplementary question.

Provincial Nominee Program Application Processing Times

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): That is exceptionally disappointing, Honourable Speaker.

Prior to the last election, Provincial Nominee applicants didn't have to wait for more than three months to receive a decision on their applications. Since the election, I have had hundreds of people reach out to me, many of whom have been waiting nine months just to hear if they're going to be issued a certificate.

Under the previous NDP government, backlogs ballooned for years; we're talking four to five years just to find out if they're going to be accepted into the Provincial Nominee Program.

Can the minister please share with us why backlogs are beginning to grow, and assure applicants and members of this House that their applications will be assessed in a timely manner?

Hon. Malaya Marcelino (Minister of Labour and Immigration): Our department is very, very committed to addressing these backlogs. You know, under the previous PC government, all we saw were cuts, cuts and cuts.

Because of the previous—the PC government, we were not even able to accept an additional 2,000 people and their families that Manitoba should've accepted, due to their cuts. That's 2,000 newcomers that we were not able to process because of their cuts. That was extremely shameful for them to be able to do that to these newcomers.

As a newcomer myself, I know what it means to be able to come to this country and be able to live your

best life here. And because of their cuts, we were not able to process 2,000—

The Speaker: Minister's time has expired.

Manitoba Hydro Assets and Subsidiaries Government Directive Issued

MLA Mike Moyes (Riel): Honourable Speaker, Manitoba Hydro is our province's Crown jewel. It is the source of our Manitoba advantage of affordable, low-carbon energy. We know that the former PC government sold off subsidiaries of Manitoba Hydro and had plans for further privatization.

I am so proud to be part of a long history of NDP governments who have built up Manitoba Hydro and kept it public for the benefit of Manitobans.

Can the Minister of Finance please share with the House how our government is protecting Manitoba Hydro for future generations?

Hon. Adrien Sala (Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro): Thank you to my excellent colleague for that important question.

Our government will always keep Manitoba Hydro public. And that's why we've given a directive that Hydro retain ownership of its subsidiaries, ownership interests and intellectual property assets. I'll table that directive for the House.

Manitobans don't have to look back far to remember the very dark days of the PC government. They hiked up rates by 20 per cent, they interfered with the PUB and they sold off Hydro's subsidiaries.

Luckily, Honourable Speaker, Manitobans have a new government that will keep Hydro public, keep rates low. We're going to keep creating good jobs for Manitobans while building a low-carbon energy future.

Addiction Treatment Services Government Funding Intention

Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler): We have had—heard very little on how the minister will address those with addictions. Manitobans are rightfully concerned, but not enough is being done to provide treatment and care for individuals struggling.

Will the minister confirm for the House today what—that recovery-oriented-care options will continue to be funded to those who are asking for help with addiction recovery?

Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness): We are taking a harm

reduction approach, something that the previous government didn't take.

We are taking an approach where we're actually listening to those who are struggling with addictions. We are meeting with experts. We are meeting with those who are on the front lines.

We are actually supporting mobile overdose prevention workers, and we are actually working towards opening our first supervised consumption site here, right in Winnipeg.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Morden-Winkler, on a supplementary question.

Mrs. Hiebert: Honourable Speaker, under the previous PC government more than seven RAAM clinics were opened and funded. These clinics provide education, counselling, medications and many other addiction treatments and services, as well as referrals.

Can the minister tell us today if they will be continuing to fund and support these clinics for Manitobans struggling with addictions?

Ms. Smith: Well, I can tell that member that those clinics will remain open with added supports. And actually we have been meeting with those very providers who have been giving us expert advice on opening up our first safe consumption site, something that they had been telling this previous government that they should have done a long time ago.

But they wouldn't take their advice. Instead, what did they do? They threw a report on the floor that was from experts who were supporting people with addictions. We saw addictions rise in this province under the previous government. We saw people lose their lives under the previous government, something that we will not turn a blind eye to.

We will support people in this province with their addictions and continue—

The Speaker: Minister's time has expired.

The time for question period has expired.

PETITIONS

Amending The Winnipeg Foundation Act

MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

The Winnipeg Foundation was amended by the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba in 2011, but in

these ensuing years changes in the methods of governance of the Winnipeg Foundation board have been necessitated and updated to the Act.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To amend the Winnipeg Foundation Act by:

(a) Removing the requirement that the mayor of the City of Winnipeg be a director of the Winnipeg Foundation; and

(b) Removing a requirement that copies of the audited financial statements be provided to the public on request and that information respecting the financial statements be published in a newspaper; and

(c) Ensuring that the information respecting the audit of the financial statements of the Winnipeg Foundation be published on its website.

The Speaker: Any further petitions?

Seeing none, Orders of the Day. The—Government Business.

* (14:30)

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(Continued)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Acting Government House Leader): Honourable Speaker, can you please resume debate on the Government motion calling for a ceasefire in Gaza, followed by second reading of Bill 9—The Employment Standards Code Amendment Act.

The Speaker: It has been announced that we will resume debate on the motion calling for a ceasefire in Gaza, followed by second reading of Bill 9, The Employment Standards Code Amendment Act.

The debate on the motion is open. The Honourable acting opposition House leader. *[interjection]* The honourable Government House Leader.

Mr. Wiebe: On House business, Honourable Speaker, could you please canvass the House to see if there is leave to not see the clock until the question has been put on the motion calling for a ceasefire in Gaza, brought forward by the Honourable Minister of Labour and Immigration (MLA Marcelino).

The Speaker: Is there leave to not see the clock on the motion until the question has been put on the motion calling for a ceasefire in Gaza, brought forward by the Honourable Minister of Labour and Immigration?

Some Honourable Members: No.

The Speaker: I hear a no. Leave is denied.

DEBATE ON GOVERNMENT MOTION

The Speaker: The floor is open for debate.

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care): I'm honoured to be able to rise today to speak to this very important motion. And this is a very important motion.

It is important for other provinces across the country to know where this House stands on this issue. It is important for the Government of Canada to know where this House stands. And it's important for Manitobans to know where, as legislators, we stand.

In so many ways, the ongoing devastation and fear cuts to the heart of our understanding about the nature of democracy and human rights here in Canada and around the world. It highlights, in so many ways, the ugly realities of anti-Semitism and of Islamophobia.

And it lays bare before us now how the forces of hate and of prejudice are connected, how our friends and our neighbours across our communities, across our province, are impacted by events that are unfolding half-way across the world.

We all must play a role in the global project of building a world based on a fundamental commitment to recognizing our shared humanity, of holding steadfast to that fundamental tenet that we are all born to live free and equal in dignity and in human rights, of finding peace—as peace, finding peace as a starting place for progress toward a better future. And not just a better future here in Manitoba, but a better future across our country, and a better future across our globe.

Honourable Speaker, those commitments, those sacred commitments, require all of us to show courage. They call on us to say, with one united voice, ceasefire.

But the opposition is trying to duck this incredibly important issue. They are trying to filibuster this motion and prevent it from being voted on. And, Honourable Speaker, I think we know why the opposition is doing this. They're doing this because they are not ready, they are not prepared, to say the one word that so many need for us to come together as legislators and say, ceasefire; to say that publicly; to truly advocate.

The opposition needs to stop hiding behind fake procedural objections and simply tell Manitobans today,

in this House, in this Chamber, where they stand. Do they support the motion or not?

On this side of the House, Honourable Speaker, we think Manitobans deserve to know. Manitobans deserve to know plainly and clearly where we, as legislators, stand on this issue. This is our moment, as legislators in Manitoba, to have one voice, but the opposition instead refuses, lacks the courage.

Honourable Speaker, they have an opportunity right now, and so I ask the opposition: Will they stop trying to run from a vote and will they simply stand today in this House and be counted?

Thank you, Honourable Speaker. I'd like to ask for leave to have the question be put to the House right now.

The Speaker: Is there leave to have the question put to the House?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

The Speaker: No. I hear a no.

Leave has been denied.

Anybody else wish to speak?

Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli): Although I'm not fasting, I do have a raspy voice, so I'd just like to thank my colleague for endeavouring to do what he's doing but I apologize to those who are listening with my sore throat. So, not contagious—it's been a while, so nobody panic. It's all good.

But I just want to, obviously, talk a little bit about this motion before bringing an amendment forward. This motion that's currently on the floor does not speak to the need for provisions of aid—[interjection]—thank you very much for that. Our great staff here heard my voice and brought some water. I want to thank her for that. Thank you very much.

There were no provisions of aid in this motion that's before us here today. Our amendment that we're going to be bringing forward and that we discussed yesterday as well, talks about provisions of aid.

We have historically helped in times of need, through 'crises' around the world and I think this is definitely a time of need.

It also does not speak to the release of hostages; I think it's very important. You know, a ceasefire is one thing, but to release all the hostages is important. So this is just another example of the NDP that are

picking politics over helping those that are actually in need. This motion is limited.

The NDP could help directly, as I mentioned before, like our PC government has historically. We helped with Ukraine and our PC government provided \$800,000 in direct funding for the Ukrainian war effort. That is what provides immediate aid.

Now, in general, any innocent civilian, particularly a child experiencing famine due to war, is a tragedy. I think we can all agree on that. We, too, are calling for a commitment to peace, security and are encouraging negotiations of a ceasefire.

I'm not sure if the members opposite—they didn't want to include the word negotiations—so I'd like them to point out a single ceasefire that happened without negotiations. Obviously, both sides have to get around the table and negotiate that ceasefire. This does not have to be a political issue. This should not—this should be a non-partisan call for peace.

There are families and children starving and also no access to clean drinking water, nutritious food and now aid is having trouble reaching them. It's very important that we are committed to ensuring that aid reaches the area.

We, as Canadians, need to do whatever we can directly to help, and this NDP government could provide direct help, as we have in the past but they are choosing not to.

This motion fails to provide any concrete action to address the struggles of starving children in Gaza. Families have been torn apart in Israel and Gaza. Innocent lives have been lost on both sides.

* (14:40)

Now, millions of people have been displaced due to this war, and that, as well, is a tragedy. Hostages, as I mentioned earlier, have been taken on both sides, and there is no consideration in their motion, as presented, for timely release and safe return of these hostages to their families.

So many Manitobans and Canadians alike have personal connections and loved ones that have been deeply impacted by this conflict. We probably can think of somebody in our fairly close circle that has been affected on one side or the other or both.

So both the Muslim and Jewish communities are incredibly tight-knit and are major contributors to Manitoba's cultural landscape, and I think we can all attest to that here in the House, as well.

The NDP wants to call for a ceasefire in what is the most complicated geopolitical situation globally. They fail—once again, they fail to recognize the need for fulsome negotiations. They fail to understand, despite the Premier's (Mr. Kinew) words that Hamas and its terrorist 'organations' cannot be trusted. There can be no peace while women and children are held captive.

Innocent men, women and children are paying the price each and every day. This motion must be amended to address the fact that aid supplies are not reaching those that need them most.

So again, I want to give a shout-out to the MLA for Fort Whyte for all of his efforts here in speaking yesterday, and he'll be speaking again today. And our caucus is proud to have the first Muslim MLA and our first Muslim minister of the Crown in Manitoba. So give him a round of applause.

Now, also, our caucus was proud to pass The Jewish Heritage Month Act in 2022, and proclaiming every May officially as Jewish Heritage Month. Honourable Speaker, 2022, our PC government was proud to officially adopt International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's working definition of anti-Semitism.

There is so much to speak about here today. I do not want to hold up the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Khan). I think, as we heard yesterday, he's fast-ing, and probably the earlier he gets up to speak in the day, the easier it is for him; he gets pretty dry by this time of the day. So I would like to bring forward this motion and, hopefully, members opposite will have consideration to pass this motion.

So I move, seconded by the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko), that the motion be amended by striking out everything following "ceasefire" and replacing that text with "and the surrender of Hamas, and to provide immediate relief for the Israeli and Palestine people to address the humanitarian crisis and all civilian suffering in the region."

The Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable member for Interlake-Gimli, seconded by the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet, that the motion be amended by striking out everything following "ceasefire" and replacing that text with "and the surrender of Hamas, and to provide immediate relief for the Israeli and Palestine people to add the humanitarian—to address the humanitarian crisis and all civilian suffering in the region."

The motion—just a small correction: the Israeli and Palestinian people.

The motion is in order. The floor is open for debate.

An Honourable Member: Point of order.

Point of Order

The Speaker: On a point of order, the Honourable Minister of Justice.

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Acting Government House Leader): Honourable Speaker, I have to admit I'm quite disappointed here today that the House refuses to move on to the substantive motion that has been brought forward by the government on a very serious issue, a serious issue that impacts communities throughout this province and around the world.

In consulting with the clerks, consulting with the rules of this Chamber, it's been made abundantly clear to all members of this House that any amendment that's brought forward does need to be substantially different or unique as compared to any resolutions or amendments that have been brought before.

Now—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Wiebe: I recognize some members are new to this Chamber and might not understand that a point of order is a serious matter, but it's actually not them who are heckling here today, I might point out, Mr. Speaker—Honourable Speaker.

Again, very clear rules in the House, and the understanding of those rules is that what we're doing in this House is we want to be debating new material. In other words, it would simply be a rehash of the debate that we already had yesterday that the members, you know, put on the record that they were so interested in having yesterday, you know, not allowing us to move on to the government motion. We had that debate. In fact, it took more than two hours here in this Chamber. We had that debate and we voted on it. The members opposite lost in that motion.

Now, here today, the Government House Leader himself, when he gets up, rises, and says, well there's not much difference in what I bring forward as an amendment today. There's not much different, is what he puts on the record.

And so I would suggest to the Honourable Speaker, and I would hope that the Honourable Speaker does take this matter quite seriously, because it does impact the

ability of this House to debate matters in a serious substantive way, rather than simply using procedural techniques to avoid answering a very simple question: Do we stand with the people of Gaza?

So, my point of order is that this amendment clearly revives a question that has already been considered by the House, that was clearly—expressed its will on this matter just yesterday. The opposition cannot revive a question that has already been settled by this Assembly, and therefore, we believe that this amendment should be seen as out of order.

The Speaker: Before recognizing any other members to speak on the point of order, I would just remind members to make sure your comments are relative to the point of order.

Mr. Johnson: And the member is quoting the revival clause, and we specifically vetted this so there's enough substantial difference. We vetted it through the clerks, which do an amazing job for us here. I want to thank them for all their hard work and help through a process like this. We wouldn't just pull something out without being vetted and brought forward.

Now, the member clearly did not state a rule that was broken of the House. So therefore this is a not a point of order. This is substantial difference and does not fall under the revival clause that the member is referring to.

The Speaker: So—order. There is no point of order. I would indicate that I ruled the amendment was in order. Bosc and Gagnon, on page 541, states that an amendment is out of order procedurally if it raises a question substantially the same as one which the House has decided in the same session.

I've reviewed the text of the amendment, and I am of the opinion that the amendment is different than the previous one moved by the interim Leader of the Official Opposition.

* * *

The Speaker: The floor is open for debate.

The honourable member for Fort Whyte. Oh—

Mr. Obby Khan (Fort Whyte): Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Waverley (MLA Pankratz) was standing first. *[interjection]*

The honourable member for Waverley.

* (14:50)

MLA David Pankratz (Waverley): Well, I am very proud to stand and put some words on the record today regarding the urgent humanitarian crisis unfolding in Gaza, and I am disappointed that we're having to take it this far. I think there have been some important words that have been put on the record, and I had hoped that we could vote on this motion as a government and move forward in a good way together.

You know, today as I stand before you to underscore the importance of advocating for a ceasefire immediately, a cause that transcends political affiliations, religious beliefs and national borders, echoing the core values that define us as Manitobans and as part of the global family. You know, as friends, family members, neighbours observe the holy month of Ramadan, I'm reminded of the words of the Manitoba Islamic Association, who I spoke with recently. And put simply, they say Ramadan is about humanity. And being a friend of the MIA, whose grand mosque is in my constituency of Waverley, you know, I know these words to be deeply true.

Now, let's be clear. A ceasefire and the situation in Gaza is not just a distant conflict but a profound human tragedy, and the echoes of despair resonate here in our province, reminding us of our shared duty to uphold the sanctity of life and the dignity of all people. It's a moment that calls for empathy for the kind of courage and compassion that compels us to look beyond our differences and act with unwavering moral clarity.

In parallel, my conversations with members of the Muslim community, particularly at the MIA and in Waverley in the constituency, have been profoundly illuminating. Manitoba Muslims have shared their experiences of fear and uncertainty, not just about distant homelands but about their place in the world where they increasingly find their faith misunderstood and their peace threatened. I've spoken with a number of families in Waverley and across the province who've lost family and friends. Their stories remind us that our calls for peace abroad must be matched with a commitment to respect inclusion and understanding at home, ensuring that our Muslim and Jewish neighbours feel valued and safe in our shared community.

Calling for a ceasefire is fundamentally an appeal to our common humanity. It's an acknowledgment that every life is precious, that every child deserves a future unmarred by the shadow of violence and that the world cannot stand idly by while suffering and chaos prevail. The relentless cycle of violence has brought nothing

but devastation and deepening divisions. And yet, we know in quiet of reflection that peace is possible, that reconciliation can triumph over retribution and that the arc of history bends towards justice. The holy month of Ramadan, a time of reflection, prayer and community, further amplifies the need for peace and understanding. It's a period when the values of patience, compassion and generosity are most vividly expressed, serving as a reminder to all of us of the universal aspirations for peace and goodwill that transcend our diverse traditions.

Recognizing and respecting these sacred times reinforces our shared commitment to a province and world that honours all faiths and upholds the dignity of all communities. A ceasefire is the first crucial step towards a lasting peace. It provides a respite from the violence, a moment of calm in which meaningful dialogue can begin and the foundation upon which a durable resolution can be laid. It's an opportunity for all parties to step back to re-evaluate the path of conflict and to consider the profound benefits of peace. This pause enables humanitarian aid to reach those in dire need, offering a lifeline to the innocent and a glimmer of hope from these darkest of times.

Moreover, let's not forget that the implications of this conflict extend far beyond the borders of Gaza. In a world more interconnected than ever, the reverberations of this crisis are felt by all of us, influencing economic stability that brought our quest for a world where justice prevails over discord and unity over division. Equally, we must confront the shadow of increasing Islamophobia and anti-Semitism, a deep problem that undermines our collective quest for peace and justice.

The rising tide of discrimination and prejudice faced by the Muslim and Jewish community here in Manitoba is a stark reminder of the work that remains in building a society that truly embodies the values of respect, tolerance and mutual understanding.

To me it's clear: we need to stand united in our call for an immediate ceasefire. This call is not merely a plea for a temporary halt in hostilities, but for the beginning of a new chapter; one in which dialogue replaces gunfire, where understanding supplants animosity, and where a spirit of solidarity triumphs over strife.

In closing, let's remember that our history is not yet fully written. We have the power to shape the future. Our words matter to build a legacy of peace. The call for a ceasefire in Gaza is a testament to our

unyielding hope and our faith in the boundless potential of humanity when we come together.

I've had a number of conversations recently with members of our government that touched on the idea that we want to govern in the way that makes our children, our grandchildren proud. So to that point I'd like to finish by saying, let's not be remembered as the generation that turned a blind eye to suffering, but as architects and supporters of peace.

Thank you.

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): I want to start by first just commenting that I don't actually understand what the NDP are trying to accomplish with this motion. They already put out their news release yesterday, and instead of debating their own legislation for the second day in a row, they prefer to talk about a tragedy unfolding across the world, over which the Manitoba government has no influence.

And I think we, as legislators, need to be self-aware enough to understand where our sphere of influence begins and ends. And certainly we need to be working with individuals and groups in our constituencies who are directly impacted by this conflict. And that is where we can make a difference. Not with motions like the one put forward by the NDP that are binding on no one and accomplish little.

That being said, I note that the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) says that this is a very serious topic, and I would agree. And far from being superfluous, our amendment to this motion is an attempt to get it right. It is an attempt to make it into a motion that is more inclusive of all Manitobans who are impacted by this tragedy; that is more comprehensive, that is more thorough and that is something that all members of this House could actually support.

So on that note I will shift my comments to the way that the war in the Middle East has impacted the people in my constituency. Yesterday in my comments, I noted that my constituency, like most of ours, has people of both Jewish and Muslim ancestry. It is my honour to represent them both.

Sadly—I'd thank the Minister of the Environment to stop heckling me. Sadly, the events that have unfolded in Israel and Gaza over the last several months have had a terrible impact on those with loved ones overseas, and it's unfortunately been incredibly divisive here in Manitoba.

There has been a documented uptick in blatant anti-Semitism. This has caused a great deal of distress

for Jewish people in Manitoba attending synagogue, school, or really anywhere else that they may be targeted.

Folks in my constituency have written to me expressing grave concerns about the harassment and intimidation, and even violence that we've seen erupt in other Canadian cities. This is unacceptable and must be condemned in the strongest possible terms.

And I want to touch on something the Premier (Mr. Kinew) said in the Legislature yesterday that I found a little troubling. He said, quote, consider the Jewish students who face hostility on Manitoba campuses because of the actions of the government of Israel. And that statement didn't sit quite right with me, and I thought on it for a little while, and I realized it's because they're facing hostility because of anti-Semitism. And the Premier did acknowledge that those actions constitute anti-Semitism, which I appreciate, but we cannot give those who would harass and intimidate Jewish people an excuse in saying that it is somehow caused by the actions of a foreign government. It's caused by anti-Semitism, full stop.

I would further argue that anti-Semites have been emboldened in the current global political climate. One can criticize the actions of the state of Israel without targeting Jewish people collectively or individually, at their homes, places of worship, businesses and schools.

* (15:00)

At the same time, there has also been a documented increase in Islamophobia. Yesterday we heard a passionate and heartfelt plea from my colleague, the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Khan), who described meeting a constituent while door-knocking who asked him to use his platform to dispel the myths and lies about Islam, something I know my colleague tries to do every day, not just in his words, but by his example.

We see Islamophobia rear its ugly head all too often in the racist and hateful actions of those who target Muslims simply because of their faith. This, too, is completely unacceptable and should be condemned by all of us in this House.

I would just like to put on the record that I'm talking about anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and I'm being heckled by members opposite. Speaking about something that's incredibly important to the people of my constituency.

This morning the House unanimously passed a private member's bill put forward by the member for

Assiniboia (MLA Kennedy) to establish Islamic heritage month, and I think that this speaks to this Legislature's commitment to fighting Islamophobia and promoting Islamic culture and heritage here in Manitoba. And I congratulate the member opposite on the passage of her first bill.

As I mentioned in my preliminary comments, our province is home to people of both Jewish and Muslim Manitobans. And all Manitobans, I think, are troubled by what has happened and is happening in Israel and in Gaza. As a mother, as a human being, I am horrified by the scale of the destruction in Gaza and the unending suffering taking place there. The famine and the health crisis has had a devastating impact on innocent Palestinian people, a trauma that will linger for generations.

And Hamas does not care. Hamas serves only Hamas, not the Palestinian people. The innocent people of Gaza deserve to live free of Hamas terror. And I am not a foreign policy expert. I represent one-fifty-seventh of Manitoba here in our provincial Legislature. I don't have all the answers.

But Israel has said that this war would be over tomorrow if Hamas laid down its weapons and returned the hostages that were so brutally taken from their homes on October 7. Hamas must be destroyed. And what is missing from the NDP's motion is any mention of this, or any mention of the hostages. We tried to amend the resolution yesterday to make it a more comprehensive; the hostages must be released and aid must immediately flow to the people of Gaza.

These things are not mutually exclusive. It is not one or the other. We could put forward a motion that pushes for both. But the NDP defeated our amendment, so today we are trying again. Surely the NDP will agree with us today that Hamas must surrender. Genuinely, I do not understand why members opposite will not take an approach to this topic that is more inclusive of all Manitobans who feel a connection to these tragedies.

In speaking to our amendment yesterday, I felt it important to put a few words on the record about the terrible sexual violence and the atrocities that occurred on October 7. It's horrifying and it's uncomfortable, but if we are going to debate this resolution in the Legislature, we have to include this as part of the conversation. The UN has now confirmed that Hamas committed rape, sexualized torture and other cruel and inhumane treatment of women on October 7 and in the days that followed. I know all of us in the Chamber abhor these evil acts. There will be no

justice for the victims of these terrible crimes until Hamas is destroyed.

And speaking of women who have been impacted by this conflict, I wanted to put a few words on the record about Vivian Silver. Vivian Silver was a Winnipeg Israeli-Canadian peace advocate, a tireless activist for peace, a bridge builder and a women's rights activist. And she was tragically killed in the attacks on Israel on October the 7th. Just days earlier, on October the 4th, Vivian Silver had organized a peace rally in Jerusalem, attended by 1,500 Israeli and Palestinian women, showing that even though she may have officially retired in 2014, Vivian Silver's entire life was a testament to how one can devote themselves to peace and to bettering the world.

Vivian was a founder of Women Wage Peace, a coalition of Jewish and Arab women seeking a negotiated peace in Israel. I would like to send my deep condolences to her family and take a moment to acknowledge this great loss. People like Vivian are why we are calling for an amendment to the motion. There are people who have dedicated their entire lives to advocating for peace, and we as legislators need to learn from their examples.

A little bit closer to home, I also want to talk for a moment about the Saul and Claribel Simkin Centre. It's a personal-care home in the constituency of my colleague, the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Khan). And he and I had the privilege of visiting there just a few weeks ago. The facility doesn't serve only Jewish Manitobans, but it does have a significant population of Jewish residents, and as a non-profit, it receives significant support from the Jewish community. It is a beautiful facility. And we learned all about the good work that the administration and the staff there are doing to care for their residents every day, and it was evident from the moment we walked in how well cared for those residents are. They are treated like family. And we learned about some of the issues being faced by the non-profit sector in health care.

And they also did tell us about the uncertainty and fear in the Jewish community following the October 7 attacks, and that's a sentiment I've heard echoed by others in the Jewish community. A group of parents in my constituency reached out to me, asking for help to deal with anti-Semitism in public schools. There is a very real fear out there, and I think that any motion passed in this House today on this topic needs to acknowledge that side of the equation as well. And I think that's where this amendment is so important. It

is more inclusive of all Manitobans who are impacted by this tragedy. The NDP's motion is not.

Any innocent civilian experiencing famine due to war is a tragedy. And I don't have the quote in front of me, but there's a quote about, you know, a large number of deaths is a statistic and one death is a tragedy. And we have to remember that every single one of these deaths is a person with a family and a story and a life that has been tragically cut short due to a war and a terrorist entity, Hamas. And we are calling for a commitment to peace and to security and encouraging negotiations towards a ceasefire and calling on Hamas to surrender.

This doesn't have to be a political issue. It could be a non-partisan call for peace. But the NDP are taking an incredibly narrow approach to this. We all understand and agree there are families and children starving, without access to clean drinking water, nutritious food, and aid is not getting in, and this is unacceptable. We agree that as Canadians we need to do whatever we can directly to help. The NDP government could be providing direct help, but they're choosing not to.

The motion fails to provide any concrete action to address the struggles of starving children in Gaza. The motion is just words. Families have been torn apart in Israel and Gaza; innocent lives have been lost, and millions of people have been displaced. And then there's the issue of the hostages, people taken from their homes forcibly on October the 7th, many of whom have not been returned. The hostages must be returned, and that should be part of this motion.

So many Manitobans have personal connections and loved ones that have been deeply impacted by this conflict. Both the Muslim and Jewish communities are incredibly tight-knit and major contributors to Manitoba's cultural landscape. Back in '22, the Legislature passed a motion proclaiming Jewish Heritage Month. Just today we've passed a bill—passed first reading of a bill for Islamic heritage month. And those are both great steps, concrete things we can do here in Manitoba.

But the NDP's motion fails to recognize the need for negotiations, fails to understand that Hamas is a terrorist organization and cannot be trusted. There can be no peace while women and children continue to be held captive. Innocent men, women and children are paying the price for this each and every day. The motion should be amended to include the surrender of Hamas and the delivery of aid to the innocent people of Gaza who are suffering.

Before I conclude my comments, I just want to state unequivocally that I believe Israel has the right to defend itself. Israel has the right to exist. And I made this comment yesterday in speaking to a previous amendment, but those shouldn't be controversial words. Every sovereign nation has the right to defend itself.

* (15:10)

And what we are seeing unfold in Gaza is a tragedy, and I think it is incumbent on us, as legislators here in Manitoba, to recognize the deep impact that our words here have on people of both Muslim ancestry and Jewish ancestry.

The impact on Manitobans will be far greater than the impact on the actual conflict, so I think it's important that all of us bear that in mind when we rise to speak to this motion, or when we fail to speak to a proposed amendment because, as members opposite have demonstrated, they are only willing to consider their version and not any constructive feedback that actually seeks to improve what they've put forward.

With that, I'm going to pass the floor on to others who may wish to speak to this amendment. Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: The Honourable member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Khan).

Mr. Khan: Thank you—

The Speaker: Oh, I'm sorry. Sorry. I'm not paying attention again. The honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MLA Nellie Kennedy (Assiniboia): I rise today to speak on the government motion for a ceasefire in Gaza.

I'm somehow confused, though, by some of the words that our colleague across the way has just finished saying. You know, I think the Premier (Mr. Kinew) of a province such as ours in Manitoba, standing up and calling for an enduring ceasefire, an immediate ceasefire due to the humanitarian crisis that's occurring across this world is, in fact, powerful, and we do have power behind our voice. It's our job as legislators and a part of this province to be able to speak to the humanitarian crisis that's occurring across the world.

You are correct in saying that we have people of the Jewish faith and people who are Muslim and Palestinian who live here in this province. I have met with many of them. Many of the people who live in Assiniboia are of Palestinian lineage. They have family

who live in the region, and it is horrifying to think that while we sit here with procedural loopholes that are going about instead of actually calling for what is needed, a ceasefire, is abhorrent.

We need to ensure that the people of Gaza and the people who live in this province, and the people of Israel, understand that our position is that there is a humanitarian crisis that's occurring. Women, children have been killed at alarming rates within Gaza. There is nowhere for people to go. The Israeli Army and the Israel has chosen to attack Hamas in a way that is detrimental to the entire population of Gaza. It is not that they are attacking Hamas; they are literally killing thousands and thousands of women and children. This must end.

Our government, our motion for a ceasefire, it's essential for Manitobans to know where this House stands on the matter, and sitting and debating this amendment is just honestly a waste of time.

According to local media and authorities, the conflict in Gaza has seen the killing of over 30,000 Palestinian people, many of whom are children and women. Both the Palestinians state and Israel have the right to exist. Each civilian life lost risks entrenching hardline views and pushes reconciliation between the parties further away.

Our Premier (Mr. Kinew) supported Canada's vote in favour of the United Nations' resolution for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire.

Why will the members opposite not support this motion? Millions of Palestinians are currently displaced in Rafah, a city in the southern Gaza Strip. These Palestinians are crammed into tent cities or in houses where rocket attacks and drone strikes are occurring.

Rafah was the last refuge for Palestinians trekking south to avoid Israel's air and ground campaigns, following orders from Israeli Defense Forces, the IDF officials. For Palestinians to leave Gaza City, and then to Khan Yunis. With bombs getting closer and closer to Rafah, there are fears of nowhere else for Palestinians to go.

This is a humanitarian crisis: the inability for these people to have food and water during the month of Ramadan, to not be able to have food and water to break their fast in this holy month of Ramadan. There is a need for an immediate ceasefire and I stand with our Premier and with our Caucus and ask that the members opposite support our motion.

Thank you.

Please ask for leave after you are done speaking—Honourable Speaker, we ask for leave for the question to be put forward on the House.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Is there leave for the question to be put forward?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

The Speaker: I hear a no. Leave has been denied.

The honourable member for Fort Whyte.

Mr. Khan: Honourable Speaker, third time's a charm; I appreciate you recognizing me.

You know, there's so much I want to talk about and there's so much I could go on and on about today. And I will get back to those points afterwards and I have a lot to talk about it, and then when I went to bed last night—actually, no, so I'll back up.

When I opened my fast last night at 7:30, it was—I thought it was 6:30. I got home at sunset, it was 7:31. I got home and my son who's 11 years old fasted for the day. He did what's called a chirri fast, which means birdie fast. I forget the term in Arabic, but I said, you can fast but, you know, at lunch you can eat some food. I said, eat some food or water, whatever you can. Just go as long as you can. He's 11.

And he gets home at 5:00 and he's exhausted, he's tired, he ate food. And so we're sitting there talking about, you know, what does it mean, how did you feel, the water. He goes, dad, that first sip of water, I could feel it go all the way down my throat to my stomach and all the way to the very bottom.

And we joked a little bit. We talked about how blessed we are to have the food and water here. And I use these as teaching moments with him and I said, let's talk. I said, well, what about people that don't have that?

And you can think about, I mean, whether it's Israel or Palestine or sadly people here in Canada, but to hear that from an 11-year-old, say, Dad, there's people all over the world that don't have food and water. He says, we chose not to have food and water for today, but those people have no choice. It puts things in perspective of what we're actually doing here with all sincerity.

And I wanted to start off today in a much different tone than yesterday's went. I want to thank the member for Assiniboia (MLA Kennedy) for bringing the

Islamic heritage month bill forward today. Absolutely honoured that I was in this building when we could pass that forward unanimously. It's great for the community and it's great for the province.

I was honoured when we brought forward Jewish Heritage Month and all of the other months that we recognize that have made significant contributions to this province.

And as we sit here as elected officials and we all recognize this going forward, that's why we're here, to make Manitoba better. And if we're standing here today and I'm sitting here, standing here and, okay, what am I going to talk about? How am I going to get this across? How are we going to echo this?

I said, you know, children I think is really the gateway to opening your heart. So when we look at that and we say, what are we actually talking about here in our precious time that we have to discuss this very important motion? It's not a waste of time. What we are elected to do here is important. People's lives are important. Words are important. Every word we say is important.

Members opposite know this very well. I, unfortunately, have misstepped with comments and they'll call me on it right away.

We've had colleagues, whether they be from different demographics, different ages, different places in Manitoba, different backgrounds, have slipped up with words and members opposite or us on this side will call them out for it immediately.

Words matter. Comments matter. What we're putting on paper here matters. It might not matter in the grand contextual thinking that we're going to stop the war in Israel and Palestine. We're not. But it matters to the people in Manitoba that we're elected for. It matters that we get this right as we go forward.

* (15:20)

So, you know, members opposite, they want to say we're filibustering; we're not. We're putting together, forward, a better motion than what they have because words matter. When you say something, it matters. As an elected official, it matters. And no one in this room can tell me that they can go on social media or out in the media and say what they want and it won't make the front page of the paper tomorrow. It will. Because what we say matters.

The government's motion is proposing for, and quote, immediate call for a ceasefire in the Israel and Gaza war to address the famine crisis. Okay. So let's

get that straight. It is immediate call for a ceasefire in the Israel-Gaza war to address famine, okay. Immediate call for ceasefire. The rest we can say, okay, we got that. Immediate call for ceasefire.

You look at our motion that we're putting forward now, and our motion goes all the way up and including the word of ceasefire. So the member for Union Station (MLA Asagwara), the member for Assiniboia (MLA Kennedy), the member for—no, that's all, I couldn't hear the other member. So those two members have stood up. The member yesterday, the MLA for Rossmere, stood up and said we need stronger words, that encourage negotiation wasn't strong enough.

Okay. That was the only objection the member from Rossmere had was—MLA—said that encouraging negotiation was not strong enough. So we changed it. That was the only objection from the NDP that got up yesterday on this motion. One objection. Those words weren't strong enough.

We took it back. We listened. We sat with our leader, the member from Lac du Bonnet. We sat with our caucus. We said, okay; that's not strong enough. We need something stronger because that was the only objection they came up with.

So we moved forward with immediate call for a ceasefire. That's what they said in their motion. Agreed. So now, what does the member from Union Station have to say? What does the member from Assiniboia have to say? That's all they've really put up to talk about this, and the member yesterday for Rossmere.

Mr. Tyler Blashko, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

Their objection was we didn't have the word ceasefire. Well, they obviously didn't read the motion we put forward because the word ceasefire is in there. The word ceasefire is in there.

So if that is your only objection to the NDP, why will they not support this motion? Immediate call for a ceasefire is what the NDP say; immediate call for a ceasefire and surrender of Hamas and provide immediate relief for the Israeli and Palestinian people and to address the humanitarian crisis and all civil suffering in the region.

Like, anybody at home, the thousands of viewers that are listening at home, or the ones that will get this clipped and listen, what is the objection. Honestly, for—please tell me so I can go home and explain to

my 11-year-old son why his dad couldn't do a better job at work; why his dad couldn't protect the people.

You know, you have the member from Riel heckling me now. You have the member from Riel heckling when I'm talking about going home and talking to my son about this. He was—yesterday when he was heckling me yesterday—*[interjection]*

An Honourable Member: I think it was me.

Mr. Khan: Mike Moyes, Mike Moyes, Mike Moyes.

An Honourable Member: He's not here today.

Mr. Khan: Moyes is right there. Yes. I'm not blind. I know I'm tired and I'm hungry but I can still see properly and I can hear properly—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Just a reminder that you have to refer to members as a—from their—as their constituencies. And even if you're whispering, we can hear you.

Mr. Khan: Yes, the member from Riel, as I mentioned, and this was yesterday. As I mentioned, I go home and that I said—I can go home and tell my son, because we talk about work, that this is what we did. And the member wants to heckle. I sincerely ask if the member has so much to say, if he can stand up, because he's been heckling me quite a bit the last two days, for him to just stand up on the record and say why he won't support our motion.

So far, all we've heard is that they want the word ceasefire in there. We added the word ceasefire. We made the language stronger.

But our motion goes farther. Why is the NDP afraid to go farther to protect everyone? Or, are the NDP just playing games, playing political games? Bringing this up on the first day of Ramadan, when the Premier (Mr. Kinew) stands up and misleads the Muslim community that was here, that I spoke to, that said, we came for a ministerial statement on Ramadan; we had no idea the Premier was going to talk about Israel-Gaza.

That they were sideswiped by that. They came for a joyous occasion to celebrate Ramadan—and it is joyous. This—the self-discipline that it requires resonates in so much joy in the community, in one another, and so much love for one another. They had no idea that the Premier would sideswipe them with a ministerial statement about the Gaza-Israel conflict.

Now, an important one? Yes. One that we're discussing today, very important. But to mislead the Muslim community under false pretenses and then

say, this is what it is; what are we doing? Are we playing political games, and are we now—has this Premier stooped so low to use communities as marginalized chess pieces in his game of chess? *[interjection]*

Okay, and now opposition's upset about that, what—my comment. And I figured they would be.

So why will we not move forward with this motion? Honestly, I'm—I address the Speaker, I think, still. Your motion says immediate call for ceasefire to end the conflict in Israel and Gaza. Great. Awesome. Our motion says, immediately call for a ceasefire in Israel-Gaza, and the surrender of Hamas, and provide immediate relief for Palestinians and Israelis, and address the humanitarian crisis and all suffering in the region. Ours goes farther.

Not ours, sorry; the Legislature's—the Legislature can go farther. We can all go farther together. It's not too late. We don't want to play games. Let's stop playing games—as they call it. You want to move forward, let's move forward. We on this side of the House, the Progressive Conservative Party of Manitoba, are ready to move forward with a stronger motion than what the NDP have brought forward.

We are not playing games. They want to stand up—the member for Union Station (MLA Asagwara), the Minister of Health, said they're afraid to use the word ceasefire. We used it. MLA for Rossmere said, encouraging negotiations wasn't strong enough; we got rid of it. MLA for Assiniboia says the same thing: we need stronger language, we need to call for a ceasefire, and we did it.

What else? How about we add in surrender of Hamas, we add in immediate relief for all the people there, we add in humanitarian crisis and we add in civilian. Please tell me what I'm missing here, because if I'm missing something, I want to go home and tell my son, this is what I missed. This is what I missed.

And yesterday's motion included the hostages on both sides. We added that in. They didn't deem it worthy enough. No; just the ceasefire. So you lay down your arms, and what? Seriously, what happens then? I'm literally asking, like, you lay down your guns, they go, okay, well, there's no binding commitment for humanitarian aid, we don't have to do anything. We don't got to return the hostages, we don't got to do anything. No immediate relief, forget about the civilian suffering.

This is the real sad part—real sad part. As we are elected to do better by people in Manitoba, we also

send a message to the world. Whether they're watching or not is irrelevant; we've got to put our heads down at the end of the night. We've got to be able to look ourselves in the mirror, and we've got to say, okay, was their motion or our motion better, period. That's it. Yes, there's partisan politics. I get—I'm learning, I've been here for two years. I understand partisan politics; I'm learning. Certain issues, okay, you've got to vote this way, you've got to vote that way, it's what the party wants.

This is a non-partisan issue. Come on, I'm begging you guys on the opposite side of the room to look at the wording in our motion. There are rational people on that side that can look at this and say, their motion is better, period. Our motion's better.

* (15:30)

They don't want to look at me; they're all on their iPhones, except for one member over there, which I greatly respect, so I'll appreciate that. I say thank you for paying attention the entire time. No one else has engaged me the whole time. Sorry—two members, apologize. The other member is in front of another member; I couldn't see them.

They don't want to engage. They don't want to have this debate. They don't want to stand up and say why they are against our motion. Just tell me that. Manitobans deserve that. Yes, we're going to vote on it at the end and yes, they have more votes, and yes, they're going to win. And that's the way this—our democracy is crafted; I get that. But this is not a partisan issue.

We're not talking about something that's divided us. We're not talking about, you know, maybe the way we see how we want to run Hydro or the way we want to run education or the way we want to—hospitals or health care or ag or whatever the other issue is. This is not that. This is really not that. We're not talking about saying, you know, is the Minister of Education going to do exams or not? This is not a—partisan; it's not a ideological philosophical thing on—there's no funding associated with this. It's a simple matter of what motion is better.

If the NDP came forward with a better motion, I would've been the first one over there. Well, I wouldn't actually cross the line; I'd still stay here, but I would've voted for it.

So, Honourable Speaker—Honourable Deputy Speaker, you know, when we're talking about this motion it is important to remember that words matter. Every word in this thing—motion matters. And I know

the opposite members on opposite side of the House—I don't know, I would assume some of them don't think fondly of me; that's okay. We're on different sides. For now, ultimate goal is for Manitobans. I get it. I'm a six-foot-four, 250 pound, very large, booming voice, heckling quite often, so they—I get that energy. I understand that.

I don't understand why this motion can't go forward. I just—I fundamentally don't. And if they get shut down—if it gets voted against it at the end of the day, I would humbly ask that maybe one or two of those members who, you know, don't view me the way some of them do, can come across and just say this is why, because we have a right to know.

My son has a right to know why we didn't do a better job putting a better motion forward. Manitobans have a better right to know. The Muslim community has a better right to know. The Jewish community has a better right to know. Canada has a better right to know, a right to know why we didn't do better with a motion.

When we talk about words—I've already mentioned it. I've mentioned their objections to it. It was just one; we've changed that, we've gone farther. We're ready to move forward on this. Talked about partisan politics. This is not a partisan issue. This is an issue for the world to see.

Winnipeg is an amazing place to live. I love it here. From Ottawa, born and raised, went to school in Vancouver, played for the Bombers, chose to settle here. And I chose to settle here because of the community here. I chose to settle here because I was welcomed in all communities regardless of how big I was, how long my hair was, how crappy the football team was, how awesome the Bombers were. I was welcomed into all communities.

Over that time I got to build substantial bridges in these communities: Jewish community, Muslim community, of course, because I'm Muslim and, hopefully, they still like me. I build bridges and I chose to stay for community. I had no ambitions of wanting to get into politics. It was about community, about bringing people together by doing that. I didn't even know what partisan politics was 'til a few years ago, really until I started to dive into it.

It's about building community. And if this motion, as members opposite say, this is not a partisan issue, why are we not moving forward for community? Like, just somebody, please just tell me why afterwards. Stand up. You have time today, please.

Manitobans, Palestinians, Israelis, Muslims, Jewish people, everyone has a right to know why this NDP government will not support a better motion.

So, the next speaker, I encourage you stand up, if they're going to put someone up, and talk about this. Bringing up a different concern we don't have.

When we talk about what else could be done if this government wasn't just virtue signalling, wasn't catching the Muslim community off guard by having the ministerial statement with the ceasefire statement instead. Why has this NDP government not done more to help the suffering that's happening there now?

Why haven't they? You say, well, what can they do? Well, the previous government, PC government, sent over \$800,000 to Ukraine. Has this government, since October 7, done anything like that to help the people suffering in the Middle East, in Gaza?

We talk about a humanitarian crisis. They want to put a motion forward. They want to virtue signal that this motion is fantastic, but then when we bring a better motion to have it have more impact, they say, oh, no, no. We don't want that much virtue. We don't want to look that good. We can't have the PC Party take over the credit for this.

Take it. Take the credit. Do the right thing. Do the right thing. They could have stepped up with \$800,000 or more or less. Twenty—\$10,000, \$100,000, \$1 million, whatever. It's within the power of this government to do that. Nothing. Paying Ukraine was a one—no, Ukraine wasn't one time. Pakistan; remember there was those immense floods where, I believe, one third of Pakistan was covered underwater. This government sent \$200,000 to help.

Now, \$200,000 when an entire country—one third of the country's covered underwater isn't going to do much. It's not. It's something. Something is better than nothing. Actually, \$200,000 is going to do a lot. I stand corrected. I was thinking of the exchange rate, the rupees and the money. That is going to do a lot. It's going to help a lot of people. It's going to feed a lot of people. It's going to help them, that country, on a road to recovery.

Why has this government not done that? Like, I literally, like, when I sit there and I look at the notes and my colleagues say, how do you come up—I said, I'm not even looking at my notes; I'm just speaking from the heart.

And I'm not speaking from the heart because I'm Muslim. Not. I'm speaking from the heart because I'm

a human being. I'm not trying to go to war or attack or be divisive with the NDP today. I'm really not. That didn't go over well yesterday.

Today's a different approach. The approach is look at our motion; look at your motion. If you don't have them in front of you, we can get copies brought to you of both of them and you can just see the difference.

It is amazing what—we all say, for the betterment of Manitoba, we represent everyone in Manitoba. We all say this. I've said it dozens of times. I think in the House today I've heard it at least a half a dozen times that we're all in this together.

If we are in this together, what better way to signal to Manitoba that we can work together across party lines by adopting this amendment? What better, more powerful way? Everyone knows the NDP has the votes. Everyone knows you guys call the shots. Everyone knows you guys won the last election. We get all that. We know that. You guys have the power.

Well, as cliché as it sounds, with great power comes great responsibility. With great power comes the responsibility to do the right thing. With great power might mean, hey, you've got to take the guys that don't have—the side that doesn't have all the votes and say let's work together to get this done for the betterment of the conflict of what's happening.

Again, this isn't going to have an effect on the conflict. Well, what's it going to have an effect on? The people right here in Manitoba. It is. The Muslim-Jewish community here that has had to live through this, living through this. The Islamophobia, the anti-Semitism, the verbal and physical attacks that have incurred—the vandalism, the breaking of buildings. The, you know, MLA for Waverley has had lots of connections. He goes to the mosque there regular. He's got to meet a lot of those people. He's well aware of some of these stories. It's devastating.

And what are we doing? We're sitting here fighting over a better motion? Like, you literally cannot tell me this is not a better motion. Whether you're a teacher or a firefighter or you are a lawyer, you're a public servant, whatever you may be, you can look at this and just say, this is a better motion. Let's get it done for the betterment of Manitoba.

Let's get it done. When you talk about, well, what is this actually going to do? It's going to send a real message to Manitobans.

* (15:40)

The wording is what the wording is. Every word matters, and when we brought this motion forward, we believe we did the best attempt we could at making those—every word count. Some people still might not like all the wording. There might be some communities that still don't like the certain words in there. And that's going to happen.

But what's stronger than that is the fact that the NDP, the PCs and the Liberals work together on an amended motion to get this done. We can work together to get this done. That sends a stronger message. That is the strongest form of combat of divisiveness in this province. That will bring people together, saying hey, they actually can work together to get something done on that; they were on opposite sides before, and now they're together.

And now they're together; they actually represent what we want, what our constituents—all of our constituents—want. Our constituents don't care if we're NDP or PC or Liberal or Green or whatnot. They want a better Manitoba for themselves, for their kids, for their grandkids. They want an affordable Manitoba. They want a safe Manitoba. They want a Manitoba where a government is working for them and with them. They want a Manitoba where people can work across party lines to see the bigger picture.

This is that opportunity. We can combat Islamophobia and anti-Semitism right now by doing this together. We can talk about curriculums—and I brought that up earlier—and about tool kits, and how tool kits aren't the same thing as curriculums, and, hopefully, this government will commit to adding Islamic education into the curriculum. Because a tool kit is not the same thing, and if they want to send a signal, a just—pure signal, they will add it to that.

I will continue to advocate for that, because that needs to be there, along with many—I mean, we—the Minister of Education's sitting there, and we need to look at all of these topics and how do we get them in, because the world has changed. The world has changed from five years ago, 10 years ago, 20 years ago, 30, 40, 50, 60—trying to see who's the oldest—I'm trying to see who's the oldest one around here—and whatnot, that we can all be part of.

This sends a message that we can get it done. We can get it done together; we can move this bill forward; we can combat all of the things that are happening in the Middle East, and we can make Manitoba a better place, because that's what this motion should be about. It shouldn't be about grandstanding; it shouldn't be about surprising people with

a ministerial statement and going out with pressers and saying this is—you know, I get it. That's the partisan politics of it; I get that aspect.

But when we peel back the layers of the onion and we say, okay, what's at the core of this issue? The core of the issue, if it is really to help the people of Gaza and put a ceasefire to the conflict of Gaza and Israel, then this is what it is. It is a call for immediate ceasefire. It is surrender of Hamas. It is humanitarian aid. It is immediate relief for the people of Israel-Palestine. And it is for—to support all to help a humanitarian crisis on all civil sufferings. This is what this is.

But I know I'm going to run out of time, and I'm going to use the full 30 minutes to talk about this, because, hopefully, this is the end of it. I pray that it's the end of it; I prayed last night. During the month of Ramadan it's, well, you know, I guess I made my points known. But you know, praying in Islam, there's five pillars, and one of the pillars is fasting—which I'm observing now—and another one is prayer; it's five times a day in prayer. And it's tough to pray five times a day. Clockwork: you got an alarm, you got to go and you got to pray at these times. And one of the prayers is right before you go to bed; it's when it's completely dark outside, and the other one's right before the sun comes up. And I prayed for peace. I have been praying for peace from October 7th and before.

Yes, I'm more emotional about this topic. It's the same faith, same brothers and sisters. And I don't just say that for the Muslim community; I say that for the Jewish community as well. We are all of the same; we are all of people of the book, and Christians alike that are there, and non-believers that are there.

People are dying. We can do something today that sends a message from Manitoba that we are united in the cause for peace. We are united for a ceasefire in Israel-Gaza. We are united when it comes to the surrender of Hamas, to provide immediate relief for Israel and Palestine. We are united for the humanitarian crisis and all civil suffering in the region. That's the motion.

And then we are united for Manitoba. We are united for all of the communities within this great province, that when it comes time to get things done that are in the best interest of those communities, we will put partisan politics aside.

There is no debating which motion is better. The conversation of filibuster game is not even on the

table. It's not. If it was exact same thing, or if it was—we were proposing something that was worse, sure, you could say that. I wouldn't have a leg to stand on, here. My whole speech has been about—30 minutes—is about our motion changes and how it's better. If it wasn't, I'd be filibustering. You're right. If it was the same, I'd be 'filibu'—I'm not.

So what am I doing? Why am I standing up, mouth exhausted, repeating words, wearing my heart on my sleeve for people to see that this is an opportunity for us to do better. It's an opportunity to look across party lines and say, we can do this.

The member from Assiniboia took a great step today for the Islamic community. This is a step forward and how we can do this together. There is no argument on which motion is better. I just hope, and I pray sincerely with the purest of intentions that this motion gets passed as amended, which is better for everyone.

Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: I see a speaker. *[interjection]* Yes.

The member for Radisson. *[interjection]* Sorry, could you repeat it, member for Radisson?

MLA Jelynn Dela Cruz (Radisson): Oh. Am I calling the question? *[interjection]* Okay.

Thank you, Honourable Deputy Speaker. I want to start off by just really explicitly saying how offensive it is that people in Gaza are starving to death.

The Speaker in the Chair

Women in Gaza are being raped. Children in Gaza are being murdered violently as they play. And the opposition thinks that it's okay to be here talking about whose amendment, whose language is better than the other's.

What people in Gaza need is an immediate ceasefire, and I'm glad that everyone in this Chamber, in this House, can get on board with the fact that words matter, because our Premier (Mr. Kinew) has given the Province of Manitoba and the rest of the world, all of Canada, his word, not once but twice, that our government stands with those who are most affected by this conflict, by this war, by this humanitarian crisis, that he is calling, and condemned Hamas, called for a return of hostages, called for an immediate and enduring ceasefire.

If words truly matter, that would be enough. If words truly matter to every single person in this Chamber, all of us would be able to get on board

with the motion originally as written and pass it unanimously.

And so, Honourable Deputy Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise in this House today to speak to a motion put forward by our government yesterday, a motion that calls for an immediate and enduring ceasefire in Gaza.

Now, my heart is heavy because while we stand and are forced by the opposition to play their political game and delay this motion, real people with real heartache are anxiously waiting for their representatives, all of us in this House, to take real leadership.

Manitobans who have been deeply hurt by the war in Gaza are waiting to know where their representatives stand, so I will keep my comments brief so that we can come to a timely resolution.

Both the Palestinian state and the Israeli state have the right to exist. According to local media and authorities, the conflict in Gaza has seen the killing of over 30,000 Palestinians, many of whom are women and children.

Meanwhile, Hamas's attack on Israel last October saw the largest loss of Jewish life since the Holocaust. In Radisson, I hear regularly from constituents these days who are troubled and frustrated at the rise in very explicit anti-Semitism.

* (15:50)

Meanwhile, I also hear constituents who practise a job, who tell me about the same experiences that they have with Islamophobia.

Honourable Speaker, life is sacred. I truly fear that with each sacred civilian life lost, we are seeing the entrenching of hard-line views and pushing reconciliation between these parties further and further away.

Here in Manitoba, we have people of all backgrounds and both stripes calling for unity, holding space and holding hope for a peaceful resolution to the conflict despite the carnage.

Our government team is focused on responding to this conflict with compassion for those deeply impacted. Our government team is willing to help those seeking refuge from war in Gaza by providing sanctuary, community support and ensuring that they can return home—many of these things that our Premier has stood up in this House again, not once but twice.

We are also taking a meaningful step today and every day by urging members of this House to

unanimously and unequivocally call for an immediate and enduring ceasefire.

Beyond calling for an immediate ceasefire, our government is also working to reduce the hate and bigotry in our province. Holding Jewish peoples responsible for the humanitarian crisis and famine caused by the Israeli government is wrong.

Similarly, holding Muslim peoples responsible for the terrorist actions of Hamas is also wrong.

And so while the opposition can chirp all day and maybe all night, saying that little old Manitoba could never possibly bring peace to the Middle East, people all across Manitoba are watching, and we have an opportunity to unanimously demonstrate that we are willing to try right here at home.

So thank you, Honourable Speaker, and we once again ask for leave for the question to be put.

The Speaker: The last speaker asked for leave to put the question. Is there leave?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Some Honourable Members: No.

The Speaker: I hear a no. Leave has been denied.

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Economic Development, Investment, Trade and Natural Resources): On House business?

The Speaker: On House business.

Mr. Moses: Thank you, Honourable Speaker. I want to ask for leave to not see the clock until we complete the main motion.

The Speaker: Is there leave to not see the clock until the question has been put on the main motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

The Speaker: I hear a no. Leave has been denied.

Mr. Grant Jackson (Spruce Woods): You know, I just have to start by saying, you know, this is a horrific tragedy, a horrific series of events that we're discussing here today and for the last couple of days—unspeakable violence against civilians, particularly women and children in this area of the world which, you know, at times I suppose can seem very far away, but it has global impacts on people and families and communities here in this province and right across the country of Canada.

So, you know, I just can't express enough what a horrible, horrible time this is to be discussing this. Certainly, issues and events that I've never seen firsthand in my life, nor have likely many of us in this Chamber.

Rockets landing on homes; I mean, women and children taken as hostages, this is sort of deplorable action by hostile parties who seek to use these vulnerable and innocent people as, you know, to their own advantages and their own ends.

And, you know, it's certainly something that I have not seen in my small town in Westman, that's for sure.

And while, you know, I guess unlike many other members of this place, I've not yet been blessed with parenthood, but many of my friends are at the point where they're having children. And I think about the children that are the subject of these horrific acts, you know, over there in the Middle East, and you know, homes destroyed, taken as hostages. I can't imagine the impacts that that has on these families and their communities.

And so, you know, it's just sort of unimaginable horror, and this reminds me, as I speak here, you know, that I come from a very privileged life, and many people do in this place, and many Manitobans really do overall. There are certainly challenges in this province; there's no question. We have significant issues to deal with on a variety of different subject areas. But there aren't rockets falling on our homes. We aren't being taken en masse as hostages out of our communities away from our parents and families.

And so, you know, we are called here to do more and not sit idly by to allow these types of transgressions to happen in this specific conflict or around the globe anywhere. And so, you know, I came here, and I think many—most of us, if not all of us—certainly came here to make things better. And so, in that vein, I appreciate this motion being brought forward by the government.

You know, more cynical minds than me, perhaps, who maybe have been here longer or are a little more jaded in the political landscape may ask why this motion was brought forward in this way, why the government is responding to, you know, I think genuinely based criticism for the member—Fort Whyte and others about a wording change. I mean, they've certainly expressed that they want this to be bipartisan support. And so, you know, I would hope that any reasonable human being would accept a suggestion for improved

language if they wanted something to be labelled bipartisan support.

And just to remind all members what we're talking about here, the amended motion reads that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba affirm its commitment to immediately call for a ceasefire. On that much we agree.

The rest is simply adding, and the surrender of Hamas and to provide immediately-immediate relief for the Israeli and Palestinian people, to address the humanitarian crisis and all civilian suffering in the region.

I am bit confused. What exactly is so offensive in that edited language? I respect the member for Radisson's (MLA Dela Cruz) comments and, you know, they're absolutely right. We could have been done this an hour ago if they could simply explain to us what in that amended language is so offensive, and maybe suggest an alternative.

Maybe we still can get to bipartisan support for this—I don't know—but there's been no conversation. It was presented to us at 9 o'clock in the morning with no notice. We provided an alternative. They said, no, thank you. And then they said, by the way, we're not consider—we're not going to consider any other proposed suggested changes, either. It's either your—support our wording or nothing.

Well, that's an ultimatum. That's not negotiating in good faith, and it's not negotiating bipartisan support. So I don't know. I'd really like to support this somehow, if we can find a way to work together.

So, we've still got an hour left today. I certainly hope that the House leaders can get together and maybe, you know, with the sponsoring MLA, the Minister for Labour and Immigration, come to some kind of agreed-upon language.

I don't know; I guess we'll see. But I'm just not sure what the issue is with including the release of hostages, the surrender of a horrific brutal terrorist organization. What exactly are we opposed to by ensuring that that's in the language? I'm not sure, but maybe further NDP speakers will sort of clarify that for us and, you know, for all Manitobans, because I certainly don't oppose a motion encouraging the federal government to do better.

* (16:00)

A ceasefire is great, but if hostages aren't going to be released and food isn't going to be delivered, or aid or humanitarian relief, whatever the wording is, we

want to call that food. It's food we're talking about. If that's not going to be included, then I'm not really sure what the purpose is, right? That's the point, to address the starvation that's going on in this part of the world.

And, you know, I—you know, ceasefires are not negotiated in a vacuum. They don't just get imposed somewhere. So, I think, previously, they were, you know, opposed to the wording of negotiate a ceasefire. Well, ceasefires don't just spring out of holes in the ground. Like, both sides have to agree to it.

And how do they come to an agreement on a ceasefire? They have to talk to each other, which is called a negotiation. So I don't—again, very confused as to how they feel a ceasefire is going to come to be if it's not going to be negotiated between the two sides of this conflict.

Justin Trudeau's not going to sail in there on his rickety old, you know, air force flight, and it's just going to happen. But that doesn't work. That's not how ceasefires function.

So, obviously, we're calling on the Government of Canada to get their act together, demand a ceasefire be negotiated between the two parties. That's the only way this is going to happen.

So, I don't know. I'm still waiting on some understanding of that. And we're not alone in asking for these specifics. The UN secretary-general used the start of Ramadan yesterday to call for peace, specifically noting the need to release hostages as part of a negotiated ceasefire and to remove all barriers to the delivery of aid.

So I understand this new Premier (Mr. Kinew) has a pretty high opinion of himself. Does he actually think he knows how ceasefires are negotiated better than the secretary-general of the United Nations? Like, I don't know.

So, again, he—you know, waiting to hear some type of a justification why that is such an offensive word for them to put in the motion. I don't know where it is. I hope it's coming. I guess we'll see.

And so it's a very sad day when the Manitoba Legislature is in this position. It seems as a new government rejects these amendments and, you know, I don't know, politicized a horrible situation. Maybe that's going too far, but certainly he's not open to bipartisan negotiations, which, on the one hand, they're requesting and on the second hand, they're shutting the door on.

So, you know, it's a horrible situation and these conflicts, you know, are becoming more common in my lifetime, which makes me very sad to say. We only need to look at Ukraine and what's going on there and this conflict subsequently in the last two years alone.

And so if we can't figure out a way, you know, to put our simple disagreements over language aside and work together on a reworded motion, I don't know. It doesn't probably give Manitobans very much hope for where we're going to go in the future.

And, you know, our previous government has a record of delivering aid to places in conflict: Ukraine—thousands of Ukrainian refugees taken in here. And not only that, but a task force was set up delivering housing, health cards, jobs, daycares, education. We had the best reputation in the country for receiving refugees from Ukraine.

Where is that approach from this government in this motion? Instead of this political gotcha moment with the language and not being willing to negotiate, this government could be doing the same.

Where are their aid dollars for the folks actually experiencing this crisis? Where is the dollar figure of food that they are going to send to the Gaza Strip? Where is their contribution? Where is the task force who is going to help develop the government's response to this crisis, made up of community members and immigration experts and the like, to make sure that we are having an informed approach?

No, no, there's none of that—none of that in this motion and, in fact, no interest from the government, apparently, to talk about immediately relieve—immediate relief for both the Israeli and Palestinian peoples. No need to address humanitarian crisis and civilian suffering in the region. They don't want any of that language.

And I mean, I think, again, most egregiously, no need, according to them, to include: and the surrender of Hamas in the language of this motion. Okay, well, I guess that's not a priority. I don't know; I'm not a leading global securities expert. But I would think that if they were here, they would tell you that Hamas unconditionally surrendering would likely be a pretty pivotable and important step toward a ceasefire in this region. I would think that would be pretty important.

So, alas, we are where we are. And so if this had been brought forward with the right intentions and a willingness for a truly bipartisan negotiation to send a unified message to Ottawa from the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, we would not be here still

talking about this. No doubt—I have no doubt we could've reached mutually agreeable language. I have great respect for many of my colleagues on that side of the aisle. I do. Member for Waverley (MLA Pankratz), the member for Rossmere's (MLA Schmidt) not here, my good friend from Dauphin, you name it.

And so—

The Speaker: Order, please. Not allowed to reference whether members are present or not. *[interjection]* Apology accepted, but the—*[interjection]*

Yes. The member from Spruce Woods.

Mr. Jackson: I apologize, Mr. Speaker, sincerely.

If this had been brought forward with the right intentions, I have no doubt that we could've reached mutually agreeable language. But here we are, both sides wanting to support both the Muslim community and the Jewish community, who are valued members of this province's fabric and they make us who we are as Manitobans. More importantly than that, even, if that's possible, both sides wanting Justin Trudeau to step up and do his job as a G7 leader and make a difference on the international stage and lead, as previous prime ministers have done with different international crises before him, despite his cozy relationship with this new Premier (Mr. Kinew).

I appreciate the NDP bringing forward this motion, because it shows that he maybe actually, despite flip-flopping on the carbon tax, is willing to call on this Prime Minister to do more; that is a good thing for Manitobans. But unwilling to negotiate on a simple proposition of better language. And so, you know, and on top of all that, both sides wanting this horrific crisis to come to an end so that peace will resume and future generations do not have to turn on the news or TikTok or wherever they get their news today and see clips of children taking hostage, clips of death and destruction.

And so politics has gotten a little bit in the way here. But I'm hoping that that government will show some willingness to step across to this side and have a frank and open discussion with us about what they are willing to accept. We have revised our language, and we will do so again. And we hope that eventually they will come down off of their fairly high horse and negotiate with us in good faith.

Speaker, I don't pretend to be an expert on this issue. I'm a small-town, white, Anglo-Saxon Protestant boy from a middle-class family in rural Manitoba. Indeed, I know little compared to my colleague from Fort

Whyte and many others who have spoken to this issue today. In fact, it's been many generations since my family has lived in a war zone or conflict zone, although, you know, my grandfather certainly served in World War II. So I appreciate those who have come to Canada and the strong bonds that their ethnicities and their faiths and cultures have with other countries who are much closer or directly involved in this conflict.

My limited education of—to this is, of course, comes from my university degree, in addition to what I read on the news like all other Canadians. I did take a course in university, and one of the assigned readings was a book called *The Lemon Tree* by author Sandy Tolan. And if members in this Chamber haven't read it, I would certainly encourage them to do so. It was fairly transformational, in my limited understanding of what is going on in this region, and not just what is currently going on, but the lengthy, lengthy history of conflict and violence in this part of the world.

* (16:10)

It tells the story of a home and its lemon tree outside, and two families, one Jewish and one Muslim, and their—not just multi-generational but multi-decade, multi-century—attachment to that specific home and how it has moved between borders, between cultures, between governments, and the violence that has surrounded those transitions.

So I'm not here to debate right now the solution for the region of that—region of the world from a political perspective, but I raise this book as a foundational and really transformative read that changed me as a student, particularly a history student, and, you know, continues to impact me today. Not because of the political solution that it offers, but because of the profound personal stories that it tells, the impact of these families and the crisis of that region that has been going on for decades and decades and decades.

And that's what we're here to talk about today. We're not here to find a political solution to the boundaries and the borders of foreign nations. We're here to talk about the impact on people and on families, and we must affirm the right of Israel to exist. We must also affirm and recognize that Palestinians deserve to have a place to live and safely call home, free from the threat of violence and destructions.

And we're here to call on the federal government to do their job. Do something. Show leadership. It is timely that, earlier this session last week we reflected

on the life and legacy of Brian Mulroney. Love him or hate him, or somewhere in between, Brian Mulroney was an internationalist. He was a globalist who believed that while Canada is a small country by population, we can have a big impact on the world stage.

And he didn't just believe it, he practised it. And you've seen that in the tributes that have poured out to him since his death earlier this year. It's time for this current Prime Minister to do the same. But he seems a little bit rudderless in doing so, which, I guess you could say, he's a little rudderless in most things, but anyway, we'll leave that for another debate.

He can't seem to find the sound footing to stake out his position on this issue that previous prime ministers have found to stand on in other international crises during their time, like Brian Mulroney on apartheid, for example. And so I appreciate, again, this government bringing forward this topic, because the Prime Minister very clearly does need some strong guidance on where to go and how to respond to what is going on in Israel and Gaza.

And the general statement from them is good. We agree on the first half of the motion. So, can they come across the aisle and meet us halfway on the second half. You know, the Minister of Justice and others have said they want it to be a bipartisan approach, but dropping this on our desks and saying, our way or the highway; our language is the only language that will be the one that passes, is not a bipartisan approach. That's not a negotiation.

Maybe that's why they don't want to change it, because they think that that's how the Prime Minister is going to solve this crisis, by imposing a ceasefire instead of having to have one negotiated, which is reality, and so they think it works the same here for a bipartisan approach to a motion. I don't know, but that's not how democracy works. That's not how negotiation works. That's not how ceasefires are negotiated.

And so I would encourage them to come across here, have a conversation with us, and I am sure that we can agree. I don't think it's unreasonable to include aid in the language. As we've seen in recent days, aid has, in many cases, not been going where it was intended, despite G7 countries, the most powerful countries in the world, sending this aid to where they believed it needed to go. It has been diverted and gone elsewhere.

So it is important to put that language into this motion, to say it must go to where it is needed, which is the families that are suffering and starving.

So, I don't believe that this is really that unreasonable of a request. Let's give the Prime Minister a little help on the direction from where all Manitobans are at, and believe that he needs to go on this issue.

And so, you know, it's unfortunate that we are where we are. I'm hoping the NDP before the end of the day today can see this, and we can renegotiate perhaps just that last sentence, and we'll be there. And we can send this off to Ottawa in good faith from all Manitobans from a truly bipartisan approach.

So even with that sad interaction and this current stalemate, I hope that, you know, it's brought forward in the right way. And I think that, you know, if we do this and many other legislatures across the country do this, you know, the Prime Minister will find his courage and show leadership on the national stage.

I hope so, for the betterment of all Canadians and for the betterment of the world, frankly. The world needs Canada's leadership—it always has.

And so I hope that, you know, a truly bipartisan motion from the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba could make a difference in his direction and where he wants to go.

So if the Premier (Mr. Kinew) and others are serious, you know, come over. Have a chat with our House leader and let's have a discussion. The Premier's serious about making a difference, I hope that this motion follows with the establishment of a task force to determine the government's direction on further support for individuals in this region experiencing the crisis.

I hope that they call for the federal government to get out of—get these families out of harm's way. Offer them safety and shelter. We've heard it a lot in recent days and throughout the day today that words matter, and they sure do.

And it's unfortunate that the NDP didn't want to get more specific and stronger with their words, but here we are. So now, we need them to follow up with these words with actions of support for these communities.

And I hope to see that reflected in their upcoming budget on April 2, as well, with aid specific to this region and the families that are experiencing famine and crisis there. Because that's certainly something that previous governments provided in situations of global crisis and unrest, most recently to Ukraine.

And so, we certainly hope, and I know likely most Muslim and Jewish Manitobans expect to see aid from this government for this region and these communities reflected in their upcoming budget.

And so, you know, with that, Honourable Speaker, I wish for peace. You know, peace in the Middle East, peace for Ukraine and generally a world where we don't see women and children and civilians used as bargaining chips and negotiating tactics for terrorists and dictators and theological dogma.

These people are a stain on the collective history of humanity, and the day cannot come soon enough when they are finally defeated for good. And I hope in all sincerity that we can send that bipartisan message to Ottawa before we close at the end of the day today.

Thank you very much.

House Business

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Acting Government House Leader): On House business.

The Speaker: The honourable Minister of Justice on House business.

Mr. Wiebe: Thank you, Honourable Speaker. Pursuant to rule 34, sub 7, I am announcing that the private member's resolution to be considered on the next Tuesday of private member's business will be the one put forward by the honourable member for River Heights (MLA Moroz).

The title of the resolution is Calling on the Federal Government to Reduce Corporate Food Waste.

The Speaker: It has been announced that pursuant to rule 34, sub 7, that the Government House Leader—Acting Government House Leader—has announced that private member's resolution to be considered on the next Tuesday of private member's business will be one put forward by the honourable member for River Heights.

The title of the resolution is Calling on the Federal Government to Reduce Corporate Food Waste.

* * *

The Speaker: The honourable member from Turtle Mountain—for Turtle Mountain.

Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Turtle Mountain): Thank you, Honourable Speaker. *[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order. Order. Order, please. Order, please.

There's a rotation that's been agreed to by the two party House leaders, and that rotation will be followed. So, the honourable Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage.

* (16:20)

Hon. Glen Simard (Minister of Sport, Culture, Heritage and Tourism): Today I stand before you to advocate what is desperately needed in Gaza: an immediate ceasefire. A ceasefire would represent more than just a pause in hostilities. It would signify a glimmer of hope, an opportunity for peace and a chance for dialogue and understanding amidst conflict. Gaza and Israel has been plagued by violence, suffering and the loss of innocent lives. The cycle of conflict seems endless, with each escalation bringing more destruction and despair to the people living in this embattled region.

A ceasefire is not just a temporary halt to the fighting. It can be a testament to the power of diplomacy, negotiation and international co-operation. It can demonstrate that even in the most entrenched conflicts, there is always a possibility for dialogue and compromise. It reminds us that peace is achievable even in the most seemingly hopeless situations.

But let us not forget the human costs of this conflict. After months of intense fighting that has left many dead, wounded and displaced, it is clear that stability to the region is of a paramount importance. Families have been torn apart, homes destroyed and livelihoods shattered and so much loss of innocent life. The scars of war run deep, and healing will take time.

And although the conflict is located far away, we have seen the implications for Manitobans. This call for an immediate ceasefire demonstrates our province's desire for peace. We make this call for a ceasefire, recognizing that a commitment will be needed to include efforts to alleviate the suffering of the people living in Gaza and Israel to ensure their basic rights and dignity are respected. As we reflect, let us also remember the importance of solidarity and empathy. Let us stand with the people in the region as we hope that they have the ability to rebuild their lives and their communities. And let us never lose sight of the ultimate goal: a just and lasting peace for all of the people in the region.

From my perspective, calling for a ceasefire immediately is a step in the right direction. But much work remains to be done. Let us seize this opportunity to build a better future for the people of Gaza and

Israel and for generations to come. The opposition is stalling. Their amendment to this call for a ceasefire diminishes its effectiveness and hides their stance for Manitobans. It's time for the opposition to take a stand. Our NDP government is calling for an immediate ceasefire. If they agree, then they'll support the motion as approved by the Premier (Mr. Kinew).

Honourable Speaker, I ask for leave for the question to be put.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Before I recognize any further members, leave has been requested to put the question.

Is there leave to put the question on the motion?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

The Speaker: Leave has been denied.

Mr. Piwniuk: I just want to give the opportunity to put a few words on the record when it comes to the amendment that we've done to the government's motion of the ceasefire. And after the ceasefire we wanted to add—and the surrender of Hamas and to provide immediate relief for Israel—Israeli and Palestinian people to address the humanitarian crisis and all civilian suffering in this region.

Honourable Speaker, I know when it came to October 7th, and, you know, my colleague from Roblin had indicated that, you know, Vivian Silver, who, from—is from her area, basically was there in Israel, to actually—to attend a jointly—a peace rally, between Jerusalem with Israel and Palestinian women, showing an—even a solidarity. And the thing is, three days later, Lilian [*phonetic*] Silver, was killed when it came to the attack on Hamas in Israel.

And like my colleague said yesterday, that maybe the amount of people who were killed by Hamas in Israel was, like, wasn't as many as the 9/11 in the United States, but when I do the numbers, Honourable Speaker, 1,200 people were killed in Israel on October 7. If you looked at a comparison to the population of Israel of 9.364 million people, that would be equivalent of 43,800 Americans being killed on 9/11. There had to be—everybody in Israel had to know somebody of some sort that had to be very close to them, that had to be either killed or taken hostage. And so that was devastating. If you do the comparison to Canada, if somebody—come and attack us, that would be equivalent to 5,140 people in Canada being attacked

and killed, and on—and then on top of it, being basically kidnapped too and taken as hostage.

And, you know, Honourable Speaker, I actually had the opportunity to be in—down south in Florida for Christmas, and I was walking down a town called Venice, Florida. And what was really shocking to me was there was a construction site for one of the renovations of one of the storefronts on the main street. And what hurt—what was very, you know, basically, I was choked up and, you know, to see all the people who are still being—keep hostage by Hamas.

So, as Hamas, who had to take those hostages from Israel into the Gaza strip, and the thing is, you know, when it comes to, you know, Israel has a right to actually defend itself, like my colleague from Roblin had indicated. And when I saw the pictures on that bulletin board of all the people that are still being, you know, captive by Hamas, there is people from all walks of life, and most of them—most all of them were basically Israelians.

You know—of course, you know—we talked about this morning about when it comes to diversity in our province and the importance of us all coming together as one province. And with this amendment that we want to put down, we want to go further because the fact is, a lot of people were affected by this event that happened on October 7 and the impact of them going into—amongst women and children. We see that over and over and with a lot of conflicts. We see that with Russia, with Ukraine, bombing civilians and seeing women and children perish because of bombs from Russia.

And, you know, we want to make sure that, you know, we—like, Hamas actually surrenders and releases the hostages so that we can continue. Up to October 7 you really didn't hear much of the—about the—I thought everything was in harmony when it came to the Middle East. And, apparently, this is—the Hamas is basically a terrorist organization. And the thing is, we can't—you know, we've got to make sure that they've surrendered, because the fact is, they'll just come back, probably stronger than ever. And Israel has the right to defend itself.

And, like I said, Honourable Speaker, you know, when it came to—you know, when it comes to, like, with everything, you know, we want to make sure that, you know, we have peace in our world right now. You know, we have conflicts already in Russia and Ukraine, and when it came to the Americans being

under attack on 9/11 they went after the Taliban who were basically supporting the terrorist attacks.

And the thing of it is, it really affected the world. It changed our world overnight. It changed our world when it came to flying, the impact that we saw over time. And, like I said, you know, when we talk to everyone out there, like, we want to make sure that we provide humanity when it comes to food and services to the people of Gaza. It's so important that women and children are taken care of. It's so important that we have a—basically, a solution here.

* (16:30)

And like Canada, we want to send that message. I know the Premier (Mr. Kinew) has come in, kind of made it, like, on Ramada [*phonetic*], the first day of Ramada [*phonetic*], basically coming up to put this forward, and that was his speech. And it was kind of odd that this was about this conflict.

And it, basically, I think it probably, you know, like my colleague from Fort Whyte, you know, when it came to, supposed to be the celebration of Ramada [*phonetic*], he brings this motion forward. And I think it's important that we want to add this humanitarian—make sure that we have the relief for both Israeli and Palestinian people, and making sure that Hamas surrenders. Because it's so important that when we move forward for negotiations and rebuilding of the Gaza Strip, it's important that there's a peaceful existence between Israel and the Palestinian people.

And I remember back from history classes, you know, when it came to—after World War II, you know, a lot of—and I think after World War I, too—there was talk of a, having Israel, having both a Palestinian and Israeli Middle East. And we—the histories of the Jewish people moving back to the Middle East, the importance of what happened in World War II, the atrocity of what the—when it came to World War II, the Nazis, what they did to the German people, was 6 million people in Europe were executed by the Nazis. And the thing is, we grew from that.

And the thing is, we wanted to make sure there was a homeland for the Israeli people, a peaceful one. And we saw the conflict. I remember growing up in the 1980s and seeing the conflict that we saw in Lebanon. I know the member for Assiniboia (MLA Kennedy) who brought that—the bill in—I think it was 207—this morning, talked about when her family came from Lebanon, and Beirut was basically a situation where there was a lot of conflict there.

I remember seeing on TV in the 1980s a bombing of the city devastate the city. And now you hear so many people going to Beirut to go in, like, as tourists. And now that the peaceful existence of all the religions within Beirut, it's astonishing how that country of Lebanon, and the city of Beirut, were able to rebuild after conflicts.

And here's an opportunity now to make sure that we have Hamas surrender so that there can be a rebuilding of the Gaza Strip again, to making sure that there is—even Israelis have given up land, to go back to it, to make sure that there was a dedication of land—like, population of the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

And I thought, you know, it was amazing when October 7 came. I think it basically shocked the whole world, when it came to that event. And we want to make sure that, you know, when we make this message to the federal government, to making sure that the federal government helps with humanitarian aid for the region, and making sure that, you know, we, as Canada, have always been peacekeepers.

And one of the things, and it goes back to Pearson, when he actually created the peace—UN peace, you know, it was in Cyprus. When we—when he actually—when there was a conflict between the Turks and the Greeks in Cyprus, there was an opportunity as Canadians to do their part to become peacekeepers of that region.

And we—and today, we still keep that peace-keeping. I know Canada has a history of going to the old Yugoslavia, a country which, you know, when there was a conflict there, we actually sent many—actually, even RCMP officers—to go for their peacekeeping mission.

And this is what we need to now look at, is focus not just on humanitarian, the ceasefire. We've got to negotiate, and making sure, you know, we—there was—we always—also had the problem with ISIS in the Syria area. You know, ISIS was—been brought down, destroyed, and the thing is, people are living more peaceful in some of that regions.

I know they've had a lot of hostages, too, that they executed on video, showing it to their families. We have to stop that in this world. And again, the thing is, right now, there is a lot of Israeli people who are waiting for their loved ones. Like I said, the pictures that we see right now that—on that bulletin board, there was a lot of people on that bulletin board, Honourable Speaker. And we got to make sure that these people

come back to their loved ones safely and making sure that there's—no one else gets killed in this conflict.

And, like I said, you know, when it comes to, you know, Israel and the Palestinian people, you know, there is—there are peaceful areas: the West Bank, you know, right now, they're living in harmony around Jerusalem. You know, there is opportunities for, you know, to make sure that it doesn't start in that region either because there has been a history there.

And, like I said, we, as an international, you know, when it comes to G7 or NATO or when it comes to the UN, we have to make sure that when we move forward on the whole conflict that's happening in Gaza, that there is a solution, there's a final solution, because once that final solution gets done, then we can actually move on to rebuild and, if so, that people can prosper, much like Beirut in Lebanon.

And it's so important that we continue the pressure. I think the union has the responsibility to making sure that they can help with negotiations with the ceasefire, also to make sure that there's humanitarian aid that goes out. I know the Red Cross is probably involved.

And we need to make sure that, even this province—like, you know, when the Ukrainian issue happened, with the conflict with Russia invading Ukraine a couple years ago, our government, the PC government, basically, for the first round, provided \$800,000 for—when it came to the aid for Ukraine to making sure. But also, we opened up our hope—our province for about 25,000 Ukrainians who came here to get away from the conflict in Ukraine.

And, you know, Honourable Speaker, I remember reading a book. It's called the gateway to Europe. It was based on the Ukrainian region. And over thousands of years, since the birth of Christ, the conflicts that happened in that region. You know, it has the most richest deposit of soil. They say that it's almost 14 feet deep in some cases.

And that is the breadbasket for Europe. Much like we have the breadbasket in our western Prairies. And the thing is, there was—always been conflict. There was either conflict of first, you know, when it came to the first Europeans that were, you know, I forget what their—like, the names were, but the Vikings, they first came—they also came into Ukraine. And I think the reason why there's a lot of blond-haired, blue-eyed Ukrainians was because the Vikings took over some of the land and basically made their home there. They invaded Ukraine.

And then we had, the Turks came up. We had the Mongolians come and invaded areas. And these are—happens within hundreds of years, and it created a certain population.

And then, of course, the Russian, the—when it came to the, you know, the—like, the Russians, you know, the civilization of Russia, the civilization of Ukraine, they—it all came to a point where—that we had the Russian Empire, and then we had the Polish Empire. We had the Ottoman Empire. We had the Austrian-Hungarian Empire.

So every time it seemed like, in Ukraine, it's always been invaded over centuries. And the thing is, no surprise, during World War I, World War II, Ukraine were—basically the place where a lot of the invasions happened.

And history continues it even to this day when Russia now, two years ago, has invaded—and, mind you, they 'alkso' invaded Ukraine back in 2014 and the Crimerea [*phonetic*]—Crimea region because it's a very important harbour for—and a very—it's sort of the gateway of the Black Sea for the Russians, when it comes to the Russian navy. So there's always been conflict in that—in all those regions here.

And that's the importance of, you know, like I said this morning, my grandfather came here in 1911, before all the major conflicts happened, where his family had to endure all that. We thought they were gone after the World War II. We'd never had any kind of correspondence with our Ukrainian relatives until after the Iron Curtain went down.

* (16:40)

And then what happened was, Honourable Speaker, we actually—I had a cousin who worked for Manitoba Agriculture. He went to Ukraine to do some health work after their—the conflict to help with the agriculture programs that they had in Ukraine, and while my cousin went with them, we discovered that on both sides of her family, she had a—her mom, which is my aunt, and her dad, which is my uncle, they both had families, and they all survived. But because of communism, they were—eliminated any kind of correspondence to the western world.

And so, Honourable Speaker, the reason why I'm sort of going onto—into this situation here is that these conflicts have happened over centuries. And this is what's happened right now with Israel and the Palestine peoples. You know, they've had conflict over the—for centuries, and it's up to the rest of the world to make sure that we can be the peacekeepers,

to making sure that there's a ceasefire, that we work together to making sure that the military, when it comes to the surrender of Hamas—again, it's Hamas who's put all those people, they're—the Palestine people, in jeopardy.

You know, they came to hide in their basements. There's been fighting in the streets and a lot of them are underground. So this is where we have to make sure that there's—it's more complex than just by having a ceasefire. There's a lot of moving parts here that we may—we have to make sure that we address here, and making sure that all Manitobans, when it comes to coming together for this motion and actually supporting our enhancement to this motion, making sure that Hamas surrenders and that they—we—and have provide immediate relief for the Israeli and Palestinian people.

Because right now they need it. They need it in the worst way. And we want to make sure that, when we get that aid, that the right people get it. We want to make sure that the women and children who need the help the most will get it. We want to make sure if there's a ceasefire and a solution and a surrender, this gives a chance for the international world to come in to the Gaza Strip to bring aid, like we saw the rebuilding of Europe after World War II and after World War I.

We want to make sure that this gives an opportunity for the people of Israel and the people of Palestine, for their kids and their grandchildren, to have a better future, much like we saw when I said, for example, when it came to Beirut.

Right now Beirut, Lebanon, is prospering. It's probably one of the fastest-growing air—regions in the Middle East. This all can happen everywhere, providing that we stamp out some of the evilness that's happening with the people of—that are part of the Hamas. These guys are terrorists, and this is why we need to make sure that they are stopped, that they don't create another October 7 all over again, much like we have to make sure, and the Americans are making sure in North America, Europe is making sure that we never have another 9/11 ever again.

I remember—I think we all remember where we were during 9/11, you know. It was shocking. But like I said before, you know, there was a lot of Americans, like 2,300 Americans that were killed in 9/11. I had the opportunity to be there in New York months before, about three months before 9/11. I saw the World Trade Centers. I had pictures of them in a night—bright blue sky. And then I was there after the aftereffect, like when they, when they were starting to

rebuild again. I was back there with my kids in the—I believe it was 2009. We were there for spring break, and we saw the big hole, and had to rebuild the destruct—like having to tear down some old buildings that need to be torn down again.

But we went to a church. And I remember this is a church that George Washington was—went to a service before he was inaugurated as the first president of the United States. That church was so close to the 9/11. It was a miracle that it survived the collapse of the World Trade Centers. And the thing was, I was there this past June to see the memorial, the monument, the water, the square, ponds now where the trade centers had once been with everybody that were on those that died that day on 9/11.

And now, just imagine, the people of Israel, on October 7, that terrible day of October 7, like I said, when 1,200 people in Israel were killed by Hamas, like I said, that was equivalent of losing 43,800 people on 9/11 for Israel, much like if there was 5,000 people in Canada that were killed like that. That's an impact. I'm sure everybody here would feel the same way, that these people who came into their—invaded their country have to be stopped. They have to surrender. This is the only way that we can get a peaceful solution for the Middle East, making sure that we can make sure that we can rebuild.

You know, and like I said, you know, we're—we like to do this amendment to send to the federal government to make sure that we do our part as, like—as we have a history of peacekeepers, this is our opportunity to continue that mission and working together with the world, the international community, to make sure that we actually help the Palestinians, especially the women and children, you know, helping to rebuild and helping Israel to making sure that their people have a safe way of life. And it's so important because, again, I don't think any of us want to see, being us, our city here, our province, being invaded like what they—what happened with the terrorist attacks that happened on October 7 of 2023.

It is, again, I have to say, you know, when it came to, you know, when it comes to the people of—here in Winnipeg, we want, you know, we value the contributions of the Jewish community that have done what they've done in the—throughout history for this province. There's a large Jewish population. There's a large population of Jewish population in the River Heights constituency. There's a large population of Jewish people in the Roblin constituency or Tuxedo.

You know, I come from Turtle Mountain. You know, I'm here for seeing, embracing the people coming here, coming to Manitoba, from all around the world, to making Manitoba home, like my ancestors did before me. And I want to make sure that when anybody comes to this country and our province, that they put their differences aside, they come here to be productive, to be the opportunity that had happened to my family, that happened to a lot of us in this Chamber. We come from all walks of life, and we want to make sure that we have the same opportunity for our children or grandchildren.

That's what Palestine wants—the Palestinians want in Gaza. That is what the Israeli wants. They want to have a better life for their kids and their grandchildren. We all want that; that's always our goal. And we want to make sure that we have to make sure we do it right.

And we also, for the province here in this Legislature, we send the right message to the federal government, to the international community, to say, look, we—we—we want this all to happen. We want to make sure that Hamas surrenders because no one wins by them continuing what they're doing to create terrorists of situations into the future. There has been always, you know, for the last 10 years, there's always been—even when it came to the Palestinians, when it came to other organizations within their groups, they had a brokered a great, you know, like, basically a great—I read the word I want to use here—contributions to making sure that there was peace in the Middle East, especially for Israel.

* (16:50)

You know, we—I've seen over time, you know, when there was a war, you know, in 1967, the year I was born. There was the seven-day war, I believe, that was it—what was it called.

And then there was also the war with Egypt. I saw some history of what happened on one of my reels that showed what—why there is conflict within the Gaza Strip. And I—and it was kind of a short blurb, and there was a lot of history that, you know, they talked about the West Bank, they talked about the Gaza Strip and how that was all created.

And bringing people from Europe who were, you know, again, they lost family members during World War II. To come to an area where they feel that they can, to live, where they—there—the background, where they first came from, where—with the existence with the Jewish community when it came to, you know, before the birth of Christ.

You know, they—they're—they lived in the Palestinian area of, they were—existence between the, both—all the people there, and it's important that we continue making sure that when we move forward, that we have peace within the region. And at that point, I think I'm going to pass on to someone else who wants to speak.

And thank you, Honourable Speaker.

MLA Billie Cross (Seine River): It's sad that I have to rise and speak to this. When the purpose of this motion was that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba affirm our commitment to immediately call for a ceasefire in Gaza—in the Gaza conflict—to address the famine crisis.

Immediately would have been yesterday. Here we are on day 2, arguing over language. Yes, language matters. It absolutely matters.

We are calling for an enduring ceasefire that will protect innocent civilians and return all hostages. We are calling for the House's unanimous support of this government motion.

I'm trying to understand the motivation of the PCs for stalling on this motion. I've been sitting here all afternoon listening quite carefully to the members opposite as they speak, and so I have a few ideas.

So I'm wondering, are the members opposite auditioning for leadership? Are you creating soundbites—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order, please.

MLA Cross: —for your campaigns? And, most importantly, I would have hoped that every single person—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order, please.

MLA Cross: —on the opposite side of the House would have learned their lesson, but they're—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order, please. Order, please. Order, please.

When the Speaker is standing, everyone else should quit speaking. I'd appreciate that. The member for Seine River has the floor.

MLA Cross: As I said, I would have hoped that the members opposite would have learned their lesson last summer. Each and every person on the opposite side of the House ran under an umbrella and campaign of divisiveness.

They used human beings as political pawns—

The Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Khan: I call a point of order on the member from Seine River.

Point of Order

The Speaker: The member for Fort Whyte, on a point of order.

Mr. Khan: Pardon me?

The Speaker: The member for Fort Whyte, on a point of order.

Mr. Khan: I call a point of order for the member of Seine River for inputting inflammatory—flammatory, divisive, racial remarks saying that the member from Fort Whyte is only speaking to soundbites on this motion when in reality, the member from Seine River and everyone in this House knows how deeply affected, how much I care about this issue, how passionately I've spoke about this.

So I ask that the Speaker look into those comments from the member of Seine River as completely unacceptable in this Legislative Building.

The Speaker: Before anyone else speaks on the point of order, I would remind members to keep their comments relevant to the point of order that's been raised.

Mr. Wiebe: Well, Honourable Speaker, there's clearly no breach of the rules that—cited by the member opposite.

But, you know, we've now had two days of debate. We've thoroughly discussed and debated this matter. Substantive words put on the record by members on this side of the House who are just simply asking for a vote. That's the purpose of this Legislature.

So I would hope that the member would stop stalling, stop trying to eat up time, and put this to a vote, both the amendment and the motion, so the people of Manitoba can know where he stands, along with every other member of the opposition.

The Speaker: Order, please. Point of order is—very serious matter, and I would expect all members to listen to the comments being made. I would also like to be able to hear the comments being made myself.

So, listening to what has been said on this particular point of order, I do not believe there is a point of order. It's a dispute of the facts.

* * *

The Speaker: So with that, the member for Seine River has the floor.

MLA Cross: I actually have deep respect for the member of—from Fort Whyte, and the fact that he is fasting. He stood up and spoke in this House for 30 minutes. That is difficult to do with a dry mouth.

So I was not trying to offend you personally; please know that. But I am offended that we're stalling on moving this motion forward. And so I—the member from Fort Whyte actually, in part of his—what he was saying earlier, was he was concerned that members on the opposite side were not listening.

I was listening, I was taking notes, I was trying to understand his position. And so he said a few things I do agree with.

He said that this is not a partisan issue. I completely agree; this is a human issue. We are talking about 30,000 people that have been killed in a conflict. We are talking about women and children suffering. We are talking about women giving birth in conditions that are horrific. My own daughter gave birth a few weeks ago, and had to have a C-section. Imagine a woman in Gaza right now trying to give birth, who needs an emergency C-section, and they don't have the supports that they need.

This is not a partisan issue. It's about being human beings and trying to do the right thing. You can't pick and choose when you show humanity.

And often the members on the other side do use people as political pawns; we saw that last summer. I'm an Indigenous woman who was deeply offended by the campaign you ran on. You ran on the idea that we shouldn't search for women who were murdered, because they were Indigenous women, I suspect.

Reconciliation is something that should be an important factor to everybody in this House. This morning, the members opposite talked out a resolution where we're—we were asking for unanimous collaboration on reconciliation in this province. This is reconciliation, folks. This is actionable.

I'm asking the members opposite to support this motion, to stop stalling, to move forward and do what is right.

Honourable Speaker, I would like to ask leave for the question to be put to the House.

The Speaker: Once again, leave has been requested to put the question to the House. Is there leave?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

The Speaker: Leave has been denied.

The honourable member for—sorry, the honourable minister of Health, Seniors and active living.

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care): I'd ask that we—I'm asking to seek leave to not see the clock until the original resolution has been voted on by this House.

The Speaker: Leave has been requested to not see the clock until the original motion has been voted on by the House. Is there leave?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

The Speaker: I hear a no. Leave has been denied.

Any other members wishing to speak? Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

The Speaker: The question before the House is the proposed amendment moved by the honourable interim leader of—sorry.

Question before the House is the proposed amendment moved by the honourable member for Interlake-Gimli (Mr. Johnson), brought forward.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

The Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

The Speaker: All those in favour, please say aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

The Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

The Speaker: I believe the Nays have it.

Recorded Vote

Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader): Can we have a recorded vote, please.

The Speaker: A recorded vote has been requested, call in the members.

* (17:00)

The question before the House is the amendment to the motion—excuse me—the question before the House is the motion—the question before the House is the proposed amendment by the honourable member for Interlake-Gimli (Mr. Johnson), on the motion brought forward by the Minister of Labour and Immigration (MLA Marcelino).

Division

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

Ayes

Balcaen, Bereza, Byram, Cook, Ewasko, Goertzen, Guenter, Hiebert, Jackson, Johnson, Khan, King, Lamoureux, Narth, Nesbitt, Perchotte, Piwniuk, Schuler, Wharton, Wowchuk.

Nays

Altomare, Asagwara, Blashko, Brar, Bushie, Chen, Cross, Dela Cruz, Devgan, Kennedy, Kostyshyn, Loiselle, Maloway, Marcelino, Moroz, Moses, Moyes, Naylor, Oxenham, Pankratz, Sala, Sandhu, Schmidt, Schott, Simard, Smith, Wiebe.

Deputy Clerk (Mr. Tim Abbott): Ayes 20, Nays 27.

The Speaker: The motion is accordingly defeated.

The hour—the motion is accordingly defeated. The debate on the main motion is now open.

The hour now being past 5 o'clock, this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 tomorrow.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, March 12, 2024

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