

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

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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Forty-Second Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
AL TOMARE, Nello	Transcona	NDP
ASAGWARA, Uzoma	Union Station	NDP
BRAR, Diljeet	Burrows	NDP
BUSHIE, Ian	Keewatinook	NDP
CLARKE, Eileen, Hon.	Agassiz	PC
COX, Cathy	Kildonan-River East	PC
CULLEN, Cliff, Hon.	Spruce Woods	PC
DRIEDGER, Myrna, Hon.	Roblin	PC
EICHLER, Ralph	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FIELDING, Scott, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni	St. Johns	NDP
FRIESEN, Cameron, Hon.	Morden-Winkler	PC
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
GORDON, Audrey, Hon.	Southdale	PC
GUENTER, Josh	Borderland	PC
GUILLEMARD, Sarah, Hon.	Fort Richmond	PC
HELWER, Reg, Hon.	Brandon West	PC
ISLEIFSON, Len	Brandon East	PC
JOHNSON, Derek, Hon.	Interlake-Gimli	PC
JOHNSTON, Scott, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
KHAN, Obby	Fort Whyte	PC
KINEW, Wab	Fort Rouge	NDP
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAGIMODIERE, Alan, Hon.	Selkirk	PC
LAMONT, Dougald	St. Boniface	Lib.
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Tyndall Park	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas-Kameesak	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom	Flin Flon	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Malaya	Notre Dame	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	McPhillips	PC
MICHALESKI, Brad	Dauphin	PC
MICKLEFIELD, Andrew	Rossmere	PC
MORLEY-LECOMTE, Janice	Seine River	PC
MOSES, Jamie	St. Vital	NDP
NAYLOR, Lisa	Wolseley	NDP
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine	Midland	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle, Hon.	Turtle Mountain	PC
REYES, Jon, Hon.	Waverley	PC
SALA, Adrien	St. James	NDP
SANDHU, Mintu	The Maples	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield-Ritchot	PC
SMITH, Andrew, Hon.	Lagimodière	PC
SMITH, Bernadette	Point Douglas	NDP
SMOOK, Dennis	La Vérendrye	PC
SQUIRES, Rochelle, Hon.	Riel	PC
STEFANSON, Heather, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
TEITSMA, James	Radisson	PC
WASYLIW, Mark	Fort Garry	NDP
WHARTON, Jeff, Hon.	Red River North	PC
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WISHART, Ian	Portage la Prairie	PC
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
<i>Vacant</i>	Thompson	

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, April 28, 2022

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

**Madam Speaker:** Good afternoon, everybody. Please be seated.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

**Bill 221—The Apprenticeship and Certification Amendment Act (Apprenticeship Supervision)**

**Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition):** I move, seconded by the member for Flin Flon (MLA Lindsey), that Bill 221, The Apprenticeship and Certification Amendment Act (Apprenticeship Supervision); Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'apprentissage et la reconnaissance professionnelle (supervision des apprentis), be now read a first time.

*Motion presented.*

**Mr. Kinew:** Madam Speaker, I'm very honoured to introduce Bill 221, The Apprenticeship and Certification Amendment Act. This bill amends The Apprenticeship and Certification Act.

Currently, the number of apprentices a journey-person may supervise is set by regulation. Bill 221 requires a one-to-one supervision ratio for most trades.

Today is the Day of Mourning, where we honour those who lost their lives on the job. This bill, in that same spirit, will help ensure that everyone, or at least more people, who go to work in the morning at the start of their shift will be able to come home safely at the end of it.

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

Committee reports?

## TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to table the 2022 Report on the Repeal of Acts Not in Force for the Department of Justice.

**Hon. Eileen Clarke (Minister of Municipal Relations):** I'm pleased to table the Supplement of the Estimates of Expenditure for the Department of Municipal Relations for the fiscal year '22-23.

**Hon. Doyle Piwniuk (Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure):** Madam Speaker, I'm honoured to table the Supplement of the Estimates for the Expenditures for the budget of '22-23 for the Department of Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure.

**Hon. Jeff Wharton (Minister of Environment, Climate and Parks):** Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to table the Annual Report for the Manitoba Watershed Districts Program for 2021.

**Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Natural Resources and Northern Development):** Madam Speaker, it's my pleasure to rise today in the Assembly to table the 2022-23 Supplement of Estimates of Expenditure.

**Madam Speaker:** Any further tablings?

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable Minister for Sport, Culture and Heritage—and I would indicate that the required 90 minutes notice prior to routine proceedings was provided in accordance with our rule 26(2).

Would the honourable minister please proceed.

## Holocaust Remembrance Day

**Hon. Andrew Smith (Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage):** Madam Speaker, I rise today in observance of one of the darkest times in modern history. During World War II, six million Jewish men, women and children were killed, alongside millions more who were targeted for their disability, sexual orientation, political affiliation or ethnicity in the Holocaust.

On May 1st, 2000, the Legislative Assembly joined other governments in establishing a day of commemoration for Holocaust Remembrance Day, or Yom Hashoah, a national day of remembrance in Israel.

By commemorating this day each year, the people of Manitoba join others around the world in remembering the victims of the Holocaust. We honour the resilience and the resistance of victims and survivors who rallied against organized tyranny, oppression and hatred in whatever ways they could.

Despite their own trauma, many survivors bravely share their experiences as they were determined to

ensure that their friends and family were not forgotten. We have a responsibility to listen to their stories and learn from them.

Last Sunday, I attended a Holocaust memorial service at Congregation Etz Chayim. At the service, I had the honour of presenting an official proclamation which proclaimed April 28th as Yom Hashoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day. I'd like to thank the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg for hosting and including me in their commemoration of this very important week, and extend a warm welcome to all of the members who are here with us in the gallery today.

Madam Speaker, the true impact of the millions of individuals' lives taken in the Holocaust will never be truly and fully understood. As Manitobans, we have a responsibility to remember this collective loss of humanity. As we do so, we must commit to fighting against all forms of hatred and building a more compassionate world, where all people are welcome and included.

Although there are fewer opportunities to hear first-hand accounts from survivors, their words and actions are enshrined throughout our province, including here on the grounds of the Legislature. In fact, Manitoba's Holocaust monument, erected here on the Legislative grounds in 1990, was the first of its kind on public property in Canada.

By building a diverse and respectful society that supports connections between people of all cultures, faiths and ethnicities, we ensure our collective success.

In observance of this important week, I would encourage all Manitobans to learn more about the Holocaust. Consider a visit to the monument here on the Legislative grounds, a local museum, or a Jewish cultural or religious centre. We each have a role to play in making Manitoba a welcoming place for all. In doing so, we demonstrate our values of the protection for all human rights.

Madam Speaker, on this solemn occasion, I would ask all those present to join me in a moment of silence, reflection and remembrance of the many lives lost in the Holocaust.

**Mr. Diljeet Brar (Burrows):** My NDP colleagues and I join the rest of this House in taking time to remember 6 million Jews murdered in the Holocaust and the heroism of the survivors and those who rescued them.

We also pause to remember all the descendants of Holocaust victims and survivors who now call Manitoba home. Their continued identity as Jewish people, worship and contributions to our province are by their very nature brave acts of defiance against the Nazi project and ones that show that even something as terrible as Holocaust was, ultimately, a failure.

It is important to remember the horrors of the past so that we ensure we avoid repeating them, especially as Jews in Canada and around the world continue to experience anti-Semitism. We know that Canada is not immune to this ancient form of hatred, either now or during the 1930s and '40s. To our great shame, anti-Semitism was also present in Manitoba during this time.

Jews were discriminated against in admissions to the school of medicine at the University of Manitoba and ostracized at Victoria Beach. In 1948, an 11-year-old boy applied to join the Puffin Ski Club and was refused because, and I quote, Jews are aggressive and can take over the club. End quote. We cannot forget that the same hatred that led to the Holocaust will forever be part of our history.

Today, members of Manitoba's Jewish community gathered to read aloud the names of Holocaust victims inscribed on the monument on the Legislative grounds. It's important that these people are not forgotten, and this exercise is just one way in which we can honour and pay tribute to Holocaust victims.

We must never forget the devastating horrors of the Holocaust, especially as living memories of the genocide begin to fade. Our children must be taught about the horrors that Yom Hashoah commemorates and our own country's complicity in anti-Semitism. I hope all Manitobans will take the opportunity to commemorate this important day and to recommit to standing up against anti-Semitism wherever it occurs.

Let's welcome our guests in the gallery today.

Thank you.

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface):** I seek leave to speak in response to the minister's statement.

**Madam Speaker:** Does the member have leave to respond to the statement? *[Agreed]*

**Mr. Lamont:** Together with many colleagues from the Legislature, I had the honour this morning of attending a ceremony of remembrance at the Shaarey Zedek synagogue: to every person there is a name.

It was a sombre and deeply moving ceremony that marked the horrors of the Holocaust in naming the individuals who were murdered, and where their lives were lost. These names are also on the Holocaust memorial here on the grounds of the Legislature.

\* (13:40)

In attendance were survivors, including a woman who is the only remaining member of her family. Many others who read names were the descendants of the Holocaust who lost grandparents, parents, brothers, sisters, uncles and cousins, persecuted simply for the crime of being who they were.

Some had lost dozens of members of their families, some hundreds, and we read the names of children, of whom one and a half were murdered, dying of starvation in ghettos or slaughtered and turned to ash in death camps.

On Yom Hashoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, it is also important to draw attention to the recent report by B'nai Brith that shows that anti-Semitic incidents in Canada are on the rise. In Saskatchewan and Manitoba, there was an increase from 101 to 233 incidents in one year, an increase of 125 per cent. Even more alarming, almost all of the increase in those incidents were in Manitoba, where 146 incidents incurred.

In a world awash with misinformation, the historical reality and truth of the atrocities of the Holocaust are being eroded, while anti-Semitic conspiracies, propaganda, outright hate and threats spread unchecked, especially online.

As Manitobans, and as Canadians, we must recognize that the price of freedom is eternal vigilance.

There is also a vital lesson we can draw from Judaism, the idea of Tikkun Olam: we all have a role to play in repairing and bettering the world. This is our commitment to the Jewish community, today and every day.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave for a moment of silence? [*Agreed*]

Please stand.

*A moment of silence was observed.*

### National Day of Mourning

**Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Natural Resources and Northern Development):** Every year, April 28th is recognized around the world as the Day of

Mourning for workers killed or injured on the job. The Day of Mourning gives us all a chance to remember and honour the Manitobans who did not return home safely from work last year.

In 2021, Madam Speaker, 21 Manitobans lost their lives as a result of work-related incidents and occupational diseases. Many more Manitoban workers were hurt seriously enough to cause permanent injury or require time away from their jobs.

Course, those lost are much more than workers, Madam Speaker. They're our family members, they're our friends, they're our colleagues as well as our neighbours.

Today is a day of remembrance, and there are many events occurring throughout the province, commemorations of those that have been impacted by the workplace tragedies, Madam Speaker. Earlier today, the new firefighters, peace officers and Workers Memorial was officially unveiled in Memorial Park. The monument honours those who have lost their lives at work.

As we remember the past and look to the future, I call upon all of us to renew our commitments to occupational safe—safety and health, and continue to work together to ensure workers come home safely, Madam Speaker.

I ask that all members stand for a moment of silence in the Chamber to honour the Manitobans who were injured or killed in the workplace in the past year.

**MLA Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon):** April 28th marks the National Day of Mourning, which commemorates workers who have been killed, injured or otherwise made sick while on the job. I'd like to thank former NDP MP Rod Murphy, whose private member's bill in 1991 gave rise to the day we remember today. On this Day of Mourning, we pause, reflect and remember those who have lost their lives or suffered an injury, illness due to their work.

All Manitobans have the right to come home safe and healthy at the end of every shift. Unfortunately, workplace fatalities and injuries continue to occur. Not only do these tragedies have devastating effects on workers, they also have profound, long-lasting impacts on families, colleagues and communities.

The National Day of Mourning is not only a day to remember and honour those lives lost or injured due to workplace tragedy, but also a day to collectively renew our commitment to improve health and safety

in the workplace and prevent further injuries, illness and death.

The importance of workplace health and safety cannot be undervalued. It is our job as legislators to ensure that legislation is put in place and followed to help reduce and prevent injury, illness from occurring.

Thanks to the hard work of unions and advocates, significant progress has been made over the years to protect workers. Continuous improvements to workplace health and safety laws are necessary as new issues are identified.

**Madam Speaker:** The member's time has expired.

**Some Honourable Members:** Leave.

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

**MLA Lindsey:** Thank you.

Unfortunately, this government has consistently cut standards that protect workers and their rights. I hope my colleagues across the Chamber will listen when I say we need to strengthen our resolve to establish safe, healthy workplace conditions.

As—this year in particular, we will forever remember those who held the line during COVID-19. And today, we remember the dead and must fight for the living. We do that by extending permanent paid sick leave for all Manitobans. Temporary programs have expired.

On this Day of Mourning, we call on this government to extend permanent paid sick leave to all workers and for everyone, now and forever. Mourn for the dead; fight for the living.

Thank you.

**Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** Madam Speaker, I seek leave to respond to the minister's statement.

**Madam Speaker:** Does the member have leave to respond to the statement? *[Agreed]*

**Ms. Lamoureux:** I rise this afternoon to speak to the National Day of Mourning. Today is the day where we take some time to step back and reflect upon those who have lost their lives from being injured on the job.

We need to ensure that worker safety is taken seriously in our workplaces and is continuously being improved upon by all levels of government. For example, our city government has a role to play with

transit and bus driver safety. This has become more evident throughout the pandemic.

Our federal government has a role to play, for example, with air traffic. Airport security, staff and pilots, they all deserve to be safe on the job and this requires proper training and workplace strategies.

And lastly, Madam Speaker, there's a lot we can be doing provincially.

It is disappointing that, over the last couple of years, this government removed the one-to-one apprenticeship ratio, and this needs to be reinstated.

We have also seen this government ignore our calls for a provincial sick day program. Madam Speaker, workers have had to sacrifice more in the last couple years than anyone could have expected or anticipated due to the pandemic, and these Manitobans should not have been forced to choose between whether to stay home unpaid or go to work sick to ensure that their essential needs were met.

Our Province has a role to play, and I'm hoping that, moving forward—for example, if Bill 36 passes later this year which would allow individuals to sell generated electricity back to Hydro—

**Madam Speaker:** The member's time has expired.

**Some Honourable Members:** Leave.

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

**Ms. Lamoureux:** My hope is that proper training will be provided to individuals and especially to Hydro workers, as they will be dealing with potentially dangerous situations.

Madam Speaker, I want to wrap up by just reiterating the importance of workplace safety. Whether it be through official training, being asked to wear steel-toed boots or additional precautions like bulletproof screens or upgraded harnesses, spending these extra dollars are always, always worth the cost.

Thank you.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave for a moment of silence? *[Agreed]*

Please stand.

*A moment of silence was observed.*

**Madam Speaker:** And on that ministerial statement, I would indicate that the required 90 minutes notice had been given prior to routine proceedings in accordance to our rule 26(2).

The next ministerial statement would be from the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure—and I would indicate that the required 90 minutes notice prior to routine proceedings was provided in accordance with our rule 26(2).

Would the honourable minister please proceed with his statement.

### Severe Weather Event Forecast

**Hon. Doyle Piwniuk (Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure):** Madam Speaker, heading into the weekend, our government, along with the staff from the hydrologic forecasting centre are monitoring the forecasting of another 'significant' weather event. This weather event has a potential for bringing vast amounts of precipitation, with the greatest impact being in southern Manitoba and the Red River Valley.

This weekend, daytime temperatures are expected to be above zero while cooling off at night. The cooler nights' temperatures could temporarily slow down the snowmelt and the runoff rate in the western parts of the province.

There are six municipalities in the—of—in state of local emergency, being the RM of Headingley, Cartier, Ritchot, Morris, and recently the RM of Fisher and the RM of Montcalm.

The regional emergency managers continue to engage with local authorities throughout the region, providing support and information. Additionally, they are hosting regular conference calls with local authorities and providing updates on the weather 'systems' and flood information.

\* (13:50)

In Morris, the provincial crews are working to mitigate high water levels to keep the Highway 75 operable as much as possible. Fill material will be stockpiled on site in preparation for potential closure. Detours will be in effect, should a highway close. Please continue to check Manitoba 511 for the most recent updates regarding highway closures.

Thanks to all provincial government staff for working around the clock. Power outages across the province have been resolved and restored.

Manitobans, you are rest—you should be rest assured that the government has invested 'significantly' in flood infrastructure and we will continue to do so, as safety for Manitobans remains on top of our priority. As we are monitoring the weather event

looming this weekend, our government is prepared for the worst, but hoping for the best.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia):** Madam Speaker, I want to begin by thanking the minister for continuing to update this House, as well as all Manitobans, about the flooding situation that is evolving.

As we continue to monitor and be concerned about the situation in the Red River basin, just this morning, rural municipalities of Montcalm and Morris joined others in declaring states of local emergency that will remain in place for the next 30 days. Crews in many towns continue to pump and sandbag, including in Winkler, where they're shoring up low spots along the city's south dike.

Thank you to all those residents who continue to look after your neighbours and step up to help in your communities.

Mayor Martin Harder also noted that culverts beneath Highway 32 are now compromised and will need repair by Manitoba Highways. We hope this work will begin promptly, along with many other damaged highways so that Manitobans don't face any more further disruption.

We urge all Manitobans who have suffered flood damage without insurance coverage to apply for disaster financial assistance, which they can access through the provincial government's website.

As we all monitor this weather condition that is coming our way this weekend, we continue to thank those provincial, municipal and Hydro crews who are out working around the clock to protect Manitoba infrastructure, property and people.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Madam Speaker, I ask leave to speak to the minister's statement.

**Madam Speaker:** Does the member have leave to respond to the statement? *[Agreed]*

**Mr. Gerrard:** Madam Speaker, we are all quite concerned about the possibility of additional precipitation this weekend. We've already had a lot; we don't particularly need any more. But I think it's really important that Manitobans around the province are aware of the situation and are preparing as much as can be possible.

I salute those like the RM of Morris, who are taking a lot of precautions at the moment, hoping that the worst doesn't happen but being ready for it in case it does.

There are now six rural municipalities which have declared state of emergencies. This is a spreading of the state of emergencies, and the impact of the rain that we've had and the snow that we've had.

Madam Speaker, there's a little bit of a tendency to dismiss the importance of overland flooding, but it can be very important. It may not be as big a deal as a major Red River or Assiniboine flood, but to the individual homeowners affected, it is a big deal.

I ask, once again, for the minister to consider restoring a basement flooding support program that was there.

I want to thank the minister for the briefing this morning. It was much appreciated, the sharing of information and the dialogue and discussion.

I want to thank all those who are working hard to prevent further damage and hope that we can get through this and also that the government will start paying a little more attention to climate change issues and to reducing greenhouse gases, because climate change is part of the reason for this.

Thank you.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### National Day of Mourning's Leaders' Walk

**Mr. James Teitsma (Radisson):** As the legislative assistant to the Minister of Labour, it was my honour to represent government at the National Day of Mourning's Leaders' Walk this morning, and also for the official unveiling of the Workers Memorial just across Broadway from the Legislature.

The monument encourages us to remember, reflect and honour those who have died or been injured in the workplace. The memorial also encourages everyone to mourn the dead and fight for the living.

The construction of the monument was undertaken by the Fallen Firefighters Foundation, the peace officers foundation, Manitoba workers foundation and the Province of Manitoba.

Next to the monument was a list of names of those who had died from workplace injuries or workplace related disease in the past year, including one worker who was just 19 years old. It also this year included

the name of one of our colleagues, Danielle Adams, MLA for Thompson.

We cannot understate the impact of the loss felt by each of these workers' families and also by their friends, colleagues and communities. No one should become ill, suffer an injury or lose their life while trying to earn a living.

Hearing the list of those who died and why makes it clear that we must all rededicate ourselves to creating safer workplaces, preventing workplace falls and saving the 100 who die each year in motor vehicle accidents.

I was especially pleased to walk and talk with Alex Forrest, president of the United Fire Fighters of Winnipeg, in today's Leaders' Walk, for today is his last full day as president of that union. He worked very hard to establish that worker—that memorial monument, so it was special that he was able to dedicate the memorial on his last day. He's had a significant impact on politics in our province, and I expect he'll continue to find ways to be involved.

While members of this Chamber may have different views and levels of appreciation for the contributions of unions and union leadership in our province, there can be no doubt that unions have had a significant and positive impact in improving worker safety in Manitoba. I have no doubt that their advocacy over the past 100-plus years has saved quite literally hundreds if not thousands of lives.

So, my thanks to the Manitoba Federation of Labour and SAFE Workers of Tomorrow for inviting government to take part in today's ceremonies and to all the organizers and attendees, including students from Tec Voc and St. Norbert high schools, for participating in today's events.

Thank you.

### Art City

**Ms. Lisa Naylor (Wolseley):** I am excited to have guests in the gallery today from Art City, which is a non-profit community art studio in Wolseley dedicated to providing people of all ages with innovative, professional and free programming. Art City was founded by Wanda Koop in 1998 to make community art programming accessible to anyone who wanted to express themselves creatively.

Art City made incredible contributions to our community throughout the pandemic. When staff were first laid off, they continued to meet virtually and



voluntarily to prepare for when they could restart programming.

Board and staff knew that community engagement requires intentional planning. They brainstormed ideas for virtual programming and eventually reformatted their program to be held outdoors. They consulted with public health, secured outdoor storage and partnered with a community member to access power and water. They created a welcoming outdoor space using shade tents and decorative banners and meals were served. Art City ensured that programming felt like a festival instead of just a backup plan. The community responded favourably, with programs at capacity and families participating together more than ever.

During a second pandemic closure, Art City Curbside was developed to provide process-based art experiences for community members to take home. This was a huge success with 10,000 kits distributed.

In all, Art City pivoted and reimaged their programming four times.

Many supports are needed during a crisis. And as we collectively experienced the crisis of a global pandemic, Art City staff worked diligently to break through the isolation and provide a language with which community members could process and share their struggles.

Please join me in thanking the staff and board members present today for their continued service.

#### **Pembina Active Living (55+)**

**Mr. Obby Khan (Fort Whyte):** Today I take a tremendous amount of joy to shine some light on one of the many amazing things happening in my constituency of Fort Whyte: Pembina Active Living (55+) or known as PAL. This is really an amazing group of volunteers that represent some of the best of what people have to offer.

The mission of PAL is simple: to enhance the quality of life for older adults in south Winnipeg. It is a home away from home where older adults can experience a sense of community, inclusion and well-being through participation in leadership, innovation—innovative programming, active living and leisure pursuits.

\* (14:00)

The pandemic has been especially hard on everyone, but especially hard on groups like PAL, wherein which the social interactions, support system,

physical, mental and emotional activities are vital to its members.

However, with all the hard work of the board, they have managed to double their membership since last September and they're on pace to hit their pre-pandemic levels of over 400 members.

PAL offers a balance for older adults, cultures—and all cultures in south Winnipeg, which include Zumba, yoga, painting, book club, men's breakfast, pickleball, bridge, gardening, PAL pedallers, tai chi and line dancing.

PAL (55+) is a group that could have settled anywhere in Winnipeg, but they chose to settle in White Ridge Community Centre—very close to my house, from the backyard actually neighbours onto.

I am honoured and pleased to have them there and I look forward to working them closely over the next 14 years or until I am old enough to join PAL myself, take line dancing lessons. And if anyone wants to have a Kevin Bacon-style dance-off, I am ready to do that.

I am so proud of my announcement—of the announcement from my colleague, member from Assiniboine, for an additional \$20 million that will go to support groups like PAL.

I want to thank the entire PAL board for their hard work, and especially to the president and good friend of myself, Dr. Sandra Sukhan, and her 37 years of living in Whyte Ridge. Thank you so much, Sandra and your board, for all you do. I would like to take a moment now and acknowledge her and PAL.

#### **United Steelworkers Union Local 6166**

**MLA Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon):** Steelworkers Local 6166 are celebrating 60 years of steelworkers this year.

In 1962, United Steelworkers Local 6166 signed their charter certificate with affiliation with the United Steelworkers of America at the beginning of the labour movement in the young town of Thompson.

Over the following six decades, Local 6166 has fought for their members and for the protection of their workers and prosperity of the wider Thompson community. And they continue to fight to protect their workers against unsafe conditions.

Unfortunately, Local 6166 has also had to deal with a government that won't help make things better. Smelter closed in 2018, hundreds of workers lost their jobs; meanwhile, the PC government refused to use

funds set aside to help communities to deal with disruption in the industry. It's quite shameful.

Despite these changes, workers 'persevere.' In solidarity, Local 6166 president Warren Luky writes, the challenges of all our members face and overcome every day has not let up as COVID operational challenges, ventilation, organizational changes, frustrating mines' incentive and pay issues have many wondering what 2022 will look like. It is our solidarity that is more important than ever.

The Manitoba NDP wholeheartedly agrees, and I would like to take a moment on behalf of our caucus to reaffirm our own commitment to them and the causes of worker safety, fair pay, social equality for which Local 6166 has fought for 60 years. Here's to many more.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Lourdes Federis**

**Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** The Philippine embassy is highlighting Filipino restaurants in Canada this month, and I have used this as an opportunity to not only eat a lot of good food but to learn about individuals in the restaurant business.

One individual, who I am so inspired by, is my Ate Lourdes Federis, who has joined us in the gallery.

Madam Speaker, Lourdes grew up in the Philippines and first came to Canada in 2006, working as a graphic designer and attending marketing classes at Red River College.

Over the last 16 years, Lourdes has made it her mission to bring people together and to help people feel at home. She's done this by creating Mabuhay Welcome Packages that are specially designed for Filipino newly landed immigrants; through programming on Mabuhay TV, which focuses on celebrating Filipino culture; by being the founder of Foodorama, which highlights a taste of Winnipeg's culinary diversity; and by branching off into Foodtrip Market, which is the largest series of food stalls that aims to support independent small businesses.

Lourdes also established B2Bpreneur, based on the belief that parents and community have a shared accountability in raising financially and socially responsible children.

Now, from day to day, Lourdes, along with her family, manages and works at her two outlets of Foodtrip Kitchen, and when asked where she gets her

inspiration from, she shared it comes from her children and her beautiful mom.

Madam Speaker, Lourdes works exceptionally hard because she wants to set an example for her children. She attributes all of her accomplishments to those in her close circle, which includes her incredibly supportive and hard-working husband, Aldo; her three children, Aeron, Ehenan and Yohan; and two of her friends, Marianne and Laarni, who have also joined us here in the gallery today.

Madam Speaker I'd like to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Lourdes for all of her tremendous work and contributions to our province.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Infrastructure Spending Budget for Road Repairs

**Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Madam Speaker, I want to begin by putting on the record my recognition of Yom Hashoah and extending a message of solidarity to the Jewish community in Winnipeg and across Manitoba.

I also want to acknowledge on the record that the Day of Mourning is a significant one and one that calls all of us from all backgrounds to work together to make sure that working people don't lose their lives simply by trying to earn a paycheck.

We know that many Manitobans right now are rightfully concerned about the state of our roads and highways; current government has cut and under-spent. Last year the underspending was to the tune of \$60 million. That means that all the potholes that we're seeing now are only going to get worse in the future.

Why does the Premier (Mrs. Stefanson) continue to cut our road and highway budget?

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Acting Deputy Premier):** I want to thank my friend for starting off his question by mentioning two things that are very significant, and I think that all members of this House, and all Manitobans, would agree on: Yom Hashoah, which we celebrated the remembrance of today to talk about the people who had lost their lives in the Holocaust, to read their names, to remember them, Madam Speaker; and then, later today, the walk to talk about those who'd lost their lives through workplace safety.

It's the best of us members when we get together and recognize things that we agree on. And we all agree that we need to remember where there's been

tragedies and do the best we can to put in laws and legislation and remembrances to never have them repeated.

And I'll answer the member's question in his second one.

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

**Mr. Kinew:** Potholes, potholes, potholes, Madam Speaker.

We know the situation on the highways in Manitoba is bad. Driving on the highway at the best of times can sometimes be dangerous, but when you have to swerve around the potholes that seem to be ever increasing in number, that is a major, major concern. *[interjection]*

Of course, I'm talking about the provincial highways and I'm being heckled by the Minister of Infrastructure, who doesn't appear to understand his area of responsibility.

I would point out to this government that they have cut the budget for road repair, they have frozen the funding for municipalities and now Manitobans are seeing the impact on our roads and highways.

Will the Premier simply stop the highway repair freeze today and stop cutting the road repair budget?

**Mr. Goertzen:** There's no challenge—no question that it's been a challenging winter in a lot of different ways and—Madam Speaker, and certainly on our roads, but we have continued to have record investments when it comes to infrastructure, and to spend that money where it's needed most.

I remember the NDP, when people were begging them to finish Freedom Road. They came to this Legislature, they protested every year, begging the NDP to put some money into Freedom Road so people could access their homes; people who had done so much for us.

The NDP, year after year after year, said no. They didn't do anything. They didn't do an inch, they didn't do a foot, they didn't do a mile. We got it done because we believe in infrastructure and helping Manitobans. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

The honourable member—or, the Leader of the Official Opposition, on a final supplementary.

**Mr. Kinew:** Well, unlike the members opposite, on this side of the House we believe in building our economy and building our roads, Madam Speaker.

This government continue their daily attacks on the Howard Pawley administration, or whatever their newest talking point is. We know that they've been in power for more than six years, Madam Speaker. Of course, you could never pick it up from them—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Kinew:** —because they were too embarrassed to acknowledge the anniversary of their election under Brian Pallister. They're running so hard away from his record, and it's easy to see why.

\* (14:10)

Right now, just look outside at any road or highway: potholes, potholes, potholes. It's a direct result of their policy decisions. They freeze the transfers to cities and municipalities, and then they cut and under-spend the budgets for infrastructure.

Will the Premier simply admit that this approach is wrong and that it's hurting our economy, not to mention roads?

**Mr. Goertzen:** Well, I suppose, Madam Speaker, we should've taken more time to celebrate our anniversary, because there's so much to celebrate, but we've been busy.

And what have we been busy with? We've been busy with building Freedom Road, something the NDP never did in 17 years of government. We're busy redeveloping the Perimeter, Madam Speaker, to ensure that it is a modern transportation system around the city of Winnipeg. We've been busy building bridges. We've been building—putting money into Brandon, into rural Manitoba, into northern Manitoba, into the city of Winnipeg.

Busy, busy, busy, building, building, building, Madam Speaker.

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

### Health-Care System Funding Physician Training Programs

**Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Yes, the member for Steinbach holds up his scissors shoulder height and says, we've been busy, busy, busy busy.

Cut, cut, cut, cut, cut, all over Manitoba. Cutting the roads. Cutting health care. Cutting schools, Madam Speaker. That's what they've been doing since 2016, and now it's hitting our ability to train physicians in Manitoba.

The dean of medicine at the University of Manitoba said that their programs are in trouble because of this government's cuts to health care. And he added, and I'm issuing a direct quote here, it would be disingenuous to think they aren't related. End quote. That's the real-life impact of their cuts to health care. It's impacting our ability to train physicians in Manitoba.

The question is simple: Why, after all these health-care cuts, do they now want to risk our ability to train doctors in Manitoba?

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Acting Deputy Premier):** Madam Speaker, it's nonsense, and when the member opposite was doing his research in the newspaper, he should have looked at the first line that said, no one expects the University of Manitoba will lose its standing to train doctors, because it won't.

What is true, Madam Speaker, is that a one-in-100-year pandemic has impacted health care—not only in Manitoba, across Canada and around the world. That is why we are trying to put investments in place: \$110 million to clear up the surgical backlog, more than \$800 million for capital investment, rebuilding the emergency room at St. Boniface Hospital, all things that Manitobans think are important and all things that that member opposite voted against earlier this week.

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

**Mr. Kinew:** Well, Madam Speaker, let's turn to the newspaper article in question, where the dean of medicine of the University of Manitoba says that the impact of their health-care cuts is, quote, the fact that the U of M has been living with a budget of austerity for several years. The same applies to the health-care system.

And you will note, my colleague from Steinbach abandons the Premier's (Mrs. Stefanson) line of trying to deny that there are cuts to health care. I would like to welcome this new change of tact, to recognize what everyone in Manitoba knows: that this government has cut and cut and cut when it comes to our health care.

And, of course, the dean of medicine would add there, it would be disingenuous to suggest otherwise—disingenuous to suggest otherwise, Madam Speaker.

The only question that remains, now that the member for Steinbach admits the impacts of his cuts to health care, is: Why do they insist on continuing them?

**Mr. Goertzen:** Historic investment when it comes to health care by this government, but nobody should deny the impact of the pandemic, Madam Speaker.

I was concerned when I read a headline in the newspaper that said a doctor had never seen it this bad. In fact, Dr. Jeff Unger said that, in his 22 years working in the emergency rooms, he's never seen it as bad as it is. He said the wait times in the ER—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Goertzen:** He said—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Goertzen:** He said the wait times in the ER often average more than eight hours.

This was actually a quote only from a week ago in British Columbia—in NDP British Columbia—who are also dealing with the impact of the pandemic, Madam Speaker. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

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

**Mr. Kinew:** Again, Madam Speaker, finally, a question period without the Premier denying that there have been cuts to health care in Manitoba.

Again, it's very clear what the dean of medicine at the U of M is saying. He's saying that health cuts are having a tremendous impact on the system.

We know the impact that this means for patients. This means Manitobans are waiting longer than ever before in emergency rooms. It means that Manitobans who are waiting for surgeries are waiting longer than ever before, and there is now some 170,000 Manitobans who are on that waiting list.

It's the result of cuts. We know it's disingenuous—direct quote there—to suggest otherwise.

Since we now agree on the facts that the PC cuts are harming our province, will the Premier finally agree to abandon them?

**Mr. Goertzen:** Record investments, Madam Speaker. And of course, British Columbia is now looking at moving patients into hospitals because they're running out of room in their hospitals. NDP British Columbia.

But there's no question that it's been a challenge in the health-care system. It was a challenge before the pandemic. It was a challenge under the NDP.

I'd remind him, in 2014 when patients were being discharged from the ER over at the Grace and sent home in taxicabs, Madam Speaker—they were sent home in taxicabs, and two of them died because they couldn't get into their homes.

And the NDP minister of Health at the time told them to fix it, but not the health officials. They said the taxicab industry should fix it.

We're working with the health-care industry; they want Duffy's to fix the health-care system, Madam Speaker. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order. *[interjection]* Order. *[interjection]* Order.

I'm going to call the Leader of the Official Opposition and the Minister of Justice to order, please. I've been standing, and I'm expecting that when I do that the room should fall to silence.

### **Health-Care System Funding Physician Training Program**

**MLA Uzoma Asagwara (Union Station):** Madam Speaker, the College of Physicians and Surgeons has put our province and the University of Manitoba on notice. This is very serious.

Programs to train our doctors are at risk. Dr. Brian Postl, the dean of medicine at the University of Manitoba, explains that years of austerity budgets left health care stretched remarkably thin before the pandemic. He says this government's austerity has been the threat to accreditation. They're linked, Madam Speaker.

He also says, and I quote, it would be disingenuous to think they aren't related.

Why won't the minister and this government take responsibility for their cuts, and why have they jeopardized the training for our doctors?

**Hon. Audrey Gordon (Minister of Health):** I thank the member for Union Station for the question.

I was so pleased last fall to join the member in the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority to welcome internationally educated medical graduates

to our province. We continue to support all medical graduates who are working in the system, the faculty of medicine, and that will not change, Madam Speaker, and we want to ensure the funds and the services are there for these individuals.

We'll continue to work with system leaders to ensure that our graduates receive the opportunities that they need in health care.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Union Station, on a supplementary question.

**MLA Asagwara:** Madam Speaker, I'm talking about residency programs, and this is very, very serious.

Now, the minister has 'prevlisy'—previously offered thoughts and prayers for patients, but that's not going to fix health care. In fact, she's been demanding that others fix her mistakes.

Austerity and declining quality in health care are linked. That's according to Dr. Brian Postl. It would be disingenuous to think otherwise.

Now, the programs for neurology, internal medicine and obstetrics have been flagged for—as insufficient for our doctors. Madam Speaker, internal medicine is a core discipline required for every doctor in training, and it's at risk.

\* (14:20)

Why won't the minister take responsibility for their cuts, and why have they put these programs at risk?

**Ms. Gordon:** I just want to once again place on the record the comment from the article that the member for Union Station is referring to: no one expects the University of Manitoba will lose its standing to train doctors.

Madam Speaker, Shared Health has also 'staid'—said, and I quote, accreditation reviews are an important component in our collective efforts to maintain a high quality of care, ensuring that medical residents receive appropriate training.

The reviews don't mean patients are receiving substandard care. What it means is that there are areas for improvement, and our government is committed to supporting our medical graduates and individuals working in the faculty of medicine and across the system, Madam Speaker, and medical teams will continue to provide excellent care.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable leader—the honourable member for Union Station, on a final supplementary.

**MLA Asagwara:** Madam Speaker, COVID arrived into a system that was not prepared for it and was already stretched remarkably thin and had been living with budgets of austerity for several years. *[interjection]*

Now, those members may heckle me, but those are the words of Dr. Brian Postl. It's simply the truth. It's disingenuous to say otherwise. Cuts and consolidation hurt health care and is now putting our training for doctors at risk.

Madam Speaker, we can't afford to lose a single physician right now. This problem needs to be addressed immediately.

Will the minister take responsibility and ensure that these programs are fixed today?

**Ms. Gordon:** I am so pleased to see, at the end of the week, that the member for Union Station is now on side with myself and our government in terms of wanting to fix situations in the system. Earlier this week, it was don't fix. Now it's fix. Again, Manitobans don't know what to expect in terms of the position of the opposition.

Madam Speaker, we will continue to support all levels of the health-care system and we appreciate the feedback we're receiving from the accreditation review. There's more work that needs to be done. Our government has committed to doing that work.

### **Indigenous Reconciliation Strategy Timeline for Development**

**Mr. Ian Bushie (Keewatinook):** The Auditor General recently published a damning report on this government's failure to act on its legislated—and I repeat, Madam Speaker, legislated—responsibilities towards reconciliation. He found that in the five years since The Path to Reconciliation Act was passed, the government still had, and I quote, no strategy for reconciliation.

The report urged the government to do more towards working towards reconciliation. However, we haven't heard when or even if a strategy will be developed or even implemented.

Can the minister stand up today and provide us with a date and a timeline for a release of the reconciliation strategy?

**Hon. Eileen Clarke (Acting Minister of Indigenous Reconciliation and Northern Relations):** I'm very pleased to get up and talk about reconciliation in the province of Manitoba.

Having been the minister of Indigenous relations for six years, I had the opportunity to work diligently reaching goals, and there were several goals that were achieved and will be continuing to be achieved through this government.

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

**Mr. Bushie:** I would like to point out that the AG report actually includes the former minister's time as Indigenous reconciliation minister.

And it's common knowledge that Brian Pallister did not work with Indigenous leaders when he was the premier. This led to a fractured relationships with Indigenous peoples. However, in the eight months since his departure, the government still has not developed a reconciliation strategy. The same people that sat at the—at Pallister's Cabinet table are still there today.

This government talks about change, but hasn't made any progress on reconciliation strategy at all.

Will the minister tell us if and when a reconciliation strategy will be implemented?

**Ms. Clarke:** It gives me great pleasure to share with the member opposite that, as Minister of Municipal Relations, I attended the conference last week with all municipal officials.

In my presentation, I did make a 'rand'—land—a land acknowledgement, and I also at the end spoke to all members about reconciliation. I was absolutely humbled after the proceedings of that day to be contacted and spoken to by many of the members, how much they appreciated and how far they feel we have come. The fact that they acknowledged it spoke to me that we have made great strides in the past six years.

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

**Mr. Bushie:** I will point out that a member from Agassiz while minister did not develop a reconciliation strategy. Instead what did she do? She quit.

The Auditor General states that the government's first step was to develop a reconciliation strategy as required by law, however, they failed this most basic obligation. And eight months under a new Premier

(Mrs. Stefanson) has still not produced any new outcomes either. There still is not a strategy.

Ninety-four per cent of Indigenous leadership surveyed stated that the Province had not been respectful in their interactions with Indigenous people. How can this government work to repair these relationships without a reconciliation strategy?

Will the minister provide a timeline for this reconciliation strategy that is non-existent to this day?

**Ms. Clarke:** The member opposite—I find it quite disgusting his comments about my position in government and decisions that I made for my personal reasons.

I would love to share with him the comments, the letters, the emails—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Ms. Clarke:** —that I received upon such resignation for this—the position that I had at that time.

And I would like to point out that reconciliation isn't a document. Reconciliation isn't a strategy. Reconciliation is what we do every day, the way we live and the way we treat other people.

#### **Paid Sick Leave Request for Program**

**MLA Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon):** Today's the Day of Mourning for workers killed, injured or made sick on the job, and we will forever remember those who held the line during COVID. What we need now is comprehensive paid sick leave.

So, will the government commit to that today, not a temporary but a permanent paid sick leave program in the province of Manitoba?

**Hon. Scott Fielding (Acting Minister of Finance):** Our government's very proud of the stance we took, especially during COVID, in terms of providing a sick leave program that was second to none across the provinces. We were one of the first provinces to introduce that, that meshed and amalgamated with the federal government.

In fact, our leadership here at the provincial government pushed the federal government to make sure there was a sick leave program that was in place when Manitobans needed it most.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Flin Flon, on a supplementary question.

**MLA Lindsey:** Newsflash for the minister: workers in Manitoba still need a paid sick leave program. Apparently, this government has learned nothing from this pandemic.

They should realize people coming to work sick prolong the illness, interfere with productivity, make more people sick. Paid sick leave stops all of that. It's really just that simple.

So, provinces like BC have already implemented it. They didn't wait for the feds. They went ahead and did it.

So on this Day of Mourning, will the minister do the right thing for workers and implement permanent paid sick leave today?

**Mr. Fielding:** A part of our program, thousands of Manitobans got support when they needed it most. We also pressed the federal government in terms of a sick leave program that's in place.

In terms of sick leave, we want to make sure there's a balance between labour and management; we want to consult to make sure any program would be applicable. That's always something we'll talk to, in terms of labour as well as management.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Flin Flon, on a final supplementary.

**MLA Lindsey:** Empty words from a minister. A lot of management already have paid sick leave. That's a newsflash that I'm sure the minister doesn't understand. Workers, on the other hand, do not.

Certainly the most vulnerable workers in this province, ones working for minimum wage, part time, that are barely hanging on as it is, need permanent paid sick leave today. They don't need legislated wage freezes. They don't need their collective bargaining rights interfered with by a government. They don't need a government that reduces safety on a job by changing ratios for apprentices. What they need is a minister that stands up and does the right thing, particularly on today, the Day of Mourning, to protect workers going forward.

\* (14:30)

Will—

**Madam Speaker:** The member's time has expired.

**Mr. Fielding:** We take a balanced approach between labour as well as management in so many different ways. We consult. We listen to individuals to make sure we're getting policies right. We're also making

sure that workers have affordability, making sure that that is.

And that's exactly what this budget did, Madam Speaker, it reduced the education property taxes for over 600,000 Manitobans. It introduced a residential tax credit that lower income individuals would be supported from. It also put together \$10 daycare that the NDP never were able to do, to make life more affordable for Manitobans.

Everyone in society needs a break and needs life more affordable coming out of the pandemic. That's something this budget did.

We're concerned that the NDP do not support affordability measures.

### **Support for Ukraine Request for All-Party Committee**

**Mr. Mark Wasyliv (Fort Garry):** Madam Speaker, when Russia invaded Ukraine, I immediately called for an all-party committee to develop Manitoba's response. Everyone who was invited agreed to participate, except this PC caucus.

Now, I spoke with the member from Waverley on March 21st, who invited me to set up a meeting with him to discuss this further. Over a month later, he finally responded saying he wouldn't meet. Not only would he not meet with me, he refused to meet with members of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress who were supposed to attend that meeting.

Now, this shouldn't be a partisan issue, Madam Speaker. Government should want to work with everybody.

So will the minister set up an all-party committee today?

**Hon. Jon Reyes (Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Immigration):** Madam Speaker, the member and his NDP party voted against Budget 2022.

So, let me put some facts on the record. We have provided \$800,000 in humanitarian aid and grant relief; we've waived the \$500 application fee for Ukrainians applying through our Provincial Nominee Program; announced \$5.1 million in newcomer support that will benefit over 6,000 newcomers, including Ukraine nationals—but that's what they voted against—opened a central reception centre near the Winnipeg airport.

Our government support continues to be immediate, strong and unwavering. We've been proactive

and we will continue to move forward on these important issues that matters most to Manitobans.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Fort Garry, on a supplementary question.

**Mr. Wasyliv:** Well, Madam Speaker, you heard that answer. This government continues to ignore the concerns of the Ukrainian community and Manitobans who are concerned with providing shelter for Ukrainian refugees.

To date, this government's response to the war in Ukraine has been to do the bare minimum. No full-time resettlement workers have been hired. The financial contributions have been absolutely pitiful, and we're now 64 days into the invasion and members of the Ukrainian community are calling for this government to act.

That's why I called upon this minister to set up an all-party committee, to include the business community, to include City representatives and members of the Ukrainian community. To date, he has refused to make this commitment.

Will he change course—

**Madam Speaker:** The member's time has expired.

**Mr. Reyes:** I want to thank the Ukrainian Refugee Task Force. I want to thank all the non-profit organizations. I want to 'thunk'—thank all those organizations that have done those fundraisers and that are contributing to humanitarian aid for the Ukraine.

Madam Speaker, the budget that they voted against will be investing more than \$821 million in capital infrastructure for health care, more than \$630 million towards the pandemic response and provide more than \$2,400 in tax relief for Manitobans, including Ukrainians coming to Manitoba.

We are making life more affordable for those who are already here, and for those who want to come here and stay in the home of hope here in Manitoba.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Fort Garry, on a final supplementary.

**Mr. Wasyliv:** Madam Speaker, if this minister wants to really thank the Ukrainian community for all they've done so far in this crisis, he could do so by putting real dollars into helping the resettlement of Ukrainian refugees in Manitoba. Wrapping himself around a Ukrainian flag is insulting.



Now, members of the Ukrainian community here in Manitoba are calling on this government to do more. That's why we are calling for this all-party committee. This committee will help this government's decisions regarding refugee resettlement, humanitarian aid and more.

Now, this shouldn't be a partisan issue. This shouldn't be this hard for this government to do.

Will this minister implement an all-party committee today?

**Mr. Reyes:** While our government is providing \$5.1 million to benefit over 6,000 newcomer families, including Ukrainian citizens, coming to Manitoba, the federal NDP-Liberal coalition in their recent 2022 NDP-Liberal budget did not provide any new dollars for settlement services in Manitoba.

I ask the member to pick up the phone and call the unofficial deputy prime minister in Ottawa, also known as Jagmeet Singh, and ask him why are there no new dollars for settlement services in the federal NDP-Liberal budget for Ukrainian citizens in Manitoba?

Thank you, Madam Speaker. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

#### **U of M Medical School Loss of Accreditation Concerns**

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface):** The University of Manitoba's medical school accreditation is at risk due to spending cuts and closures by this government.

I table a document showing actual spending by this government on health care from 2016 to '19, which was flat-lined while this government closed urgent cares, ERs and clinics like the Family Medical Centre in St. Boniface, all of them teaching hospitals and clinics where medical students learn and provide care at the same time.

Our health-care system depends on medical students and the medical school to run.

Did this government ever consider they were risking the University of Manitoba's medical school's accreditation and the ability to train doctors when they closed these clinics?

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Acting Deputy Premier):** It was already stated, Madam Speaker, that there is not a risk, as the member indicates.

We do know the important work that not only doctors do but all medical professionals do, those who

are in training, those who are in residence, those who are in our health-care facilities, those who are in our clinics. Madam Speaker, we've been supporting them throughout the pandemic. It's absolutely been a challenging time over the last two years. It's been a challenging time in Manitoba, in every province across Canada and, indeed, around the world.

There is reason for optimism, Madam Speaker. As we move through this portion of the pandemic, there is increased investments and there's reasons to believe that we're moving to a better time when it comes to many things in Manitoba, including moving past the pandemic.

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

**Mr. Lamont:** It's hard to understate what this government has put to risk—at risk, including the U of M's reputation. And it's not anything that new buildings are going to fix.

The national regulatory body doesn't care about the pandemic. They don't care about the PCs' spin or excuses. They care about one thing: whether or not Manitoba's only medical school can properly teach people to be doctors or not. And it can't.

We're not going to tolerate the claims that this PC government has made about health—about federal funding when they've received 'recod' amounts in equalization—billions for health, education and more—and they've squandered it.

This is an emergency.

What is the plan to ensure the U of M medical school doesn't lose accreditation?

**Mr. Goertzen:** Already stated in the article I think he's referencing, that no one expects that to happen, Madam Speaker.

But I'm glad that the member opposite did raise the issue of federal funding. It's something that's been raised by every premier across the—Canada, Madam Speaker. Every premier has been asking—well, I can name them: I can name John Horgan in British Columbia, I can name Jason Kenney, I can name Scott Moe, I can name Doug Ford. Every premier in Canada has been asking Justin Trudeau to come to the table to talk about health-care funding. He won't even come to the table.

Maybe the member can raise—or, can lift up a phone, call 1-800-Justin Trudeau and ask him to come to the table to talk about fair and equitable health-care

funding for every province in Canada, Madam Speaker.

### **Non-Disclosure Agreements Request for Support for Bill 225**

**Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** Earlier this week, my colleague from St. Boniface introduced an important bill that would reform the use of non-disclosure agreements.

The reason this was introduced is because our caucus heard from many individuals how they were wrongly silenced for decades because of the misuse of NDAs.

Does this government support the idea of discussing NDAs and the need to review how they are used?

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Madam Speaker, we certainly don't believe that victims should be silenced.

\* (14:40)

I know my friend from St. Johns spoke earlier this week that she believes victims when they come forward and they talk about, as an example, the experience that they've had with domestic assault. I appreciate her coming forward and saying that, that she believes those victims. That was a very important statement. I think that all members of this House appreciated her making that very bold and very clear statement.

I also know when it comes to NDAs, there's a lot of legal considerations around it. I certainly believe that they shouldn't be used to stop individuals from being able to have their voice heard if they're victims, and the department is looking at that bill, Madam Speaker.

### **Development of Seniors Strategy Government Announcement**

**Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain):** Today, my friend, the Minister of Seniors and Long-Term Care, announced the in-depth consultation that will form the core of our seniors strategy. This consultation is essential to addressing the needs of a growing seniors population.

Can the minister outline some of the initial feedback that he has received from seniors, advocates and experts?

**Hon. Scott Johnston (Minister of Seniors and Long-Term Care):** I thank the member from Riding

Mountain, who cares deeply about the seniors in Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to be able to indicate to the House that we did announce the seniors strategy initiative this morning. As part of that initiative, we have established the advisory—a ministers' advisory group chaired by a very, very capable individual, Connie Newman, who is well-known in this House and certainly a seniors advocate in Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, I can also advise this House that we will be going through public and stakeholders consultations in all parts of this province—

**Madam Speaker:** The member's time has expired.

### **Early Childhood Educators Request for Competitive Wages**

**Mr. Adrien Sala (St. James):** Over the last six years, this government has frozen funding to child-care centres, and this de facto cut has prevented centres from being able to pay fair and competitive wages, and the sector has struggled to attract workers as a result.

As the federal government sends millions to our province to implement \$10-a-day child care, it's unfortunate that this government won't commit money to increase wages for child-care staff. Child-care workers should be paid a fair wage that reflects the importance of the work that they do for our families.

Will this government commit to paying child-care workers in Manitoba a fair wage?

**Hon. Scott Fielding (Acting Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning):** We really want and encourage by this budget to making life more affordable, and that's for people that are working moms and dads that are going through child care.

We are one of the first provinces to sign on to an agreement with the federal government that's going to reduce child-care fees to \$10 a day, on average, which makes complete sense and will make life more affordable for individuals. We also are committed to over 23,000 new spots with the federal government, as well as making sure that ECEs are paid an appropriate rate.

That's something our government did and accomplished. That's something the NDP government never got right and never did.

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

**Mr. Sala:** Six years of frozen funding to child-care centres under this government—six years. That's shameful, Madam Speaker.

This has forced child-care centres to cut staff and benefits and offer less competitive wages. Child-care centres want to attract the best possible candidates to work with our youth, and Manitoba is currently facing a labour shortage and it's key that ECE wages are competitive with other sectors. However, wage analysis by the Manitoba Child Care Association shows that wages for ECE staff are below recommended levels in this province.

If this government wants to expand child-care spaces, they need to make sure that ECE staff are paid competitive wages so they can attract new workers.

Will they make a commitment to do so today?

**Mr. Fielding:** I'm not sure why the opposition don't want to take yes for an answer.

The reality is, there was agreement that was signed with the federal government: \$1.1 billion is going to do a number of things. Number 1, it's going to reduce costs for parents that are in the system to \$10 a day. That's something the NDP never did. In fact, they don't have a plan to do that.

It's going to increase spaces, Madam Speaker, to make sure parents have spaces.

As well, it's going to increase costs as well as funding to child-care centres to ensure that ECEs are funded appropriately. That's our plan. Where is the NDP's plan, Madam Speaker?

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

**Mr. Sala:** The minister continues to ignore the question about ECE wages. We'll try it again.

This week is early childhood education week. ECEs play an essential role in the development of our next generation of youth in this province. However, they're not being paid competitive wages. This deters workers from entering the sector.

Using the government's own target of new spaces, experts estimate the sector will need 5,000 new workers. The best thing we can do to recognize ECEs and attract new workers is by paying them a fair and competitive wage.

Will this government commit to doing so today?

**Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Families):** Madam Speaker, that member knows well that when

our government signed the agreement on the child care, the historic agreement, that we committed to raising the floor of the wages for ECEs to \$25 an hour; and that is something our government is committed to.

Budget 2022 also committed to increasing the wages of the child and youth practitioners, the people working in the Family Violence Prevention Program, people working in the CLDS community serving people with disabilities.

These are predominantly women-dominated sectors, and that is something that our government is committed to, increasing the wages.

And I would remind members opposite that they voted against every one of those measures. Shame on them.

**Madam Speaker:** The time for oral questions has expired.

Petitions? Are there any petitions? Seeing none, grievances?

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

*(Continued)*

### GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

#### House Business

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader):** Thank you, Madam Speaker; I'm sorry for the delay.

On House business, I'd like to announce that the Standing Committee on Justice will meet on Monday, May 9th, 2022, at 6 p.m. to consider the following: Bill 18, The Legislative Security Amendment Act; Bill 19, The Beneficiary Designation (Retirement, Savings and Other Plans) Amendment Act; Bill 23, The Reducing Red Tape and Improving Services Act, 2022; Bill 26, The Officers of the Assembly Act (Various Acts Amended); Bill 35, The Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months and Related Repeals and Amendments Act.

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Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months and Related Repeals and Amendments Act.

\* \* \*

**Madam Speaker:** The Official Opposition House Leader, on House business.

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader):** Regarding the opposition day motion on today's Order Paper in the name of the honourable member for Keewatinook, would you please canvass the House for leave to substitute the wording of that ODM with the following: That the Speaker, on behalf of all members of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, invite Pope Francis to come to Manitoba as part of his upcoming visit to Canada to deliver, in person, as he did recently at the Vatican to visiting delegations, a papal apology to residential school survivors on behalf of the Catholic Church, which should include a visit to the graves of First Nation and other Indigenous children who perished in these institutions and a blessing of the grave of Louis Riel in St. Boniface, all with the goal of advancing reconciliation for Manitobans from all walks of lives.

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\* (14:50)

Is there leave? *[Agreed]*

#### OPPOSITION DAY MOTION

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

**Mr. Ian Bushie (Keewatinook):** I move, seconded by a member from Fort Rouge, that the Speaker, on behalf of all members of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, invite Pope Francis to come to Manitoba as part of his upcoming visit to Canada to deliver, in person, as he did recently at the Vatican to visiting

delegations, a papal apology to residential school survivors on behalf of the Catholic Church, which should include a visit to the graves of First Nations and other Indigenous children who perished in these institutions and a blessing of the grave of Louis Riel in St. Boniface, all with the goal of advancing reconciliation for Manitobans from all walks of life.

#### *Motion presented.*

**Mr. Bushie:** I rise today to share this important motion, and to bring forth this motion in a true spirit of reconciliation on behalf of Indigenous people, Métis citizens across Manitoba, across Canada and, for that matter, where they reside around the world.

Madam Speaker, healing is a journey. It's not an overnight, it's not a snap solution where one gesture, one comment, one word can heal generational impacts and generational wounds and generational hurt. It's something that needs to be driven and experienced and developed over time.

Indigenous people in Manitoba and First Nations citizens in Manitoba have experienced many hardships, have experienced attempted genocide, assimilation, extermination of their culture, of their being and who they are as people.

Madam Speaker, there was been a call a number of times and we've seen various stories come out over the last couple of months, and I beg to differ about calling them stories. They are, in fact, lived experiences. They are, in fact, lived experiences of First Nation Indigenous people here in Canada. And in regards to residential schools, it's lived experience of children. And those stories that they've shared are not simply—like I said, not simply stories. They're sharing their lived experience.

But Indigenous peoples are also very, very forgiving, Madam Speaker. So, the comments that have come out over these last number of decades in regards to residential schools, there's still that need and that want for Indigenous people and Indigenous communities, and in fact, these Indigenous children who are now—are adults now, who are now grandparents, their lived experience, now they want to be able to say, let's truly go forward in a spirit of reconciliation.

So they had called for that apology from the Pope. They had called for that for many, many years. So, there was a step, there was a positive step towards reconciliation, Madam Speaker, when the Pope entertained the First Nations delegations, the Métis delegations at the Vatican.

And again, Madam Speaker, that's a step. But there's another step that needs to happen because those atrocities happened here. Those atrocities took place here. Those atrocities took place here on Turtle Island, in the country we all call Canada, in the province we call Manitoba, on a place that's been sacred to First Nations and Indigenous peoples for generations. So this motion calls for another step towards that reconciliation, calls for the Pope, on—come on behalf of the Church, to come and share that apology, in a meaningful way.

And, Madam Speaker, there's no be-all, end-all. Will there be—is there a checklist that we need to go through on this path of reconciliation? No, there's no checklist because it's a journey. And it's a journey that's met with many different obstacles along the way. But Indigenous peoples are more than willing to engage that journey, more willing to have that journey, to share that journey. Not to walk in front of, not to walk behind, but to walk together with society at large.

Madam Speaker, I reflect on how this impacts me and my own family and my own community. And Indigenous communities are still—there're very devout Catholic parishioners in Indigenous communities. And there's also some that go to Midewiwin lodge and the pipe ceremonies, and that's how they choose to share their teaching and reinvent themselves as a culture, and re-share that—and share that type of what we are. And there's some that do both. My parents, in particular; my family, they do both.

But still, Madam Speaker, there's still that hurt that exists there. And I do want to share a personal story. And I know he's no longer with us here today. It's my Uncle Alec. And I remember my Uncle Alec, and for—we—where we are in our community, our families all live around a certain area—a neighbourhood, if you will, if you want to call it that. But the church is—the Catholic church is centred around that.

And, for myself, Madam Speaker, my adjoining neighbour, if you will, or my property next to me is the graveyard of the Catholic church. And further to that is—was my Uncle Alec's house. And my Uncle Alec, time and time again, was the one who went out there and shovelled for the church in the winter, shovelled the steps, made sure the walkway was done.

And, Madam Speaker, what he asked in return—and he's a residential school survivor, attended Fort Alexander. And when he was there, there was a group of them that were part of the seminary and were

almost being groomed to perhaps become priests at some point in time. And to this day, until the day he passed, he still shared those stories about what that meant and how he didn't feel that was his place, because that was being forced upon him.

And in fact, Madam Speaker, when he was taken from Fort Alexander residential school and taken to a diocese in Otterburn, he was told what he was representing was the devil. And that was supposed to be the inclusion of what he felt in that church. But still, in the spirit of forgiveness, he still, in his adult years, in his elder years, in his senior years, still went and shovelled that church.

And he had passed away at cancer, a couple of years ago now. He would've been 74 in a couple weeks. And, Madam Speaker, on his deathbed, he asked for the priest of the parish in our community—his wife had gone to the church and asked if the priest could come and see him. And the priest refused. The priest refused because he deemed him to be an alcoholic.

So, Madam Speaker, those stories and that lived experience that my uncle had, to be able to say, no matter what, I still believe in this process, I still believe in the church, but for the church to turn their back on him. And did the Church at large turn their back on him? I would like to believe not. But at the same time, that was the thought process of how that impacted my uncle.

He wasn't born an alcoholic. And to his dying day, he acknowledged the fact that he was an alcoholic. But he wasn't born that way, Madam Speaker. All those steps in his journey, all those steps to residential school to his adulthood, to his path to reconciliation with the Church, still, he always believed in that.

But, Madam Speaker, did the Church believe in him? And by refusing him one of his last things that he ever asked, that really hurt himself, that hurt all of us and that hurt Indigenous people.

\* (15:00)

So, Madam Speaker, when Indigenous people then, still, after all those—and that's one story. That's one lived experience, and there's many, many more. And there'll come a day where the last residential school survivor is physically alive to share their story and share their lived experience. But we have to carry those forward. We have to—absolutely have to—be able to share that knowledge that they have, to share that experience to ensure that that never happens again.

And moving into that path and that journey and that healing journey, and on behalf of my uncle to be able to go on that healing journey and still say, like, I promise you, Madam Speaker, my uncle would still be there. He would be glued to the television, glued to the media about what happened with the papal apology in the Vatican. He would be glued to the TV when—if that—if and when Pope Francis visits us here in Manitoba. Because in the spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation, he still believed. He still believed in that forgiveness.

But that forgiveness, Madam Speaker, cannot be taken for granted, and we've seen many, many examples of it, in fact, being taken for granted. But still as resilient as we are as Indigenous people, we're still there asking, giving and providing and sharing that forgiveness, sharing those stories, sharing that path, that healing journey that everybody wants to go on.

Is there a goal, Madam Speaker? If there is, will we ever get there? No. But I believe we need to get on that path. Like I said, there is no checklist to say, okay, we've met all the matters of reconciliation. Let's move forward. Let's turn the page from what this is and what a residential school system was meant to do and hope to accomplish in terms of exterminating us as Indigenous people. Let's not get to that point where those things are forgotten. We need to be able to have those conversations forever.

And, Madam Speaker, for my Uncle Alec, that is why I stand here and speak. And he is one of many, many generations of Indigenous peoples whose voices need to be heard. And that's why this motion is so important.

Miigwech.

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, and for the opportunity to speak to the opposition day motion today. I want to commend the member for Keewatinook (Mr. Bushie) for his very thoughtful, poignant and meaningful words.

It is the best of this Assembly when we hear members speak about their personal experiences and take action upon those personal experiences, and I thank the member for Keewatinook for doing that here today.

He spoke of reconciliation as a journey and I agree with him one hundred per cent. I believe it's as much a personal journey as it is a corporate journey. Madam Speaker, each of us have a path of reconciliation to walk along.

*Mr. Andrew Micklefield, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair*

After the graves were found in British Columbia of the children from the residential schools, there was a desire, rightfully, to lower the flags here at the Manitoba Legislature, which involves more protocol perhaps than it should, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And at the time I was serving as the Deputy Premier, and I came into the Legislature and it was already—there was a number of people here at the Legislature who were remembering the children who were found. And we, you know, gave the direction to lower the flags. But before the flags were lowered, there was a smudging ceremony that I participated in and others participated in. I had the chance to speak to some of the survivors of residential schools. My son came with me, my wife came with me, and it was a very meaningful and difficult afternoon.

And on the way home, my wife was in tears on the way home. Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know her well, and she was in tears. And I said to her, I said, Kim, you know, like, I'm—this really touched you. And she said, you know, I knew—I knew about residential schools and I've read about them. I'd learned about them, but I don't think I really understood until she was, you know, speaking to some of the survivors there. And much of it is about understanding and understanding comes from personal connections and personal interactions.

And I've been on that journey as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker. When I was serving in the role as interim premier, I had an opportunity to get a better understanding of the importance of things like land acknowledgements here in the Legislature and we began a process, together with my friend, the former minister of Indigenous relations, about how that would happen in the Legislature. And it is true today that we have that land acknowledgement, which is important.

On the day for national truth and reconciliation, also serving as interim premier at the time, I had the opportunity to go across the street Memorial Park, and, together with the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew) and others, be involved in a sacred fire, which was new to me. And I am very thankful, both for the member for Fort Rouge and others, who were very gracious in, sort of, teaching and showing me what some of the meanings were of some of the actions we were taken. And that was a journey for me, as well—a personal journey, because we're all on these different journeys.

Then, in St. John's Park, and the member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine) was there, and the member for Fort Rouge was participating in the powwow, and I participated with my son, Malachi. And after, Malachi and I went for lunch or supper, whatever it was, and we had a very good discussion about some of the things that we'd seen and we'd learnt, and I felt it was important for me to not only be on that journey but to take my son on that journey. And we learned a lot about reconciliation, and about some of the harms that have caused in the past.

And so, I thank the member for Keewatinook (Mr. Bushie) for speaking about how it's a personal journey, it's a community journey, it's a corporate journey and that we're all learning along the way. And I—I'm glad to see that there are things that are happening in Manitoba. Some are initiated by the government and some are not, and it doesn't really matter, necessarily, how the initiations come, but whether it's the redevelopment of The Bay building, and I think that was described as reconciliation in action, and that is going to be meaningful and poignant for many, many years.

And there are people who can stop and listen and learn and reflect. And so much of it is about listening and learning. I've learnt—maybe question period isn't the prime example of that, but sometimes you're better to stop and listen and just stop talking. And I'll do that relatively soon because I want to hear other members, because I learn—I learn from the member for Keewatinook who has spoken; I've learned from the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew), at times, when he's talked about his journey; I've learned from the member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine); I've learned from our members; I've learned from many of my friends on this side of the House. It is about learning, and recognizing that sometimes we make mistakes and it's okay to admit those mistakes, but if we continue to try to learn, that's how we get to true reconciliation.

I appreciate the motion brought forward and the amendment that was raised by the member for St. Johns. I think it's a stronger motion by having the Assembly ask, all of us together, as opposed to just the government ask for the Pope to come to Manitoba to make that personal apology—the apology that he's made at the Vatican, but to do it here at in Manitoba. I think it's great that the Assembly comes together to ask for that, because this place can be powerful in a very meaningful way when we do it together across party lines. There's always going to be political divisions, and that is an important part of democracy,

but there's power in political parties coming together on something and this opposition day motion is part of that.

So, I think it's entirely appropriate to ask the Pope on his upcoming visit to Canada to come to Manitoba to deliver in person what he's delivered from a distance to the delegations that came—or, went to the Vatican. I want to thank them, by the way, for the journey that they made on behalf of all Manitobans, on behalf of Indigenous people, going to the Vatican and getting that apology and then encouraging the Pope to come to Canada, as well.

So, again, you know, when we talk about residential schools and we talk about reconciliation, today is an important point, it's not an end point, it's not the end-all, it's not the be-all, but it is another step, another part of a journey, another place where politicians can put aside whatever differences we have and join together in something we all believe, we all think is important, and we journey together. We're not all in the same place in that journey; we're not all at the same marker point. I've got much further to go, I'm sure, than others do. But I'll learn from them. I'll learn from others who will show me along the way, as well, and I appreciate that, and I appreciate the member for bringing forward this opposition day motion. I look forward to hearing from other members and seeing this motion pass this afternoon.

Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

\* (15:10)

**Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition):** If the Pope is to visit Manitoba, I think it could be a significant moment to help bring healing to residential school survivors, to help non-Indigenous Catholics who've had their faith unsettled over the past year, and to provide a venue for Manitobans from all walks of life, believers and non-believers, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike, a venue with which to engage in some important conversations about both one of the darkest eras in our Canadian history, but also one of the most important challenges that we share as we go forward into the future.

My remarks today, I just—I'm going to speak about a few uncles, and as I go along the way there, you'll see what I mean by that.

I want to begin by speaking about my uncle Fred, who was my late father's youngest brother. As we were talking about this motion, I gave him a shout and I did so because he was a part of the delegation that went to the Vatican recently. You may have seen him

in some of the media coverage. He was the elder wearing the war bonnet in the Holy See. And he is the one who, I guess, carried out some of the ceremonies that were conducted in Vatican City.

So I call him about this and I said, you know, we were saying we should invite the Pope, and his immediate response was, you know, your father and I went to St. Mary's residential school in Kenora. But it was part of the Saint Boniface diocese, he said. So he supported it because he thought it gave an opportunity to reflect on the experience of some of our family members as it pertains to the Catholic Church in this part of the world.

We got to speaking a bit more about it, and afterwards I reflected on his experience as a child. He was taken from his parents when he was four years old. I have a son who is going to turn four in about a week, and I can tell you that it's not difficult to draw the connection. And I have to say that I think it's fair to judge that any person, at any time in human history should've known that it was wrong to do what was done to a child of that size and of that disposition. Any child, every child matters.

I'll spare you the details of the abuse that he suffered, but suffice it to say that he experienced the first assault on day one of arriving, at the size that a four-year-old child is. You fast-forward many years, he's now had the opportunity to hear the head of the Catholic Church acknowledge what has been the truth the entire time: that the Church was wrong for the role that they played in these institutions of cultural genocide, and that children and him were right in that they always deserved the opportunity to be who they were, to be respected for where they came from, and should've had the opportunity to grow up with their parents.

A few years ago, I had an opportunity to travel to the Vatican with another person who I would call an uncle, and I know that my colleague from St. Johns would refer to as a relative, as well, and—Uncle Phil—if we're going to crack a joke about Fresh Prince. He's Phil Fontaine. And as we were there, we were there to see the canonization of Kateri, the first Indigenous saint from North America in the Roman Catholic tradition.

And it was quite a remarkable ceremony that we shared there, my late father—still around at the time—the rest of our family, Phil, and a few other folks, and we crossed paths with Caroline Bruyere who is an elder and residential school survivor from Saugeen First Nation.

And I just had to step back and remark how we are in, you know, this centre of the Roman Catholic tradition and we're carrying on a conversation in one of the languages that the residential school era sought to replace or erase.

And as we're carrying on this conversation, one line in particular that Caroline said really stood out to me. She said, like, in Ojibwe, we're here to 'canonizawiyin' Kateri. I really got a kick out of 'canonizawiyin' because she took a Roman Catholic verb and she conjugated it with the Anishinabe grammar. And in that moment, I think you have a little microcosm for all the various cultural, linguistic, spiritual and human experience that kind of intersected in the experience of somebody like Caroline Bruyere and so many other residential school survivors. And that is who they are and that is what they carry forward with them throughout their lives.

Another person that I spoke to in advance of this motion is somebody that I affectionately call Uncle Jimmy. Uncle Jimmy is better known to most Manitobans as the former Archbishop of Winnipeg, James Weisgerber.

The reason that I call the person who used to be the head of the Catholic Church in this part of the world uncle is because, at a ceremony several years ago, Phil Fontaine, Phil's brother Bert, my late father and my Uncle Fred adopted the archbishop as their brother.

The significance to the adoption ceremony in our culture is a peace-making ceremony, the foundation of which rests on the idea that if you embrace somebody that you're in conflict with as a relative you will arrive at a peace because you're committed to one another in the sense that any family is committed to those that they share blood with.

But on a spiritual level, the ceremony was significant to me because it represented four residential school survivors who were willing to rise above the pain and the anguish that they felt, and were willing to embrace somebody who represented some of the darkest moments in their lives. They were willing to step above that and embrace that person with love and with forgiveness in their hearts. And so I thought that that was really, truly significant. And of course, you know, the former archbishop offered his support and said, yes, if the—if you invite the Pope and he makes it, a hundred per cent the Church is going to be behind that.



But I really wanted to reflect on that experience because, you know, I learned a lot from Phil and from Bert, and I remember Bert had his Bible there with him. So we had an Indigenous ceremony, conducted by Indigenous elders, presided over by Indigenous elders, and a Catholic priest in a Roman collar was being embraced as part of that, and you had one of the Anishinabe elders there with his Bible that he wanted blessed. And so again, the overlapping, intersecting, multidimensional nature of what it means to be a Manitoban; of what it means to be alive in this part of the world today.

And the final person I wanted to reflect on in my remarks today is a person who came up to me last summer and is a non-Indigenous person who I had never met before in my life. But they are a Catholic. They are somebody who has a deep faith that they practice throughout their lives. And they approached me because they were deeply upset by how they felt after having learned of the disclosures of the gravesites at places like, you know, Kamloops and Brandon, and many of the other sites across Canada. And this person was clearly somebody in turmoil.

On the one hand, they're not going to abandon their Catholicism even if they're feeling unsettled by the practice of that faith at the time. They are still somebody who is going to pray in that same kind of way and have a relationship with the Creator intermediated by that faith. At the same time, this person articulated some frustration with how could the Church have been involved in something so dark as that part of our collective history.

And even some of the frustration, I would venture to say, reflected on the current leadership of the Church, and they were asking, why are they asking me, as a parishioner today, to pay for the things that they should have done back then? Why am I being asked to put into the collection plate to make up for the money that the bishops were already supposed to have committed to residential school survivors?

I don't think any of us relish confronting the emotions, but it is important for us to do so. All of us have been affected by this issue. Some of us have had our lives upended and framed by some of the experiences in residential schools; other of us are learning about it and are feeling our conceptions and ideas of our country and of our religious traditions challenged by these things. And yet, we are all here together right now, and no one is going anywhere.

And so we have a sacred responsibility and a shared responsibility to work through this together.

And insofar as inviting the Pope here is only one step, it is a significant step and it could bring people from all walks of life here in Manitoba together. So that's why I support this motion.

\* (15:20)

**Hon. Eileen Clarke (Minister of Municipal Relations):** I welcome the opportunity to speak today of the value in healing that would be realized by the Pope's visiting and including Manitoba as a priority visit on his planned trip to Canada this year.

Manitoba had, over the years, a very high number of residential schools and the last one was closed in 1996; that's only 26 years ago. Many Manitobans and many Canadians had little or no knowledge of residential schools until last year when the 215 unmarked graves of deceased children that were stolen from their families were identified in Kamloops, BC. This stark reality is the—of the shameful harm and tragedy sent shockwaves across our country, and beyond.

I believe for many who knew of this horrific past found it far too easy to disregard and left the past to be forgotten. I'm personally relieved that the events of the past have come to light and are finally being acknowledged, discussed and many questions are being asked.

I personally had very little knowledge of residential schools earlier in my life, too, about those who didn't survive but even more so of the survivors, until I had the distinct honour of becoming Manitoba's Indigenous minister from 2016 to 2021. I traveled and I listened to many survivors and I was saddened, and often horrified, to hear their painful stories.

In another way, I wanted to know so much more, so I went to Chapters and I purchased many books. As I read them, I found the ones that were personal accounts of individuals who had lived this unbelievable life were the ones I just couldn't put down.

I felt ashamed for not having known so much more, and I intend to keep reading, listening and learning. I don't need a title or a position to do what's right for residential school survivors and their families.

Reconciliation comes from the heart. It's not written documents or media reports. As I read and listened, I was often left wondering what needed to be done now, in my time, to make a difference for the families and the individuals that are scarred and living in darkness because of a life that was forced on them and their previous generations.

It's extremely painful to think about it, and often find myself in—putting myself in their life, if this happened to us right now. I think of my three precious grandsons, aged 13—pardon me, 11, 13 and 14. I think of what it would have been like to have them brutally removed from their mom and dad, or us as grandparents.

I think of my oldest grandson, who absolutely loves his dark, thick and very, very curly hair, and likes to let it grow; and it's sometimes very unruly, but he loves his hair. And I think of how important hair is—the hair of Indigenous people, grown long—how important it is to them.

I also think of my grandson who lives here in Winnipeg, who is pretty shy and would just carry such deep pain and loneliness within him. And then I think of my youngest grandson, 11 years old, who's feisty, quick to retaliate and would verbally and physically fight 'til—to the death, likely to the point where he'd be one of the ones in the unmarked grave.

The feelings that fill up within me is terrifying and it keeps me awake at night; and that's just thinking about it. It doesn't compare with the tremendous pain and suffering experienced by Indigenous families in the past.

I took the opportunity at Long Plain Keeshkeemaquah last year. I was invited on September 30th for the national day of truth and reconciliation. I took that opportunity as a minister of this government to humbly apologize on behalf of our government, my Agassiz constituency and my family, to all families who did and are currently living with the nightmares and pain that has totally dissipated their lives for so many years.

There were a couple of survivors who spoke, and one of them was a good friend of mine, former band councillor, Liz Maric. It was so hard for her to share her personal story with everyone, but she gave us a very clear picture but even more so, a gut feeling of what she endured. We listened to how it made her feel then, how it has remained in her heart and the stigmas that just don't go away, even though she is a very accomplished First Nation woman.

I'm proud to call her my friend and I have so much respect for her, for the bravery she showed in sharing her residential school experience.

I was also honoured to be invited to the historic day at Keeshkeemaquah for the announcement of the Portage la Prairie residential school historic designation, one of only two in all of Canada. Former Chief

Meeches indicated this was a very long time coming, and there has been personal traumatic effects on his people. But in many ways, this designation would bring some closure and showed reconciliation efforts were being undertaken.

There are many reasons I personally feel the Pope should reconsider and include Manitoba in his Cantadian [*phonetic*] locations to visit. I want to acknowledge Manitoba First Nations, Métis and Inuit delegations that have recently visited Rome to meet the Pope and hear his humble personal apologies to Manitoba Indigenous families. I believe it is appreciated by those who were able to travel, but there are thousands of survivors and families who were not able to be included in those chosen delegations.

My husband and his family are Irish Catholics. My mother-in-law had the distinct opportunity to just visually see the Pope in Manitoba at Birds Hill park many years ago. It meant the world to her and it strengthened her faith, even though her faith has—never did waver, and she had not ever suffered at the hands of the Church.

This makes—helps to make me understand how much it would mean to residential school survivors and all their families and friends. It could, perhaps, set them free and finally give them a chance to heal. It could, perhaps, often—open and soften their hearts, knowing that their lifelong emotional and physical pain is being acknowledged, that apologies are genuine and that the people in the communities and province are—will stand with them and want to be a part of moving forward to live a life of freedom and respect.

For it truly means the most—for it to truly mean the most, you need to look into the eyes of the person delivering the message and hear the words in the person that 'trreally' feel the sentiment of this long-overdue apology.

Manitoba residential school survivors and their families, past and present, have my absolute respect, and I'm honoured to have the opportunity to just be a small voice in their appeal to have Pope Francis visit them and address them in their home province.

I had the opportunity last year, as our government's Indigenous minister, to have a virtual meeting with Archbishop Richard Gagnon. He spoke of his work within the Catholic Church and he also spoke of the meeting that was being planned to Rome with Manitoba Indigenous representatives. I shared with him my concern and disappointment that only selected

leaders were going to be chosen and that those who are suffering the deepest pain would not necessarily be included, which would be so disappointing for many.

I also shared with him the value and the learning I was experiencing in my travels and meeting with Indigenous leaders, elders, knowledge keepers, grandmothers and individuals all across their Turtle Island. I told him of the conversations and stories had truly changed my life in a good way, and that would it be good for leaders or the Pope to visit and sit with the people in their traditional territories.

It became evident that that was not being considered and I was really disappointed to hear that. I wish my colleagues and residents of Manitoba all had the opportunity to be a part of the journey that I have been on with the people—Indigenous people of our province.

I pray for the healing that needs to happen. I pray for forgiveness for all the wrongs of the past. And I pray for reconciliation not to be a buzzword for the time—this time in our lives, but instead an intense feeling within our hearts to do better, to respect all others and to be inclusive in all we do.

As a representative of all people in Manitoba and our government, I commit to equality for all people. I have never and will never consider reconciliation a strategy or a number Call to Action. I choose to live reconciliation by example.

Thank you for this humbling opportunity today.

**MLA Uzoma Asagwara (Union Station):** I really and truly appreciate the opportunity to rise today and speak to this very important motion brought forward by our colleague, the MLA for Keewatinook.

\* (15:30)

I have a tremendous amount of respect for him, as I do all my colleagues. But, certainly, in the very short amount of time that I've been elected alongside him, I have learned an incredible amount. He is incredibly generous. He is generous with his knowledge, with his time, with his kindness. And it's significant not only that he's brought this forward on behalf of so many, but it's significant that even in doing so, you know, when he speaks to this, he shares personal stories, as all of our colleagues—all of our Indigenous colleagues have done, time and time again. So, I want to thank him for not only bringing it forward, but for sharing from such a personal place and for all the work that he

does day in and day out that, you know, folks would know nothing of in this House.

I want to thank survivors who continue to advocate, make their voices heard. Send love and care to them as they navigate all of the ups and downs of what's been going on now for quite some time and, certainly, the dialogue around this. Thank the leaders, activists, organizers, community members who are all working very hard to try and, you know, bring folks on board, non-Indigenous folks on board and really invest meaningfully and participating in reconciliation and fighting tirelessly for their voices to be heard and for action to be taken by way of reconciliation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this motion—I think that all of us in this House can speak to this motion and why it's significant and why it's so important. And, you know, our NDP caucus, our NDP party, we recognize the realities of the legacy of residential schools and the importance of centering and prioritizing the voice and the needs of survivors and their families, recognizing the lasting impact residential schools have had on Indigenous peoples.

And I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's so important for us to—when we talk about reconciliation and when we talk about the roles that we each play, we can't just talk about what we do as legislators. It's incredibly important, what we do. But, certainly, it is something that we have to commit to and recommit to every single day in our lives, our day-to-day lives, not just in terms of policy. What we do here is incredibly important, but it's also important for us to recognize that we must be actively engaged in this in all aspects of what we do in our homes, with our families, in our communities, at the grocery store, you know, as we go on our day-to-day lives.

And our colleague, the MLA for Keewatinook, who brought this forward in question period today was asking some really important questions. And the minister—and I apologize, I don't know her portfolio clearly off the top of my head. But the minister who responded was the former minister of Indigenous relations and reconciliation—you know, sort of came off as defensive. I'm just going to describe it that way.

And what I think is really important about that interaction, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is it actually really represents much more than what we see in this Chamber. It represents sometimes as non-Indigenous folks, moments where we are being asked to be accountable to our roles in advancing reconciliation, and we receive feedback that perhaps we're not comfortable with, and we receive feedback that perhaps

we don't want to face because we feel it is incongruent with how we see ourselves in participating in reconciliation.

And that moment—I know that question period is, you know, described sometimes as theatre, performative or what have you—but those questions that he asked today were really important. They are important. And it's incumbent of non-Indigenous folks—myself, good example—to listen and to not listen from a place of trying to protect our feelings, of trying to defend our actions or inaction, but to listen to folks when they are so generous as our colleague always is and offering us an opportunity to learn and unlearn and move forward in a better way that respects the rights of Indigenous peoples.

And so what I would encourage—what I encourage myself to do, because I do reflect on this because I am certainly somebody who's had to do a lot of learning and a lot of unlearning, and over the past many months alongside, you know, thousands and thousands of other Canadians, have had to dig into having a deeper understanding for the reckoning that this country has been facing.

And so, I say that because I do think that what happened earlier is a good, clear example of a shift that needs to take place, where, if we're saying we're committed to reconciliation, then that means that we are prioritizing the listening aspect of this journey.

And that, you know, we don't use, you know, one person gave us feedback or gave us these insights and therefore I'm doing it well. No, like, set that aside. Hear when someone is asking you to do better and commit to doing that. And that's something that I'm taking away from that interaction today and really going to focus on applying, you know, to my own actions, moving forward.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this motion is incredibly important. There's a lot of work that needs to be done to—well beyond this motion to fulfill and to respect the efforts of those who are working so hard, to make sure that the truth is accessible and understood by all of us. There's a tremendous amount of work that needs to be done by this government, this current government. And, you know, I think that—I hope that all of us in this House can be unified in supporting this.

Obviously, we all support this, we recognize the significance of this motion. But again, it's about more than just supporting this motion. It is incredibly important. We've all seen the reactions that so many folks are having to the apology, the folks going to the

Vatican, et cetera. But we need to insist on ongoing actions being taken.

And that when members of this House—just as an example, when Indigenous members in this House bring concerns forward, their voices should be heard and taken seriously. When Indigenous members of this House are raising issues and advocating for their communities, that should be met with open arms, open hearts and should be reflected in the actions in this Chamber.

And I do raise that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because as I stated—I—in the beginning of my comments, you know, there's a role that each of us has to play well beyond just supporting this very, very important motion. And so, I do hope that folks can commit and recommit to taking those steps. I'm grateful for the opportunity to be able to put a few words on the record in regards to this motion and the significance of it.

And I really and truly call for, you know, all members of this House—non-Indigenous members of this House—to be open-hearted, open-minded and receptive to the feedback that they receive from folks who are being very generous with their knowledge and their experiences, and to meet that with the respect that it should be. Very much looking forward to the unanimous support of—in this House, of this motion.

Thank you.

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface):** It's a pleasure to speak in favour of this motion and I wanted to thank the member for Keewatinook (Mr. Bushie) and the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew) for their leadership in putting this forward as well as for sharing their powerful stories.

You know, the first time I think I heard of residential schools was from the playwright Tomson Highway. Next week at MTC, there's a premiere of his play, *The Rez Sisters*. But I was at a student conference in 1991 and there'd been a number of scandals in—in the Mount Cashel boys' home was one, and he said, look, there's something coming up. You're all going to be hearing a lot more about the experiences in residential schools. And I remember that very significantly. It was first time that I ever heard anyone in person—it was in Brandon—talking about that.

\* (15:40)

And last September 30th, I had the opportunity to meet a residential school survivor at St. John's Park, and she had gone to the residential school just off

Academy Road in—here in Winnipeg. And it was the first time she had ever attended an Orange Shirt Day and she hoped to see one of her former classmates.

But the choice of St. Boniface as a site of apology for the Pope is, of course, extremely important.

Le choix de Saint-Boniface et de Winnipeg comme lieu de réconciliation pour le pape revêt une importance spirituelle et historique considérable.

Le cimetière de la cathédrale Saint-Boniface est aussi le dernier lieu de repos de Louis Riel, le fondateur de notre province, mais c'est aussi là qu'il a vécu, travaillé et adoré.

Lorsque le gouvernement du Canada a cherché à englober le Manitoba et l'Ouest canadien sans penser aux habitants de la rivière Rouge, c'est sur les marches de la cathédrale de Saint-Boniface que Riel a prononcé des discours enflammés qui ont galvanisé les citoyens.

C'est à Saint-Boniface que Riel collabore avec l'abbé Ritchot et le gouvernement de transition pour rédiger la Loi sur le Manitoba, et Ritchot a négocié lui-même l'entrée du Manitoba dans la Confédération. Et une des conditions que Riel et Ritchot demandaient pour l'entrée des Manitobains dans la Confédération était des traités avec les Premières Nations.

Mais, quand même, l'archidiocèse de Saint-Boniface faisait aussi partie de l'Église catholique, responsable des pensionnats non seulement au Manitoba, mais dans tout l'Ouest canadien.

Je reçois encore des lettres de gens qui cherchent à minimiser ce qui s'est passé dans les pensionnats. Je leur réponds toujours en soulignant qu'en 1907, il y a plus d'un siècle, M. Peter Bryce a qualifié les pensionnats indiens de crime national. Il a paru dans les journaux à l'époque. Il a ensuite été publié dans un livre en 1922.

L'une des demandes de la Commission de vérité et réconciliation était des excuses du pape et de l'Église catholique, qui dirigeait de nombreuses écoles pour le gouvernement fédéral.

Et cet aspect de la Vérité est absolument critique. Des excuses reconnaissent que des personnes dont la souffrance a été réduite au silence, ignorée et balayée sous le tapis sont acceptées et validées.

En juin dernier, après la découverte des tombes anonymes à Kamloops, j'ai écrit une lettre à Monseigneur Albert LeGatt, archevêque de Saint-Boniface, pour lui demander de me rencontrer au sujet

d'excuses—et j'ai constaté qu'il était déjà en avance sur moi.

Il est profondément engagé à reconnaître la vérité, à guérir par le pardon et à corriger les choses. Il a fait preuve d'un véritable leadership moral qui mérite d'être reconnu.

### **Translation**

*Choosing St. Boniface and Winnipeg as a place for reconciliation for the Pope is of considerable spiritual and historical significance.*

*The St. Boniface Cathedral Cemetery is the final resting place of Louis Riel, the founder of our province, but that is also where he lived, worked and worshipped.*

*When the government of Canada tried to engulf Manitoba and western Canada without thinking of the inhabitants of the Red River, it was on the steps of the St. Boniface Cathedral that Riel gave passionate speeches that galvanized citizens.*

*St. Boniface is where Riel collaborated with Abbé Ritchot and the interim government to draft the Manitoba Act. Ritchot himself negotiated Manitoba's entry into Confederation. And one of the conditions that Riel and Ritchot asked for Manitobans to enter the Confederation was treaties with First Nations.*

*But the Archdiocese of Saint-Boniface was also part of the Catholic Church, which was responsible for residential schools in Manitoba as well as in all of western Canada.*

*I still receive mail from people trying to minimize what happened in residential schools. I always respond to them by highlighting that in 1907, over a century ago, Mr. Peter Bryce stated that residential schools were a national crime. He was published in the newspapers at the time. He was then published in a book in 1922.*

*One of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls was asking for apologies from the Pope and the Catholic Church, which was running numerous schools for the federal government.*

*And this aspect of truth is absolutely critical. Apologies acknowledge that people whose suffering was silenced, ignored and swept under the rug are accepted and validated.*

*This past June, after the discovery of unmarked graves in Kamloops, I wrote a letter to Monseigneur Albert LeGatt, Archbishop of St. Boniface, to ask him to meet*

*me to discuss an apology—and I observed that he was already ahead of me.*

*He is deeply committed to acknowledging the truth, healing through forgiveness and putting things right. He demonstrated real moral leadership that deserves to be recognized.*

### **English**

There is tremendous spiritual and historic significance to the choice of St. Boniface and Winnipeg as a place for the Pope to visit for reconciliation. The cemetery of St. Boniface Cathedral is the final resting place of Louis Riel, the founder of our province and that's also where he lived, worked and worshipped.

And when the Government of Canada sought to swallow up Manitoba and the Canadian west without thought to the residents of Red River, it was on the steps of the St. Boniface Cathedral where Riel delivered rousing speeches that galvanized citizens.

And, of course, the Archdiocese of St. Boniface is one of the places from which the Catholic Church ruled over the residential schools, not just in Manitoba but across western Canada.

And I still get letters from people who are seeking to minimize what happened in residential schools. I always answer by pointing out that in 1907, more than a century ago, Dr. Peter Bryce called residential schools a national crime. It ran in newspapers of the time. It was then published in a book in 1922. It was a crime then and it was a crime now.

And that aspect of an apology of recognizing and acknowledging the truth is so critical. An apology recognizes that people whose suffering was silenced, ignored and swept under the rug is being accepted and validated.

Last June, after the discovery of unmarked graves at Kamloops, I wrote a letter to Archbishop Albert LeGatt of St. Boniface asking to meet about a possible apology and found that he was already ahead of me. We discussed the possibility of the Pope coming to Manitoba and to St. Boniface, and I hope that if this measure can receive unanimous support that this important step on the path of reconciliation can become a reality.

Monseigneur LeGatt and I also had a meeting with former national chief Phil Fontaine, who was at the time set to travel to Rome to meet with the Pope.

And I just want to say this about Monseigneur LeGatt, about his true empathy that he feels is in part

because he recognizes the terrible suffering of parents and of children who were separated and suffered enormously, in part because one of his own earliest memories is that of a younger sibling who died when he was only four or five years old, and his earliest memory is that of a funeral of his own little brother.

And that remembrance of that suffering helps to inform his sympathy, because the difficult truth of Canada and of Manitoba is that non-Indigenous Canadians have prospered at the expense of the suffering of Indigenous people, even as Indigenous leaders—Louis Riel being one, Elijah Harper being another, and many others—have stayed true to their own principles. They have pressed us to be true to our own. We owe a collective debt of gratitude, and reconciliation means acknowledging the harm and making amends and earning forgiveness.

There are lifetimes of work ahead, and that is not a burden but an opportunity for us to embrace.

Thank you. Merci. Miigwech.

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** First and foremost, let me begin by saying miigwech to the member for Keewatinook (Mr. Bushie) for bringing forward this important opposition day motion, you know, on behalf of all of us here in the Chamber, calling on the Pope, Pope Francis, to include Treaty 1 territory, to include Manitoba as one of his stops on his official Canadian visit, when he will apologize to residential school survivors. We support the calls from survivors to have the Pope stop here, to have an apology in these territories.

And I think it's important to recognize—again, and I said this right after the papal apology in Rome—that—and he's been mentioned several times already today, you know, it's leadership from these territories, from Treaty 1 territories from here in Manitoba that really did begin this national conversation and, you know, kind of opening the door to the Canadian public about residential schools and what happened to residential schools.

And, again, the first leader to do that was Phil Fontaine, my cousin, in 1990 in a really important CBC interview where, again, that was one of the first times that a leader spoke about that. Many of us for many, many years, you know, have grandparents or parents that went to residential school, and still to this day where they have not shared what happened to us—in—to them in residential schools. And so Phil, you know, it was such an important moment. It was so courageous, and he was so vulnerable to do it in such

a public space. And yet he chose to do that to bring truth, to bring that truth to the official Canadian record to our Canadian history.

And so it is only fitting that Pope Francis would include Treaty 1 territory, would include Winnipeg as part of his tour here to apologize for what happened in residential schools.

You know, let me say this. I—you know, I've been thinking about what I wanted to share in the very limited time that we have here. You know, since we—since the discovery of the, you know, the little ones in Kelowna, it's been, like, such a year, such a journey, you know, all across Canada. It's been such a journey for all of us. For Indigenous peoples it was so raw and so hard and so difficult. Like, on a cellular level, it was so hurtful.

And, you know, I know that the Government House Leader (Mr. Goertzen) spoke about his own journey on July 1st in St. John's Park and going with his son and having those discussions with his sons. And I know other members have spoken about those own—their—you know, those own family discussions. And that's what happens, when you have moments where truth is laid bare in the same way that Phil did in 1990, Kelowna and all of the other discoveries that came after that laid bare that truth.

\* (15:50)

And in that, as uncomfortable and as hurtful and as painful as that truth is, there's moments of beauty, there's moments of change, there's moments where we can connect with one another on a very deep, emotional, spiritual level. And in that connection, in that healing, is where the path to reconciliation lies.

And so, you know, today is one component of that path that we've been on in the last, you know, 30, 40 years, but certainly in the last year since Kelowna; almost a year since Kelowna.

You know, I want to acknowledge all of the relatives who went to Rome just last month; that would have taken an incredible amount of strength and courage and resolve and determination to do. And each and every delegation was so stunning to behold and to watch, they way that their visit unfolded with the Pope.

And I know that many Canadians would have saw that there was a First Nation woman that brought a baby basket with her to gift to the Pope. You know, I have to say that that brought me to tears to see that. It was so powerful. It was such a powerful, spiritual

gesture; it was such an act of love, an act of connection to the Pope to give a baby's cradle to him to care for.

And so you see all of those moments. You see that those delegations that went to Rome often were led by women, were led by matriarchs. Often in the discussion on residential schools, for many years women's voices have been left out, off to the side. And so it was fitting and beautiful and empowering to see matriarchs take up their rightful place, because that's what colonization has done; it has disrupted those gendered roles between Indigenous men and Indigenous women.

Pre-contact Indigenous women and Indigenous men were equal. Our language—most Indigenous languages didn't have conceptions of, you know, that men were the house, you know, the head of the household, everybody was equal. Women sat in council. Women made decisions. There was equity. And that was disrupted.

I talked earlier about that—this moment in our collective history to connect with one another and to go and to find that reconciliation. And today I'm wearing these two lockets, and they were gifted to me this week. And they were gifted to me by Shauna-Jean and Cory Matthews, two non-Indigenous citizens who reached out to me.

And she shared with me that when the news about Kelowna was unfolding, her and her husband were watching the news and they were so sickened by what they were seeing, and they wanted to be able to do something. And so they started to create these lockets. And one locket has, like, an orange shirt in it, it's an origami orange shirt. And in this one, she—it's an origami of a red dress. And she ended—they ended up creating these lockets and they gifted them in preparation for July 1st, about 300 of these lockets.

And they didn't take any money, they only asked for donations to the Indian Residential School Survivors Society. That is reconciliation in action.

And I wanted to honour them because there have been so many non-Indigenous people that have reached out since Kelowna to myself, to the Leader of the Opposition, to the member for Keewatinook (Mr. Bushie), to the member for Point Douglas (Mrs. Smith), what can we do? How can we support residential school survivors? How can we support Indigenous peoples? And simple gestures like this mean so much. It's a moment that people take their time and their energy and their resources and they

pour their love and spirit into something that, hopefully, connects and binds us all together.

And so, I knew today that we would be discussing this opposition day motion, and I wanted to bring these two lockets that represent not only residential school survivors, but represent missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, and two-spirit. I wanted to bring them into the Chamber with me. But I also, by extension, wanted to bring Shauna-Jean and her husband Cory into this Chamber, because again, that is where we're going to find healing. And that is where we're going to find reconciliation.

And so, again, it is my most humble, most gentle and yet, strongest recommendation and hope that the Pope will make Treaty 1 territory one of his stops this coming summer.

Miigwech.

**Hon. Alan Lagimodiere (Minister of Indigenous Reconciliation and Northern Relations):** I want to thank the member opposite for bringing this very important opposition day motion forward.

We need to acknowledge that First Nations, Inuit, Métis leadership, survivors and families have been calling on the Catholic Church for a formal apology and recognition of their truths, and the trauma and intergenerational impacts that have been endured due to the painful legacy of attending residential schools.

And after the passage of the Indian Act in 1876, innocent children were stripped from their families and forced to attend the Canadian residential school system, where they were subject to horrific treatment: physical abuse, mental abuse and sometimes sexual abuse.

And our government acknowledges and appreciates the Pope's recent apology to Indigenous peoples for their—for the involvement of the Roman Catholic Church in the residential school system in Canada, and acknowledging the tragedies of the past.

However, so much more work needs to be done. And at this—a few days ago, we—I received a phone call from the First Nations regional chief, Cindy Woodhouse, who was part of the delegation to Rome, and she wanted to meet with both the Premier (Mrs. Stefanson) and myself.

And so, in the meeting—it was a very emotional meeting where she came to me and the Premier and presented us both with rosaries—rosaries that were blessed by the Pope himself—and wanted to provide us with those rosaries in acknowledgement of the work

we were doing on reconciliation, and to encourage us to continue on this path. And we were very honoured to receive these very sacred gifts, especially being blessed by the Pope himself.

And I want to put on the record that prior to President Chartrand's leaving, I did have an opportunity to speak with him, and he told me that when he was meeting with the Pope, he was going to include a request to have Manitoba as part of the visit to Canada.

And I agreed with this approach, and welcome and invite the Pope to Manitoba to deliver, in person, the papal apologies to the survivors and families. And we would also encourage his visit to include blessings to the gravesite of Louis Riel and attending gravesites of Indigenous children who lost their lives in residential school system.

We believe a demonstration of reconciliation would be an important step in the healing needed to address the intergenerational trauma caused by the residential school systems. And I've said it before that reconciliation is everyone's responsibility, and we all have a role to play on the path to reconciliation, and we will be supporting this motion.

\* (16:00)

Thank you. Miigwech.

**Mr. Adrien Sala (St. James):** I'm really proud to have an opportunity to speak to this very important motion, which requests that Pope Francis include Manitoba as part of their—his tour of Canada and that he come here to apologize to residential school survivors on behalf of the Catholic Church, and also that this visit include a visit to the graves of Indigenous children who perished in this institutions and that they seek to bless the grave of Louis Riel.

Like my other colleagues, I want to make sure that I take a moment to thank my colleague from Keewatinook for bringing this really important motion forward today, and giving us this opportunity to reflect and to encourage members of this House to do the right thing and to come together around a really great opportunity here to bring the Pope to Winnipeg—or bring the Pope to Manitoba to offer an apology on behalf of the Church. So, thank you to him for that.

We, as the Manitoba NDP, recognize the awful history of residential schools in Canada and the lasting impact those schools have had on survivors and their descendants in this country. The legacy of residential schools in this country is one of abuse, racism,



assimilation, cultural genocide and it's one where our country and religious organizations partnered together to steal away children from their families; to steal away culture, languages and faith from Indigenous peoples here in Canada.

So, this recent apology by the Pope, of course, was a very important step in acknowledging the Catholic Church's in what happened here in Canada. It's a very important step but it is, as my colleague from Keewatinook said earlier, it's just one step, and it's a first step. And it is really important that we do come together in requesting that the church—the Catholic Church and the Pope do come here and include Manitoba; to take that next step in ensuring that survivors and the family members of survivors have an opportunity to hear it here on this territory.

It's also important to recognize that this apology does fulfill one of the actions—Action 58 from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. And that's just another reason why it's so important that we come together here to, again, encourage the Pope to include Manitoba as part of their tour.

You know, the revelation of the unmarked graves that were found in Kamloops last summer—it shook Canadians to the core. It shook Canadians to the core and I know, myself, as a settler on this territory—as somebody who is on their own learning journey—reconciliation learning journey and only coming to understand more and more about our own history of residential schools, how deeply it impacted me.

And as a father to two young kids, you know, imagining the realities that those families faced knowing that their kids were being stolen away from them and brought to these schools was unbearable to consider as a parent, and really drove home and—when I learned about what happened in Kamloops. I'm sure, like everyone in this House, the emotional impact was just indescribably deep to think about the horrors that those families, those Indigenous people endured—again, as a result of decision-making actions by the Catholic Church and by our Canadian government.

And we know that Indigenous peoples in Canada have long known, of course, about the reality of what happened in these residential schools, and have been educating and sharing that with other settlers, Canadians, but that revelation and that discovery in Kamloops really changed things. It really changed things in this country.

And I think about that, I—my own experience in my own community, as an MLA, knocking on doors

after that revelation in my community and the number of times I heard from community members how horrified they were, how this was the first time that they'd been really forced to cope with or to recognize the reality of our history here in Canada, was really powerful. And it was clear to me from those conversations—from those many conversations—just how much things had changed. We seem to have moved to another level of recognition broadly among a much broader group of Canadians about that horrifying past.

And I think as painful as that is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for folks to come to grips with that and to really reconsider the history of this country for a lot of people who had, maybe, a certain idea about our history here, it is a really important—clearly, an incredibly important thing for Canadians to have recognized and for us to all reckon with, this horrifying aspect of our history.

And so, you know, I stand here today, again, as a settler on this territory, as somebody who's on their own learning journey, who continues to learn more, and I'm very proud to speak in support of this motion. And I think that this motion is an incredibly important opportunity for us to come together. It's an important opportunity for the Catholic Church to come here to this place where we have—you know, we've had an incredibly high number of residential schools in this province. This is a necessary stop and we need to come together to support that.

I thank my colleague again from Keewatinook for bringing this important motion forward, for giving us this opportunity to come together around this, and I hope that we can all agree that this is something that needs to happen and that we should really be strongly encouraging the Catholic Church to move forward with, with this apology here on this territory.

So I thank you, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker.

**Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas):** I want to thank my colleague for bringing this motion forward—super-important motion, and certainly something that all First Nations and Indigenous people here in Manitoba and, I think, across Canada would agree that, you know, they'd like the Pope to come to their community, to their territory, to give that papal apology.

I think about, you know, being a grandmother, and I have two granddaughters: one's eight, the other one's 10, and even my own children, I mean, my children are now grown. You know, I have two sons: one that's 28, one that's 31, a daughter that's 19. And

I couldn't imagine, you know, the pain that families felt and, you know, how, you know, letting their children go, how painful that must have been, and having, you know, no control over it, being told that if you don't let them—if you don't let us take your children, that we're going to imprison you.

Yesterday, I was at my cousin's funeral, you know, 41-year-old that, you know, passed away from a heart attack, and I was talking to some of my great-aunts about this, and, you know, this whole apology, and many of them never went to residential school. Many of them—and we were joking because I—they were like, oh, no, we were in the blueberry patch. And I was, like, what? No way, because they were saying, oh, I'm going to fax this to you because their spouses went to residential school and day school. So one of them was—I want to, you know, apply for their day school and we don't know how to do it.

So many families had to go and hide their children. They had to go live in the bush. They had to go live on the trapline—very hard lives to live, away from their communities, you know, isolated, very hard conditions. But, again, living off the land, you know, being free from having someone come in and control what you do with your children.

\* (16:10)

And certainly, you know, as an educator, I remember having these conversations as an Indigenous educator in my own division when we started bringing this into the curriculum, and how controversial it was for some people, you know, non-Indigenous people not feeling comfortable with teaching this history that, you know, so rightly all Manitobans, all Canadians should know about and know that this was a forced assimilation, that it wasn't something that, you know, families wanted.

When they signed treaties, they signed treaties to have their children educated as everyone else was being educated and not to be, you know, stolen and taken and, you know, for some not to return and to be left wondering where, you know, their children are to this day.

So those were hard discussions because, you know, pushing people out of their comfort zone and for the betterment of, you know, all Canadians, especially Manitoba children.

And I remember, you know, some of these teachers even going home and having conversations at their own dinner tables. And many of their, you

know, mothers, fathers, aunties, relatives, not knowing the history of, you know, the province, the country that they lived in. And this motion, you know, is really about reconciliation, and this is about giving voice to, you know, the survivors. This is what they want. This is what they're asking for. It's about educating, continuing to educate, because I know there's still Canadians who don't know about this history, and I know that there's newcomers that move to, you know, our great country of Canada, and this is something that everyone should know. This is something that should never be repeated in our history and we should never feel fearful of our children being taken away.

You know, I think of our CFS system now. Many of that—many people call that the new residential school system because, again, children are forced—they're taken by not the will of their families. And, you know, I know many of us saw that video a few years back where, you know, a mother gave birth in a hospital and the police were called in, and this child was taken by force from his mother's arms. And, you know, it's still happening. It may not be the residential school, but our children are still being taken. And, you know, I think about, are we going to be apologizing for that?

You know, we need to start investing in our families and ensuring that everyone has equal access to education and the same education, not a watered-down education. You know, I think about our First Nation communities that don't have equal access to resources. I remember teaching high school, and that wasn't that long ago. I had many students come from the remote communities, and many of them, you know, behind a grade or two or three. You know, coming to a high school of 1,600 students, you know, three, four, five times, 10 times bigger than the community that they were coming from, and not equipped to deal with what was, you know, an urban setting. So there's, you know—certainly we need to make sure that there's—that these don't continue to happen.

And I want to go back to my grandchildren because, you know, I think about every day when they walk out the door, when they go to school, what they're learning about. Because when I was in school, I didn't learn anything about Indigenous peoples. I remember singing—and I've said this in this House before—one little, two little, three little Indians, and I was actually proud of that. And I thought, oh, hey, I'm an Indian, right? And—but how racist that was.

But now I'm educated. Now I know that, so now I can speak to that. But, at the time, that was a

reflection of, sadly, of the only reflection that I remember growing up as—with. There was no—you know, no culture, no language. My mother went to the residential school. You know, I knew a few words from my grandmother. My grandmother didn't speak English. I would, you know, go and listen to her, but I would nod my head and not really know what she was saying.

*Madam Speaker in the Chair*

But I would pick up on some words—mostly the bad words, but a lot of us, that's what we know. But, you know, I think now—I reflect now, why didn't I spend the time to actually learn the language?

So, that's a part of reconciliation, is, you know, giving back the access to the language, to learn the language, to giving access to the culture. And, you know, prior to the 1950s, we couldn't practice our culture. It was, you know—we'd have to leave our communities. We'd have to go into the bush. And I know with the Red River jig, you know, the Métis people talk about—they had to—that was their dance. You know, often the Indian agent would look in the window and they'd be, you know, dancing and they couldn't see them practising, you know, their culture. And they kept that alive, and that's still alive today.

And, you know, I've passed on what I know from my culture and language, and I've only started to learn who I was when I was 23. But yet my mom's First Nation, you know, I'm Métis, I had a non-Indigenous father. We are working on getting our treaty. My uncles just got theirs, so we're going to work on getting ours now hopefully. And, you know, this is something that is long overdue.

And they say, oh, we've discovered these children. They weren't actually discovered. They—we knew that they were there for years and years and years and, you know, nothing was ever done.

And I think about the link to, you know, our MMIWG2S in—you know, there was a number that was 600, and the member from St. Johns says this all the time. You know, people weren't paying attention. You know, that—there can't be 600, you know, missing and murdered Indigenous women in Canada. And that number is much higher now. And the number of children that, you know, were taken from us and that didn't return to their families, that number increases every day. When that number was—first came out 231, you know, it's grown to well over 10,000. And, you know, we don't have the same, you know, attention

paid to it, and it's brought out a lot of feelings for families.

And, you know, I'm really happy that, you know, this has brought—been brought forward by my colleague and I'm happy that we can all agree on this, and this is something that's long overdue, and we need to continue to educate Manitobans and Canadians.

Miigwech.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Madam Speaker, we have all watched the coverage of the recent delegations going to visit Pope Francis in Rome. We have watched as the delegations and their visits have raised awareness of what happened at residential schools in Manitoba and across Canada. We have watched as Pope Francis has apologized for the harms that were done at residential schools.

We understand that Pope Francis is planning to come to Canada, we hear in late July. We need to welcome Pope Francis on his journey to our country. We hope that Pope Francis will visit Winnipeg and Manitoba.

The Manitoba Liberal Party, we support this resolution for our Speaker and our Province to invite Pope Francis formally to come to Canada to deliver in person the papal apology to residential school survivors, to visit the graves of First Nation and other Indigenous children and to give a blessing on the grave of Louis Riel with the goal of advancing reconciliation for all Manitobans and all Canadians.

Reconciliation is a journey. We are all on that journey. We travel together, recognizing the harms that were done at residential schools and in the process which involved taking children from their parents and from their families, a process which occurred as a part of the process of taking children and putting them in residential schools.

For me, it has been a long journey learning from Indigenous people. I remember visiting Montreal Lake in northern Saskatchewan in the 1960s and learning of the lack of locally relevant teaching materials and visiting La Ronge and hearing with horror that the movies shown in the local theatre almost always provided a negative view of Indigenous people.

\* (16:20)

In the 1960s and since, I learned of the incredible knowledge and wisdom of Indigenous people in relationship to nature, to Mother Earth, to wildlife and, most particularly, knowledge with respect to bald

eagles and fish, knowledge which was relevant and helpful to work that I was doing with others and, indeed, continue to do.

In the late 1960s, helping out at a health clinic in Kahnawake near Montreal, I learned of the incredible skill of Indigenous people in the community in building skyscrapers in New York. I also read and started learning from the story of Poundmaker and others of the terrible way that Indigenous people have been treated so often.

In my years as a physician at the Children's Hospital and the Manitoba cancer foundation, I got to know, personally, many amazing Indigenous children and their parents. In my time in Oklahoma, I was there for two six-month periods, I learned of the Cherokee people who developed their own alphabet, actually a syllabary, and marveled at their ability to develop their writing and printing and newspapers in the first several decades of the 1800s, now close to 200 years ago.

In my time in politics, I have learned, to my shock, of the child and family services system in Manitoba, of the far too many mistakes, errors and harms which have occurred in the pattern of behaviour, a pattern of behaviour which has mimicked that in residential schools taking children away from their families. The stories I have heard have been and are horrific. It was a wake-up call to me, as was visiting Brandon in about 2007 and learning of the children who went to residential schools and who never came home.

But I have also learned of the incredible and too often underappreciated expertise of Indigenous knowledge keepers and leaders. We have a long way to go in this journey of reconciliation. It is a journey of understanding past harms. It is a journey of also appreciating the strengths and the contributions of Indigenous people to our province, Manitoba, and our country, Canada. It's a journey of making sure that opportunities are there for Indigenous people and for non-Indigenous people to walk and travel together in a better way, and toward a better future.

We hope that Pope Francis will accept our invitation to visit Manitoba. We say to Pope Francis, we need you to come to help us on our journey of reconciliation.

Miigwech, merci, thank you.

**Mr. Nello Altomare (Transcona):** It's a great pleasure to rise this afternoon to speak to this very important bill brought by my colleague, the member

from Keewatinook. It is certainly something that has put me on a journey, as well, Madam Speaker. I can certainly say that working with the member from Keewatinook, the member from The Pas-Kameesak, the member from Point Douglas, the member from Fort Rouge, the member from St. Johns, a person at my stage of life, right now, this is the very first time that I have worked with an Indigenous cohort.

Now, think about that. I've come from a career as an educator where I didn't have the opportunity to work with people like my learned colleagues here that I just outlined. Now, how unfortunate is that as an educator? A thirty-three year career and here we are today in 2022, in Manitoba, and how important this particular piece of legislation is, brought forward by my colleague.

Think about all 57 of us here, representing 1.4 million people, sending a letter to the Pope to have him come here to Treaty 1—not treaty two, three, four, Treaty 1 territory—how significant that is: on behalf of 1.4 million Manitobans, to come here and help us all on our journey of reconciliation.

When I hear about stories, about my colleague's Uncle Alec; I hear it about Uncle Fred. You know, 'thasa' impacts us as members, here, because we all have family members that have been tremendously influential on us; when I hear about my colleague's uncle, my colleague from St. Johns' Uncle Phil.

The first time I heard about residential schools, Madam Speaker, was in 1990 on that television interview with Barbara Frum. Never heard of it. Already seven years into a—no, hang on, no—five years into a teaching career, never heard of it. An educator on Treaty 1 territory didn't know about this at all.

We had some rumblings of—heard some stories, oh, yes. Indigenous kids went to—they got to go and live at their school. Okay. That was it. And I was in charge of teaching Indigenous kids that were in my classroom. What was I teaching them? Certainly not about the history of this territory, here. I was teaching them a colonial history, one of oppression, one of stealing culture, without even knowing about it. Perpetuating it.

So, then we have, many years later, Madam Speaker, we have the Truth and Reconciliation Commission brought forward recommendations 62 to 64: education for reconciliation. I would read them into the record but I think every member of this House is already very familiar with what those recommendations are.

So I will be—just briefly touch upon them, one of them being curriculum needs to reflect what really happened here on Treaty 1 territory: the true history of colonialism and its impacts on the people that were here before the colonists arrived. My own children, the children of every person that has a family here in this House, haven't really had an education about that. And this is very important, and when we say and when we're writing this letter to invite the Pope to Treaty 1 to rectify this—help us rectify this situation that we're in right now.

Because the—one of the other recommendations as we work our way down to No. 63, Madam Speaker, is that not only do we have curriculum, but we also have to have representation in the system that reflects who we're teaching.

I can think of many—I still think of students that I work with. Where are they now? I think of one student of mine was Dwayne, who was on a powwow circuit. He would leave in May, come back at the end of September. And we did our work, we made sure that we had things ready to roll. And I had to fight for that student in order for the—for him to leave school early so he can go practise his culture, be who he was. And this was in the 1990s, fighting for what is right because we knew what was right.

Now we move on to recommendation 64, where denominational schools are funded to provide an education that reflects what happened on this territory, so that they know; they know about Indigenous spirituality and how important that would be because it would put them also on a journey of reconciliation.

\* (16:30)

These are very important, just like this letter that we're about to send, Madam Speaker. It's very important. These aren't just gestures. We're representing 1.4 million people. We need to get this done and that's a powerful message that will be sent.

I can say that as we move forward on this, one of the best experiences that I've had in this—as a politician—I'll just tell you one quick little story of a powerful Indigenous spiritual piece that I was gifted when I was diagnosed early. And after I was elected, I had to tell my colleagues here that I had to go. And the member from Fort Rouge sang me a healing song in front of all my colleagues, and that stayed with me.

And so how do we make this better now? We're doing it now by making sure we get this from all 57 members representing 1.4 million Manitobans; to feel what I felt. I want everyone to feel that, right—to

have that. And now, as members of this House, we will ask the Pope to come here to Treaty 1, to help every one of us here on our journey so that we can make this place the best place: right here on Turtle Island, Treaty 1 territory, for our families, for settlers, for Indigenous peoples, for all of us here.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Is the House ready for the—oh, the honourable member for The Pas-Kameesak.

**Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas-Kameesak):** It's an absolute honour to stand up and put a few words on record on this very important opposition day notion, and I really want to say kinanâskomitin to my brother from Keewatinook for bringing this forward.

I come from three generations of matriarchs that went to residential school. My Chapan, my great-grandmother went to Guy Hill—no, she went to Duck Lake; St. Michael and Duck Lake. And my kokum, my grandmother, went to Duck Lake as well; and my mom went to Guy Hill, which is very near The Pas, Manitoba.

And I could tell you that my grandmother, my Chapan, never, ever spoke about it. I only heard one story—one story. We were sitting around my mom's kitchen and my Chapan shared a story about she ran away from this school and she had nowhere she was going. She had no clue how far Duck Lake, Saskatchewan was from Opaskwayak Cree Nation and she slept for two days underneath a tree; one of those ones with the branches, they look like willows and they almost look like a little hut. That's where she hid for two days: cold, hungry and scared. And the nuns eventually found her. And she said, only for one second I was glad to go back only because I could get my belly full, but not back to that environment.

And I was just sharing with my colleague here, member of Elmwood, that my mom had three of her knuckles gone because she was strapped from speaking her language, and this was at Guy Hill Residential School. And so, because of that, this is the main reason why my mom and my dad did not teach us Cree, because they thought we were probably better and safer to get ahead in this society by learning English.

And look at them: they were beaten, threatened, taken away from their families because of their culture, their language. So, of course, that died right there.

And as a young, 45-year-old woman, I grew up, and the awful stereotype, the stigma that comes from what residential school colonization created, you know, the drunken Indian, squaw, chief. I didn't mind chief, but that created that whole stereotype, that absolute racism that I grew up in. And growing up in that, you know, your confidence is not too—you know, not that high.

So, fast forward. It wasn't until I was in University of Manitoba that I learnt about residential schools and that I learnt about—you know, we're not bad people that—you know, we're not handouts. We're not, you know, what I've been—what we're called a lot, handouts. And it just—it gave me inspiration to know that this political movement I was witnessing and learning about in university and the advancement and—like, look at where we are today. Never in a million years I thought I'd be sitting in this building with my colleagues here—never, ever thought.

And especially, too, I never thought that I would go on a journey in 2010 with my sister, Niki Ashton, MP for Churchill–Keewatinook or—is that what you say.

We—I worked for residential school survivors with Swampy Cree Tribal Council under—through funding, and basically it was providing healing services in the community. And that was my first lobbying act, if you will. I went to Ottawa, and we lobbied the government there to extend the healing foundation funding which is to continue providing healing—funding for healing, right? But that ended. Like, who puts a deadline on healing, right? It's a lifetime process.

And it was quite exciting that Justin Trudeau wasn't a Prime Minister yet, but when I got back from Ottawa to Winnipeg, they had an emergency debate. And it was exciting. I was watching the debate like I was watching a hockey game, just yelling and cheering at the TV. The funding ended, but another source came through which continued to this day the healing services that are required for survivors.

So when I heard about those unmarked graves being found, that was like a kick in the stomach because, while I was working with the residential school survivors, I heard their stories, you know, but it's still like they weren't taken seriously. Like, they were still being told, get over it. Get over it. You got your money. You got what you want. Get over it.

But it took these children's voices that were buried for so many years to finally get our country to

realize—and the world—as to what happened to these little kids' voices. So, even though they were buried, boy, they sure made their mark once they were uncovered and slapped society in the face that residential schools did exist. The 'intervincial'—the inter-generational effects do exist.

And so with that, I just want to say that I'm working hard to make sure my daughter, the next generation, is going to be much more stronger, can inspire our other children to know that—to know our worth and that we're not just handouts.

And with this motion and the era of reconciliation that we are in, it just makes sense.

Ekosi.

**Madam Speaker:** Are there any other members wishing to speak in debate?

If not, is the House ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**Madam Speaker:** The question before the House is the opposition day motion in the name of the honourable member for Keewatinook (Mr. Bushie).

Do members wish to have the motion read?

**Some Honourable Members:** Yes.

**Madam Speaker:** The motion states that the Speaker, on behalf of all members of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, invite Pope Francis to come to Manitoba as part of his upcoming visit to Canada, to deliver in person, as he did recently at the Vatican, to visiting delegations, a papal apology to residential school survivors on behalf of the Catholic Church, which should include a visit to the graves of First Nations and other Indigenous children who perished in these institutions and a blessing of the grave of Louis Riel in St. Boniface, all with the goal of advancing reconciliation for Manitobans from all walks of life.

\* (16:40)

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

**Mr. Goertzen:** Madam Speaker, is it the will of the House to see the—or to record the vote as unanimous?

**Madam Speaker:** Is it the will of House to record the vote as unanimous? Agreed? *[Agreed]*

\* \* \*

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader):** I seek leave of the House to have copies of the opposition day motion just passed by this House be sent by the Speaker of this House to the Prime Minister of Canada, the Speaker of the Canadian House of Commons, the Speaker of the Canadian Senate, the Vatican and to Indigenous leadership of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak, the Southern Chiefs' Organization and the Manitoba Métis Federation.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave to have copies of the opposition day motion just passed by this House be sent by the Speaker of this House to the Prime Minister of Canada, the Speaker of the Canadian House of Commons, the Speaker of the Canadian Senate, the Vatican, and to Indigenous leadership of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, Manitoba

Keewatinowi Okimakanak, the Southern Chiefs' Organization and the Manitoba Métis Federation?

Is there leave? *[Agreed]*

**Mr. Goertzen:** Is it the will of members to call it 5 p.m.?

**Madam Speaker:** Is it the will of members to call it 5 p.m.? *[Agreed]*

The hour being 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until May 9th at 1:30 p.m.

And I just want to wish everybody the best as they work on a constituency week and catching up on all the constituency business.

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, April 28, 2022

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