

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

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

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

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
ALLAN, Nancy	St. Vital	NDP
ALLUM, James, Hon.	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	NDP
BLADY, Sharon, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	NDP
BRAUN, Erna, Hon.	Rossmere	NDP
BRIESE, Stuart	Agassiz	PC
CALDWELL, Drew, Hon.	Brandon East	NDP
CHIEF, Kevin, Hon.	Point Douglas	NDP
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	NDP
CROTHERS, Deanne, Hon.	St. James	NDP
CULLEN, Cliff	Spruce Woods	PC
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DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	PC
EICHLER, Ralph	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FRIESEN, Cameron	Morden-Winkler	PC
GAUDREAU, Dave	St. Norbert	NDP
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Liberal
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	PC
GRAYDON, Cliff	Emerson	PC
HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
HOWARD, Jennifer	Fort Rouge	NDP
IRVIN-ROSS, Kerri, Hon.	Fort Richmond	NDP
JHA, Bidhu	Radisson	NDP
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Swan River	NDP
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas	NDP
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	Dawson Trail	NDP
MACKINTOSH, Gord, Hon.	St. Johns	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Flor, Hon.	Logan	NDP
MARCELINO, Ted	Tyndall Park	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	Morris	PC
MELNICK, Christine	Riel	NDP
MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	PC
NEVAKSHONOFF, Thomas, Hon.	Interlake	NDP
OSWALD, Theresa	Seine River	NDP
PALLISTER, Brian	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine	Midland	PC
PETTERSEN, Clarence	Flin Flon	NDP
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Arthur-Virden	PC
REID, Daryl, Hon.	Transcona	NDP
ROBINSON, Eric, Hon.	Kewatinook	NDP
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ROWAT, Leanne	Riding Mountain	PC
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WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
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<i>Vacant</i>	Gimli	—
<i>Vacant</i>	Southdale	—

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

*The House met at 1:30 p.m.*

**Mr. Speaker:** Good afternoon, everyone. Please be seated.

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

**Mr. Speaker:** Introduction of bills? Seeing no bills, we'll move on to committee reports. Tabling of reports? Ministerial statements?

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### Grandeur Housing Ltd.

**Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Grandeur Housing Ltd. in Winkler on celebrating their 40th year in operation.

Employing over 300 people in the city of Winkler, Grandeur is a leading manufacturer of modular homes and commercial and industrial buildings and recipient of the MHAPP 2015 award of excellence for best industrial commercial project and multi-family project.

Mr. Speaker, Grandeur has been bidding on Saskatchewan Crown corporations opportunities since 2000 and has secured contracts for over 130 modular buildings since that time. Last fall, Grandeur wrote to the NDP Minister for Jobs and the Economy citing changes to the Saskatchewan government's procurement policies to enhance opportunities for businesses in Saskatchewan, Alberta and BC provinces under the New West Partnership Trade Agreement. Grandeur asked why Manitoba is not a partner in the New West Partnership agreement and the minister never even responded. Under the changes, Manitoba businesses stand to lose access to a significant market while out-of-province competitors continue to enjoy access to the Manitoba market.

This morning in the Legislature, the member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson) introduced her Bill 207 calling on Manitoba to join the northwest partners—the New West Partnership. NDP members howled and stuck to their tired lines about protectionism and isolationism, and the fact is that this NDP government does not take a collaborative approach, not with Manitoba families, not with businesses, not with their provincial trading partners, not with

their federal cousins and certainly not within their own caucus. The New West Partnership is about standing together with job creators, with Manitoba businesses, with Manitoba workers, reducing trade and investment barriers, making it easier for Manitoba businesses to compete.

The NDP must acknowledge that serious issues pertaining to trade cannot be solved so long as the NDP continues its isolationist approach. Now is the time to support Bill 207 and join the New West Partnership.

**Mr. Speaker:** Further members' statements?

#### Bailey and Shelby Bram

**Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister of Tourism, Culture, Heritage, Sport and Consumer Protection):** Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to say that Manitoba has two hockey stars who found their start playing shinny on outdoor rinks in Dawson Trail.

Bailey and Shelby Bram were among four Manitobans chosen for the Canadian national women's team training camp where they will prepare for the world championship in Kamloops this spring.

The two sisters are quickly becoming the hottest names in women's hockey. Bailey Bram currently plays for the Calgary Inferno and has helped Canada win the gold medal at the 2014 Olympics, the silver medal in the 2015 Four Nations Cup in Sweden and the silver medal in 2012 IIHF–F, sorry, women's world championship.

Her younger sister Shelby has followed in her footsteps, playing for the Buffalo Beauts in the NWHL. Shelby's experiences at the 2011 Canada Winter Games, the 2012 Four Nations Cup and the 2009 Manitoba Games and the IIHF under-18 world's, where she scored a goal, has made her into a hockey star.

Bailey and Shelby grew up with six siblings in Ste. Anne, Manitoba, where they found a passion for hockey. They were part of Balmoral Hall's comprehensive hockey program and later were forward linemates at Mercyhurst University in Pennsylvania. They have both been described as extremely smart players who have a gritty, hard-playing edge and style and unique skills that make them stand out on the ice.

Their talents and determination have propelled them to the highest level of women's hockey. Unfortunately, Canadian women's hockey is still underfunded and undersupported. Players like Bailey and Shelby Bram are just as talented and dedicated and deserving as their male counterparts, and I think the world is only just starting to realize this. Bailey and Shelby, along with their teammates, are paving the way for equally—for equality, sorry, in sports.

Congratulations on your successes. I wish you both all the best in Kamloops.

Thank you.

### Budget 2016

**Mr. Dennis Smook (La Verendrye):** Mr. Speaker, on February 24th, we resumed this session of the 40th Manitoba Legislature, but there is a big difference between this session and those of the past. This year the Selinger NDP are not bringing forward a provincial budget.

Last April the Finance Minister said there will be another budget before the next election. The NDP government then spent a significant amount of taxpayer dollars on budget consultations, yet is not bringing forward a budget. What is this NDP government hiding?

The Premier (Mr. Selinger) said there is no time for a detailed budget and blames lack of information regarding money the Province will receive from the federal government's budget. However, since last October's Throne Speech the Selinger NDP has made spending promises totalling \$6.6 billion.

This NDP government is willing to make spending promises but will not tell Manitobans where they will find the money. How many of these promises will be broken? What is this Selinger NDP hiding? What new taxes will Manitobans be burdened with to pay for this NDP financial mismanagement and increasing debt?

Before the 2011 election, the Selinger NDP promised no tax increases. That's ridiculous, he said—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I've been very lenient during this member's statement. I know I have referenced for members of this House many times, if you're going to talk about a member of this Assembly and you're going to use their family name, you're going to do it in reference to an era of a government, not to a political party. And I know that the honourable member for La Verendrye referenced many times an individual member of this House

using the family name and the political party and I've cautioned members of this House many times before with respect to that.

And I'm asking for the co-operation of the honourable member for La Verendrye, when you're delivering your statement, please, if you're going to reference the era and not the individual with their family name and the political party. So I'm asking the honourable member to make sure that when he's delivering the rest of his statement that he adheres to that caution.

**Mr. Smook:** This NDP government broadened the PST, then hiked its rate from 7 to 8 per cent, a 14 per cent overall increase in the amount Manitobans pay. This brought in more than \$1 billion. Yet, the NDP still can't produce a balanced budget, shorten ER wait times or improve the education of our children.

Manitobans are tired of paying more and getting less. They are tired of the same NDP broken promises and want a change for the better.

When you look at the number of NDP MLAs that are not running in the next election, I wonder if they are not tired of the same broken promises.

Thank you.

### Aidan O'Brien

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** Mr. Speaker, Manitoba lost a great man when Aidan O'Brien passed away late last year at the age of 73. Aidan O'Brien had a commanding presence, matched only by his incredible record of service to the people of Manitoba.

Aidan was the president and CEO of Manitoba Blue Cross for many years. He served as the superintendent of pensions for the Province of Manitoba, as the chair of the St. Boniface Hospital Foundation, as the president of Pine Ridge Golf Club and as the president of the Winnipeg Fury Soccer Club. He served on the boards of the Manitoba Theatre Centre, Venture Manitoba and the Winnipeg Police Commission. He received the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal and was inducted into the Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame.

Aidan was fiercely proud of Manitoba and of his Irish roots. He was the founding president and the driving force behind the Irish Association of Manitoba. Aidan founded the association in 1972. In so doing, he brought together Irish immigrants regardless of their religious, geographical and

political backgrounds to form a family here in Canada. The association, located on Erin Street in the West End, carries on today, guided by these founding principles.

He was the founding artistic director of the Tara Players Theatre Company and the co-founder of the Acting Irish International Theatre Festival. As president of the Folk Arts Council, he made friends from every ethnic community in Manitoba and celebrated our diversity. Aidan served as the honorary Irish consul to the Province of Manitoba.

Aidan is survived by his loving wife Betty Lou Burke and his four children and their families.

Two minutes is not enough time to even scratch the surface of the legend of Aidan O'Brien. Aidan's greatest accomplishment was how he touched and influenced so many different lives in our province. For all of his good works known to the public, there were many more known only to the people he helped.

If the House rules allowed it, Mr. Speaker, I would ask all of my colleagues to raise a glass in Aidan O'Brien's memory. As it is, I ask simply that we reflect on how lucky we are that Aidan O'Brien chose to make Manitoba his home.

\* (13:40)

#### **Russell Personal-Care Home**

**Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Riding Mountain):** I stand before my colleagues to issue a concern of unacceptable care that residents are receiving within rural Manitoba.

A 90-year-old resident recently passed away. His name was Bill Zimmer.

Because of this NDP government's disregard for rural health care, including personal-care homes, many rural residents have faced negative health-care experiences.

Because of the lack of available beds in Russell's hospital or the PCH, Mr. Zimmer spent the last year of his life being shipped between several different communities where his friends and family faced challenges to visit him regularly.

Today I'm tabling a petition brought to me by a sister-in-law, Anita Zimmer, which is signed by hundreds of community members demanding the promised NDP-forgotten personal-care home for Russell.

In 1994, then-MLA Len Derkach did a sod-turning for this project as it was considered the No. 1 priority on the capital projects list. Since then, nothing has been done and the current building continues to cause heartache and concerns for families and the staff who work there.

Prior to the last election, the Premier (Mr. Selinger) said it helps seniors and their families by bringing or hiring more personal-care-home staff and making a commitment to over \$2 million in investments in personal-care homes. When asked where rural PCHs fit into this promise, the then-Health minister indicated it was an urban or Winnipeg commitment.

Why were the rural communities like Russell or Minnedosa not considered in this investment? This NDP government has continuously neglected the issue of aging and, in many cases, unsafe personal-care-home facilities in rural Manitoba for far too long, and the seniors like Mr. Zimmer are paying the price.

This is not my first question raised in this House with regards to the lack of responsibility this government shows for rural health care. It frustrates me to stand, once again, and share my concerns that are shared from constituents that have been caused by this government's incompetence.

I am asking the Premier today why his government for the last 17 years has failed to stand up for my constituents and for all rural Manitobans by denying them the care and the attention they so rightfully deserve.

Where is that equal care for all Manitobans? Not in rural Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, obviously.

Thank you.

**Mr. Speaker:** That concludes members' statements.

#### **Introduction of Guests**

**Mr. Speaker:** I have some guests I'd like to introduce just prior to oral question period.

Seated in the public gallery we have from Tec Voc High School, we have 25 grade 9 students under the direction of Frank Harms. This group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Minto (Mr. Swan).

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

And also seated in the public gallery we have with us today Teresa and Curtis Boucher of Russell, Manitoba, who are the proud parents of Lane Boucher who is an intern assigned to the official opposition caucus, who are the guests of the honourable member for Riding Mountain (Mrs. Rowat).

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

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Manitoba Hydro Sole-Source Contracts

**Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition):** If I could, with your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, I think we'd all like to show our congratulations to the member for Fort Richmond (Ms. Irvin-Ross) on tying the knot; all the best to you and to your partner and your life together.

Mr. Speaker, we've been urging the government to adopt policies that would show that they respect Manitoba's ability to shop smarter by shopping smarter themselves, but they failed to do that. We've raised the alarm about untendered contracts and the government continues, despite the Auditor General's recommendations of just a couple of years ago, to pursue an epidemic of untendered contracts. They haven't listened, and now we've learned as of yesterday that the NDP had appointed—Hydro board has approved an \$85-million secret untendered contract for work done on Keeyask and bipole line.

So I want to ask the Premier: Why the cover-up, and would he agree today, in the interests of transparency and out of respect for the Auditor General's recommendations, to make this contract public?

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, I want to start my comments by thanking the member for Dawson Trail (Mr. Lemieux) for his service to the Legislature since 1999. The member from Dawson Trail is noted for his colourful responses to members of the opposition and he will not disappoint again today, I can assure you, later on, with some of the plans that he has. But he has been our Minister of Culture and Tourism, he's returned to that portfolio with minister of consumer affairs as well as culture and tourism. He's done a tremendous job there.

The people in Dawson Trail have benefited from investment in the Ste. Anne Hospital, personal-care homes, more daycares and better schools and very

major investments in infrastructure there. And he's advocated for the entire southeast region of Manitoba including places like Steinbach and La Broquerie, St. Pierre Jolys, expanding housing opportunities with the ring dike around St. Adolphe, so I do want to thank him for his contribution.

On the member's question, the Leader of the Opposition, 95 per cent of all contracts in Manitoba Hydro are tendered, Mr. Speaker. And the one thing that we will do is we won't do the ultimate tendering. We won't be privatizing Manitoba Hydro, which is exactly—

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

**Mr. Pallister:** I'll join in congratulating the member for his service and we appreciate his service and the tone that he's taken in this House most of the time. We appreciate that, thank you.

No, the government claims they won't privatize it but they're Americanizing it and they know that, and it's hurting the process of providing Manitobans with low-cost hydro, which is why Manitoba Hydro was created.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier says he's not concerned. He's not concerned, he said just now, about an \$85-million untendered contract. He should be concerned because the tone at the top matters. That's what the Auditor General said in her report. She referred to an epidemic of untendered contracts; she said that as well. This contract was let right after that report came out that shows total disregard for the recommendations, which were valid recommendations.

This government has broken the law in not providing information on untendered contracts as well. Mr. Speaker, it's not just the lack of smart shopping; it's the secrecy around that lack of smart shopping that concerns us.

And when a premier of a province says \$85 million doesn't matter to him, I guess I have to ask him: If \$85 million doesn't matter to him, do billions of dollars of untendered contracts matter to him either?

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, every public dollar matters. There's no question about that. The reality is we have \$9 billion of export contracts that the Leader of the Opposition says we shouldn't be building hydro for export. He wants to give away \$9 billion of revenues that are fuelling hydro development in

northern Manitoba as we speak. Fourteen hundred Manitobans, 1,400 people are working in northern Manitoba right now, Mr. Speaker, and that hydro power is reducing greenhouse gas emissions throughout the entire North American region, which helps us address climate change, good jobs in Manitoba, good green jobs in Manitoba supporting clean energy throughout the United States and Canada.

We have contracts to the west of us now; 95 per cent of all contracts are tendered. We're building Manitoba hydro for the future. The member opposite, he wants to slice and dice it and privatize it.

**Mr. Pallister:** Poor desperate Premier, Mr. Speaker. Record rate increases imposed on Manitobans, especially hard on the people in northern isolated communities, and now he wants to take credit for imposing those record rate increases on the same Manitobans that want to know what's going on with these secret untendered contracts.

If he was proud of it, he'd make them public. He's ashamed of it or he should be, Mr. Speaker. Untendered \$85-million contract secretly awarded, and now the Premier of Manitoba won't commit to letting the public see. Whose money is it? It most certainly is not the Premier's money. It does not belong—Manitoba Hydro does not belong to the NDP. It is not a partisan possession of that party. It belongs to Manitobans and the Premier of Manitoba should act like it.

And will he today follow our lead in demonstrating belief and faith in the openness of contracting as the best way to get value for money to all Manitobans? Will he commit to shopping smarter? Will he finally walk the talk and put the contract out to the public to read and see what's in it?

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, the Manitoba Hydro belongs to all the people of Manitoba, and that's very different than what we saw when the Leader of the Opposition was in the Legislature.

He took an asset that belonged to all the people of Manitoba; the telephone system, he privatized it. He put it in the hands of the few. Over 80 per cent of Manitoba telephone system is owned outside of the province of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker. Where do those profits go? Outside of Manitoba. Who pays for those profits? Every time a young person picks up their cellphone bill and notice it's one of the higher ones in

the world, they're paying for it because the member opposite privatized the telephone system.

\* (13:50)

Our rates in Manitoba are among the lowest in North America, and they will stay that way because we'll keep Manitoba Hydro owned by the people of Manitoba, no privatizing by the member opposite.

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

**Mr. Pallister:** Our hydro rates are rising faster under the NDP than they have in the history of Manitoba Hydro and the Premier is standing up bragging about it. That should be an embarrassment for him and his government.

We're no longer the lowest hydro rates. According to the industrial users we've met with, we're moving to middle of the pack and we're losing a precious advantage because of this government's misadventures in Americanizing our hydro company.

The Auditor General said that these untendered contracts increased the risks of impropriety, and the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) could explain that, perhaps, to the House. Impropriety is right. And the government has an obligation to ensure the interests of the public are properly protected, and they are not properly protected by secret contracts to friends.

Now, how does secrecy protect the public interest? It does not. How does the NDP epidemic of untendered contracts protect the public interest? It does not, and covering it up does not; and giving contracts to political donors and pals does not. But that's exactly what this secretive government has done.

Will the Premier admit that, in hiding these contracts, he is protecting the interests—as the member for Fort Rouge (Ms. Howard) has quite rightly asserted—of himself above the best interests of Manitobans? He's using secrecy as damage control.

**Mr. Selinger:** Not at all, Mr. Speaker, 95 per cent of all contracts put out by Manitoba Hydro are tendered. They have to be accountable for whatever they do. They have to be accountable to the board. They have to be accountable to the public.

Very different story than what the Leader of the Opposition is proposing to do. He is for—his notion of accountability is to increase tax credits for political donations for the wealthy while not

committing to ban union and corporate donations. There's nothing accountable about that. His version of accountability is to not pass the surface water management bill which would protect wetlands in Manitoba—wetlands, good clean water for the people of Manitoba—water, water that flows into our watershed and provides the fuel for Manitoba Hydro to provide good, clean energy in Manitoba.

If he's really concerned about protecting the interests of Manitoba, pass that water bill. Make sure we protect the climate. Make sure Manitoba Hydro isn't privatized. Instead of being sliced and diced like he's doing right now, he wants to slice and dice it and sell it off in bits just like he did with the telephone system.

We'll keep it owned by all the people of Manitoba.

**Mr. Pallister:** If the Premier respected the owners of Manitoba Hydro, being Manitobans, he wouldn't hide contracts from them.

And, Mr. Speaker, the justification that was given by the NDP spokesperson was that the contracts are secret, and justifiably so because it's a competitive requirement. Where's the competition in an untendered sole-source contract?

Now, the NDP leadership race, the Premier was concerned about being competitive with the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton). He was concerned about being competitive with the member for Seine River (Ms. Oswald). But he wasn't being competitive so he made a deal: jobs for votes. Now, those jobs he promised were Hydro jobs.

Did he make and belatedly keep his jobs-for-votes deal because he knew that the NDP-appointed Hydro board would keep the information on the contracts secret?

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, the member likes to play fast and loose with the truth in the House. That's one of his most outstanding characteristics. Here's a gentleman that, when he was a member of the government, said he wouldn't privatize the telephone system. He rammed it through in the middle of the night with great delight. He privatized it. He won't declare whether he made any money off that transaction where they benefited privately from it.

He makes allegations in the House right now with respect to a leadership contest. If he wants to make those allegations stick, stand outside the House. Say that in public. Get rid of his immunity in

the House. Be brave about it. Say it on the public record so that the proper course of action can be taken.

The proper course of action: keep Manitoba Hydro owned by all Manitobans. Keep the lowest rates in North America. Build it for the future to prevent greenhouse gases from continuing to have natural disasters. We've had major floods in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, we're creating good green jobs for the future, protecting the planet.

If they're really serious about climate change, if they're really serious about protecting the interests of Manitobans, pass that surface water management bill today.

**Mr. Pallister:** Mr. Speaker, a significant number of the NDP caucus don't believe a thing that he says, and I believe that Manitobans stopped believing in this Premier a long time ago.

He speaks about trust and keeping his word. He went to the doors of every Manitoba household with his team last time, knocked and said to them, I have a plan. I will not raise taxes for five years, he said, and hit Manitobans with the largest tax hikes in their history. And now we're talking about \$85-million contract he wants to keep hidden. That would be an increase in the property taxes of every Winnipeg home owner of 17 per cent. That is a significant amount of money and the Premier doesn't want to be accountable for how it's spent. He wants to hide.

Manitoba families shop smart with their money. They have to—they have less of it because of the taxes this Premier's imposed on them, and they understand that untendered contracts are bad. They understand they provide little value. They understand because they're honest people that secrecy is bad. They understand this government is using secrecy for damage control.

The NDP secret untendered contracts are an epidemic. The Free Press editorial board said in an editorial that the member of one—one of the members of their Cabinet was unworthy of office because of his use of untendered contracts.

Would the Premier agree, based on his defense of untendered contracts today, that he, too, is unworthy of office?

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, nobody's defending untendered contracts. We're simply putting on the record the facts: 95 per cent of all the contracts let by



Manitoba Hydro are tendered contracts. If they believe they have a sole-source rationale for doing that, they need to be accountable for that.

The largest untendered contract in Manitoba: selling off the telephone system. Who benefited from that? Did the people of Manitoba benefit from that? No, the cronies of the member opposite benefited from that. They're the ones that benefited from that. Eighty per cent of the ownership of our telephone system lies outside the boundaries of the province of Manitoba. All of Manitoba Hydro is owned by all of the people of Manitoba. We will keep it that way. We will keep it that way and we will keep the lowest rates in North America while providing good green jobs for the future.

We're building it for the future; we're building it for climate resilience, and if the leader opposite really wants to be committed to Manitoba Hydro, say today in this House what he will do different when he slices and dices and sections off pieces of Hydro for privatization. That is not the way forward. That's exactly what he proposed earlier this morning: slicing and dicing it and selling it off piece by piece—not a way to the future.

#### **Tendering Practices Government Record**

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach):** And we will make Manitoba Hydro successful for all Manitobans and he should release that contract, Mr. Speaker, if he truly believes it.

But we know, Mr. Speaker, this is a government that doesn't learn the lessons. It wasn't that long ago that we saw the report of Tiger Dams where the Minister of Infrastructure ignored his senior civil servants and tried to give an untendered contract to his friends, and then that very day when the report was released, the Premier (Mr. Selinger) said, well, I think we've learnt a lesson. And then an hour later the Minister of Infrastructure went out and said, I've got nothing to apologize for.

And now it's only a couple of months later and we find out about another untendered contract: \$85 million.

Will the government—will the NDP government just admit that they don't follow the rules, they don't respect Manitobans' tax dollars, and they are not going to change their ways until Manitobans change it for them?

**Hon. Eric Robinson (Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro):** Mr. Speaker, I'll try and find the question in that—the many words spoken by the member from Steinbach.

Let me say, first of all, that Manitoba pays the second lowest in home heating costs in Canada, and bundled with other utilities we pay the lowest in Canada. So that is Manitoba's affordability advantage.

The Premier just said that 95 per cent of all Hydro contracts in the last five years have been tendered and there are occasions when Hydro awards—untendered contracts go out for a number of reasons including emergency situations and when only one contractor can offer specific skills, service or technology.

**Mr. Goertzen:** Well, I'll try to find an answer in that diatribe, Mr. Speaker, but I couldn't.

And the fact is that the NDP have been increasing the number of untendered contracts for a number of years. There's already been an Auditor General's report in relation to that, but the NDP don't care because it's not their money.

\* (14:00)

When the Premier signed a cheque for \$700,000 for outgoing staff, well, no problem. It's not his money. When he decides to give Hydro jobs for support so he can hang on to his leadership, well, no problem, because it's not his money. And a \$85-million untendered contract, it's not a big deal. It's not his money.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, we as an opposition, we can't stop this Premier, the media can't stop this Premier; members of their own government tried to stop this Premier and they couldn't either.

Will the Premier just admit: The only way his actions of not respecting Manitobans' money is going to be stopped is if, on April 19th, Manitobans decide to stop him and to vote for a change for the better?

**Mr. Robinson:** Let me repeat my response, Mr. Speaker. Ninety five per cent of all Hydro contracts in the last five years have been tendered. Hydro awards untendered contracts for a number of reasons, including emergency situations and when only one contractor can offer specific skills, service or technology. I can't get any clearer.

**Mr. Goertzen:** Yes, I think he can get clearer.

Mr. Speaker, let's be clear. When these things happen, it's not the government that pays for it. When the Minister of Infrastructure decides to try to authorize an untendered contract, it's not him that pays for it, it's families in Seine River that pay for it. When the Premier (Mr. Selinger) decides to cut a cheque for \$700,000 for his friends, ultimately it's not the Premier who pays for it, it's business owners in Kirkfield Park or in Dawson Trail who pay for it. When the government decides it's okay to have an \$85-million untendered contract at Hydro, it's not actually the government who ends up—the NDP who end up paying for it, it's people who are living in Southdale, in Rossmere, in Radisson. All Manitobans end up paying for that waste.

Why doesn't the NDP—the Premier admit it's hard-working families, hard-working business owners and Manitobans who are paying for their inability to manage money every day?

**Mr. Robinson:** Hydro contracts that go untendered are for a number of reasons, including emergency situation, Mr. Speaker, and when only one contractor can offer specific skills, service or technology and—let me repeat that we in Manitoba pay the second lowest in home heating costs in Canada, and bundled with our other utilities we pay the lowest in Canada. And we also are the party that lowered hydro rates. We equalized hydro rates across Manitoba in 1999.

#### **Power Smart Program Management Concerns**

**Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside):** Manitoba Hydro, once a leader in Power Smart programming, has taken a drastic change in direction. It's Manitobans who are paying the price. Since 2012, Hydro underspent its Power Smart budget by more than \$35 million.

The NDP is clearly directing Hydro to put the brakes on Power Smart so it can move forward with its plan to double the rates for all Manitobans.

Will the minister just admit that that's his plan?

**Hon. Eric Robison (Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro):** I want to thank my colleague from Lakeside for raising this very important question because it gives me an opportunity to talk about something that we haven't had an opportunity to talk about in great detail, Mr. Speaker, and that's the geothermal investments that we have made in the province.

Mr. Speaker, our residential geothermal loan program has provided \$20 million in financing to nearly 1,200 homeowners in the province of Manitoba, and Manitoba Hydro has also partnered with Aki Energy to install geothermal heat pumps on First Nations communities, which is creating jobs. It's also lowering electricity bills. So far, 175 installations have been completed on Fisher River, Long Plain, Peguis, and Sagkeeng.

**Mr. Eichler:** Mr. Speaker, the Public Utilities Board told the NDP government in 2014 that, I quote: An inherent conflict of interest may exist when a utility that derives income from the power it sells, also has the responsibility of promoting the use of less electricity through efficiency programs. End of quote.

We know that conflicts of interests are business as usual for the NDP.

What I'd like to ask the minister: What has he done about the conflict of interest that he's known about for the last two years?

**Mr. Robinson:** Our direction to Hydro was that the new Power Smart plan should keep Manitobans' energy bills among the lowest in Canada, building on more than \$800 million that Power Smart has saved Manitobans to date.

And we've asked for more aggressive Power Smart programs with special consideration given to programs that reduce upfront financial barriers. It all—it, you know, that prevents customers from investing in energy-efficient measures. Can we do better? Absolutely.

**Mr. Eichler:** Mr. Speaker, the short answer is nothing. The minister has done nothing to address the conflict identified by the Public Utilities Board, because this NDP government wants to do nothing.

Independent energy expert Philippe Dunsky has this to say about the independent authority, and I quote: Organizations that operate under a clear oversight framework did deliver and they systematically deliver. End of quote.

Mr. Speaker, will the NDP government, will this minister, establish an arm's-length agency for their energy-saving program, yes or no?

**Mr. Robinson:** We are doing very many progressive things on geothermal investments that I described just a few moments ago, including the low-income program. And we're very proud of the initiatives that we've undertaken, especially partnering with

Aki Energy, which is Aboriginal-owned, to install geothermal heat pumps on First Nations communities. I think that is critical and that is something that is—something that should be given more attention to. So far, 175 installations, like I said, have occurred. And they're being completed on Fisher River, the Long Plain First Nation, Peguis and the Sagkeeng First Nations.

### **Mining Industry Investment Concerns**

**Mr. Cliff Cullen (Spruce Woods):** The annual and comprehensive survey on mining from the mining companies was released this morning. This report serves as a barometer as to the attractiveness of investment in a given jurisdiction. The report, unfortunately, shows Manitoba trending down in the ratings. In fact, this year we're down to No. 19, considerably down from our No. 1 ranking just a few years ago. Clearly, Mr. Speaker, companies are looking to invest in either exploration or mining will not view this report very favourably.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the government: Why have they continued to ignore the mining sector here in Manitoba?

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Mineral Resources):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome the question, particularly because it's a week in front of the PDAC convention that's being hosted in Toronto, of all mining companies, and Manitoba's presenting this year about its innovative plan to offer a 25 per cent equity interest in all new mines to indigenous people. And that is being now considered as probably the foremost and most progressive thing that has been done in the country. And we've been asked to present and to help break the log jam that is appearing across the country with respect to, obviously, low, low commodity prices and some of the issues that we have to work through as a country in order to work with First Nations, in order to have a productive and growth in the mining and resource sector.

**Mr. Cullen:** Mr. Speaker, certainly there's room for improvement here in Manitoba. Now, while this is one of Manitoba's lowest rankings in a number of years, our neighbours to the west maintain its second-place standings worldwide again this year. The news release associated with this report indicates that Saskatchewan has a competitive tax regime, efficient permitting procedures and clarity around land claims. Clearly, Manitoba has dropped the ball in all these areas. Now, I know the NDP doesn't like

us to compare us to Saskatchewan; in fact, we're not even a close second to Saskatchewan.

Why has the NDP failed to attract investment here in Manitoba?

**Mr. Chomiak:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I keep reminding the member opposite, and I'll have to remind him again, that only one province in the country opened two mines, two mines in one year, and that was the province of Manitoba.

And since the member brings up our sister province of Saskatchewan, I'm sorry to tell the member opposite that Saskatchewan PotashCorp closed two mines in New Brunswick, Mr. Speaker, cut back production, shut down, had a longer shutdown over the Christmas period and has seen a deficit budget.

\* (14:10)

And, in fact, we didn't even know if Saskatchewan's going to call the Legislature this year, because they're going into election as well.

So I will not take advice, Mr. Speaker, from members opposite, where they've shut down mines.

**Mr. Cullen:** Well, Mr. Speaker, the minister fails to recognize the nine mines that closed under their watch.

Another recent study just completed on permitting times in Canada, this study shows some alarming responses for Manitoba. In fact, Manitoba ranked last in terms of meeting its own permitting deadlines. Additionally, Manitoba also ranked last in terms of encouraging investment due to its permitting processes.

Mr. Speaker, the results show this in Natural Resources Canada, where Manitoba's only attracting 1.6 of all the exploration dollars across Canada. Clearly, investment goes where it's wanted, and it's shown it's not wanted in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, why has the NDP failed this sector?

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Speaker, it shows the small-mindedness when you don't look at the comprehensive picture. CaNickel, who are exploring and are a very successful mining company, say the single biggest reason that they are exploring in Manitoba is that we have the lowest hydro rates to mining companies in the world.

Mr. Speaker, we're the only place in Canada that has opened two mines in the last two years. And we're now in a process of looking at potash, and while that's been a long story and there's no guarantee, we've taken the most serious and reasonable steps in the last 40 years to put together a package, to go to tender and to work on tender about potash. And even though the market's down, even though the cartel is up, we're doing our best to develop Manitoba, and we have both Vale and HudBay being very successful and continuing to go because of the efforts of low hydro and the work of the government in terms of the best incentives in the country.

### Water Control Structures Report and Legislation

**Mr. Shannon Martin (Morris):** Mr. Speaker, almost two and a half years ago, the Province launched a review of the operating guidelines for the Red River Floodway, Portage Diversion and their Fairford water control structure. The NDP has been in possession of the final report since last year, but for some reason are keeping it hidden from the public and this Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister table the report today?

**Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister responsible for Emergency Measures):** Mr. Speaker, I, in fact, really appreciate the question, because this government has done a number of historic things.

First of all, the review itself is the first review ever, in terms of the Portage Diversion. And that's pretty significant, because that's one of the major concerns that came out of the 2011, 2014 flood. That report is available; the member is wrong.

I would also point out that we also released a very historic report in terms of flood mitigation that points to the need for \$1.2 billion worth of investment over the 10 years upcoming. I point out, we've already committed to the Lake Manitoba, Lake St. Martin flood mitigation. We're now working on the Assiniboine dikes, in terms of the major issues. That, again, is available. Those reports are public information.

The only question I have, Mr. Speaker, for members opposite is: When are they getting on board with actually investing in flood mitigation? Because we're for it, they continuously vote against it.

**Mr. Martin:** Mr. Speaker, while I can appreciate that the current flood forecast remain positive, let us recall that the minister publicly committed to presenting that report, and any accompanying legislation, by June, 2015.

Is the minister now saying that, in the next seven days, that he'll be presenting both that report and the accompanying legislation?

**Mr. Ashton:** Well, first of all, Mr. Speaker, I think the member is confused. We already have legislation that governs this. We're talking about the operating roles; in fact, the review itself, for the first time, looked at the operating roles of the Portage Diversion. It was this government that recognized it was a very legitimate concern raised by residents in the area. The same thing with the Fairford structure as well.

And I point out that that information is available, Mr. Speaker, as is the report that was put forward by KGS that recommends we look at \$1.2 billion worth of investment. And I want to put on the record that we know where the Liberals stand; they won't do a thing about flood mitigation until they say they will balance the budget after cutting \$475 million in corporate taxes. We know where the Tories stand; they're against it, because any time we've had a vote in this House on flood mitigation, they voted no.

**Mr. Martin:** Mr. Speaker, at the pace set by this NDP government, the next mandated review will be initiated prior to the release of the current review. As an MLA whose constituents are directly impacted by these water control structures, I can appreciate the frustration they have with the NDP. In fact, I assure my constituency that their—my constituents—that their frustration is shared, in fact, by all Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, the minister has a report. One can only assume he has read the report. My request is simple: Will he table it at the Legislature today?

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Speaker, I know members opposite have tablets. I think in their case it's stone tablets. This report has been available; it's public information, as is the KGS report.

And if the member's so concerned about his constituents, I think I'd want to put on the record that ever since he's been elected in this House, he's never once voted in favour of flood mitigation. And I know members opposite, you know, the Leader of the Opposition, in particular, has no experience with building flood mitigation. I'd like to ask the question; it's a trick question: What did they build in the way

of flood mitigation when they were in office? The answer: nothing.

But what's interesting, Mr. Speaker, the only time the member opposite talks about flood mitigation is when he talks about project labour agreements, when he goes into an anti-union tirade. Let's not forget when he was a Member of Parliament; he wanted to hold up the bailing at the floodway because he didn't like the collective agreement that had been negotiated.

Mr. Speaker, we take no lectures from members opposite. We're for building—

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

### **Minimum Income Approach Poverty Reduction Strategy**

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, a tragic hallmark of the last nearly 17 years of NDP government has been their failure to address poverty, evident in the increased number of Manitobans using food banks.

The mincome approach seeks to ensure every person in Manitoba has at least a minimum income. Manitoba Liberals will put a priority on evaluating the benefits of the mincome approach.

Why has the Premier never put a priority on the mincome approach to addressing poverty?

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier):** We're the only province in Canada that requires a poverty reduction strategy as a part of every budget by law. I would hope that the members of the opposition would stay committed to that objective.

And, Mr. Speaker, I have to say that for the member of River Heights to raise this question about poverty reduction, he was part of the federal government that killed the Canada assistance program which required—provided 50 per cent support for social assistance, legal aid, community development and family services all throughout the country. The federal government pulled out of that when he was a federal member of Cabinet. And now he's part of a political party at the provincial level that their No. 1 priority is to give a \$471-million corporate tax giveaway to the big banks and the big corporations. That will do nothing. There will be nothing trickling down from there to reduce poverty.

We did what the Tories refused to do, the Conservatives refused to do. We took the National

Child Benefit, we made it available to all children, and we took down the billboards asking people to snitch on people on welfare. That's what we did. We made it available to all children in Manitoba.

Then we brought in Rent Assist for all the families of Manitoba to help them with their housing costs, and what happened? The Liberals and the Conservatives voted against all those measures.

**Mr. Gerrard:** Mr. Speaker, the mincome approach has the potential to be more effective in addressing poverty than what the NDP have done and to decrease the cumbersome bureaucracy which is presently needed for the NDP's current, ineffective attempts to address poverty.

Today, a Manitoban living in poverty has a full-time job keeping up with the NDP's rules, requirements and paperwork.

Why has the Premier not simplified the system so that individuals on low incomes can spend their time getting training, finding work or getting their illnesses addressed, instead of filling out and complying with the NDP's cumbersome bureaucracy?

**Mr. Selinger:** The Liberal Party of Manitoba wants to do another demonstration project on basic income, or in Manitoba a guaranteed annual income. We're actually implementing that on the ground as we speak. The National Child Benefit provides a floor of income for moderate and low-income families, working or not working, for income for their children.

The Rent Assist program provides a platform of income for moderate and low-income families on rent support. Our tax measures have reduced taxes and taken thousands of people off the tax rolls in Manitoba—of moderate and low income.

\* (14:20)

And we're the only political party, neither the Conservatives, neither the Liberals have any support for a minimum wage in Manitoba. We've raised it every single year that we've been in office, and it now has the purchasing power that it did before the Conservatives came into office. We now have a minimum wage which we think can be even better in the future. And stay tuned. We will do more to reduce poverty by having low unemployment, good job creation rates and stimulus programs that provide opportunities to work for all Manitobans.

**Mr. Gerrard:** Mr. Speaker, as the Premier explains, his party is all over the map with this range of individual initiatives and programs, but they're not working. The NDP have ignored the data from the mincome trial in Dauphin without ever assessing its effectiveness. This mincome approach was ultimately found to result in people being healthier, lowering costs related to health and justice.

If the mincome approach can save on bureaucracy and reduce costs, why have the NDP failed, in the 40 years since the initial work on mincome, to make it a priority as Manitobans' Liberals will do from day one?

Why, in the nearly 17 years, has the NDP not made mincome a priority?

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, while the Liberal Party of Manitoba wants to do another study, we're actually implementing a low-income floor in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker. That's why we've made the National Child Benefit universal for all families in Manitoba. We have a prenatal benefit that's available to Manitobans. We have a Rent Assist program which is available to all Manitobans, and we've taken thousands of low-income Manitobans off the tax rolls.

And, again, if the Liberals are really interested in supporting people that want to have a decent wage, support the minimum wage policy in Manitoba. They've always opposed it, just like the Conservatives. There's only one political party that supports minimum wage in Manitoba, this party, the New Democratic Party. There's only one party committed to having stimulus that creates one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country and one of the best job creation rates. When people are working, they're making decent wages, and that's what we're doing in northern Manitoba, rural Manitoba, urban Manitoba, and we're also doing social enterprise, which allows people to fix up homes and save energy, and building social housing, which the member from River Heights cut when he was in the federal Cabinet.

Social housing, jobs, minimum wage, basic income support programs and more to come.

#### **Path to Reconciliation Support for Bill**

**Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas):** Last week, our government tabled the first bill in Canada to set a path to reconciliation. This bill provides a framework to implement the recommendations of the TRC. We

know that all Canadians and Manitobans want a new relationship with indigenous people, and reconciliation should be a priority for all of us.

Would the Minister of Aboriginal, Northern Affairs please explain the importance of this bill in moving forward on reconciliation, contrary to what the Opposition Leader said when he called it a show?

**Hon. Eric Robison (Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs):** Well, Mr. Speaker, indeed, it's a day of pride for me and many other indigenous peoples in the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, let me tell you what the bill outlines. Some of it—this new approach will be guided by recognition and the contributions of the indigenous peoples of the province of Manitoba, recognizing the historical agreements that exist, including the numbered treaties in Manitoba and the Manitoba Act and a commitment to a collaborative and meaningful engagement with indigenous peoples and nations based on mutual respect and a goal of mutual benefit.

What we're going to be doing after the bill has been introduced for second reading, Mr. Speaker, is something that is—something that I thought I would never see in my lifetime, and that would be the unveiling of a portrait of Louis Riel, the founder of Manitoba and the president of the Legislative Assembly of Assiniboia in 1870 and, some would say, the first premier of our province.

I believe that this is a very important step in the repairing of a relationship between indigenous and nonindigenous Manitobans.

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

#### **PETITIONS**

**Mr. Speaker:** It's now time for petitions.

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

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

The background for this petition is as follows:

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

(2) There have been many dangerous incidents where drivers use the right shoulder to pass vehicles

that have stopped at the traffic light waiting to turn left at this intersection.

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge that the provincial government improve the safety at the pedestrian corridor at the intersection of PTH 206 and Cedar Avenue in Oakbank by considering such steps as highlighting pavement markings to better indicate the location of the shoulders and crosswalk, as well as installing a lighted crosswalk structure.

This is signed by G. Grycki, D. Saydak, D. Houghton and many, many other fine Manitobans.

Thank you.

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

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Speaker:** The Official Opposition House Leader, on a point of order.

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

Earlier today in question period, and this is under the category of reflections of members in the House, the member—the Premier (Mr. Selinger) indicated that he wished this afternoon for us to debate Bill 5, the water surface act, and indicated that we would not be willing to debate that bill and move it forward to committee—not actually pass it, it has to go to committee.

I want to indicate to the Premier, since he demanded that it come forward for debate this afternoon, I actually agree with the Premier we are certainly willing, if the government wants to call it first, we're willing to have it debated this afternoon and pass it to committee by the end of the day.

So the Premier suggested that that bill be debated this afternoon. I'm in agreement with the Premier and I want it on the record that we do support the Premier in having that bill debated this afternoon as he requested.

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Government House Leader, on the same point of order.

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, firstly, I appreciate the fact that the Premier wished to—there's a number of bills we wish we could debate and we're prepared to sit; we're prepared to sit longer. We're prepared to extend sittings into Fridays and into weekends in order to debate bills because there's a lot to debate.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, there are several—there are many visitors that are here today in anticipation of passage of a particular bill that we have communicated to the opposition that we've—we'll be introducing first today. We're quite pleased to introduce and pass Bill 18, which is our intention today with the visitors in the gallery, and then we're happy to move on to the bill the Premier to debate and the leaders opposite wish to debate. We can do—let's try to get more work done, as much as we can while we're here because that's what Manitobans want.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I don't think the member has a valid point of order.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order please.

On the point of order raised by the Official Opposition House Leader, I thank him and the Government House Leader for their advice on this matter.

I listened very carefully to the point of order that was raised and I didn't hear a particular reference to any rule that may have been breached.

And while I certainly appreciate that members have an interest in debating the matters before the House, I appreciate that, but I leave that to the consideration of the House leaders to make that determination how that process will unfold. And since we haven't yet proceeded to orders of the day and government business as is enlisted in our order paper today, I'm going to leave it to the members of the House to make that determination, and I must respectfully rule that there is no point of order.

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**Mr. Speaker:** So we'll continue to proceed with petitions.

#### Manitoba Interlake—Request to Repair and Reopen Provincial Roads 415 and 416

**Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Midland):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

These are the reasons for this petition:

(1) The Interlake region is an important transportation corridor for Manitoba but, unfortunately, is still dealing with serious underinvestment in infrastructure under this provincial government.

(2) Provincial roads 415 and 416 are vital to the region, but have still not been repaired or reopened since sustaining damages during the 2010 flood.

(3) Residents and businesses in the Manitoba Interlake are seriously impacted and inconvenienced by having no adequate east-west travel routes over an area of 525 square miles.

\* (14:30)

(4) This lack of east-west travel routes is also a major public safety concern, as emergency response vehicles are impeded from arriving in a timely manner.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge that the provincial government repair and reopen the provincial roads 415 and 416 to allow adequate east-west travel in the Interlake.

And this petition is signed by D. Mosher, B. Griffith, L. Place and many more fine Manitobans.

**Mr. Speaker:** Any—the honourable member for Riding Mountain.

### **Community-Based Brain Injury Services and Supports**

**Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Riding Mountain):** I wish to present the background—or this—I'm sorry—I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And the background to this petition is as follows:

Brain Injury Canada, cited at [braininjurycanada.ca/acquired-brain-injury/](http://braininjurycanada.ca/acquired-brain-injury/), estimates that 50,000 Canadians sustain brain injuries each year, over 1 million Canadians live with the effects of an acquired brain injury, 30 per cent of all traumatic brain injuries are sustained by children and youth, and approximately 50 per cent of brain injuries come from falls and motor vehicle accidents or collisions.

Studies conducted by Manitoba Health in 2003 and 2006 and the Brandon Regional

Health Authority in 2008 identified the need for community-based brain injury services. These studies recommended that the—that Manitoba adopt the Saskatchewan model of brain injury services.

The treatment and coverage for Manitobans who suffer brain injuries varies greatly, resulting in huge inadequacies depending upon whether a person suffers the injury at work, in a motor vehicle accident, through assault or from medical issues such as a stroke, aneurysm or anoxia due to cardiac arrest or other medical reasons.

Although in-patient services include acute care, short- and longer term rehabilitation are available through the Province. Brain injury patients who are discharged from hospital often experience discontinuation or great reduction of services which result in significant financial and emotional burdens being placed on families and friends.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to develop and evolve community-based brain injury services that include but are not limited to: case management services, known also as service navigation; safe and accessible housing in the community; proctor or coach-type assistance for community reintegration programs; improved access to community-based rehabilitation services; and improved transportation, especially for people living in rural Manitoba.

To urge the provincial government to encompass financial and emotional supports for families and other caregivers in the model that is developed.

This petition is signed by N. Fort, G. Cockburn, J. Carr and many other Manitobans.

**Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Brain Injury Canada, cited at [braininjurycanada.ca/acquired-brain-injury/](http://braininjurycanada.ca/acquired-brain-injury/), estimates that 50,000 Canadians sustain brain injuries each year, over 1 million Canadians live with the effects of an acquired brain injury, 30 per cent of all traumatic brain injuries are sustained by children and youth, and approximately 50 per cent of brain injuries come from falls and motor vehicle collisions.

(2) Studies conducted by Manitoba Health in 2003 and 2006 and the Brandon Regional



Health Authority in 2008, identified the need for community-based brain injury services.

(3) These studies recommended that Manitoba adopt the Saskatchewan model of brain injury services.

(4) The treatment and coverage for Manitobans who suffer brain injuries varies greatly, resulting in huge inadequacies depending upon whether a person suffers the injury at work, in a motor vehicle accident, through assault or from medical issues such as a stroke, aneurysm or anoxia due to cardiac arrest or other medical reasons.

(5) Although in-patient services, including acute care, short- and longer term rehabilitation, are available throughout the province, brain injury patients who are discharged from hospital often experience discontinuation or great reduction of services which results in significant financial and emotional burdens being placed on family and friends.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to develop and evolve community-based brain injury services that include but are not limited to: case management services, known also as service navigation; safe and accessible housing in the community; proctor or coach-type assistance for community reintegration programs; improved access to community-based rehabilitation services; and improved transportation, especially for people living in rural Manitoba.

(2) To urge the provincial government to encompass financial and emotional supports for families and other caregivers in the model that's developed.

This petition is signed by G. Blakely, B. Leys, S. Phillips and many, many other fine Manitobans.

**Proposed Lac du Bonnet Marina—  
Request for Research into Benefits and Costs**

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

And these are the reasons for this petition:

(1) Lac du Bonnet is a recreational area with great natural beauty.

(2) The Winnipeg River is one of the greatest distinguishing cultural and recreational resources in that area.

(3) Manitoba marinas increase recreational access and increase the desirability of properties in their host communities.

(4) The people of Lac du Bonnet overwhelmingly support a public harbourfront marina in Lac du Bonnet.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to consider collaborating with other levels of government to research the economic benefits and construction costs of a marina in Lac du Bonnet.

This petition is signed by M. Kucel, J. Bass, J. Charko and many more fine Manitobans, Mr. Speaker.

**Minnesota-Manitoba Transmission Line  
Route—Information Request**

**Mr. Doyle Pivniuk (Arthur-Virden):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The Minnesota-Manitoba transmission line is a 500-kilovolt alternative-current transmission line set to be located in the southeastern Manitoba that will cross into the US border south of Piney, Manitoba.

(2) The line has an in-service date of 2020 and will run approximately 150 kilowatt-kilometres with tower heights expected to reach over 40 to 60 metres and be located every 400 to 500 metres.

(3) The preferred route designated for the line will be see hydro towers come across proximity to communities La Broquerie and many other communities in Manitoba's southeast rather than alternative routes that has also considered.

(4) The alternative route would have seen the line run further east, avoiding densely populated areas and eventually terminate at the same spot in the US—by the US border.

(5) The Progressive Conservative caucus has repeatedly asked for information about the routing of this line and its proximity to dense, populated areas and has yet to receive any response.

(6) Landowners across Manitoba are concerned about the impact hydro line routing could have on their land values.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro to immediately provide a written explanation to all members of the Legislative Assembly regarding the criteria were used and the reasons for selecting the preferred routing for the Minnesota-Manitoba transmission line, including whether or not this route represents at least intrusive options to the residents of Taché, Springfield, Ste. Anne, Stuartburn, Piney and La Broquerie.

And this petition is signed by R. Berard, M. Regehr and T. Mavic.

**Mr. Dennis Smook (La Verendrye):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

\*(14:40)

(1) The Minnesota-Manitoba transmission line is a 500-kilovolt alternating-current transmission line set to be located in southeastern Manitoba that will cross into the US border south of Piney, Manitoba.

(2) The line has an in-service date of 2020 and will run approximately 150 kilometres with tower heights expected to reach between 40 and 60 metres and be located every four to five hundred metres.

(3) The preferred route designated for the line will see hydro towers come in close proximity to the community of La Broquerie and many other communities in Manitoba's southeast rather than an alternate route that was also considered.

(4) The alternate route would have seen the line run further east, avoid densely populated areas and eventually terminate at the same spot at the US border.

(5) The Progressive Conservative caucus has repeatedly asked for information about the routing of the line and its proximity to densely populated areas and has yet to receive any response.

(6) Landowners all across Manitoba are concerned about the impact hydro line routing could have on land values.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro to immediately provide a written explanation to all members of the Legislative Assembly regarding what criteria were used and the reasons for selecting the preferred routing for the Minnesota-Manitoba transmission line, including whether or not this routing represented the least intrusive option to residents of Taché, Springfield, Ste. Anne, Stuartburn, Piney and La Broquerie.

This petition is signed by R. Loran, E. Bunquin, C. Rowan and many more fine Manitobans.

### Applied Behavioural Analysis Services

**Mr. Stuart Briese (Agassiz):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background for this petition is as follows:

Provincial government broke a commitment to support families of children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, including timely diagnosis and access to necessary treatment such as applied behavioural analysis, also known as ABA services.

The provincial government did not follow its own policy statement on autism services which notes the importance of early intervention and ABA therapy for children with autism.

The preschool waiting list for ABA services has reached its highest level ever with at least 68 children waiting for services. That number is expected to exceed 148 children by September 2016 despite commitments to reduce the waiting list and provide timely access to services.

The current provincial government policy now imposed on the ABA service provider will decrease the scientifically proven, empirically based and locally proven program and force children to go to school at age five before they are ready, thus not allowing them full access to ABA services promised them as they wait on their wait-list.

Waiting lists, forced decrease in services and denials of treatment are unacceptable. No child should be denied access to or age out of eligibility for ABA services.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the ministers of Family Services, Education and Advanced Learning and Health consider making funding available to address the current waiting list for ABA services.

And this petition is signed by R. Postlethwaite, H. Cameron, R. Sandu and many, many other fine Manitobans.

### **Budget 2016**

**Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

On April 30th, 2015, the Finance Minister clearly stated, and I quote: There will be another budget before the next election. End quote.

The provincial government conducted budget consultations with Manitobans at significant taxpayer expense with the clear understanding there would be another budget before the next election.

Just two days after the Public Accounts for fiscal year 2014-2015 were released, showing the provincial government's deficit had ballooned by an additional \$100 million more than budgeted, the Finance Minister stated, and I quote: I'm sorry I wasn't clear, but the fact of the matter is we're weighing our options as to whether or not to introduce a budget prior to the election. End quote.

After months of misleading Manitobans, on February 4th, 2016, the provincial government finally admitted they would withhold the budget.

Manitobans deserve to have access to complete information regarding the true state of the provincial government's fiscal mismanagement.

The budget has been prepared, but the provincial government is hiding it and the facts from Manitobans instead of being transparent and accountable.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government keep its promise to the people of Manitoba and immediately bring forward the completed budget they are withholding from public scrutiny.

This is signed by C. Vandale, M. Langrell, M. Langrell, and many others, Mr. Speaker.

### **Community-Based Brain Injury Services and Supports**

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Brain Injury Canada, cited as <http://braininjurycanada.ca/acquired-brain-injury/>, estimates that 50,000 Canadians sustain brain injuries each year, over 1 million Canadians live with the effects of an acquired brain injury, 30 per cent of all traumatic brain injuries are sustained by children and youth, and approximately 50 per cent of brain injuries come from falls and motor vehicle accidents.

(2) Studies conducted by Manitoba Health in 2003 and 2006 and the Brandon Regional Health Authority in 2008 identified the need for community-based brain injury services.

(3) These studies recommended that Manitoba adopt the Saskatchewan model of brain injury services.

(4) The treatment and coverage for Manitobans who suffer brain injuries varies greatly, resulting in huge inadequacies depending upon whether a person suffers the injury at work, in a motor vehicle accident, through assault or from medical issues such as stroke, aneurysm or anoxia due to cardiac arrest or other medical reasons.

Although in-patient services including acute care, short- and long-term rehabilitation are available throughout the province, brain injury patients who are discharged from hospital often experience discontinuation or great reduction of services which results in significant financial and emotional burdens being placed on family and friends.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to develop and evolve community-based brain injury services that include but are not limited to: case management services, known also as service navigation; safe and accessible housing in the community; proctor or coach-type assistance for community reintegration programs; improved access to community-based rehabilitation services; and improved transportation, especially for people living in rural Manitoba.

(2) To urge the provincial government to encompass financial and emotional supports for families and other caregivers in the model that is developed.

And this petition is signed by B. Blakely, B. Comba, L. Campbell, and many other fine, fine Manitobans.

### Budget 2016

**Mr. Cliff Cullen (Spruce Woods):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

\* (14:50)

(1) On April 30th, 2015, the minister—the Finance Minister clearly stated there will be another budget before the next election.

(2) The provincial government conducted budget consultations with Manitobans at significant taxpayer expense with the clear understanding there would be another budget before the next election.

(3) Just two days after the public accounts for fiscal year 2014-2015 were released, showing the provincial government's deficit had ballooned by an additional \$100 million more than budgeted, the Finance Minister stated, and I quote: I'm sorry I wasn't clear, but the fact of the matter is we're weighing our options as to whether or not to introduce a budget prior to the election. End quote.

(4) After months of misleading Manitobans, on February 4th, 2016, the provincial government finally admitted they would withhold the budget.

(5) Manitobans deserve to have access to complete information regarding the true state of the provincial government's fiscal mismanagement.

(6) The budget has been prepared, but the provincial government is hiding it and the facts from Manitobans, instead of being transparent and accountable.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government keep its promise to the people of Manitoba and immediately bring forward the completed budget they are withholding from public scrutiny.

This petition is signed by G. Jefferies, K. Dowd, V. Morris, and many other fine Manitobans.

**Mr. Speaker:** That concludes petitions, we'll now move on to grievances.

Are there any grievances?

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

(Continued)

### GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

**Mr. Speaker:** Seeing none, we'll move on to orders of the day, government business.

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, we'd like to call for second reading the following bills: Bill 18, The Path to Reconciliation Act. After that we'd like to call debate on second reading for Bill 5, then debate on second reading—then we would like to call second reading for Bill 17, then debate on second reading for Bill 4, then second reading on Bill 14, Bill 6 and Bill 16.

**Mr. Speaker:** As has been announced we'll be calling bills in the following order, starting with Bill 18, followed by bills 5, Bill 17, Bill 4, Bill 14, Bill 6 and then finally with Bill 16.

### SECOND READINGS

#### Bill 18—The Path to Reconciliation Act

**Mr. Speaker:** So we'll start by calling for second reading, Bill 18, The Path to Reconciliation Act.

**Hon. Eric Robinson (Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs):** I move, seconded by the Minister of Health (Ms. Blady), that Bill 18, The Path to Reconciliation Act, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

His Honour the Administrator has been advised of the bill, and I table the message.

**Mr. Speaker:** It's been moved by the honourable Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, seconded by the honourable Minister of Health, that Bill 18, The Path to Reconciliation Act, be now read for a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

His Honour the Administrator has been advised of the bill, and the message has been tabled.

**Mr. Robinson:** It's indeed my honour to speak about this very important bill.

The history of colonization has deeply damaged the relationship between indigenous and nonindigenous peoples. The TRC commission provided us with an honest account of what—or perhaps some of the hardest truths about our country that we've ever had to face.

We thank the commissioners, the survivors and their families for their courage and the sacrifices they

have made so we might understand. What we found out is there not—there's not a single Aboriginal person who has not been touched by the legacy of residential schools. But residential schools are only part of the country's overall policy of oppression.

Aboriginal people have had to endure and cope with the pain caused by colonization, and colonization is not just a historic wrongdoing. It isn't enough to look to the past and condemn our ancestors and their actions. The stains of colonization continue today. Our contemporary reality is informed by this past and can be seen in our society's systemic oppression, in racism towards indigenous peoples, and the deep divide that still separates us.

The way this country has treated indigenous peoples and its—is its greatest source of shame, and Canada needs to deal with this and Manitoba needs to deal with it as well. There is urgency to do this work. I see it in the socio-economic disparity between indigenous peoples and non-indigenous peoples. I see it in the unrest of our indigenous youth and grassroots people who, as we saw in Idle No More, have said we will not put up with this any longer. And I see it in non-indigenous peoples, too, who have said there is something wrong here and it needs to be fixed now.

That is because the Indian problem is not just for indigenous peoples to address. We have all been impacted by the history of colonization, and it is our responsibility as every Manitoban and every Canadian to address these issues and do our best to address this issue. And it starts with changing the way we talk to and about each other, and it's about moving to a place of mutual respect.

The government of Manitoba is going to lead these efforts for all Manitobans through this bill. In fact, Manitoba's leading the way for the country as we are the first jurisdiction to come out with such profound commitments to the righting of wrongs that were committed in our past and in our present.

This bill fundamentally changes how we talk to indigenous peoples and nations. Our government must be guided by the principles of respect, engagement, understanding and action. This bill is important because it mandates our government to a nation-to-nation relationship with indigenous peoples.

This nation-to-nation approach will be guided by recognition of the contributions of indigenous

peoples to Manitoba. Recognition of the historical agreements including the seven numbered treaties in Manitoba and the Manitoba Act and a commitment to a collaborative and meaningful engagement with indigenous peoples and nations based on mutual respect with a goal of mutual benefit.

This bill is important because not only does it commit our governments to reconciliation, but places the responsibility for staying in the conversation with indigenous peoples in a respectful way and keep the government accountable to a minister, a minister responsible for reconciliation.

And the bill goes even further, and it recognizes the work that is not the responsibility of one minister, but the responsibility of every member of the Executive Council. This bill is important, because although the government will lead this work, it also compels all sectors of society to work at making our society a more inclusive place for all Manitobans, a safer place for all Manitobans, and a place where we're not divided by racial and cultural differences, but stronger because of our commitment to work together with respect and for mutual benefit.

This bill is important because it not only compels our government to work towards repairing the relationship for the benefit of all Manitobans and Canadians, but it ensures that we are held accountable and we report on the work that we do and the progress we make to both the Assembly and to the public.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is important because it gives further recognition to indigenous languages and communicates, through our commitment to translating this groundbreaking legislation into the seven indigenous languages, our respect for not only their languages and their culture, but also their nation.

\* (15:00)

This bill continues the momentum that was started by the TRC to carry out the work of reconciliation. It is my commitment and a commitment of this government that reconciliation will happen in a proper way. This bill creates a legal mechanism and a framework that can be and must be passed on to future generations. That is why this bill is so important. We can start the work of renewing the nation-to-nation relationship between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples, but the work will continue for generations to come.

This bill ensures that work will continue and the future generations understand our ambitions for reconciliation.

It is time to reconcile our history and our relationship with indigenous peoples, and this bill will provide for that foundation. Manitoba's social and economic success depends on this renewed approach.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released its 94 calls to action in June 2015. These calls to action relate to many areas under provincial jurisdiction, including child welfare, education, health and justice, to name a few.

Today, there is a new momentum and change that is occurring in Canada. The Government of Canada has taken—undertaken to fully implement the calls to action, including the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In July 2015, Canada's Premier supported the TRC's calls to action and many provinces and territories have already begun to act and respond. Manitoba has undertaken several initiatives to address the TRC's calls to action, and we see this bill as another avenue to move forward on reconciliation.

This bill will build on—will build on many activities that will lead us to the path of—to reconciliation. We recognize that more work and engagement with indigenous peoples is needed to foster greater understanding and awareness, and to make meaningful progress on reconciliation. To this end, the national research truth or truth and reconciliation act was passed on June 30th, 2015.

Another example is recognizing customary care founded on traditional practices and approaches through the introduction of Bill 15, The Child and Family Services Amendment Act, the Recognition of Customary Care of Indigenous Children. This bill honours and respects indigenous beliefs by supporting self-determination and designing customary care approaches in healing.

Bill 13, The Education Administration Amendment Act (First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework), is another important bill the government is introducing to promote reconciliation that aims to support indigenous students' successes and teaches indigenous perspectives in Manitoba schools.

Further to this, the Manitoba Civil Service Commission is leading an interdepartmental working group to develop a strategy with the goal to build

awareness and understanding of indigenous history as we work towards greater reconciliation.

In addition, 'Manitobia'—Manitoba has championed efforts to address the long-standing issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls nationally and hosted the national round table last week.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba has been proud to champion economic development through the First Peoples economic development fund, the Metis Economic Development Fund and the expansion of CEDF to support indigenous entrepreneurs on and off reserve.

We have supported the creation of the only Metis authority in the country, the development of the only government-wide Metis policy and a number of other issues in partnership with the Manitoba Metis Federation.

Other current examples of reconciliation is correcting our history. There will be support for a formal commemoration of Rooster Town, a Metis settlement whose history has been denied and erased.

And today, the official portrait of Louis Riel, founder of Manitoba, president of the Legislative Assembly of Assiniboia, and some would say the first premier of Manitoba, will take its rightful place in the halls of the Legislature, among this province and the other great leaders of the past.

There is more work to come. This bill will lead us back to our original path where the relationship between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples was a relationship of co-existence, where we built on the strengths of our cultures and our society, where we worked together for the benefit of all citizens, and where all cultures and all people were valued and respected.

At 3:30 this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, we shall be doing the unveiling of that portrait on the north side of the building, alongside the premiers that served the great province of Manitoba.

With that, I want to thank all members for the opportunity to speak on Bill 18, and I truly appreciate the attention of all members in this regard.

**Mr. Stuart Briese (Agassiz):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker—

**Mr. Speaker:** Questions?

**Mr. Briese:** I want to ask the minister—I thank him for bringing this bill forward, it's certainly

groundbreaking legislation, but I want to ask how they envision the—weighing the results that come out of the implementation of this bill.

**Mr. Robinson:** The member of Agassiz and I, I think, are both committed to ensuring that there is equality, equity and that there is an opportunity for indigenous peoples to take their rightful place in the mosaic of the province of Manitoba. And what we believe that this bill does, it gives us that opportunity to begin moving forward into the future.

Many of our long-standing veterans of the relationships with government are in the audience with us today, and I give them thanks for their perseverance. And it has taken some time to have indigenous peoples included in any and all activities that we do. The Metis people and the recognition that they rightfully deserve and their contribution for this province becoming Manitoba in 1870 through the provisional government—that Louis Riel, and the Inuit people and their contribution in opening up the fur trade, along with the First Nations people in northern Manitoba and, of course, indigenous peoples. Why can't we have along and around this building people like Peguis, people like John Ramsay, who helped the Icelandic people adjust to the new climate of their new environment?

So I believe that this is our opportunity, as legislators, to lay the groundwork as we step into the future. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that this gives us the opportunity to do this—just that, with the passage of this bill.

**Mr. Briese:** There's a number of recommendations outlining goals on child welfare, educational language and culture and health and justice in this bill.

I want to, once again, ask the minister: What are going to be the guidelines that will indicate success moving forward in those fields?

**Mr. Robinson:** In my meeting with the member from Agassiz yesterday, I believe that we're both agreed that we need to do something.

We have made many attempts to address the longstanding issues that are faced by indigenous peoples. We have the child-welfare initiative, the devolution, and some will argue that it's not working right. But, then, we just look back a few years prior to that; it didn't work much better then, either. So it takes a few years to allow these First Nations and Metis-run child-welfare agencies to take shape.

\* (15:10)

My colleague the Minister of Health (Ms. Blady) is very well aware of the initiatives that we have taken in health care and being able to provide renal health treatment facilities as an example on reserves in the province of Manitoba. And we are the only province in Canada to do such, to have these dialysis treatment facilities located on reserve, because we believe that there was no time to fight over jurisdictional issues and we believe that people should be closer to their home communities. There's more to be built; there's more that are needed and we will address those in due course, and we are also looking for opportunities.

The member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) and I grew up and were born in northern Manitoba communities. Rarely did northern people, indigenous peoples particularly, have the opportunity to even in participate in full-time employment activities. And we have broken new ground in developing new relationships on hydro development in northern communities. They have become partners prior to any development with respect to hydro, and I believe that reporting that progress we are making on indigenous issues to this Assembly and to Manitoba more broadly is something that we can all support in this Chamber.

**Mr. Briese:** I thank the minister for that answer and I—just one more question that I have. And my concern—I raised it yesterday when I met with the minister, too, but I'd like to have his reply put on the record.

I have a concern that this bill, like so many other commissions and reports and stuff that have been done over the years both by the federal government and provincial governments, that the commissions and the reports are done and then there's really no action taken afterwards. They—there's no forward progress on those actions, and the one that comes to mind is the 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples where there was considerable effort and resources put into developing that commission report, and then no action really in any of the years following it. It just seemed to be shelved, and I'm hopeful that we have a plan in place on this bill to not allow that type of thing to happen.

**Mr. Robinson:** Well, I certainly agree with the member, because I could even go up to 1991 when the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry was tabled in this Chamber, where it contained 294 recommendations. About roughly 90 of those recommendations affected

the province of Manitoba, and when we came into office the member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh) and I had a look at the two volumes of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry. That was in 1999, several years later after it was tabled in this Chamber. Upon having a look at those, we implemented the Aboriginal Justice Implementation Commission and we asked Mr. Paul Chartrand and Mr.—Ms. Wendy Whitecloud to start looking at the report and dissect the report and identify those ones that related to the province of Manitoba, which is what they did. And then we addressed those issues which included the devolution of Child and Family Services. So that's where the work began it started from that point onward.

I certainly agree with the member that we don't want any of these reports to be tabled, shelved and then gather dust.

We want to have action immediate, and—because we can't wait any longer. We don't want to create another generation of indigenous peoples that are made to feel disenfranchised in a country that they rightfully belong in.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, as the minister well knows, this path to reconciliation focuses primarily on the residential schools and the consequences of residential schools. But there has also been, of course, the '60s scoop which has received a lot of attention and for which there has been an apology. And, indeed, in more recent years, that there have been many children apprehended and taken from their families. This has caused a lot of difficulties and troubles with families and with communities.

I wonder if the minister sees this path to reconciliation as a path to reconciliation not just from the residential schools, but from these—'60s scoop and from the more recent apprehension of many Aboriginal children from their families.

**Mr. Robinson:** I absolutely do.

I view it to be the basis of all the things that we do in our relationship with indigenous peoples. Certainly, the '60s scoop is a shameful act that was perpetuated upon the indigenous peoples of this country—not only here in the province of Manitoba where the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry identified that, roughly, 3,000–3,000—of our children were adopted out of their homes, out of their communities and out of the country. I think that we have to correct—as I said in my earlier remarks, we have to correct the wrongs of the past.

The Sayisi Dene people of northern Manitoba come to mind. The Sayisi Dene people, in 1956, were removed from their homelands, somewhere they were making a good living at trapping, at Duck Lake, and moved to the shorelines of Churchill. Mr. Speaker, you and other members of this Chamber will know the harsh climate of Churchill. When they moved, they were moved to the coastline. And over 100—a third of the population of the Sayisi Dene people—died as a result of alcohol-related deaths.

The Metis people were not always recognized for their service of this country in the great wars of years gone by, whether it was World War I, World War II, Korea and other conflicts since then. Metis people have been the marginalized people, as well, for the most part.

The contributions of the Inuit people for the prevention and the protection of Canada, as well, has gone unnoticed. We have done work in ensuring that the Inuit people feel a part of any and all activities in the province of Manitoba. It wasn't the Inuit people, nor was it the indigenous peoples that drew the boundaries and the borders; there was overlap. The Dene people would hunt in the traditional areas they felt was theirs, which laps over into Nunavut. The people from Nunavut would come over to what is now Manitoba. Those have to be addressed, and we are correcting those through the efforts of such groups as the Hudson Bay roundtable, which I had the pleasure of and honour of being a co-chair for the last several years now, along with a minister from the Nunavut government.

So I think that we must continue that work, and I thank my colleague because, for a number of years. He was part of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities, and, through that organization, they helped facilitate—through his leadership at that time. I might add, rarely do I offer my good words to members of the opposition, but to this member I do because I witnessed his leadership in trying to promote a greater unity among Manitobans through his work as the lead of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities. And I also remember the interaction that occurred with our Nunavut delegates and northern Manitoba delegates.

So I believe this bill gives us that opportunity to carry on with the work that is necessary.

**Mr. Gerrard:** I noticed that the minister, in the bill, will translate the bill into seven languages, and I wonder if the minister would consider bringing in an



amendment—or second an amendment that I would bring in—which would require the translation of, at a minimum, the summary of the annual report into those seven languages, because I think it is important to make sure that it is not just the beginning, which is this bill, but the annual reporting, which is continued.

\* (15:20)

**Mr. Robinson:** I'm not quite sure I understand the question, Mr. Speaker. If the member could break it down a little bit, I'll perhaps be able to better respond to the question.

**Mr. Gerrard:** The bill requires: Within three months of the end of the fiscal year, the minister must table a copy of the report of progress on the path to reconciliation and make it available to the public. Well, it seems to me that at a minimum, the summary, but perhaps even the whole report, could be translated into the seven indigenous languages so that that would be more readily available to indigenous people throughout the province.

**Mr. Robinson:** I understand, Mr. Speaker, and I fully respect that recommendation. And we will support it.

**Mr. Gerrard:** One last question. It—my understanding, and I would ask the minister to confirm that the government would fully support all the 92 recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation—or the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the bill requires that there be a strategy developed to implement the path to reconciliation.

When would the minister be planning to present that strategy?

**Mr. Robinson:** Actually, Mr. Speaker, there are 94 recommendations that the TRC outlined. Upon passage of this bill, and I think that we begin talking about strategy and then we will be in a better position to give a more clear response to the member's question.

**Mr. Speaker:** That concludes the question period for this bill.

Is there any debate?

**Mr. Briese:** Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to speak to Bill 18, The Path to Reconciliation Act, brought forward by the Minister Aboriginal and Northern Affairs. This is another step in a process. It's a bill that continues a process that has started somewhat and will probably continue for a long time to come, and that's reconciliation over some of the

things that have happened in the past that have split our society somewhat.

The bill is designed to recognize the history of European colonizers and their relationship with indigenous people of Canada and to acknowledge the needs—the need to reconcile using the findings and recommendations of the TRC report and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.

It will be—we will be the first province where this type of legislation goes forward. I don't believe for a minute we'll be the last. But we are laying the groundwork for others to follow. It outlines specific language definitions, as well as guiding principles of the act, which opens with an eight-part mission and proclamation.

And I see this as being a necessary piece of legislation that's something that we hope will lead, and probably will take quite some time yet, but will lead to better relationships between all the people of Manitoba. It's designed to repair a relationship, and these are—some steps have been made already, and there will be many more steps to go through.

Some of the things that have been positive, I think, in the past, last spring we passed the I think it was Bill 6, and it was the bill relating to making the records of the truth and reconciliation process—giving them a permanent home at the University of Manitoba and rightly so. I think that's where they should be. We have the highest per capita indigenous population in Canada, I believe, and so I believe our province is where those records should be housed, and we supported that bill from this side of the House. That bill was passed unanimously in this House.

There's been a couple of other things that certainly have been progressive, I think, and are things that tie into this in one way or another. One of the more—one of the recent bills that went through the House was the Sioux Valley self-governance bill, once again, I think, a step in the right direction. It took years to do, and that's always my concern on these processes is the length of time it takes to put them in place. It almost takes more time to create these things and move forward with them than it did that—to the original cause of them. And Sioux Valley self-governance, they were the first First Nation in Manitoba to arrive at self-governance. There are some, I think, about 60 across Canada that have, but it may be years before there's another one in Manitoba, and I think that process is just too slow. I

think it needs to move along. I think it's a step in the right direction, and I think it's what First Nations people and leaders are asking for, but I think the process is too slow. It takes generations, it seems, and I don't know how we speed it up, but I think it needs to be speeded up.

The other thing I was quite pleased with recently in the fall session, I believe, I put forward a resolution on Jordan's Principle which was fully supported in this House. And that was after many years of debate over Jordan's Principle, and it's an issue to clarify jurisdictional issues when dealing with things like health care, whose responsibility is it, what level of government, especially with Aboriginal people, and disputes that arise from that. It's to look beyond the initial reactions, and it's to—we'll argue after the fact, not before the fact, take the actions that need to be done and decide afterwards whose jurisdiction it was.

And in some cases, that relates very much to Bill 18, is that you get away from some of the jurisdictional issues, and that's where we want to go, I think. There's clearly leadership. There'd clearly have to be resources put in place that define responsibilities and especially on the various jurisdictional parts of this. And if we don't, if we continue the way we are and the way we have, the resources are eroded. We don't get as much bang for the buck as we should yet, for lack of a better phrase.

\*(15:30)

But if you have jurisdictional disputes, your resources, your efforts are going toward the dispute instead of the solution of the dispute, and I think that happens far too much. I think it's something that has to be addressed, and I think the Jordan's Principle proposal certainly is one small step in that direction.

Another place where I believe we've made some gains as a party, as an opposition, and the leader of the—of our Conservative—Progressive Conservative team has been a long-time champion of property rights for indigenous women, and we will continue to champion and support the rights of indigenous women and indigenous peoples of Canada. It—our leader, when he was in Ottawa, took forward a bill and actually had it passed, dealing with property rights of indigenous women.

We, of course, will endeavour to foster relationship and partnership and equality with indigenous communities in Manitoba. We have taken a strong stance in our support of the duty to consult

with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities, and we believe that. We believe we have that duty to consult, and we will honour that duty to consult.

We value the indigenous history and insights, cultural practices and respect the truth of Canada's past wrongdoings and acknowledge we are, as a country, need to right the ship and ensure the prosperity of all Canadian peoples. Only when we're all on equal footing can we move forward as a nation.

We look forward to working with branches of government and the indigenous communities to foster a relationship of reconciliation and assure a better future for Manitobans. And that is why we will be supporting this bill. We look forward to taking it to committee, or the bill going to committee, and listening to the presentations that will be made at committee. And, from what the minister indicated yesterday, he felt there would be a number of presentations at committee. That will be interesting. It will be, I think, eye-opening; it will give us some more insights into this whole process.

As I said earlier, Bill 18 does not outline specific measures or goals of reconciliation. During the bill briefing with the minister, we were told that the completion and fulfillment of the 94 recommendations of the TRC report, alongside the 46 from the declaration of rights of indigenous people from the United Nations is the ultimate goal. The recommendations outlined goals for child welfare, education, language, culture, health, justice, many that focus solely on reconciliation, including church apologies, and, as you heard in the presentation earlier, mandates translation of the act in seven indigenous languages. And I was interested to hear the member from River Heights comment on translating the annual reports into the seven languages. I certainly would support that amendment to that bill. I think that's very useful.

For 150 years, 'abiginial' children were torn away from their families and their homes and their communities and sent to residential schools. And that is a large part of what this bill is hoping to address, but, as we move forward, that we will address some of the issues that came out of that.

Some of the victims were abused and many other atrocities happened in the residential schools. Not all, I think, were totally bad, but there were a number of places where things were not handled very well, to say the least. There were abuses. There was all sorts of things that we don't even—probably

can't even understand now. It was—what drove the mindset that caused those things to happen.

The TRC hosted quite a number of events, national events across Canada. The closing event in Ottawa with goals of hearing from former students and engaging the Canadian public, providing education about history and legacy of the residential school system, and sharing and honouring the experiences of former students and their families. At the closing event, the TRC received—released its executive summary, which included the findings of the 94 calls to action and, as has been said earlier, here today the 94 calls to action are what precipitated the introduction of Bill 18 and the desire to implement all 94 of those calls to action.

The TRC mandate is to acknowledge the events of the past and work toward a better future, to promote public awareness and to educate Canadians of the impact of the residential school era.

The TRC was also tasked with establishing a national research centre, as I mentioned earlier, which is actually housed here at the University of Manitoba. The university now hosts the national research centre, and I think that is something that we should be very proud of.

Mr. Speaker, this is a—as I've said, a step to build that is another step in a long history of things that need to move forward, need to be accomplished and, I think, it's needed legislation. It's legislation that I hope we hear some good presentations at committee and we be able to take forward from there.

Those few words, I thank you very much.

**Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation):** I think it'd be appropriate in speaking to this bill to acknowledge that we are in Treaty 1 territory. And I think with the very historic naming of the—the Legislature today, the placing of a portrait of Louis Riel, that we are in the province that is very much founded because of the struggles of the Metis people. And I think that's important to say, Mr. Speaker, because in the time I've been in this Legislature, I've seen a remarkable transformation. A province founded by the Metis and which, until recently, Louis Riel was considered to be a traitor. I think history has shown and we celebrate every February now in Manitoba that that is very much not the case.

I see, Mr. Speaker, the struggle for indigenous people for constitutional recognition first-hand. I'll never forget Elijah Harper in this Legislature

speaking for hundreds of thousands if not millions of indigenous people in rejecting approaches to the Constitution that they very much did not recognize.

\* (15:40)

And I'm very proud of many of the initiatives I have seen of governments I have been part of. The Aboriginal Justice Inquiry brought in by the government of the late Howard Pawley. I've seen initiatives that we have taken over the last number of years, and I want to point, for example, the recognition of the Northern Flood Agreement as a modern-day treaty, the degree to which we are increasingly and, in fact, even in this session, been recognizing the cultural and linguistic dimensions, Mr. Speaker, of our indigenous communities.

And I think it's very important as we do this to recognize the ongoing effort, particularly in terms of missing and murdered indigenous women. I'm very proud of the leadership shown by our Premier (Mr. Selinger) and our Deputy Premier, and many of my colleagues in this caucus because we have been a beacon of hope, because that's what the inquiry is all about, Mr. Speaker. It's about recognizing this epidemic of violence against indigenous women by creating a sense of hope.

But I also want to stress one thing, and that is reconciliation cannot and will not happen without clear recognition of the underlying racism of a colonial system that has intergenerational impacts and will continue to have intergenerational impacts for many years to come. The scourge of the residential school system, Mr. Speaker, and I want to say that there was some progress taken, perhaps, federally, by the federal government, supported by all members of the House of Commons a few years ago in terms of the apology. But I want to say that it rang somewhat hollow when many of the programs were put in place for the survivors of residential schools were then cut. It's a reminder, I think, to all of us that talk is one thing, action is another.

And, as we stand here today, Mr. Speaker, I want to stress that it's what we do on an everyday basis. I'm very proud to represent communities in my area that have suffered from flooding due to hydro development in the past. We've recognized the northern flood treatments. We've dealt with many of the adverse effects. We developed a partnership, and I'm very proud today of the 1,400 employees that are working today, as we speak, at the Keeyask dam,

that the majority of them are northern and Aboriginal. That is a huge accomplishment.

And I know there's much to be done, particularly in terms of the trades. I'm very proud of the fact that we're going to be building a new trade centre in my own constituency, but that tells you the story. And I just want to relay comments from the chief at Tataskweyak Cree Nation, who I talked to just recently. He talked about when it came to his community. Normally, Mr. Speaker, many people, because of lack of employment, apply and are entitled to income assistance. He said, with the employment in the community, there's so few people now applying for income assistance because people have jobs; that's how you deal with reconciliation. You fundamentally deal with the need to create hope in the future.

I want to acknowledge the groundbreaking work being done by our minister responsible for mines. The fact that we're now going to have revenue sharing for new mines in this province with indigenous people, that is tremendous.

The work that I am doing in co-operation with the Minister of Conservation, recognizing the First Nations have been the hardest hit by flooding. And, for members opposite, I will say that we make no apologies, quote me, for being there for flood-affected communities, Mr. Speaker, because they, again, are victims of a system, a colonial system that established reserves in some of the most flood-impacted communities in the province.

The Deputy Premier talked about relocation, the relocation of Sayisi Dene. I want to talk about the relocation at York Factory First Nation in 1956. Moved from their traditional home, Mr. Speaker, to a location, a very difficult adjustment. We're still dealing with those impacts today.

And, so long as racism exists in our society, we, Mr. Speaker, have much more work to do. So I am fully in support of this, but I want to say the key element is not just the words, but the action. I'm proud to be a part of a government that is a leader historically in this province, is a leader in this country in terms of promoting and practising reconciliation.

Yes, there is much more to do, Mr. Speaker, but much has been accomplished. And this bill itself, I believe, is part of the fact that we in this province

today are making history when it comes to indigenous people.

And I want to conclude, Mr. Speaker, by saying I've always acknowledged the degree to which I have been very honoured to represent so many indigenous people, to speak out on their behalf in this Legislature, and I want to say on the record, we could learn a lot, not just through the reconciliation process, we could learn a lot from Aboriginal approaches to history, to culture, to family, to community. I have learned a lot. So as I stand today, I am very proud to support this groundbreaking legislation. We are making history today in the province of Manitoba.

**Mr. Ian Wishart (Portage la Prairie):** Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise and put a few words on record regarding Bill 18, the path forward, related to the reconciliation act and the TRC, and many good words have already been put forward both by the minister and some of the previous speakers. I think it is particularly important that we recognize that this is—it's time. You know, if I can borrow a quote from a Liberal—and there's no Liberal here to borrow it from—it's 2016, it's time, simply time that we made the changes and time that we move forward.

We have to learn a great deal from the history going back and including the period of time that residential schools was part of the problem. But even prior to that, there were many, many issues, far too many to go into in great detail, and there continue to be issues not only since residential schools, but we made reference to the '60s scoop and the ongoing problem with child welfare and the large number, disproportionate number of children caught in the child-welfare system. And, of course, you can argue cause and effect forever, I guess, but certainly there is no doubt that there's a connection between what happened in the residential schools and what happened in child welfare, and what continues to happen in child welfare.

So it is really great to have the opportunity to talk a little bit about what needs to be done because we need, as Manitobans and as Canadians, we need to resolve this issue. We have a long and troubled history when it relates to First Nations in this country and how we have worked with them. Not always bad, you know; there's some examples and some examples here in Manitoba where there was, particularly in the early days, great co-operation between settlers and the First Nations that were already here, and it worked out to everyone's benefit

in the early days. But those days seem to have disappeared, and so now we need to bring them back not in the same vein, of course, but as an evolution of where we have moved to as a society and make sure that there's a piece of the pie for everyone, including our First Nations friends. And we have failed to do that. For many, many years, we've left certain groups without their appropriate source of income, their share of the economic puzzle that is Manitoba, that is Canada, and we need to engage them and get them back as part of that. And that's moving forward, and that is part of the strategy I know that the member for Agassiz (Mr. Briese) made reference to, and we are certainly looking forward to seeing what that strategy might look like, and we're prepared to be part of that strategy.

It is our belief that all Manitobans and all Canadians need to find ways to talk together, to work together, to move our society forward and to make sure that everyone has a share in what is yet to come for this province because we have a great future before us. We need to make sure that part of that future is shared with everyone, whether it be First Nations, whether it be Metis or whether it be recent immigrants because they certainly are faced with many of the same types of problems. So it is time to focus on that and make sure that everyone has that opportunity here in Manitoba.

Much of what we have seen—and we've gone through a period of time in this city in particular where we have had some focus on the racism that is still here and to be dealt with. And I would compliment the mayor of the City of Winnipeg here for shining a little bit extra light on it following the comments that were made in the Maclean's magazine, and though I don't necessarily agree with everything that they said in Maclean's about Winnipeg, they did with some justification bring forward the issue that we do have a problem with racism here. We are not the only city, but we need to find a solution that works for Winnipeg and works for Manitoba, and the other cities will have to do the same or they will fall behind. I think that there's a great opportunity.

\* (15:50)

I think it's also particularly appropriate that the TRC records end up here in Winnipeg, though I know that many of the records are for—from all across western Canada, all across Canada, really, to bring—and bring back some of the sadder moments. I know that it was a troubling time. We had people

from our own community that went to speak before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, because we did have a residential school in Portage la Prairie, closed in the mid '60s. It was a bit of a different example because it was a day school, so not as many around-the-clock residents. There were some. But it has—because of that had somewhat different history than many of the other residential schools.

But even that was a troubling institution to have in the community, and I've talked to a number of people over the years that both attended there and worked there, and no one's comfortable with that piece of our past. It is certainly a sad reflection on a time when decisions were made that certainly didn't work out for the best of anyone, Mr. Speaker. And I'm not sure that I understand, to this day, what the thinking was that was behind that. I guess at the time, there was certainly a much different approach to dealing with your fellow mankind than we seem to have today, and I would hope that we can put that behind us and learn from it—absolutely we need to learn from it—but move forward and try and find solutions.

I have the pleasure of representing three First Nations in my constituency, one of which is part of Treaty 1 and the other two are status but not treaty Indians, which is kind of a unique situation, and we work together with them on many occasions, on many issues. And the member for Agassiz mentioned one of the problems that we're forever running into when we're trying to find solutions that work for the community, work for the First Nations, work for our community, allow us all to move ahead together, is the fact that we run into that jurisdictional issue forever. Some things are federal; some things are provincial. And I like his suggestion that we would simply find the solution and then worry about the issue of jurisdiction, because right now, the issue of jurisdiction seems to put a halt to so much good work that gets off the ground and gets started and—but then fails to move as far as it should.

We also have a very significant Metis population in the community, a couple of Metis communities, actually, in my constituency, and they, too, have their own issues and their own history. In particular, the '60s scoop is relevant to many of them, and that is a difficult thing for them to talk about, difficult for them to recognize how to deal with that and the impact that it's had on the community.

But one thing that we certainly need to do is sit down and listen to one another, talk about ways to

move forward, talk about solutions that we can find. It is not only good for those individuals as—in terms of dealing with their history, but it's good for the community. And we can find solutions that allow us to move forward as a province, as communities, as a province, as a country, that I think can be to everyone's benefit. I think it's time that we spent more emphasis on that, looking for solutions, looking for a way to move forward. And I know our leader, Brian Pallister, when he was in Ottawa, had spent a lot of time—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

I want to caution the honourable member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Wishart) that when we're referencing members of the House, it's to be by their constituencies or ministers by their portfolio and not by the family name. I caution the honourable member, please.

**Mr. Wishart:** —for the reminder. The member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Pallister), when he was—in his time when he was MP for Portage-Lisgar in Ottawa, actually was very active when it came to property rights for indigenous women, and I know he can tell quite a few instances about how he had worked on that, and it was not necessarily well received by everyone at the time. But he was very persistent on it, driven by some very telling examples that he will share with you if you take the time. And it is certainly one of his prouder moments when he managed to accomplish a private member's bill in Ottawa that provided those rights, so certainly he was part of that.

And really, as a party, we are very open to fostering relationships not only with the Metis community but also with the Aboriginal communities here in Manitoba. And, as I've said before, I think it's more than time that we should do that and move forward.

In my role that—critic's role in Family Services, I also deal with the—what we tend to view as the poverty issue, and I know that it represents a disproportionate number of First Nations families, First Nations individuals, and that we need to find solutions that work specifically for them. And I know that when you talk to many of them, especially First Nations and Metis and even some Inuit people, because surprisingly Winnipeg has quite a few Inuit homeless individuals, we really need to find special solutions for that. And many of them, frankly, have a history with the school system, residential school system, and that is part of the problem. I think we

need to work together to find specific solutions to help them get their lives together and move forward.

It is a sad example. Each individual becomes a sad example of the problems with the school system. And I know that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission included many of these stories, but it did not necessarily move them forward. It's great to tell the story and it is somewhat healing, but you need more than that to help find solutions, and that is the 94 recommendations that require to move us forward.

I think that's absolutely essential that we begin to work in a very organized manner in trying to deal with as many of those recommendations as we can. Some of them are very much based on just taking a different lens to the current problem; some of them need different policies to try and move us forward, to try and deal with some of the problems that are out there. And there are just too many sad stories from the past in residential schools to go into, but they certainly exist, and I think it's important that we recognize from that these, because I think it's very important that we learn from the past.

I know—I have kids in various parts of school, one—well, especially high school these days, and there's a lot more education being offered on the real history of Manitoba and the problems in the early days and the relationship that existed between First Nations in the early days and the early settlers and the Metis' role in Manitoba's history. And I think it's very good and very appropriate that people now learn a lot more about it. And I, certainly, recognize it, and, you know, in the days when I went through that institution, through high school, back in ancient history, certainly, it was—different stories were said and a lot of omission. I call it the sins of omission, to some degree, with the history of Manitoba.

And now that I, you know, now I'm older, I would say that that was representative of who wrote the history books, Mr. Speaker, because, as we know, it's usually the victors that get to write the history books. And though we did not actually have the type of war that occurred south of the border very—in very many instances, we had a different type of a cultural process that left them out of the mainstream. And we, because of that, we did not have the type of information available.

And I'm glad to see that that is finally being corrected, Mr. Speaker. I think it is very important, especially now that we have so many new immigrants in the communities, that they learn

immediately what the history of this country is. And, in fact, though we have not always been inclusive to the degree that we should have been, we are certainly making an effort now to do that.

So I'm very pleased to have the opportunity to speak to this bill. I think it is an important bill, and I think it's appropriate that Manitoba should be the first province to bring forward this type of bill. I do hope that not only we as a province but as a country we do the follow-up that is necessary here. Has—as has been referenced far too often, there are many very good reports done with the best of intentions out there that don't get the type of active follow-up that is necessary that end up being on a dusty shelf somewhere.

\* (16:00)

And I don't think this report deserves that. I think it deserves far better. I think it's absolutely essential that this time we get things right, not only here in Manitoba but in Canada. So I think it's very important that we move ahead, learn and learn from the past history, not only the individual histories that we heard in TRC but the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, and other documents that are out there that have discussed, in the same vein, some of the problems.

I think it's all about making sure that everyone has a piece of the future, that they have a vision for their future that is inclusive and that they have the opportunity, and I certainly would be happy to support any type of bill that I thought would lead to that type of future, Mr. Speaker.

So, with that said, I know that there are probably a lot of people in this House that want to take advantage of the opportunity that we have to speak to this bill, this one that I actually think will be a ground breaker.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas):** I wanted to address a question that was asked on how to indicate success from today's TRC bill. I wanted to back up and share my personal journey as to where I am here today.

First of all, I've shared here before that I come from three generations of residential school survivors, and today I'm speaking on behalf of my grandmother, my great-grandmother, my grandmother and my mother, and my daughter, my future grandchildren as well.

I wanted to share with you that when I was a young girl I used to eavesdrop on my dad's meetings when he was chief of OCN, The Pas band at the time, when the Helen Betty Osborne court hearing was taking place. Obviously, I was shocked to hear about the violent death that my sister went through. She was an Aboriginal woman who was kidnapped, brutally murdered, and no one spoke about it in my own community that I was born and raised in for 17 years. A lot of people didn't come forward because they were scared or they really just didn't care at all.

So, after that moment in listening to this truth what happened in my own back yard, I honestly believed that for a long time that I belonged to a group of people that could be easily disposed of and a lot of people wouldn't care. I actually accepted racism that it would be part of my life because of that incident.

It wasn't until I went to university that I started feeling, okay, maybe we are worthy. We—I majored in Native studies and political studies, and I learned about residential schools. You know, we didn't learn about this when I was in elementary school. What we learned about Aboriginal people is that fur trading—that's about it, and that's why I'm extremely proud that one of the recommendations is towards, you know, working with education, appropriate curriculum on residential schools, treaties and Aboriginal people's historical and contemporary contributions to Canada, a 'mandatory' education requirement for kindergarten to grade 12 students, something that I'm very proud of to be a part of compared to the education that we received when I was younger.

And I—while I was in university, too, I started to learn about political movement of Aboriginal people as well. I started to learn about Supreme Court cases recognizing Aboriginal and treaty rights, and with that, this level to the next level of being a proud First Nation started to rise. Education was my tool to that empowerment.

So, after graduating, I became involved with band politics. I was a band councillor, and in two capacities I worked directly with residential school survivors. One, I was a special projects co-ordinator and helped assist our residential school survivors obtain healing in traditional ways or with our church, and with that—especially after they went through their adjudication process. So imagine retelling your horrific story, reopening those wounds. So we

worked as a team to work with that person to provide wraparound services, if you will.

My other capacity that I worked with directly with residential school survivors was when I submitted in a proposal to the Indian Residential Schools Adjudication Secretariat, again, another opportunity to provide healing services but within the community instead of sending our people here to Winnipeg to take therapy. So it was an honour that we had that opportunity for our residential school survivors to stay with their family and friends in their community and receive that therapy, counselling sessions.

So, with that—I also had the honour, too, of listening to Justice Murray Sinclair speak twice and, like I've shared before, I didn't even move at all—I don't think anyone moved at all. What he shared with us was crucial. He even shared with our educators at University College of the North. And one thing that will always stick with me that he said was that residential schools, it's not an Aboriginal problem, it's a Canadian problem.

So going back to the—indicating success, I started to think about it that, where I came from, you know, 20 years ago, from here to here, my level in my pride of being an Aboriginal person, I think that's success itself—indicating success. We are much more different—treated much more different than we were 20 years ago and, today, I'm proud and honoured to be part of our government that are leading us to this path to reconciliation. And, with that—that's indicating success, it's within myself as an Aboriginal woman in this country that we are here today with the TRC recommendations. That's success.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's a good day to be an Aboriginal person in Canada. Thank you.

**Mr. Gerrard:** I want to talk to this bill which deals with the path to reconciliation.

This is an important step. It is one step of many that we are taking, and it builds upon very substantial action which has been taken over the last number of years, including action at the federal level to set up the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and to recognize the legacy of the residential school system and many other actions which took place. The Sayisi Dene were an example where people were moved from where they were living to other areas which were problematic, and decisions were taken without

people being adequately consulted or considered, and it is important that we are now recognizing this.

As I spoke earlier, it is important that we recognize that what we are looking for in a path to reconciliation is not just a path to recognize and reconcile the problems that happened in the residential school system as has been indicated in my response to my question early on, that this applies also to the events of the '60s scoop and achieving a reconciliation from that. And it applies to what has happened even more recently with the apprehension of a large number of children—indigenous children in Manitoba taken away from their families and put in care. And this disruption to families, this disruption to culture, has been a fact, but it's also been tragic and had a huge impact, and we need to recognize that impact and to recognize, also, that we need to not only have that knowledge broadly understood throughout all of Manitoba, but we need to have the processes in place that will bring healing and reconciliation.

The Indian residential schools operated, roughly, from the 1870s to 1996. They held something like 150,000 indigenous children during that period. It—as was established in the royal commission—the Canadian residential school system was established for the purpose of separating children from their families and from their cultures, and we need to ensure that this is not only understood—and the damage that this caused is understood—but there is, as this bill is a starting point, a path to reconciliation.

\*(16:10)

We owe great debt to Justice Murray Sinclair who chaired the panel, the truth and reconciliation panel, and to commissioners Marie Wilson and Wilton Littlechild who also put in a large number of hours and spent a long time helping with the process of the commission, writing the report and presenting it.

It has been reported that there were at least 4,000 Aboriginal children who died in residential schools and there may have been considerably more than that. These adverse impacts of the residential school had on family structure, on cultural understanding and loss of languages are large. And, as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission put forward, there are critical areas where there needs to be a path to healing and a path beyond healing to building a society which nourishes all, which helps build a very strong future for Manitoba and for Canada and which addresses the critical areas which



were brought forward in the—and described and discussed in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The area of child welfare with many, many children being taken into care, and as we have heard even in this Chamber by the minister responsible for family services at one point that the child-welfare system, to some extent, evolved out of the residential-school system structure and unfortunately has continued to cause dislocation, loss of culture, loss of language and breakup of families.

The second area, the education system, clearly needs to be attended to so that we are building an education system for everybody, an education system for the future and one which builds in the understanding of culture and cultural traditions and languages.

And that, then, is the third area, the area of language and culture. Children in residential schools were most frequently not allowed to speak their indigenous languages or practise their culture, and this caused great long-term consequences in terms of a loss of language and culture.

The fourth area was health. Indigenous children in residential schools were subjected to a lot of abuse, and the effects of that trauma was passed on to the survivors and passed on to their descendants and their families, creating ongoing issues. The—we need, then, to have a pathway to address the health issues which derive from this and ensure not only that the past problems are addressed, but that we have a pathway to the best possible health for indigenous people and indeed for all Manitobans.

Justice issues, we've had, of course, the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry with its recommendations, but there are many other aspects of the justice system which need attention as a result of what happened in the residential school systems and the '60s scoop and more recently with the apprehension of so many children in the child-welfare system. And we need to make sure that we are building a justice system which is appropriate.

I was, for example, visiting some time ago in Nelson House at the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation Family and Community Wellness Centre and saw a demonstration of a traditional Cree court. And there is a, I believe, a great deal of potential in being able to use such courts to address problems quickly in communities and to address them in an effective and traditional way so that we can build a justice system

for the future, which takes advantage of these cultural and historic traditions that have existed among indigenous people.

This bill talks about the path to reconciliation. It talks about ensuring that there is attention to the seven indigenous languages in Manitoba, with the translation of the bill into those languages. I have asked a question and got government support for the possibility of putting an amendment forward which would have translated in the annual report, at a minimum, the summary. And, I believe, that that would be a useful way of making sure that there is some enhanced ability to communicate this in each of the Aboriginal languages and to provide people some accountability, to show that it is not just in the bill, but the bill is actually having an impact on an annual basis and that there is accountability and a linguistic continuing representation of the importance of these languages in Manitoba.

The stories of the residential school system are, of course, many—the children taken from their homes and put into residential schools sometimes far, far away from their community and their family and only able to see their families for short periods, say, during the summer.

There are stories, and I have heard them, of children put into residential schools. This happened at Sagkeeng First Nation, and these—the residential school was within the community, close to the homes of some of the children, but the children were confined there, and they weren't even able to go home at the end of the day when their families were only a short distance away. And it was devastating what happened, and how children were separated from their families even though they were very close.

And there are stories of how some individuals were able to escape from being taken away by keeping an eye on people coming down the trail and hiding. In one instance, I heard a story of a woman, as a small child, who was made to hide in a small hole underneath the floor whenever there were people coming. And, yes, she escaped the going to the residential schools, but she did not escape having this experienced as a very traumatic time in her childhood. And so we must remember that the drama extended not just to those who attended the residential schools but to individuals who were affected in many different ways because of what happened. So I look forward to this bill passing, Mr. Speaker. I believe it has all-party support. I also look forward to having, in due course, the strategy

put forward that is called for the bill. The strategy is to outline the path to reconciliation, and I believe that this should be, you know, an urgent document and a very important document.

\* (16:20)

And, yes, that strategy will build on the principles of respect and engagement and understanding and action and needs to include each of those areas, in, as I have discussed, the areas where a particular attention is needed from child welfare to education to language and culture to health and to justice, as examples. And let us hope that this path to reconciliation is not only laid out but it is actually followed, and to the extent that I can contribute, I will certainly do what I can as an MLA. And the Manitoba Liberal Party will do what it can to ensure that the path is not only developed as a strategy but we actually are walking that path, and we are walking that path side by side with indigenous people from all over Manitoba and making sure that we have a world which is better for indigenous people but better also for all Manitoba because we can live and work together and all have opportunities.

With those remarks, Mr. Speaker, I will sit down. I just want to say thank you for this opportunity. Meegwetch, and hope that we can have this move forward soon.

**Hon. Sharon Blady (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, this is an historic day, and it's an historic day that in all of my years as a student and as an educator and as an academic and writer, I dreamed about, never imagined that I would live to see and, certainly, did not imagine actually having to be a part of it. To be able to be to second it—to be the seconder for the second reading of this is something that is so important, and it has been an historic day on a number of levels. First of all, we've had debate on this bill about reconciliation, but we also today unveiled the portrait of Louis Riel next to the other leaders of our province, next to the premiers.

I've spent the better part of my adult life—actually, even, my—it goes back to my childhood, studying the history of the Metis and advocating for the role of Louis Riel to be recognized in the way he has been, and that today what we did in unveiling his portrait is part of the actions of reconciliation.

We in Manitoba don't often appreciate the unique circumstance that we exist in. We are the only province in all of confederation that negotiated

its own way into confederation under indigenous leadership. That was done under Louis Riel. That was done with the Bill of Rights that would become the Manitoba Act, and, while we have already recognized the Legislative Assembly with the portraits that hang on the first floor, today that act of recognizing his leadership as the president of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba is one of the many tangible actions that are part of the path to reconciliation.

And the legislation that we debate today is so important, because, as I said, it's an historic moment, but it's an historic moment in response to the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, in the response to the work that was undertaken by Justice Murray Sinclair. And it has been a quick, a responsive and respectful call to action to take those recommendations seriously. And we know that the work that has been undertaken by Justice Sinclair in the past has not always been responded to so quickly. I speak of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry and the findings there and how work was undertaken and then it sat, gathering dust, until an NDP government could return and do the work. And then Mr. Sinclair and his commission and the work that came out of that, again, brought forward great change.

I had the privilege of being hired under the Aboriginal Child Welfare Initiative, which was an outgrowth of the Justice inquiry, and I was very honoured to be able to teach both indigenous and non-indigenous students about the very subjects that were a part of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's work, and I'm so proud of the things that have been done by this government.

It is very much the core reason why, when I was asked to run in '07, I said yes. It was because it was possible to become part of a party of a group of people who were committed to walking side by side, nation to nation with indigenous peoples. And I'm seeing, and I have witnessed the transformations and other historic actions that have taken place in this Chamber, from this government, and again, it makes me so proud because I came in to teach under the Aboriginal Child Welfare Initiative and within the Access Program, and within many things where I've seen the transformation because of this government's investment in education, investment in indigenous people, and now, to be able to have joined this team, I've watched further growth and historic growth happen, whether it's Bill 13, which again, passed second reading the other day. Again, it's gonna mean

that students learn about indigenous history and culture and curriculum right from kindergarten to Grade 12, because I know as a post-secondary educator, a good part of the work that I was doing was to basically, for lack of a better way of putting it, deprogrammed young people from what—from the misinformation that they had been given.

This has evolved over time. I know in my own time, that I was a Grade 8 student that wrote a paper about Louis Riel and how he was the founder of Manitoba. Let's just say that perspective did not necessarily go over very well with my Social Studies teacher at the time.

So to stand here today on a day where we have unveiled his portrait, where we sit here debating this legislation, I know how important it is and that this is part of a solid commitment to moving forward on a path towards reconciliation, and I would like to thank those that have taught me along the way, whether they have been elders and traditional teachers, or my other colleagues. And most importantly, I would like to thank the late Oscar Lathlin for his mentorship and very much thank him for, well, the legacy that he left us. And that part of his legacy resides in this Chamber as the current member for The Pas (Ms. Lathlin), and I want to thank her for her sistership and for the role that she has played and continuing the education that her father started with me.

I'd like to thank my other colleagues for the work that they have done here as well, whether it's the Minister of Jobs and the Economy (Mr. Chief), the Minister of Finance (Mr. Dewar), and most importantly, the Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, the member for Kewatinook (Mr. Robinson), their leadership, their indigenous leadership in this Chamber, and again, like the day where we had 'debated' cushion, and—I'm trying to think of the correct technical term for—where we placed the mace, when that was provided to us, that was a historic day. The day that we had the mace that was made from a Red River cart axle, these are all markers, important historical markers, and today is another one. And like everyone else in this Chamber, at least on this side, I know that this is an important day, and I look forward to moving forward in reconciliation with all indigenous people in this province. And I hope that everyone recognizes the importance of what has been brought forward, and the work that is still yet to come.

Merci, chi-miigwetch, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### House Business

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader):** Pursuant to rule 31(8), I'm announcing that the private members' resolution to be considered next Tuesday will be one put forward by the honourable member for The Pas. The title of the resolution is Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Rights.

**Mr. Speaker:** It has been announced that in keeping with rule 31(8) that the private members' resolution to be considered next Tuesday will be the one brought forward by the honourable member for The Pas, and the title of the resolution is Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Rights.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Speaker:** Now, for the debate on Bill 18, the honourable member for Riding Mountain.

**Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Riding Mountain):** It's a pleasure to put some words on the record with regard to Bill 18, The Path to Reconciliation Act. I'd like to indicate first that this is not a partisan issue. This is a non-partisan issue that we all have to take into consideration. We have to support each and every one of us across this province and I believe that this bill actually is a step forward in assisting and improving relations as well as empowering a sector of our population that for many years has seen hardships and issues that have taken away from their self-worth, Mr. Speaker.

\*(16:30)

On June 2nd, 2008, the Conservative federal government established the Indian Residential School Truth and Reconciliation Commission, known in short form as the TRC. And the TRC had a mandate to assemble records of the experiences of indigenous people who attended residential schools in order to acknowledge wrongdoings of the federal government of the past, and to create a platform for survivors to reconcile with the tragic events that frequently occurred at the residential schools.

There was a residential school in Birtle, Manitoba, a community that is very close to where I live, and I grew up less than six miles from Waywayseecappo First Nations. And I saw first-hand, and my parents made sure that I paid attention, to the challenges that these individuals faced. Personally, it not only created a lot of hardship, but it created a lot of injustice for the First Nations community that I lived beside, that I learned of first-hand. I became friends with a lot

of the individuals who personally experienced living in residential schools, and one person that I have a ton of respect for is Mr. Jim Cote from Waywayseecappo, who is an elder within the community, now, of Waywayseecappo. And the way he explained to me of the outcome of having to experience residential school was how he was taught not to show affection. He's—he indicated to me how hard it was for him to hug a member of his family because it was frowned upon while he was a student at the residential school. Not to show emotion, not to show affection, and—over and above not being able to speak your language and to be proud of your culture, but to take away that personal, I believe, tool that creates love and caring—it took Jim a long time to regain some of that. It took years.

Unfortunately, his children did not experience the loving and caring aspect of, now, who Jim is, and he knows that that has hurt his family, his children. But he is an unbelievable grandfather and an unbelievable leader within his community, and every time I see him I hug him just because I know that that was something that, in his past, was something that was not freely given and was frowned upon. So I have to say that Mr. Cote is a good friend, but also a very strong leader in the community.

And, actually, I had the opportunity to tour Birtle school over the last—I would say, within the last eight years, with Mr. Cote—with Jim. And he showed me, you know, the murals that he remembers as a child, having assembly within the school in the main hall and focusing on a wolf that was on the wall. His concerned frustration that he couldn't get the ear of the current government, this NDP government, to pay attention to his quest to regain ownership—as an indigenous community, to regain ownership of the Birtle residential school, and how he asked for advice on how to proceed with that. And I believe that that's not an uncommon story. There are a lot of community leaders, over time, who have come forward and asked for support and help in trying to gain some power back in having to deal with the issue of residential school, and I believe that Mr. Cote had a very good plan in his ideas on how to take Birtle residential school and take it from the horrors that so many families realized and turn it into a learning facility and to make it a place where elders could come and share their stories, where they could recreate history and ensure that this type of situation doesn't occur again. And, unfortunately, that opportunity was missed, and was not supported by this current government.

So, Bill 18, I believe, Mr. Speaker, The Path to Reconciliation Act, is so important. And I know that the government side has talked about the need for this to happen and I totally agree. And I do believe that there has to be immediate and long-term action. The indigenous people within our province have had too many setbacks, have had too many situations where their population has been ignored or not treated fairly. When you have the—one of the highest rates of children not graduating from high school, when you have one of the highest incidences of youth suicide in the country, within our own province, there's a lot of work to do.

So, when they talk about immediate and long-term action, absolutely, Mr. Speaker, that has to happen.

And so I believe that this bill has a lot of potential to make a difference. The actions of this current government tell me otherwise. So we, as a member of this Chamber and all members within this Chamber, have a lot of work to do if we're going to make this bill a success, as the government believes that it will be, because I believe that too many times the indigenous community have been told one thing and other actions have occurred which have not been in the best interests of the people, Mr. Speaker. So I believe that this is a good step. I believe that we are on the right track. I believe Manitoba being the first province in Canada to implement this type of legislation is correct.

But we also have some of the biggest concerns, and I believe that the indigenous people of Manitoba have some of the biggest challenges. And I think that we as a government have a moral obligation to make sure that we are taking immediate and long-term action so that we can be proud as a province of all of our citizens and not do as this government, where they talked about graduation rates being the—such a per cent, 90-some per cent, but not taking into consideration the Aboriginal or indigenous population in those numbers, knowing that the percentages would be brought down. So you cannot ignore. You have to encompass and engage all citizens within this province. And, when you're going to be talking about achievements, you have to include everybody in this province because I believe we are all citizens of this province and need to be treated properly.

I do remember a conversation that I had with the member for The Pas back probably eight or nine years when I was the critic for Aboriginal and

Northern Affairs, the father for the current member of The Pas. And he talked about education and I believe that the member for The Pas, that was something that he was very, very concerned about and something that he believed was a tool to help bring up the population, the Aboriginal or the indigenous population, because without education, Mr. Speaker, you cannot beat those other challenges. And I believe that the member for The Pas and I at that time—I enjoyed our Estimates discussions because I learned a lot. And I enjoyed listening to what he had to say. But I do believe that he was not always heard at the—their caucus table because I believe that a lot of his ideas were not implemented.

But I believe that this tool, this process, will allow his daughter, the now member for The Pas (Ms. Lathlin), to use this as a tool to empower government to make some change that is required. So I look forward to those opportunities.

\* (16:40)

There have been things that the government has done with regard to empowering First Nations, bills with regard to indigenous languages and ensuring that those things aren't lost. And that's critical. I'm Ukrainian and, you know, I know that my language, my ability to speak Ukrainian is gone. When I was little, I, you know, I was around it a lot more, and I believe that I understood the language, and I—and from that, you become very proud, and you learn a lot more about your culture. And I believe that what has been done here over time has been—it—you know, what has happened with residential schools was the taking away of that pride of your culture and your language. Has taken a number of years to come back in a number of ways. And you see so many wonderful ways that they—the indigenous people have brought that back. And I think that's—it's a great way to build strength within your community.

So I believe all members in this House support the intent of Bill 18. I believe that the values and the—the values of the indigenous history are so important, and I believe that we need to, as a government, ensure that these obligations are fulfilled. So as the member for Riding Mountain and my constituents, I know that there are many constituents within my riding who are looking forward to action on this file and on this bill, and as we go forward I look forward to supporting a number of the initiatives that this bill will bring forward. So thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Doyle Pivniuk (Arthur-Virden):** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to put a few words on this Bill 18 for path and reconciliation act. I know I was part of the—talking with the minister of—from Dawson Trail about, you know, about this bill that was first—the—on June 2nd when the Conservative federal government established an Indian residential school and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, known in short as the TRC, with a \$60-million budget. The TCR—TRC had a mandate to assemble records of experiences of Aboriginal people who attended residential schools in order to acknowledge any wrongful doing of the federal governments of the past and create a platform for survivors and to reconcile in the tragic events that frequently occurred at the residential schools.

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the Bill 18 is to recognize the history of the trouble European colonizers have caused the indigenous people of Canada and to acknowledge the need to reconcile using the findings and recommendations of the TRC report of the United Nations declaration on the rights in 'indigenal' people. And, what is so important, because I think when it comes to reconciliation, and comprised in all this information, this data that was about different stories about the Aboriginal people's experiences at residential schools, and more importantly that we need to know the history of it and the background of this issue, but the—more importantly, is how do we go forward into the future with—to reconcile with our Aboriginal people. It's so important now to work with each—with both mainstream and also with the indigenous people to work together to become an opportunity for, you know, actually, a win-win situation for our province of Manitoba and for the Aboriginal people even throughout Canada.

Mr. Speaker, during the spring of 2015 session, the PC party voted in favour of Bill 6, the national reconciliation centre of truth and reconciliation act, which allowed the access to the—records of truth and reconciliation at the University of Manitoba in an official site named the national research centre of truth and reconciliation. The TRC has created a gathering of stories and experiences of residential schools on—and Bill 6 mandate that the University of Manitoba archives, those records, and—to make them accessible to the public. And what a great a place to have it and especially when we have this—Manitoba has just opened the human rights museum, and to have these records here in the city of Winnipeg is very, very important because now when we have tourists that have come to our province to actually

tour the museum of human rights, this gives us an opportunity for them to do some—to go to the university of U of M to look at some of the research that was done of our—of Aboriginal people.

And so the other day—last year—a year—a number of years ago, I was actually—I was—city of Winnipeg, the response to Nancy Macdonald's controversial January 22nd, 2015, Maclean's article that said Winnipeg was Canada's most racist city, bayer Mowman [*phonetic*] told the public that the city would focus on and promote racial inclusion.

And a year later I was honoured to be invited to the event that happened on January 22nd, 2016, when Mayor Bowman hosted an event to announce the 2016 that would be the year of reconciliation. It was nice to see all the different people that were actually at the event. I was—with myself and my colleague from Morris, we were actually at the event. And it was nice to hear different individual people speaking at the event. We had a number of people from their First Nation people and also the Metis Federation. And it was good to understand where everybody's coming from and how we have to go forward and move forward for this province and the city of Winnipeg to reconcile our, everyone's, differences and all the stuff that has happened in the past.

It is important that we work together and incorporate our indigenous people in our economy. I went, I had an opportunity to talk to some of our Aboriginal people in my constituency of Arthur-Virden. And one of my good friends is Chief Tacan, Vincent Tacan, who is Sioux Valley's first—Dakota First Nation's chief. And we actually had a nice visit. We actually went horseback riding in the beautiful Assiniboine valley, where they actually are located. And we had a lot of good talks. You know, it was talks about what we should be doing in the future. And I will always remember that day. It was so important to have an open conversation, what we need to do to go forward and to work with our Aboriginal people. And this is the experiences that they had.

And actually Chief Tacan was mentioning that his parents were at residential schools, and one of his cousins was—her name is Barb Eastman. She's also—her son actually played sports with my son, many different sports from baseball to hockey and to football. And so we actually had a nice conversation one time when there was a game on, and I don't think I actually even watched the game, I was more

interested in the conversation we had. And she was telling me about the stories about her parents going to residential schools and some of the experiences. There was a lot of trials and tribulations. There was some positive things that she said that her father experienced, but, like I said, you know, I'm always fascinated with these stories of peoples and how people were influenced and how—and with bad experiences and good experiences. And it was important to understand where her people were coming from. And I've actually enjoyed the whole conversation.

And what I like to do is like, you know, we need to do, especially when leaders in our communities, we need to work with our Aboriginal people. And we have such an opportunity to incorporate them in the economy. I know I talked to a lot of business owners, people who are in business. And they understand how important it is to incorporate our First Nations in our economy. I remember talking to a contractor who actually hires a lot of people, and he says, you know, the opportunity that we have right now is to work together and the opportunity that we can have to build the economy in our First Nation reserves and also the city of Winnipeg.

We need these economic zones. You know, a lot of people call them urban reserves, but we on this side of the House would like to call them economic zones, with our First Nation people, because I think we need to promote it. And we see what's happened in Saskatchewan and Regina and Saskatoon, and all their economic zones, how they've created. And they're really incorporating, especially Regina. I've seen how much they have incorporated their First Nation people in their economy and even into their education system. In the University of Saskatchewan—or Regina, they actually have Aboriginal on—proportion on the campus. And I think this is a way the start of a reconciliation with our First Nation people is to work together when it comes to our university, and that includes from the early education to university and also train these individuals in our community colleges and our universities.

\* (16:50)

And we have an opportunity to work with our First Nations, especially in the northern communities. We need to develop our northern communities. And this is the opportunity that we look at mining explorations. I think we're actually now one of the—we used to be one of the highest

accomplishments when it came to mining, and now we're sort of actually almost at the bottom of the list of mining exploration. And this is our opportunity that we have in the North of our First Nation people.

The other thing, too, Mr. Speaker, is when I was talking to Chief Tacan, some of the issues that had was—the biggest concerns they had was health care, education, housing, and also, you know, when it comes to Child and Family Services. And I think the biggest thing that we can do here is if we can actually have social economics, if we can provide opportunities for our First Nation people. This gives them opportunity to become part of the economy; this gives them opportunity to have some self-worth, some confidence, and this is what we need to do, is work with our First Nation people to give them—empower them, to empower them to start a new business, to get a trade to work in the workforce. And I think by having our social economics looked after, all those other issues would actually be solved, too, when it comes to health care, when it comes to education and when it comes to housing.

You know, we need to give opportunities to our First Nation people in our reserves and in—also in our urban areas too. Many of them come from the northern areas into Winnipeg, and here's an opportunity to be part inclusiveness. And this is starts—this reconciliation will start with that, and I think this—we have a lot of work ahead of us to work with our First Nation people, to incorporate them into our economy and to foster and to work with them, to encourage.

And this is—I think this is a start, and it's important that we start here and we start here in the House and we start working with the City of Winnipeg and also with our federal counterparts and the federal government to work and have solutions for First Nation people.

Mr. Speaker, I was also privileged, like our—my colleague from Riding Mountain, to be part of our First Nation growing up. And I remember I went to school with a number of our First Nation people and—in the town of Roblin. We—I—like I said before, I graduated with the first female indigenous person that graduated from our high school in my grad class. And it was be an honour to encourage her to, like, to be—to graduate, and I believe she went on to better—a good future.

And now, I see in the town of Virden, for instance, we have many of our First Nation people who graduate, and that's encouraging. It's our—how

much our—how much things have changed just in the 30 years that—since I've graduated here.

And, again, Mr. Speaker, we need to work with many of—with our partners when it comes to, again, you know, growing up with our First Nation people, you know, I went to school with them. We—also, I went to school with a lot of Metis individuals who were from the San Clara-Boggy Creek area. We were educated together; we played sports together. A number of my family members actually married into the Metis population in—north of Roblin, and it brings a rich culture to our family and I really value that and how important it is to encourage the pride that they have.

And I know in the past, my wife, she likes the moccasins that they have created, and I know my cousin's wife's mother makes moccasins that she sells around the world, and it's so—it was nice to encourage that; they were actually selling this around the world. And it's important that we promote that.

And another person that's actually running for us in our Keewatinook is Edna Nebbish. I got to know her in the last couple years, and again, she has a business in downtown Winnipeg and she sells many different products throughout the province, throughout the country and probably international. And she has a pride, and one thing I've learnt lots from Edna is that her philosophy is a hand up, not a handout. And that's what she's really running on in this coming election, and it's important that she has that message out there, because, I think, that's what I think our First Nation people want is a hand up, and this gives an opportunity for reconciliation going forward and to, hopefully—when we form government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach):** Yes, just briefly, Mr. Speaker, we look forward to this bill passing, moving on to committee. I expect that at committee there'll be many people who will come forward and to take part in a unique process here in Manitoba. Committees are often quite emotional and often bring forward a lot of personal stories, and I'd be surprised if the committee on the truth and reconciliation bill wasn't exactly the same.

So I know the government hasn't called the committee yet, but I expect that they will next week and, certainly, those who are on the committee—I know on our side, and I'm sure the government side as well, very much look forward to hearing what might not always be easy stories to hear. But also, I think, you know, there'll be a sense of hope, and

they'll be a sense of optimism and renewal, and I know that that is the intention of this bill.

And I heard the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs bring forward his comments and the reply from our critic, and I think that the tenor was appropriate for both of them, and I think that all of us are respectful of the intention of this bill. The years will tell us, and, in terms of how successful things are moving forward, I know that there are annual reports that'll be brought forward from this bill, and the challenge is always in measuring success. But I think that all of us as legislators and those who will be legislators in the future, if we commit ourselves to ensuring that success is real, that it's meaningful and that it's measurable, Mr. Speaker, I think that this bill offers us a lot, and we'll be able to improve things and to bring us to the next step when it comes to reconciliation.

There's been a lot of things I know that have been said and that have been done, but there are many other things that have to happen. I recognize that this bill will be translated into many different languages, and I think that that is more than just symbolism, although it does have an element of symbolism to it. But it is important that it's accessible, that it reaches out to the many different people who are, not who only have been affected but, of course, their families. And we've heard stories in here, the member for The Pas (Ms. Lathlin) and others who have talked about family members who were impacted by residential schools. And I can say that I have learnt a lot listening to those stories, listening to those speeches; they're not always easy to listen to, because they tell of very difficult times. They're very difficult stories. But they're important, and they're important to be told. They're important to be heard.

The past legislation, of course, in this House not too long ago to ensure that the University of Manitoba, there would be records that would be kept, that would be archived. And what better place for that than a place of higher learning, an institution of higher learning where, for future generations, they

can come and learn. And I've heard the phrase used in this past—in this Legislature in the past and in other places as well, that those who forget the past and forget history are condemned to repeat it.

And I think that that is true and that we are better as individuals, and we are better as legislators when we remember not only our collective history as Manitoba and not only the good things. And we will be celebrating the 150th anniversary of Manitoba in the not-too-distant future, and we will celebrate the many great things that Manitoba has achieved over those 150 years. But we also have to remember that there are things we need to learn from and that great provinces just like great people end up being better when they learn from the things that are triumphs, and they learn from the things that are mistakes. That, of course, has been something that has been demonstrated in the federal government and has been demonstrated in the provincial government as well now in this Legislature.

And I look forward to this bill moving on to committee. I look forward to this bill being before the presenters within the committee in the next few days. And I look forward to hearing and to reading about the stories of those who will come forward to our committee and bring forward their ideas and their thoughts on this bill.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there any further debate on this matter?

Is the House ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**Mr. Speaker:** Question before the House is second reading of Bill 18, The Path to Reconciliation Act.

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

The hour being 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow afternoon.



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

## CONTENTS

<b>ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS</b>			
<b>Members' Statements</b>		Community-Based Brain Injury Services and Supports	
Grandeur Housing Ltd.		Rowat	716
Friesen	703	Mitchelson	716
Bailey and Shelby Bram		Martin	719
Lemieux	703	Proposed Lac du Bonnet Marina—Request for Research into Benefits and Costs	
Budget 2016		Ewasko	717
Smook	704	Manitoba-Minnesota Transmission Line Route—Information Request	
Aidan O'Brien		Piwniuk	717
Swan	704	Smook	718
Russell Personal-Care Home		Applied Behavioural Analysis Services	
Rowat	705	Briese	718
<b>Oral Questions</b>		Budget 2016	
Manitoba Hydro		Driedger	719
Pallister; Selinger	706	Cullen	720
Tendering Practices			
Goertzen; Robinson	709	<b>ORDERS OF THE DAY</b>	
Power Smart Program		<i>(Continued)</i>	
Eichler; Robinson	710	<b>GOVERNMENT BUSINESS</b>	
Mining Industry		<b>Second Readings</b>	
Cullen; Chomiak	711	Bill 18—The Path to Reconciliation Act	
Water Control Structures		Robinson	720
Martin; Ashton	712	Briese	722
Minimum Income Approach		Gerrard	724
Gerrard; Selinger	713	Ashton	727
Path to Reconciliation		Wishart	728
Lathlin; Robinson	714	Lathlin	731
<b>Petitions</b>		Blady	734
Provincial Trunk Highway 206 and Cedar Avenue in Oakbank—Pedestrian Safety		Rowat	735
Schuler	714	Piwniuk	737
Manitoba Interlake—Request to Repair and Reopen Provincial Roads 415 and 416		Goertzen	739
Pedersen	715		

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