



Third Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	Liberal
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	NDP
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	Liberal
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	NDP
CHEEMA, Guizar	The Maples	Liberal
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	NDP
CONNERY, Edward	Portage la Prairie	PC
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	PC
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	NDP
DOER, Gary	Concordia	NDP
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
DUCHARME, Gerry, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	Liberal
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Cliff	Interlake	NDP
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	NDP
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	PC
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	NDP
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	Liberal
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	PC
HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	NDP
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	NDP
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Liberal
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	NDP
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	NDP
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	PC
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	PC
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
NEUFELD, Harold	Rossmere	PC
ORCHARD, Donald, Hon.	Pembina	PC
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	PC
PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	NDP
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	PC
REID, Daryl	Transcona	NDP
REIMER, Jack	Niakwa	PC
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	PC
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	NDP
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	PC
WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy	St. Johns	NDP
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	NDP

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, May 22, 1992

The House met at 10 a.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Ruth Forbes, Harold Calvert, Don Forbes and others requesting the government reconsider its decision and return Manitoba Heritage Federation's granting authority.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Mr. Jack Reimer (Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Economic Development): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the Seventh Report on the Committee on Economic Development.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Your Standing Committee on Economic Development presents the following as their Seventh Report.

Your committee met on Thursday, May 21, 1992, at 10 a.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building to consider the March 31, 1991, annual report of and matters pertaining to the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation.

Mr. Bill Funk, general manager and Mr. Peter Hak, director, Finance and Administration, provided such information as was requested by members of the committee with respect to the annual report and business of the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation.

Your committee reports that it has considered the March 31, 1991, annual report of and matters pertaining to the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

Mr. Reimer: I move, seconded by the honourable member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table Supplementary Information as it relates to the

Department of Northern Affairs Expenditure Estimates for 1992-93.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present the 1990-91 Annual Report for the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery, where we have with us this morning from the Mary Porter school, sixteen Grade 5 students under the direction of Miss Tatisen. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper).

Also, we have with us this morning from the Treherne School twenty Grade 7 students under the direction of Craig Spencer. This school is located in the constituency of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

On behalf of all members, I welcome you here this morning.

* (1005)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Free Trade Agreement Abrogation

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): I am surprised that today of all days the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) is smiling. Yesterday, in a rather uncharacteristic Tory move, the Minister of Finance finally recognized what Canadians have known since 1988, and that is that the Free Trade Agreement is not working, not working in the interests of Canada, and certainly not working in the interests of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, on May 12 of this year our federal colleagues in the New Democratic Party in the federal House of Commons introduced a resolution calling on the federal government to abrogate the Free Trade Agreement, an agreement that has cost 465,000 manufacturing jobs in Canada over the last three and a half years.

My question to the Minister of Finance is, after his revelation, after the light came on for the Minister of

Finance, will he now join the thousands of Manitobans and Canadians who oppose this deal and call on the federal government to abrogate the Free Trade Agreement so that we can get on with building an economy on our own, on a sovereign basis, for the people of Canada and the people of Manitoba?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the short answer is no. I was and I remain an unabashed supporter of the Free Trade Agreement. My sentiments as expressed yesterday indicate that I sense that the Free Trade Agreement was not sold in the best possible fashion, and I state that also.

In retrospect, the member opposite cannot for one moment indicate the impact of an 88-89 cent Canadian dollar in the last two or three years, vis-a-vis an under 80-cent dollar through most of the decade of the '80s. He, or no economist for that matter, who wants to do scientific, empirical analysis on this can factor that out. So he cannot make the claim. He can politically, but he cannot scientifically make the claim that the Free Trade Agreement has cost the nation hundreds of thousands of jobs.

So, Mr. Speaker, as I said yesterday in the House, and as I said outside of the House, Canadian businesses had to prepare, had to become more competitive in the world context. They had to become more competitive in the North American context. Indeed, governments were borrowing heavily to spend on new programs through the period of the '80s. That has come to an end, and obviously that has all had some significant impact on economic growth.

But I say to you, Mr. Speaker, and to other Manitobans who want to listen, the Free Trade Agreement was right. It had to bring us to our senses so that we could compete globally.

Employment Creation Studies

Mr. Jerry Storle (Flin Flon): It is quite apparent then the Minister of Finance has not come to his senses, has not recognized the reality of what is happening to the economy in Canada and the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Finance is: Can he present this House with any empirical evidence, any studies that this government or the federal government have done since the Free Trade Agreement that could convince Canadians that what we are seeing is an

aberration, that the jobs are not being lost by moving across the border?

Can he present any evidence the Free Trade Agreement is working now or that it will work the longer we stay in this agreement—any evidence?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, just as I cannot present empirical evidence because there are so many moving factors, there are so many factors working at cross purposes, just as I cannot do that, the member opposite could not in any way build a model to show us a better way.

Let us go back to those years when leading figures, particularly of the Liberal Party of Canada, business-oriented people, also of the Conservative Party of Canada, said that the nation had to come to grips with its growing uncompetitiveness in a global sense. It had to. It had no alternative. It was either that or to build borders and try to supply internally whatever it was producing.

* (1010)

I would say one-third of our jobs in Canada are as a result of trade, trade not based on 73-cent dollar or 75-cent dollar, but what the financial markets should say our dollar is worth. Today our dollar is worth 80 cents, 82 cents, 83 cents, and growing. Mr. Speaker, the reality is our businesses had to become more competitive. They are going through that major restructuring. There is pain associated with that that I acknowledge, and the only people who are trying to take advantage of it, political advantage of the reality, of course are the members of the opposition party who want to blame everything on an agreement. Restructuring is taking place; job guarantees for the future are going to be the result of that restructuring.

North American Free Trade Agreement Justification

Mr. Jerry Storle (Flin Flon): The Minister of Finance knows full well that Canada is and has been a trading nation and that our share of exports has increased for the past 80 years and that this trade agreement has worked in the opposite direction. We have lost ground, both in terms of jobs and in terms of exports.

My question to the Minister of Finance is: Given the dismal impact of the Free Trade Agreement, will the Minister of Finance now explain to the people of Manitoba how continuing on with the North

American free trade discussions is going to somehow enhance the "protection" that we have under the Free Trade Agreement, given its disastrous impact?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I want to refute some of the preamble of the member.

Let me say that I understand that exports to the United States have increased 14 percent, 20 percent over the course since the Free Trade Agreement has been in place. I understand, and I know for a fact, that in the month of March, numbers being in, the Canadian exports reached an all-time high to the United States.

An Honourable Member: Look at the imports.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, you see, now we are talking imports. I am sorry. He asked the question on exports, and then he throws imports into it. The reality is, the restructuring that is so necessary to protect the standard of living of each person in this House and everybody we support, the restructuring that is taking place to guarantee the standards of living that we have in place are still there in years to come is happening. But it is not without pain. I acknowledge that.

Mr. Speaker, another big dimension of the jobs of which the member talks, where governments borrowing billions of dollars in support of public sector spending, the reality is today, governments can no longer go out and borrow money to create jobs, just as the members across would want us to do on a daily basis, given their question.

An Honourable Member: The U.S. is borrowing more

Mr. Manness: Then the member says the U.S. is borrowing more. The U.S. is printing money. They are the only country in the world to this point that can print money and get away with it. They will not get away with it very long, but the reality is that is what the U.S. is doing. Canada cannot do it anymore. We have to compete within our own cost structures, and we have to reduce government taxes. That is a large element of it, and that is what we are doing.

Civil Service Positions Westman Region

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, membership in the Manitoba Government Employees' Association constitutes about 98 percent of the total number of civil servants in the

province, and certainly does that in the Westman area. MGEA membership figures show a serious decline in the number of civil servants in the Westman area between November of 1988 when there were 1,912 to April of 1992 when there were 1,809. In other words, we had a decline of 103 positions in the Westman area.

I would like to ask the Deputy Premier therefore: How can this government pretend that it is adding jobs to the Westman area when actually the figures show that there is a decline in the number of positions in that part of the province?

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, I am not in any way going to accept the preamble of the member for Brandon East. I will check out further as to the relationship in the Westman area as to the rest of the province. We have had to make some tough and difficult decisions as a government, with last year some 900-and-some positions being eliminated from the public service. As that relates across the province, I will, in fact, take those into account in looking at the numbers that the member brings forward.

I can assure him that last year, I believe, in Estimates, I put on the record that there was a major gain in positions outside the city of Winnipeg through the decentralization program. So what I will have to do is further to have an analysis done as to the numbers that he brings forward, because he has been known to be less than accurate in the information that he has brought to this House.

Decentralization Relocation Statistics

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the offer of the Deputy Premier. I would like this House to have those figures so that we can actually see what is going on in terms of location of civil servants, but it seems to be almost impossible to get historical information on it.

Mr. Speaker, how can the Deputy Premier explain the fact that, in November of 1988, 45 percent of the Civil Service membership were located in Winnipeg, whereas by February of this year this percentage had increased to 48.2 percent. In other words, there has been a 3.2 percent increase in the number of civil servants, according to MGEA membership figures in the city of Winnipeg. Will this Deputy Premier now admit that the government of Manitoba's decentralization program is totally meaningless?

* (1015)

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, let me first of all say that I am not surprised that the member for Brandon East and the New Democratic Party never have supported the decentralization initiative, in fact, have been opposed to it from step one.

I do not believe the member for Brandon East can stand up and say that he is against the movement of the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation to the city of Brandon, that he is against the moving of the public library system for rural libraries to the city of Brandon where there is a total of 50-some jobs in two Crown operations, Mr. Speaker. Is he saying that he is against those kinds of moves? Is he against the move to Minnedosa? Is he against the move to Neepawa of the Crown Lands Branch? Is he against that? Is he against the moving of some of the mining sector to Thompson and to Flin Flon? Is that what the New Democrats are against? Are they against the movement of CEDF to Thompson where the major loan activities take place? Shame on them for being against an initiative that has worked very well.

Department of Housing Layoffs - Brandon, Manitoba

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, this member and this party agree with decentralization, but we will not go for the shell game.

Earlier this year this government opened a New Careers office. Two months later they closed the employment office, the employment services office. So now you see it and now you don't.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ernst): Can the Minister of Housing confirm that four persons were laid off as of May 1 by his department, contradicting the statement that he issued on November 16 that they were going to create 13 new jobs for Brandon in Housing? Instead of creating 13 new jobs, will this minister confirm that we have four fewer jobs in the city of Brandon?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, what we had in the Department of Housing, I believe, four positions in the city of Brandon previously. We have to date 13 positions in the city of Brandon.

Point of Order

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Energy and Mines): A point of order, Mr. Speaker. I am disappointed that the member for Brandon East does not want—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable minister does not have a point of order.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) has already put his question, has already got his answer.

Free Trade Agreement Employment Creation Studies

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, yesterday was a rather remarkable day in this country. We had the Finance minister, and I commend him for his comments for he has begun to open the door to recognizing that this deal is not working the way that they believed it would. We also had the Prime Minister of this country admitting that he may have missed the boat when he negotiated this deal, but the Finance minister went further and he said the way in which this deal was sold, based on job increases, was less than honest.

I would like to ask him then, in light of those comments, how he explains the statement of the Premier (Mr. Filmon) that every empirical study says we will gain between 10,000 and 15,000 net new jobs? Now where does the honesty lie and, if those studies exist, will he table them?

* (1020)

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, let me say there is no difference of views between the Premier and myself.

When the member says "net new jobs," certainly at the time, I know when we were in opposition and when we were coming into government, at that particular time certainly we relied very heavily on the empirical work done not only in Ottawa, but coming from other think-tank institutions, including the Conference Board of Canada, quoted very heavily by the member yesterday and over the last few numbers of weeks. That was the source for many of the comments made by myself, indeed other members of this government with respect to the creation of new jobs.

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, there have been many new jobs created as a result of the Free Trade Agreement, and there is no argument there. So, on the surface, many, many new jobs have been created as a result of Manitoba companies restructuring their costs and gaining entry into the U.S. market particularly—[interjection]

No, no. All we have to look at is the apparel industry. We can see the significant job creation there. We can look in some other areas of the aerospace industry where there is a significant increase also; within agriculture, where there has been a significant increase of trade. All of that, Mr. Speaker, in part through restructuring that has happened here, also given in Manitoba more specifically where taxes have been held down over the last five years, all of that has created the competitive cost base to allow these firms to create new jobs. That has happened.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Prior to recognizing the honourable member for Osborne, I would like to caution you, you are walking on a fine line. Pick and choose your words very carefully.

Labour Adjustment Strategy

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The use of the word "honesty," however, was the Minister of Finance's, but I accept your caution.

The Free Trade Agreement has been called the deindustrialization blueprint for Canada. Now the Finance minister is fond of using "whatifs" and "what might have occurred," or "what will occur in the future" in this province. There is not a single piece of empirical evidence that says that we were losing jobs prior to 1988. There is now very solid evidence that we are losing a substantial number of jobs to every other G-7 country. We are doing worse than every other country as a result of the policy which this Finance minister now says was not done to create jobs, but was being done because we were being blackmailed.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to give the Finance minister some credit for one thing. He acknowledged the pain. I would like to ask him this question: Having acknowledged the pain that people are feeling, why did he cut the funds for labour force adjustment in this province?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry, I did not hear the question. I guess I was so engrossed in listening to the

preamble, but let me say that it was not just staunch Conservatives who were in support of the Free Trade Agreement. There was a significant number of leading Liberals who were also in support of the Free Trade Agreement—certainly Donald Macdonald and, I believe, Mr. Izzy Asper in Manitoba, former leader of the provincial party.

An Honourable Member: . . . leave out anybody in this House.

Mr. Manness: That is right. As I am reminded, "a leading Liberal" would certainly leave out anybody in this House. Let me say, in retrospect, one can take numbers and take them any direction they wish. I think that when Mr. Lougheed and Mr. Macdonald came together and set up the commission in support of the Free Trade Agreement, they were trying to take a nonpartisan position. They were trying to say to Canada, at the time: Are we ready as a nation to compete globally? Are we ready to make changes to maintain the standards of living we have got, because such a large percentage of that standard of living is dependent upon export trade, and it is not guaranteed that we are going to have entry into market for years to come unless changes are made?

To my point of view, that was the backdrop for the forward coming of the Free Trade Agreement. It is a federal matter after that. As provinces, of course, people took different views. This government supported the Free Trade Agreement.

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Speaker, I think the position of the Liberal Party was stated by Mr. Turner.

All of the studies done on this deal said that there would be significant need for labour adjustment, because there would be significant job losses. I would like to ask the Finance minister this question: Knowing then what he says he knew and how he felt, why has that support for labour force adjustment never been delivered upon, by the federal government or by this government?

* (1025)

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I will let the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) indicate the delivery of labour force adjustment measures as is allowed for within our budget and within our policy making.

With respect to the federal government, I share some of the concern of the member for Osborne. I, too, have not seen the significant measures and programs in keeping with the promise that was

made with respect to labour force adjustment. I gathered they were not terribly well defined at the time the commitments were made and, furthermore, I take it that they have not delivered in a fashion like most Canadians were expecting.

Certainly on the provincial side, our commitments in labour force adjustments have been there. Certainly every year when we go through the Treasury Board exercise working towards the budgetary, we maintain certainly an element towards labour force adjustment, and if there is a further answer wanted with respect to that, I defer to my colleague the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik).

AIDS Prevention Programs Street LINKS Funding

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): I have a very positive suggestion to make this morning that I am sure—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am sure honourable members want to hear this.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Actually, it is a very serious proposal that I am sure particularly the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) would be interested in.

By the estimates from the federal centre for AIDS, it actually costs this government and the people of Manitoba approximately \$157,000 for treatment from diagnosis to death for someone with HIV, AIDS.

Mr. Speaker, by the minister's own studies, preliminary results of studies by Cadham Lab and Red Cross, we could be looking at eight times the rate of HIV in this province, somewhere in the neighbourhood of 2,000 people. By my own calculations, that is costing all of us \$300 million or more. Yet, at the same time, this government has cut out \$100,000 for Street LINKS, which is a program demonstrated to be proven effective for preventing AIDS in populations at risk.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health, given the cost-effective nature of Street LINKS, given the otherwise very unbearable cost for taxpayers, would this government reconsider this decision, this very difficult decision, heartless decision and reinstate the \$100,000 for this project to keep alive this very desperately needed effort to prevent the spread of HIV and AIDS?

* (1030)

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I have to admit that I almost was going to have the big one there when I heard this suggestion of a positive initiative from my honourable friend.

Let me indicate to my honourable friend that I would urge her extreme caution in making conclusions on the Cadham Lab study which may or may not be accurate. My honourable friend does not have the ability, the knowledge or the confirmation from Cadham Lab to make some of the preamble statements that my honourable friend just made.

I would want my honourable friend to be exceptionally cautious in presenting information to the public without verification, No. 1; No. 2, we discussed the issue of Street LINKS and its potential future during the Estimates process. Yes, Sir, in the two-year demonstration project that we had in co-operation with the City of Winnipeg, funding has not been continued beyond the two-year funding demonstration project time.

Mr. Speaker, as I explained in Estimates and I refer my honourable friend to Hansard so that she can get the complete answer given there, because I do not have the time, liberty today, the processes that we are engaging in to assure ourselves that we target our AIDS prevention programs and dollars. Sir, I think that all will acknowledge that the efforts we have been able to undertake over the last several years have focused our prevention and our education efforts, and we are seeing some reasonable success in the containment of the spread of HIV in the province of Manitoba.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I appreciate the caution offered by the Minister of Health about not presupposing what the results of the final studies will be on prevalence.

I would ask the minister then, would he put the savings from treating one person from diagnosis to death with HIV and AIDS, the savings from one person, \$157,000, toward the prevention of the spread of HIV and AIDS?

Mr. Orchard: I cannot accept such a small contribution to prevention. We spend 10 times that amount, Sir.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Mr. Speaker, the minister knows that he is leaving a very important project that he has said in Estimates—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Kindly put your question, please, the honourable member for St. Johns.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Would he find it within his Estimates and his budget to come up with only \$50,000 to keep Street LINKS alive between the time funds run out and the time the final study is in, and the three levels of government have been able to find a way to support a proven project, Street LINKS, which helps at-risk populations from spreading HIV and AIDS?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, in my honourable friend's question, she presented the dilemma which she does not recognize. The studies are not yet completed to prove, as my honourable friend just said, the effectiveness, et cetera. That is exactly the kind of discussion that government is engaged in, but when we create a budget, we must make decisions some several months previous to the printing of the budget. Those decisions were made. My honourable friend has in front of her—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: On a point of order, the minister has had a study since October of—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

* * *

The honourable Minister of Health, to finish his response.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, so much for co-operation. My honourable friend the critic posed these questions three weeks ago. She has the Hansard in front of her which demonstrates the process that we are embarking upon as government to come to a reasoned conclusion in providing prevention education and other initiatives of this government to prevent the spread of HIV. Why today is this an issue when three weeks ago my honourable friend had the answer?

Wang Canada Agreement Status

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, in 1989, this government signed an agreement with a great deal of fanfare with Wang Canada, an agreement that the government said was going to create some 70 jobs and bring some \$20-plus million of

investment in the province of Manitoba. We have now learned, of course, that Wang Canada has not lived up to its commitment. In fact, a penalty has been imposed on Wang Canada as a result of their failure to live up to this agreement.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister responsible for signing that agreement, the Acting Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, I guess. Can the minister indicate what conditions were not lived up to? How many fewer jobs did we get, and—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question has been put.

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): I can take that question as notice for my colleague the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson).

Government Involvement

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, this government has got involved in a whole series of back-room deals and under-the-table contracts. Can the Premier tell us today why the government would choose to get involved with Wang Canada again, when they did not live up to their commitments, did not create the jobs that they were supposed to, and on what basis, what studies, what departmental studies has this government prepared to indicate that Manitobans will get value for money in this new, under-the-table agreement—

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, this is not an under-the-table agreement, it is a public agreement. The government of the day decided to enter into an agreement with Wang because it was very impressed with the latest, new generational technology, that being imaging technology. The company under covenant agreed to create a certain number of jobs. That was not accomplished to the satisfaction of the government in the contract. What we are trying to do with this renegotiation is to still allow the new technology to come forward in an area where record keeping and updated record keeping is badly needed within the government.

Untendered Contract

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, the government says it is very impressed. I do not see how it could be very impressed when it imposed a penalty on the company that is now—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Flin Flon, what is your question, please?

Mr. Storle: This is to the Minister of Finance. Mr. Speaker, can the minister explain how Manitobans will have any insurance that this new agreement, that was not tendered, is going to be in the interest of the public? Can he give us any information which would lead us to believe that we are going to get value for money for this untendered contract to a company that has failed to live up to its obligations in the past?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I guess the only insurance I can give today is that there was a significant credit in place, and the government had two choices: basically to walk away from that credit or the value of it through a long-drawn court battle and/or get benefit for that credit by once again doing what government needs to be done very badly. That was to update the records of the Vital Statistics, and that was of course failed to have been done by the government previous to us. So we are trying again to clean up records within this Vital Statistics department.

Mr. Speaker, ultimately, once this has been delivered, members opposite will be able to join with us as to a proper evaluation at that point in time and a proper determination as to how successful this process has been.

* (1040)

Bill 49 Justification

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings). Yesterday in this House the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) called the Rafferty-Alameda dam a boondoggle and very, very harmful to the people of Saskatchewan and Manitoba. We agree. We only wish he had some influence on his colleagues in Saskatchewan who yesterday announced that they would be completing the dams despite an environmental assessment condemning the project. Why did they make that decision? Because too much had been built to turn back.

As well, yesterday the federal government in a similar move decided that the Oldman River dam in Alberta had gone too far to let a negative environmental assessment get in the way of completing it.

My question for the minister is, and this then is the legacy of NDP and Tory governments in this country: build first, think later. That is the legacy,

Mr. Speaker. My question for the minister: Will the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) tell members of this House why he is seeking to add his name to the list of governments seeking to flout the environmental process by putting before this House, Bill 49, which allows building on projects to commence and proceed before their full environmental assessment is studied, which is exactly the strategy that allowed Rafferty-Alameda and the Oldman River dam to be built?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): I am rather aggrieved that the member would choose to put such misinformation on the record. The piece of legislation that he refers to is to deal with stage licensing which allows, as I indicated at the time that the bill was introduced, for proponents to have an opportunity to at least access the site for some testing.

There is no allowance in this amendment, and there is no intent on the part of this government, to ever become involved in projects where there would be construction of any nature prior to licensing. In other words, construction that would be of any significance will not proceed until we have the kind of licensing that needs to be in place in this day and age so that there is an assurance that any impact on the environment is dealt with prior to construction.

Government Strategy

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, the minister talks of his intention. Will he acknowledge that Bill 49 is in fact a consistent and important part of the strategy which he developed with five other provinces in April of 1990, as evidenced by this government of Alberta internal memorandum—which I will table in the House today—which indicates that the ministers there agreed to take whatever measures were necessary to avoid being burdened by court review and inadequate environmental assessments and to condense the environmental process?

Will he acknowledge that Bill 49 is part of that process which he and the government of Alberta drafted on behalf of four other provinces in April of 1990?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Well, again, Mr. Speaker, the member tries to put a vision forward that is entirely incorrect. The fact is that this government has signed—and has worked continuously to develop a process of

intergovernmental co-operation and equivalency on environmental assessment. The member knows that, but he chooses to ignore the fact that this province is one of the leading jurisdictions in this country and working co-operatively with the federal authorities on environmental assessment and making sure that the assessment process is sound and respected, and I will stand by that.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, this minister and this government is the leading province in eroding the environmental—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for St. James, with your question.

Mr. Edwards: Can the minister explain why he needs the power to divide projects in environmental assessments into stages, allowing him to get a project four-fifths or nine-tenths completed before he studies the entire project? Why does he need that power? Will he acknowledge that this is—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question has been put.

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, I guess this reflects the inability of the Liberal caucus to recognize the reality of a proper and concise environmental assessment. One of the major concerns that has been raised in this country over the last number of years and certainly the last three years that I have been involved with environmental matters is that there has been no clarity for those who are proponents of various projects to be able to know when there is a decision and when there is not, and when they can have permission to either not build or are told not to build or have permission to proceed.

The member refuses to acknowledge that part of the benefits that will flow from the amendment that he is referring to is—Mr. Speaker, if you will indulge me I would like to provide an example. The fact is that as projects proceed and additional technology may become beneficial, where there is a deadline three years down the road when new technology is required to be brought in as part of the project, if there is improved technology available at that time, we need to be able to take advantage of that improved technology and not endanger the environment unnecessarily.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Radisson has time for one very short question.

Dauphin Lake Environment Concerns

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Environment. Residents in the Dauphin area are concerned that a 6,000-head commercial hog operation is going to threaten Dauphin Lake, threaten recreation and tourism opportunities because of its proximity to the golf course and threaten the aquifer water supply.

Can the Minister of Environment tell the House what environment impact assessments have been done and what his department's involvement is with respect to this development?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, first of all I would ask if the member would choose to enlighten me as to which golf course she is referring to.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

House Business

Hon. Darren Praznik (Deputy Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, the government will be calling today the resolution presented by the Honourable Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) regarding the recognition of Louis Riel and the Metis people in the founding of Manitoba.

As members are aware, when the Premier (Mr. Filmon) announced intention to bring this resolution, there was indication made that the wording of this resolution would be worked on with representatives of the Manitoba Métis Federation. Since it appeared on the Order Paper, there were some changes recommended to this resolution, and I have provided those to House leaders of both opposition parties.

I believe if you canvass the House, you will have unanimous consent to withdraw the current resolution and have it replaced with the amended version, for which I have copies. That is what we would ask, if there is unanimous consent to call that resolution.

Mr. Speaker: Is there unanimous consent?
[Agreed]

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, if I may also ask the indulgence of the House, the French translation of the changes as they were only made within the last day or so is being prepared, and we would ask for approval of the House to have that filed as soon as

it is ready, and it may be ready during the course of the debate.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave to move ahead with the proposed resolution without the attached French translation which will be provided ASAP? [Agreed]

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs): I am pleased to rise today with many of the Metis community in the gallery to participate in the tabling of a very important document.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honour today, the 22nd day of May, 1992, to rise and propose that the Legislature adopt a formal resolution to recognize Louis Riel and the role that he and his people, the Metis of the Red River Valley, Rupert's Land and the Northwest Territories, had in the development of the province of Manitoba.

The Metis are unique people in Canadian society. They emerged out of the unique set of social and political conditions and played a major role in the political and economic development of the West. The accomplishments and contribution of the Metis to Canadian society are many, from their role and involvement in the transportation and trade of furs in the Northwest, their comprehensive knowledge of plains geography, to their establishment of a provisional government for the maintenance of law and order in their homeland. In 1869-70—

I apologize to the House. I hope that members will not be too critical of me for this, because the intent, Mr. Speaker, is certainly genuine to recognize and deal with the resolution properly.

* (1050)

I move, seconded by the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik):

WHEREAS in 1867 The Hudson's Bay Company transferred the ownership of Rupert's Land to the federal government without provision for the establishment of responsible government or the recognition of the land rights of the inhabitants; and

WHEREAS the Metis people of Rupert's Land and the Northwest Territories through the election of provisional government took effective steps to maintain order in the Red River Settlement; and

WHEREAS in 1870, under the leadership of Louis Riel, the provisional government adopted a list of rights and sent a delegation to Ottawa to negotiate the terms for admission of the new province of Manitoba into the Dominion of Canada; and

WHEREAS the Manitoba Act was passed by the Parliament of Canada on May 12, 1870; and

WHEREAS Louis Riel was thrice elected to the House of Commons of Canada as the Member of Parliament for the Manitoba riding of Provencher; and

WHEREAS Louis Riel was again called upon by the Metis people in 1885 to champion their cause for equitable treatment in the neighbouring Northwest Territories; and

WHEREAS Louis Riel gave up his life for the cause of the Metis people; and

WHEREAS since the death of Louis Riel, the Metis people have continued to honour his memory and have struggled to reaffirm the rights which are contained in the Manitoba Act.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba recognize:

the significant role of the Metis people in the founding and development of the province of Manitoba; and

the unique and historic role of Louis Riel as a founder of Manitoba and his contribution in the development of the Canadian Confederation.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Motion presented.

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, I will complete my comments as I proceeded to do incorrectly in the order of business.

The accomplishments and contributions of the Metis to Canadian society are many. From their role and involvement in the transportation and trade of furs in the Northwest, their comprehensive knowledge of plains geography, to their establishment of a provisional government for the maintenance of law and order in their homeland, 1869-70, the Metis sent a delegation to Ottawa and negotiated the entry of Manitoba into Confederation.

It is clear, Mr. Speaker, that I could continue at length on their many accomplishments. It is our government's wish, however, that this sitting in the Third Session of the Thirty-Fifth Legislature officially recognize Louis Riel and the role of the Metis people played in the formation of Manitoba, which history has already done.

I ask all members to join the government today in adopting this resolution. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Prior to recognizing the member, I would like to advise the House that I am now in possession of the French translation.

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): I am pleased to rise today and to lend my support to the resolution and to add my comments on the record.

We are, of course, pleased that the government is recognizing Riel as one of the founders of the province. However, we are a little bit disappointed that they had to bring forward a different resolution. Obviously, in the first one, they made some errors in it. I guess they did not properly consult with the Metis leadership prior to bringing this resolution forward.

I wanted to state my ancestors arrived in Canada in the early 1800s, about 1812, I believe. They settled in the Selkirk area around 1820, 1822, around that time frame. The specific ancestor I am referring to was a man by the name of William Robert Smith, and Mr. Smith was born in Scotland, as a number of my ancestors were. They worked in the fur trade. Born in the Orkney Islands, they came to the Northwest Territories to work in the fur trade. Like a number of them, they married native women. Native families at the time shared with them their knowledge of this harsh and really untamed land at the time and provided them with skills and other resources, which really allowed those fur settlers to stay, to survive in the province.

I think, again, it is a recognition of the contribution of aboriginal people to those first early settlers, and, of course, they provided them with food, shelter and companionship. A lot of the offspring of these early relationships were the Metis people or, in my particular case, they were called country born or half-breeds. Again, it was a fairly derogatory term.

Countryborn—I remember watching a show called Daughters of the Country which was the story of Metis women. I think it was Governor Simpson who called his—he was married, of course, to Frances Simpson, but he had an aboriginal mistress, and he called her my little piece of brown, I believe. Again, it is sort of a derogatory term. I remember there was one episode of trilogy called Madeleine, and I remember it specifically because I have an ancestor whose name was Madeleine Lizotte and she was born in the province, I think, in 1850. She was, of course, French Metis.

So I do have French-Metis blood in me as well as the English-Scottish-Metis blood. My ancestors' names are Houries, Dennetts, McKays, Smith and

Cochranes. On both sides of my family, both on my mother's side and on my father's side, we can trace our ancestry back to really quite far back into the history of the province.

Often I went to the Hudson Bay archives. The genealogy of the Metis nation—you can go back there and trace back your family's past and they will state where an individual was born. In my family's case, it was in the Red River Settlement, and it will say Metis and the year of their birth. If you go far enough back, it will just give the woman's first name and then it will say Indian and where they were born, because the records were not all that complete as you go back further into Manitoba's history.

So, of course, there were two groups: the English, or the country-born Metis, and the French Metis. Of course, Riel was a French Metis. He, I believe, was one-eighth native blood. He was, of course, a controversial figure; no one can deny the fact that he was a controversial figure. However, it is now recognized, and I do appreciate the fact that he has been recognized as a founder of the province and as a father of our Confederation.

As I was stating before, my family lived in Selkirk for a number of years, and I was born there and lived there all my life. It is sad, but I never really encountered blatant racism until I decided to run for this political office. It was always subtle before, but as soon as you decide to put your name forward, as soon as you decide to say that you are an aboriginal person, you are proud of it, or you are a Metis person, then I encountered blatant racism, both in my election campaign and since. So that is very ugly, and it was a very painful thing to deal with.

Anyway, I do appreciate the opportunity to speak today on this particular resolution. I know that it is obviously a step in the right direction and something I believe the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) mentioned earlier, that the picture of Riel's first council should be perhaps hung in the halls of this Chamber.

I know another one of his council members, his name was Bunn, I believe. He lived right across the river in East Selkirk, and it is one of the oldest houses in Manitoba. Of course, it is significantly on Bunn's Road in East Selkirk.

So I would like to see that particular picture hung in this Chamber. It would be the beginning of a recognition, I feel, a tangible recognition. It is nice having this resolution, no doubt about that. We feel that there could be, there must be a broader

recognition of the Metis and aboriginal contribution to our great province.

I hope, and I am sure all of the members of this Chamber share, that we do not have to wait another 120, 122 years before that further recognition is achieved. So I would like to say thank you for the opportunity to make those comments today.

* (1100)

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Monsieur le président, j'ai le plaisir de m'adresser à l'Assemblée aujourd'hui au nom du Parti libéral au Manitoba, pour appuyer cette résolution reconnaissant formellement Louis "David" Riel comme fondateur du Manitoba. Nous voulons aussi reconnaître la grande importance de la contribution que lui-même et le peuple Métis ont apportée à notre province.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to address the Assembly today on behalf of the Liberal Party in Manitoba, in support of this resolution formally recognizing Louis "David" Riel as a founder of Manitoba. We also wish to recognize the great importance of his contribution and that of the Metis people to our province.

[English]

It is a very wonderful opportunity to stand here today and to pay tribute not only to Louis "David" Riel but to the Metis people, because that is what we are celebrating today. I think it is important to do some historical background for who Louis "David" Riel was and what he contributed to this society.

He was born on October 22, 1844. I must admit, it was when I was doing some research last night that I realized that he had, in fact, for a giant of a man, lived a relatively short period of time. Because when he was killed on November 16, 1885, literally because they would not provide the clemency that had been requested by the jury that had tried him, he was only 41 years of age.

Louis "David" Riel was educated in St. Boniface, where he had been born to Louis Riel Sr. and Julie Lagemodière. He was educated at first by the Grey Nuns, les Soeurs Grises, who have made such a notable contribution to our community. He then went on to be educated by the Christian Brothers. When it was recognized that this was a young man of rare and remarkable academic talent, he was chosen by Bishop Taché to go east to complete his education at the Collège de Montréal.

In those days, of course, a classical education was the only post-secondary education available, and it was assumed that everyone would be trained for the priesthood and then some would not make it. Some would recognize that they did not have a vocation, but meanwhile they would have received that classical form of education. That was the classical education that Louis "David" Riel received at the Collège.

But he then decided that he would put his wife to the law, and he began a process of educating himself to be a lawyer. But in those days, one did not go to a post-secondary educational institution to become a lawyer, one articulated oneself to someone in the practice of law. He did that by articling himself to Rudolphe Laflamme in the city of Montreal. He then spent a few short months and periods of time in the United States, primarily New York, and then returned to St. Boniface in 1868, where the beginnings of a national movement were taking form.

The Metis people, in recognition of some danger to their rights, had formed themselves into a national committee. Louis "David" Riel became the secretary of that national committee and later went on to become the president.

We frequently hear references to the Red River Rebellion. Well, I must admit that The Canadian Encyclopedia published several years ago by Mel Hurtig came up with, I think, a far more appropriate and clear definition of just what this was. They did not refer to it as the Red River Rebellion. They referred to it as the Red River Resistance. I think they clarified for all of us exactly what it was. It was identified as a movement of national self-determination, that the Metis people recognized that The Hudson's Bay Company which was under significant pressure from a number of sources from the Canadian to its east, from the British government, which had issued its original orders of patent and also from the Metis people themselves to give up its monopoly and to transfer its power.

However, it seemed clear that the people they were prepared to transfer that power to were not the Metis people who lived in The Hudson's Bay Company region but to Canada which was a country which to that point in time had no authority over the territory in which the Metis people had lived.

However, by the early 1860s, The Hudson's Bay Company had agreed to transfer that sovereignty to Canada, and Canadian and American settlers had

begun to move in. That is when the Metis people realized that if their rights were to be preserved, if their rights were to be recognized, that they too were going to have to form themselves into a committee, into an organization that would pressure governments to recognize their right of self-determination.

The Metis people became further concerned when William McDougall was appointed as the Lieutenant-Governor of this new territory, and they had good reason for being concerned because this man historically is recognized as an annexationist. This is someone who wanted to come in and take over this land on behalf of the Government of Canada and to not recognize the rights of the Metis people.

It was at this point that Louis Riel emerged as a clear spokesperson for this movement and on November 2, 1869, they seized Upper Fort Garry and they fought against the so-called supporters of Canada. Representatives of all of the settlers, including the Canadian and some American settlers, were called together in a convention which was held on December 23, 1869. A provisional government was formed in a framework at this particular point, but on January 26, 1870, when the settlers were again convened and conventioned, it was officially recognized and Louis Riel was chosen as their clear leader.

He and his companions were given what was a monumental task, and that task was to negotiate the entry of this new territory into the Canadian Confederation, but they had good reason to be very concerned as to whether their authority was going to be duly recognized, not only in the East and in the government in Ottawa, but by those Canadians who had settled within the Metis community themselves. That became evident when a force of Canadians, a militia, gathered in Portage la Prairie. They were captured and they were court-martialled. This perhaps was the moment of deep trial for the Metis people. They court-martialled two individuals, one of whom was Thomas Scott. The first, they in fact did not order a death penalty; the second, they did.

Unfortunately, historically, I think a misperception of what occurred became known throughout the land, particularly in Ontario where, all of the sudden, the Metis people, instead of being recognized as the defenders of their right to self-determination, were regarded by certainly those of the Orangemen's persuasion, that they were somehow or other not

capable of governing their own affairs, that they were acting somewhat as outlaws. This was not true, Mr. Speaker, but that unfortunately became the perception.

Bishop Taché was persuaded to return from an ecumenical council that he was attending in Rome. He returned with an amnesty act, an act of amnesty which had been passed in Ottawa, and he was to give this to the Metis people. Tragically, the only person who never—or at least in its original inception and not until 1875—was given the amnesty provided under this act was Louis "David" Riel, and that led to a series of problems that he faced for the next five years.

However, the act of amnesty did lead to further negotiations, and on May 12, 1870, the final terms of The Manitoba Act were to take their place in history, and that is what we celebrated in the Legislature just a few days ago—the 122nd birthday of The Manitoba Act.

I think it must be clear that there were very clear provisions made in this agreement. First of all, the territory was severely limited. That led many Metis people quite frankly to decide, I think tragically, that they would never get their land mass recognized, and many of them chose to move further west into the province of Saskatchewan. Unfortunately, the 1.4 million acres which was supposed to have been given to the Metis people as a result of this settlement has not yet been given to the Metis people, but the other very significant provision was the provision of bilingual services which were denied as we know in actions taken in the 1890s and again in 1916, and only recently returned to some degree to those French-speaking people who have a Metis heritage in the province of Manitoba.

The tragedy was that Louis Riel was forced to flee. He had a \$5,000 reward on his head placed by the Orangemen's society in the province of Ontario. Bounty hunters were quite common in those days, and \$5,000 was an incredible amount of money. So it is no wonder that he felt called upon to go south to the United States to avoid being arrested by a bounty hunter.

So the victory for him personally was hollow, but it was victory also for the aspirations of many of the Metis people. Sir John A. Macdonald, our first Prime Minister, actually tried to persuade Louis Riel and tried to bribe him, as a matter of fact, to remain in the United States. He offered him payment to

remain in the United States. Fortunately the character of Louis Riel did not permit that.

* (1110)

He was successful in winning a by-election in 1873. He won the general election in 1874. He even won a further election after his expulsion, as a result. But in all three elections, despite being victorious, he was never allowed to take his seat in the House of Commons in Ottawa, never allowed to be recognized as a duly elected representative of the Metis people of the then province of Manitoba.

In February of 1875, he was finally granted the amnesty that should have been his by right in 1870, but unfortunately attached to that was a five-year banishment. People have often questioned, why did he go south? He went south because he was not allowed to remain here. He was forced to go out of this country, and that is when he began to spend more time in New York and finally settled in Montana, and in 1884, at the invitation of a group of Metis in Saskatchewan, he came north once again to try to obtain for the Metis who had moved into Saskatchewan what he had been somewhat successful in achieving for the Metis people in this province. We all know that he was tried as a traitor, he was convicted, and despite the clemency of the jury, the federal government would not stay his execution and he died on November 16, 1885.

Mr. Speaker, we know that history deals favourably with some people very quickly after an injustice has been carried out in their name. In the case of Louis "David" Riel it has taken us 122 years to formally recognize in this House the incredible contribution that he made to his people. I am delighted that there is no partisanship on this recognition of his contribution.

Mr. Speaker, we must remember that if the legacy of Louis "David" Riel is to remain a positive one, then there is much work that remains to be done. The Metis people have been discriminated against in this province and in this land, of that there is no question. Unfortunately, they have the physical characteristics in many cases of aboriginal people, who we know also have been.

I say "unfortunately" because it is that that has caused that discrimination, as it has with our aboriginal people. I say "unfortunate" because what a tragedy that we judge people by their physical characteristics and we do not judge people by the contribution that each and every one of them can make to an enhanced society.

We have done that over and over again in this land. Tragically, there are those in this country today who still will not recognize that people whose colour, whose eye shape, whose texture of hair should not be the determinant of how they are treated. While there is still racism, the recognition of what Louis "David" Riel has contributed will not receive the recognition that it truly deserves.

As long as we have school children who are still discriminated against, and they are by classmates and, much worse, sometimes by teachers; as long as we have employers who will not hire someone plain and simply on their talents and their abilities; when we have those who despite all the rules we can impose as governments, whatever political stripe, that will unfortunately discriminate against people as far as housing is concerned; as long as we have people who will not recognize their legitimacy amongst us, then we will have racism, and the legacy of Louis "David" Riel will not be what it should be, which is that these are among the first people of this province. As the first people of this province, they should, if anything, have more rights, not less rights, but they should certainly have equal rights.

All of us today must not just stand here and say, is it not wonderful that we have recognized finally the contributions of this man and his people. What we must also do is to commit ourselves to ensuring that his people have the full equality of opportunity for their children, for themselves, and for their grandchildren, and on into the future of every other Manitoban, so that they can hold their heads high, they can march forward with us, to enhance all of this province, all of its cultural traditions, all of its capacity to be one of the best places on this earth. That will happen if we take this resolution in a serious vein.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to rise and speak in support of the resolution before the House.

It is my continuing privilege to have had over these many years that I have had the opportunity to be a member in this Chamber to represent within my constituency significant communities of the Metis people. When I first came into this Chamber, I did so as a representative for the constituency of Rockwood-Iberville, and a major community within that constituency was a community that we all are

familiar with, located just west of the city here, by the White Horse, on the plains of the White Horse, St. François Xavier. I would like to deal with just a little bit about—I could be forgiven, certainly by my Metis friends, if I am mistaken in any of the history—what I consider to be from what I have read surely a golden time in the evolution of the Metis people as a new nation of the plains.

I refer to a person that I believe had a great deal to do with this, one Cuthbert Grant, whose father was a partner in the North West trading company, whose mother was of Indian background. He himself as a youngster had the privilege of travelling back to the old country, to Scotland, for some formal education, came back to the Red River just about those times in the history of the Red River when things were beginning to move and some difficulties were beginning to be encountered between the rivalries of the North West trading company and the Hudson's Bay Company who presumed everything and all things here on the Great Plains.

For me, Cuthbert Grant really epitomizes the understanding that these new people, this new nation had that nothing remains the same, there are changes that take place. They are taking place right now. Our country, Canada, right now is wrestling with how we adapt to the changes, changes of free trade, how we adapt to the globalization of the world, how we adapt as a country with our own constitutional problems right now.

Mr. Grant was very quickly acknowledged as a leader of the Metis people. Some identify him of course with the tragic incidents that occurred at Seven Oaks when a bitter confrontation took place, but I remember and I read of him with favour how he encouraged the settlement of Metis people west of the forks at a community that for many years was known as Grantown. It was not till later on when the church established a first parish there that the name was changed to St. François Xavier.

* (1120)

I read with interest of how he was acknowledged and how through him the Metis people were acknowledged as being the paramount grouping of people in the Great Plains, and they were. They roamed the vast plains, borderless at that time, south and west, in organized buffalo hunts that supplied and provided the economic base for the fur trading companies and for many other things. It was their skill as horsemen that attracted international attention. I read of Europeans coming

to the plains and marvelling at the horsemanship of the young Metis riders.

(Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

I view the activities of the Metis people at that time as the bridge that inevitably was required between the advancing settlements of the white community and that of the original and aboriginal people who were of course here prior to any white settlement.

Mr. Grant knew the Riel family, Mr. Riel Sr., and met Louis Riel as a youngster. Mr. Grant was acknowledged far and wide across the Great Plains as a natural leader. He was acknowledged by the establishment of that day as warden of the Plains. He sat in the justice system of that day as a magistrate that met periodically to deal with justice matters. He was a prominent guest and visitor with the governor and the people that ran, then merged Hudson's Bay and North West trading companies, and was a good counsellor to the growing Metis population.

So, by the time of 1869, the Metis population was by far the predominant group of people on the Plains, numbering some—and again I could be wrong—9,000 or 10,000 people compared to considerably less numbers of either aboriginal, surrounding Indian people and/or white settlers.

Louis Riel understood what was happening on the continent and understood that there had to be action taken by his people in order for them to find a place in the changing world. Mr. Acting Speaker, that he was condemned or treated harshly by those in authority at that time for those understandable actions and reasons, I think we all acknowledge was a gross injustice.

That he understood and had a vision of a greater Canada that was forming was in its evolutionary stages, was a tragic loss to the rest of Canada. Perhaps, Mr. Acting Speaker, one of the earliest demonstrations of what we still chaff at when all the decisions are made in Ottawa or in Toronto or in Montreal, when we still believe that we are not listened to out here in the West, maybe Louis Riel was one of the first who really understood that—and why he was punished for understanding that.

So, Mr. Acting Speaker, I have a very deep inner satisfaction from having had the privilege of representing communities like St. François Xavier, St. Ambroise, St. Eustache, St. Laurent, Elie, in the greater constituency of Lakeside that I have had the privilege of representing now for some 26 years. I

count among my Metis friends the current president, Yvon Dumont, who is a constituent of mine, who my friend the honourable member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry) is well acquainted with, and many other active leaders within the Metis community. It has always been a constructive relationship that I have shared with them as I try to do, as is my responsibility and duty, to represent their interests as best I can in this Chamber and in the councils of cabinet from time to time.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I come and speak to you and speak to the Metis people from a background that is quite different, not of either of the founding nations, français or anglais or Indian. I come from a much newer generation of settlers, among the Mennonite community that came in the early 1870s. We were welcomed; we were given land; and we prospered. We ought to be and deserve to be reprimanded that we have not done so in a more expeditious manner for the community that we speak of today.

Today, this very hour when our leaders are engaged in the most serious constitutional debate that we have undertaken in the immediate past history of this nation—and regrettably, we Canadians do spend an inordinate amount of time in debating our Constitution. But I believe again today that the Metis role is to provide leadership, to provide some bridging within the diverse communities that are making it apparently so difficult for us Canadians to understand and to fully appreciate the privilege that we have in living in this beautiful country of Canada that the Metis people helped build with us, that the world recognizes. The United Nations recognizes that Canada still is the most favoured nation to reside in.

Then let us reason together as reasonable men and women and make it work better for all of us. I am proud to add my name to this resolution, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Acting Speaker, I am glad to be able to rise today to speak about the place and role of Louis Riel and the history of Manitoba and the Northwest. It is an honourable name and an honourable place and we are glad on this side of the House to add our name to this resolution.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I want to talk about Louis Riel, the person, and to put him in the context of Manitoba history and particularly as the embodiment, himself, of the experience and the origins of the new province of Manitoba. Riel, I think, was the

embodiment of the experience of the new province of Manitoba of the 18th and 19th Century. He was of part European origin and part, probably, Chippewyan and French mixture on his mother's side.

He came as so many people did in Red River of those days from that mixed background, but he was born into a nation which was being formed, one of the many products of the fur trade, the new nation of the Metis. It was a people who had developed and were developing through the fur trade a sense of nationhood and nationality. Some historians will trace that to the battle at Seven Oaks and to the sense of oppression that the Metis people formed very early on in the European aboriginal history of this area.

* (1130)

I think there is a broader context to be considered than simply the battle at Seven Oaks, and it is the social and economic history of the parishes of Red River into which Riel was born in the 1840s. Riel was born into a unique world, a world which existed nowhere else in North America or in Europe, a Metis world. If you look at the character of Manitoba and Red River in that period, you would look at the First Nations, you would look at Lake Winnipeg, at the historic heart of Manitoba.

At the bottom of Lake Winnipeg, if you came to this area in the 1840s, you would have seen the Christian Indian village of St. Peters, the home of the people of Peguis. As you came down the Red, you would have looked at the other parishes, you would have seen the Anglican parishes of St. Clements and of St. Andrews, parishes which were in part English speaking, but predominantly, in fact, Saulteaux-speaking. Some of them with their aboriginal ministers trained at the teachers school that had been set up at St. Andrews and in the college of St. Johns further down the Red River Settlement, where the children of Peguis himself were being educated in English, in Latin, in Greek and being trained to be teachers in the European sense for their own people.

Riel was born into this world on the other side of the river in the Catholic parishes of St. Vital and St. Boniface and beyond that, along to the West, along the Assiniboine River, stretched the other English mixed-blood parishes of St. James and reaching further out to the French parishes of St. François Xavier.

It was an economic world that was built upon trade, built upon the trade between the aboriginal peoples, first of all, of Lake of the Woods, the wild rice and the fish of Lake of the Woods, which came in annual expeditions to those parishes of the Red River. It was built upon the fish of Lake Winnipeg and the fish oil produced by the people of Saguine, Fort Alexander, as it was known in those days.

That fish oil was transported in the great rogons that were made of the birch bark and transported by the people of Fort Alexander and sold along all the parishes of Red River and transported down to Pembina. It was the fish oil which lit the lamps of the people of Red River. It was the fish from the people of Fort Alexander which provided the food in the years in which the buffalo hunt failed. It was the wild rice that was brought by the people of Red Lake and those Saulteaux of the Lake of the Woods into the parish of Red River which provided the sustenance which enabled the people to survive in the 1820s, the 1830s and '40s when there were periodic times of starvation at Red River.

It was this world into which Riel was born. Riel's people, the Metis, were very mixed in language, mixed in origin. The English-speaking and Saulteaux-speaking people of Lake Winnipegosis, for example. Mixed-blood Metis people of that area who controlled the salt trade, the Campbells and the Monkman's, who controlled the salt trade of Lake Winnipegosis and who were in fact the harbingers of spring in Red River when they came every year with their carts and again went up the roads to St. Andrew's and down again to St. François Xavier, taking the salt which enabled the European peoples of Red River to preserve the fish and the buffalo which enabled them to survive throughout the winter.

What I am arguing, Mr. Acting Speaker, of course, is for that mixed trade, for the interrelationship, the interreliance of the peoples of Red River. It was a unique society. It was one of Europeans, of fur traders, of a Metis labour force, of small-scale European settlers and an Indian-based economy and Indian land.

This was the world into which Riel was born in 1844. He was born into a family which had taken political leadership in this part of the country. His father had been an important man in the Metis community. He was a politician, a man who is remembered for leading the Metis against the Hudson's Bay Company for free trade. It was the

Guillaume Sayer Trial which took place at the courthouse down at the forks. In the Sayer Trial, even though Sayer himself was found guilty by the court of Assiniboia at that time, the presence of the Metis, gathered in large numbers with the Ojibway in fact outside at the forks, was what convinced the people of Red River and the jury of the time that free trade should be granted at Red River. The Metis were the beneficiaries of that free trade. They fought for it; they pushed for it at the trial; and their leader, Louis Riel Sr., was the one who was perhaps the most important of the political leaders in pushing for that.

So Riel was born into an important political family which had played a significant role in the development of the free trade and the practical abolition of the monopoly of the Hudson's Bay Company.

In terms of the economic history of the Metis, what this free trade did, of course, was to give them an economic and political role which began to expand far beyond the bounds of Manitoba. When we think of Metis, perhaps many Manitobans think only of Manitoba, the postage-stamp province, but we should think in much broader terms, because the Métif language, the Métif people spread far beyond the confines of this small settlement to Pembina where there are still Métif settlements, to Saskatchewan, in fact as far west as Alberta. It was the free trade, the abolition of the monopoly of the Hudson's Bay Company, which enabled them to expand into the labour force of the Hudson's Bay Company to create their own economic expansion and to move as the predominant economic free traders into the larger areas, the more distant areas, of the northwest.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

The Metis faced competition. It was not a new monopoly, in fact, that they were able to take over. They faced throughout the 1840s and '50s the economic competition of the Assiniboine people, the economic competition of the Dakotas, of the Sioux who came in in the late 1850s and early 1860s as they were, in effect, chased out of the United States. They came to compete for the buffalo; they came to compete for the trade of the northwest. The Province of Manitoba has, in fact, commemorated some of these economic battles when it has commemorated the Dakota trenches at Flee Island in the area just to the north of Brandon. It was not an era of economic peace or harmony. It was an

era of economic competition in which the Metis had to fight for economic survival at a time when the buffalo herds were declining.

Riel was born in the 1840s into a period, into a political family at a time of many economic changes, and it was his family and his father who in fact had played an important role in developing those opportunities for the Metis.

Riel himself was sent to a European educational system in Montreal, so perhaps he missed some of the intense activity in Manitoba at that time. When he came back in the 1860s he found a different kind of Manitoba. That transition in Manitoba history I think is an important one to recognize. When Riel left in 1858, Manitoba was really I think on the verge of its transition into a province which would be increasingly dominated by Europeans and particularly those who were coming from Ontario. When he came back in 1864 he came in fact to a settlement which was becoming increasingly violent and one where the Europeans were gaining the upper hand.

It is important to notice I think that he came back and was a very young man. When Riel came to Manitoba, when he led that resistance, when he created that national Parliament, when he brought together the people of the 12 parishes of Red River, people with very diverse economic and political interests and languages, he did it as a young man, a great orator, but a young man of 25 or 26 years old, who in fact, by his education and by his selection by Bishop Taché, had become a man in many ways apart from his people. His experience was not that of the buffalo hunt. It was not that of the plains of Saskatchewan or the Métiffe people of Pembina. He had been educated in Montreal and he had come back to Manitoba to lead a resistance that was to change the shape of Canada and certainly to change the history of the people of this part of the world.

* (1140)

He did not have very much experience in leadership. He had seen his father in action perhaps, but he was a man of little experience, and I think in that context his accomplishments are all the greater. He came back to a community in the late 1860s which faced severe economic crisis, faced a crisis of drought and grasshoppers in 1862 and '65 and again in 1868, and in those years just before the transfer of this part of the country to the Government of Canada, times were very, very

harsh, and those very dire economic conditions I think of the late 1860s are something that we have to remember as well.

Starvation was very close in those years, and in fact it was the people of Minnesota territory, it was the Ojibway of the woods who sent also food to the people of Manitoba in that period. A relief committee was set up, organized in fact by many of the Metis. One of them would be Captain Kennedy of St. Andrews parish, a mixed-blood English-speaking arctic explorer, and Captain Kennedy and his wife played an important part in the distribution of food and the distribution of relief in that period.

It is in this time that the Government of Canada takes steps to transfer Rupert's Land to Canada. Perhaps as a historical footnote I should point out the resolution actually reads 1867. It should read 1870, but I think perhaps the intent is still the same. 1867 was actually when the Rupert's Land Act was passed in the Parliament of Canada. It simply laid the stage for the transfer. The transfer itself did not occur until 1870.

The Government of Canada ignored the rights of the people who were here, as the historian W.L. Morton has argued. He said that the transfer of the Northwest from British to Canadian sovereignty was never the subject of serious negotiation and at no time were the interests of any of the residents, Ojibway, Assiniboine, Dakota, Metis, English or French, in this country, were they every considered. There were no guarantees of native rights, no guarantees of treaties, no guarantees of local government which had been developing in this area in the sense of the council of Assiniboia. They could have been done but they were not done because the Government of Canada intended this to be a territory as the Northwest territories of Alberta and Saskatchewan were indeed conceived at the same time, because, of course, the Government of Canada intended that the control of natural resources particularly be retained by the national government.

It was a failure of Canada, I think, when it looked at the Northwest to take those kinds of things into account. That young man, Louis Riel, the bearded and gifted orator, a young man who was able to lead his people and to take a series of political demands and to make of them a Manitoba Act in the province of Manitoba again I think become all the more significant.

Under Riel, the Metis argued for community rights. They argued for their culture in the broadest sense, not just language, not just religion, but for the maintenance of local control, of local democracy, and for the preservation of the new nation that had been created here in the Northwest.

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Government Services): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I will just take a few minutes, on a different type of note, in regard to this proclamation today in recognition of Louis Riel. I will leave ample time for my member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry) who will cover the history very well as the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) and also the honourable minister previous to the member for Wolseley gave in her talks. They have covered the history very well of Louis Riel.

I rise as a member who has represented the constituency of Riel since 1986, of more note than that, as a friend in the south St. Vital area with the Metis people for the last 50-odd years, not only as a member in politics but as a friend, as a person who went to school with many of my friends in that particular area, the business with my friends in that area.

My father would be very proud today to notice the recognition of Louis Riel and the Metis people. My father, the late Louis Ducharme, appropriately named, came to Manitoba from Quebec, however his mother was a René with some native blood and a Metis. They settled in Toutes Aides, and then after the death of his mother, they came to south St. Vital.

My father employed many Metis, many friends, throughout the St. Vital area. Also, I must mention that during the course of friendship that has developed, many of us who were always friends of Metis people, and as you grew up with the people—I myself, personally, did not realize a lot of the hardships that these people experienced in the south St. Vital area. However, as you grew older, you recognized some of the difficulties that they had, when they were going to school and when they were trying to become part of that community that they were the history of.

Finally, through the last few years, Mr. Speaker, they have been recognized. We have named schools in recognition of the Lavalee families, the St. Germaines, the people in that area. We have just noticed, just recently, we have just recognized Riel constituency, or Riel, as the community of Riel, which is composed of the St. Boniface-St. Vital area.

Mr. Speaker, I can go on and on about the relationships that I have had, relationships that I will cherish, and continue those relationships, with the Lagimodieres, and the Courchaines, the Frofishers, the Kellys, the Lavalees, and the St. Germaines. All these families now have come forward in many facets of life. These people have been recognized right across Winnipeg, in Manitoba and in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I know that everyone wants an opportunity to speak on the resolution. I myself can only sit here and probably recognize the appreciation of those families that are here today, recognize and I just say to them: Congratulations, you have waited a long, long, long time.

Mr. Speaker: Prior to recognizing the honourable member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry),

J'aimerais attirer l'attention des députés à la tribune du président, à la tribune à ma droite et aussi à la tribune à ma gauche, où nous avons parmi nous ce matin: des descendants de la famille Riel, M. Marcel Riel, Mme. Alphonsine Carrière, Mme. Augustine Abraham, Mme. France Lemay, et bien d'autres membres de la famille Riel; et aussi, M. Jean Allard, l'ancien député de Rupertsland; l'ex-juge en chef M. Alfred Monnin; les membres de la Maison Riel; les membres du Festival du Voyageur; les membres de la Société historique de St-Boniface; et les membres de la Société franco-manitobaine.

Au nom de tous les députés, je tiens à vous souhaiter la bienvenue ici ce matin.

[Translation]

I would like to draw the attention of members to the Speaker's Gallery, to the gallery to the right, and also to the gallery to the left, where we have with us this morning descendants of the Riel family: Mr. Marcel Riel, Mrs. Alphonsine Carrière, Mrs. Augustine Abraham, Mrs. France Lemay, and many other members of the Riel family; and also, Mr. Jean Allard, the former member for Rupertsland; the former Chief Justice, Mr. Alfred Monnin; members of Riel House; members of the Festival du Voyageur; members of the Société historique de St-Boniface; and members of the Société franco-manitobaine.

On behalf of all members, I would like to welcome you here this morning.

Mr. Nell Gaudry (St. Boniface): Il me fait plaisir d'ajouter quelques mots sur la résolution qui a été

présentée ici au Manitoba. C'est une journée historique.

Le 31 juillet 1885, lors de son procès, Louis Riel déclarait: "I know that, through the grace of God, I am the founder of Manitoba."

Aujourd'hui, cent sept ans après ces événements tragiques qui ont marqué profondément l'histoire de notre pays, nous confirmons officiellement ces paroles de Louis Riel, le père et le fondateur du Manitoba.

C'est avec fierté et honneur que je prends la parole ici, devant cette assemblée parlementaire, qui est le fruit du travail de Louis Riel et de son gouvernement provisoire de 1869-1870.

* (1150)

C'est grâce aussi à la clairvoyance de Louis Riel et à la conviction de ses héritiers, tel que Georges Forest, que je vous adresse la parole en français. Louis Riel avait une vision pour son peuple de la Rivière Rouge. Louis Riel avait une vision pour le Canada. Il s'était donné comme mission d'aider tous ceux et celles qui étaient dépourvus de leurs libertés, qu'ils soient Métis, Autochtones, Blancs ou d'autres races. Il rêvait d'un Manitoba et, oui, il rêvait d'un Canada, où les parlant français et les parlant anglais pourraient vivre ensemble, dans un esprit d'ouverture et de compréhension mutuel.

Monsieur le président, les Métis et les Canadiens français ont toujours considéré Louis Riel comme le père et le fondateur du Manitoba, même, et surtout, aux heures les plus sombres de 1885. Le geste que nous posons aujourd'hui ne peut pas rayer toutes les injustices et les persécutions que nous avons eu à subir mais il sert à indiquer que la résistance calme et digne de 1869-1870 est reconnue; il sert à indiquer que nous sommes prêts à bâtir le Manitoba et le Canada de demain sur la solide fondation que Louis Riel nous a léguée; il sert à indiquer que la nation métisse peut se tenir fière de sa langue, de son histoire et de ses traditions. Ce geste enfin, reconnaît le rôle unique et historique que Louis Riel joua dans la création de la province du Manitoba et dans le développement de la confédération canadienne.

Monsieur le président, je suis fier de dire que je suis un fils de cette nation métisse qui vit le jour ici, à la Rivière-Rouge et dans les vastes plaines de l'Ouest. Je suis aussi fier de représenter Saint-Boniface au sein de cette assemblée; le Saint-Boniface qui a vu naître Louis Riel, le Saint-Boniface qui a été au coeur de son oeuvre à

la Rivière-Rouge, le Saint-Boniface qui a reçu et qui honore ses reliques, le Saint-Boniface du peuple Métis et des Canadiens-français qui ont toujours gardé haut le flambeau du rêve de Louis Riel.

Cent quarante-huit ans après sa naissance, le petit gars de Saint-Boniface de la Rivière-Rouge est devenu le personnage canadien probablement le plus étudié et analysé de l'histoire canadienne. Son nom figure sur des monuments, des écoles, des musées, des bibliothèques, des rues et il a été l'inspiration pour maintes créations artistiques, en théâtre, chant, peinture, musique et sculpture. Comme Louis Riel, son peuple, longtemps victimes de mépris, sujets de gêne et d'embarras, ont surmonté ces nuages pour se situer au niveau de la légende et de l'héroïsme.

Aujourd'hui, on reconnaît à Louis Riel le mérite d'avoir été le catalyseur qui a fait reconnaître le Manitoba comme province.

Monsieur le président, je suis heureux de voir que certaines parties du préambule de la résolution présentée aujourd'hui par le gouvernement semblent avoir été prises des résolutions du Parti libéral et j'en félicite le gouvernement.

Bien que sensiblement timide, mais réitérant malgré tout les accomplissements de Riel, je pense que la résolution du gouvernement ne fait vraiment que commencer à remettre à Louis Riel la place qui lui revient de plein droit dans l'histoire du Canada et du Manitoba.

Monsieur le président, il ne faudrait pas que l'émotion et la grandeur du moment nous portent à oublier trois points fondamentaux qui sont, à mon avis, le seul chemin à prendre afin de rendre justice à la mémoire de Louis "David" Riel.

Ces trois points sont: une complète réhabilitation pour Riel; deuxièmement, sa reconnaissance officielle comme un des pères de la confédération canadienne; troisièmement, sa proclamation comme le fondateur du Manitoba.

Bien évidemment, Monsieur le président, j'ai confiance que les autorités fédérales compétentes en la matière accompliront leur devoir afin de permettre aux livres d'histoire de réhabiliter la mémoire de Riel et de souligner de façon appropriée son rôle dans la confédération canadienne.

Quant à l'échelle provinciale, Monsieur le président, j'aimerais suggérer au gouvernement un geste qui concrétiserait l'esprit dégagé dans cette résolution.

J'aimerais suggérer qu'un congé statutaire provincial soit décrété afin de concrétiser la reconnaissance et la célébration de la mémoire du fondateur du Manitoba.

Quoi de plus logique, Monsieur le président, que de vivre son histoire au travers de sa culture.

Notre grand festival d'hiver manitobain, le Festival du Voyageur, me semble être l'occasion appropriée afin de célébrer hautement et avec fierté la réalité de notre histoire.

Sur cette réflexion, Monsieur le président, j'aimerais conclure en citant une courte partie d'un poème composé par Louis Riel, peu après l'adoption de l'Acte du Manitoba: "Je suis métisse et je suis orgueilleuse d'appartenir à cette nation. Je sais que Dieu, de sa main généreuse, fait chaque peuple avec attention. Les Métis sont un petit peuple encore, mais vous pouvez voir déjà leurs destins. Etre haïs comme ils sont les honore. Ils ont déjà rempli de grands desseins."

Monsieur le président, en terminant, c'est pour donner notre appui comme parti et comme opposition à la résolution qui a été présentée par le gouvernement aujourd'hui. Et c'est avec plaisir, c'est une journée historique pour le Manitoba et pour les Métis du Manitoba et les Canadiens-français. Merci beaucoup.

[Translation]

It is a pleasure for me to add some words on a resolution presented here this morning. This is an historical day.

On July 31, 1885, during his trial, Louis Riel declared: "I know that, through the grace of God, I am the founder of Manitoba."

Today, 107 years after these tragic events, which profoundly marked the history of our country, we are officially confirming Louis Riel's words, as the father and the founder of Manitoba. It is with pride and honour that I am speaking here today before this parliamentary assembly which is the fruit of the work of Louis Riel and his provisional government of 1869-1870.

It is thanks to the clear-sightedness, also, of Louis Riel, and to the conviction of his descendants, such as Georges Forest, that I am speaking to you in French. Louis Riel had a vision for his people of Red River. Louis Riel had a vision for Canada. He made it his mission to help all those people who were deprived of their freedoms, be they Metis, aboriginal, white or of other races. He dreamed of

a Manitoba, and, yes, he dreamed of a Canada, where French speakers and English speakers would be able to live together in a spirit of openness and mutual comprehension.

Mr. Speaker, the Metis and French Canadians have always considered Louis Riel as the father and the founder of Manitoba, even, and above all, in the most somber hours of 1885. What we are doing today cannot wipe out all the injustices and the persecutions to which we were subjected, but it does serve to indicate that the calm and dignified resistance of 1869 and 1870 is recognized. It serves to indicate that we are prepared to build the Manitoba and the Canada of tomorrow on the solid foundation that Louis Riel passed on to us. It serves to indicate that the Metis nation can be proud of its language, its history and its traditions. This gesture at last recognizes the unique and historical role that Louis Riel played in the creation of the Province of Manitoba and in the development of Canadian Confederation.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to say that I am a son of this Metis nation which was born here at Red River and in the vast plains of the West. I am also proud to represent St. Boniface within this Assembly, the St. Boniface which was the birthplace of Louis Riel, the St. Boniface which was at the heart of his work at Red River, the St. Boniface that received and honours his relics, the St. Boniface of the Metis and French Canadian people, who have always held high the flame of Louis Riel's dream.

One hundred and forty-eight years after his birth, the little boy from St. Boniface by the Red River has probably become the most studied and analyzed personality of Canadian history. His name is inscribed on monuments, schools, museums, libraries, and streets, and he has been the inspiration for many artistic creations in theatre, song, painting, music and sculpture. Like Louis Riel, his people who have long been victims of contempt and the subject of embarrassment, have surmounted these clouds to reach the level of legend and heroism.

Today, Louis Riel is recognized as having been the catalyst who achieved the recognition of Manitoba as a province. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to see that certain portions of the preamble of the resolution presented today by the government seem to have been taken from resolutions of the Liberal Party, and I congratulate the government for that. Although noticeably timid, but nevertheless

reiterating all the accomplishments of Riel, I think that the government's resolution really only begins to return Louis Riel to his rightful place in the history of Canada and of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, the emotion and the greatness of the moment must not lead us to forget three fundamental points which are, in my opinion, the only road to take in order to do justice to the memory of Louis "David" Riel. These three points are: the complete rehabilitation of Riel; secondly, his official recognition as one of the Fathers of Canadian Confederation; and, thirdly, being proclaimed as the founder of Manitoba.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, I am confident that the competent federal authorities in the area will carry out their duty in order to allow the history books to rehabilitate Riel's memory and to emphasize appropriately his role in Canadian Confederation.

As for the provincial level, Mr. Speaker, I would like to suggest to the government a gesture that would put into concrete form the spirit of this resolution. I would like to suggest that a statutory provincial holiday be decreed in order, concretely, to recognize and celebrate the memory of the founder of Manitoba.

What could be more logical, Mr. Speaker, than to live one's history through one's culture? Our major Manitoban winter festival, the Festival du Voyageur, seems to me the appropriate occasion in order to celebrate openly and proudly the reality of our history.

On that thought, Mr. Speaker, I would like to conclude by quoting a short portion of a poem composed by Louis Riel, shortly after the adoption of The Manitoba Act: "I am Metis, and I am proud to belong to this nation. I know that God, with his generous hand, creates each people with care. The Metis are yet a small people, but their destiny is already visible. To be hated as they are does them honour. Already they have fulfilled a grand design.

Mr. Speaker, in concluding we support, as a party of the opposition, the resolution presented by the government today, and it is with pleasure that we are doing so. It is an historic day for Manitoba, and for the Metis and French Canadians. Thank you very much.

Mr. Jerry Storle (Flin Flon): It is a privilege, Mr. Speaker, for me to join in adding my voice of assent to this resolution. I think the words of the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry) are indicative of how everyone in this Chamber feels, that this is indeed

an historic moment for the Metis people. It is an historic moment for this Legislature and brings to—I was going to say—a conclusion an historic matter that has faced the province for more than a hundred years—what is it now?—120 or 122 years.

Mr. Speaker, it clearly does not bring the issues that are raised in this motion to a conclusion at all. My colleague the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) and the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) spoke quite eloquently of the history. Our Leader (Mr. Doer), not yesterday but a few days ago, talked about the importance of correcting the historic record, of setting the facts before the people of Manitoba. Certainly this resolution goes a long way to correcting the historic record. Maybe, Mr. Speaker, it will go a long way to, I guess, correcting the impression that people have about that period of our history which tends to have been glorified in terms of the actions of the federal government rather than on the actions of an individual who was a leader of the Metis people who is legitimately a founder, a Father of Confederation, and certainly a father of Manitoba, of our province.

Mr. Speaker, history goes beyond our recognition of the details of the life of Louis Riel, the contribution of the Metis people, throughout that period of history to the present day. The history of Metis people does not end with this resolution nor with our discussions around this resolution. It is simply a recognition of what we should have recognized a long time ago.

Mr. Speaker, I also want us to take a moment to acknowledge the role of Metis people in the development of the northern part of the province. I have had the good fortune to serve in this Legislature since 1981 and during that time have had again the good fortune to have had the support of many Metis people in what are called, in northern Manitoba, Metis communities. They include communities like Cranberry Portage, Sherridon, Wabowden, Nelson House, Brochet and many, many others across northern Manitoba, communities that perhaps reflect both the tradition of the Metis people in the province of Manitoba and their continuing contribution to this province.

* (1200)

In northern Manitoba, many, many Metis people work in the mining industry, in exploration, in underground and continue to contribute to our development as a province so that it is an ongoing contribution. Mr. Speaker, unlike many other areas of the province, Metis people in some northern

communities continue to carry on with their traditional ways of life. They are still, in many instances, hunters, fishermen and trappers as well as their contributions to the development of the North from the more industrialized aspects of our society today.

Mr. Speaker, the development and the recognition of the important role that Metis people have played in Manitoba and in the North, I think, has received in some cases grudging respect and acknowledgement on the part of government, and I include the government of Manitoba, not in a partisan way but over the history of the province of Manitoba. Their aspirations, their desire to have their contributions recognized, their legitimate rights recognized—it has been, again, a difficult and, I am sure, a time-consuming and sometimes exasperating process for Metis people.

Mr. Speaker, while we recognize today by this resolution the contributions of Louis Riel, the contributions of Metis people, we should not forget that only in 1982 was the significance of Metis people actually recognized in our Canadian Constitution. Section 35 of the 1982 Constitution recognized for the first time the constitutional rights of Metis people, the obligation of the Canadian government and, yes, the provinces to Metis people. I am proud to say that our party federally insisted that Metis people receive that recognition, that the distinction between Indian, Inuit and Metis people be made in the Constitution, so that we not lose sight of the obligations of the province and the federal government to Metis people.

Since then the Province of Manitoba, which, I believe, is continuing in that process today, has supported the Manitoba Métis Federation in its development of its case, I guess, its correcting of the historical record to ensure that governments live up to the obligations still outstanding to Metis people, and that the Metis people were involved very closely in the constitutional discussions that occurred in 1983, 1985, 1987 at First Ministers' Conferences on aboriginal rights, and that the province supported financially the preparations for those meetings and included support for tripartite discussions of the outstanding issues which have not been dealt with by government.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that this is a process, and like people throughout the world who are involved in developing both an awareness, an acceptance and a recognition of the obligations of

government to aboriginal peoples, the process is not concluded, not concluded with this resolution, clearly not concluded with their inclusion in the Constitution of the country, because there remain outstanding issues, outstanding questions, outstanding obligations. Until all of those issues have been resolved, we will not have satisfied I guess what the intent is of this resolution, and that is to recognize to the full extent the contribution Metis people have made and the obligations we have to the people who made those contributions.

When I say a process, I can see the process needs to be developed in three separate respects. Number one, there has to be some continuing flushing out of the obligations under the Constitution of our country. There is still wrangling going on between different levels of government which is preventing the full implementation of our obligations. Whether we have to see, the courts ultimately rule on what the obligations of the federal government and the provinces are with respect to Metis people, is yet to be determined. If there is political will, if governments, this government, future governments, federal governments will understand the intent of this resolution, I do not think that we have to wait for another generation for courts to ultimately decide what our obligations are. I believe that we can resolve them ourselves, as the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) suggested, as reasonable people, as people of good will.

Mr. Speaker, there is more to be done as well if this resolution's intent is to be implemented. The resolution says that we should recognize the significant role of Metis people in the founding and development of the province of Manitoba. I believe that we have a long way to go to correcting the historic record that is today being expounded in our schools. Although we have seen some rectification of the lack of information and the injustice that was done to the truth with respect to the role of Metis people in the province, our curriculum still does not reflect to the full extent the contribution, where made, that has been made by people like Louis Riel.

So in the education system, we have to continue to make sure that we achieve what we want to achieve here, and that is we achieve the truth, the unblemished, unvarnished truth of the history of this province and how it was created and the people and the context in which the province was created.

We have, of course, in many instances, not faced up to the reality that Metis people face on a

day-to-day basis, and that is the question of not necessarily overt but covert racism, the fact that we need to address the inequities that exist in employment opportunities, community opportunities.

So I am sure and I believe that every member of this Chamber will support this resolution. Let us not leave this as sort of the final act, because clearly it is not. It is part of a process of truly recognizing the contributions that have been made and are being made and will be made from this day forward. We can only achieve recognition if we, in fact, follow up in those many areas where we have been found wanting. They include areas of education and employment and the social justice for Metis people in the province, as well as constitutional justice which may be approaching a resolution. At least we can hope.

Mr. Speaker, I have used my time. I want to again indicate my support for the resolution and again thank my constituents of Metis descent for their continuing support.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Monsieur le président, Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to be able to rise and place a few remarks on the record today in support of this resolution. I will keep my remarks very short as there is little time left and I know there are other members still wanting the opportunity to speak. I think that a number of the things that I might have said have been said very well by others in the House.

We have had a wonderful variety of commentary put into the record today. We have had very interesting historical perspective put into the record by the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen), a professional historian, who brought forward some details that I had not yet heard. I am pleased that that is in the record. The member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry), for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), and Riel (Ducharme) speaking of their own personal emotions and feelings in regard to the Metis people themselves today and those who have gone before the people today I found to be quite moving.

* (1210)

For myself, I can recall, as a new bride living in St. Boniface quite close to the cathedral, in its original splendour prior to the fire, and prior to the new structure being built, and being very aware, through our friends in that area, of the importance of Louis Riel to them and to this province. I can recall going

for walks when I was carrying my first child, pregnant with our child, walking through the grounds of the St. Boniface Cathedral with my husband, looking at the gravestones and the markers that are there and reading the names of all the people, and of one particular person who rests there. Being a bit of a romantic, I used to feel that perhaps it would be possible, believing as I do, that the spirit does not stop when the body does, that perhaps it would be possible to kneel down and put my face to the ground and whisper into the grass and be heard by those who rest there.

I like to think that if such a thing is possible that the words that can be uttered in the place where we exist could in fact be heard by the spirits of those gone before. I would especially hope that the spirit of the founder of the province, Louis Riel, could hear the words that are being spoken today, certainly descendants of his can hear them on his behalf if such a thing is not a possibility.

I am very, very pleased that I can add my support for this motion to the record because I think it is significant and important and with that I will sit and look forward to the comments coming from other colleagues in this Chamber.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I have a few very brief remarks I would like to put on the record. I want to first of all address the historic irony of the Metis people. This is 122 years since the founding of this province, 125 years since the founding of Canada. The true father of Confederation in the Manitoba sense was Louis Riel. Here we are in 1992, debating a resolution that finally gives recognition to that fact. That is historic irony, Mr. Speaker.

It might be easier for people to dismiss the significance of the event today, but I was struck as I looked around this august Chamber as I walked into the building today. We have some very august individuals recognized here: great philosophers, Latin sayings; we have an interesting series of frescoes. This building was built in the 1920s. When one goes around the building, one sees much reflection of Greek and Roman classical history and architecture.

But where is the recognition of the Louis Riels, the Metis people, the founders of this province? This was a building built in the 1920s. One has to remember in those days Louis Riel was considered, by many of those in power at least, as a traitor.

But the memory was kept alive, in the descendants of Louis Riel, the descendants of the

other Metis leaders, by the Metis people themselves. It shows, Mr. Speaker, I think today in many ways there is another irony. What we are seeing today is I think the beginning of a new era and the end of another. For more than a hundred years the Metis people of this country have been Canada's forgotten people. Their contribution to Canadian history has not been recognized. Especially here in Manitoba where they founded this province, their contribution has not been recognized.

There is much that could be said about the way the Metis were treated in the 1870s and the 1880s, the land fraud, the scrip. The Metis indeed have as much of a tradition, Mr. Speaker, of being abused by the Canadian power structure, Canadian governments and, indeed, provincial governments as do all aboriginal people.

I say this because there is a new era. The Metis people have said they will no longer be the forgotten people. They are seeking equal recognition constitutionally, and that is something that is a stark injustice that needs to be rectified. What I look forward to, following this kind of debate, is not just the passage of a resolution. It is not just a footnote in history, that here in 1992 we are correcting that very fact that Louis Riel has not really been fully recognized up until this point as a founder of the province. What we do is we take the spirit of the Metis of 1870, of 1887, indeed of 1992, because that spirit still lives. We say, Mr. Speaker, that this province, perhaps as part of rectifying history, will be a leader in fighting for full and equal recognition of the Metis people constitutionally in the 1990s and the 21st Century.

I say just as a final note, I hope in this Legislature we can do more as well to recognize that historic fact. I note the only real recognition was the statue of Louis Riel which I know many people had difficulty with, Mr. Speaker, because it did not give the kind of dignified presentation. We have Queen Victoria, we have other figures from the dark, long-gone days of the British Empire still on these grounds. Let us start today and perhaps put a fitting memorial, as I know the Metis people are fighting for, in terms of Louis Riel and the Metis. Indeed, as has been suggested in this House I know by many people, including Gary Doer and others, let us start by that. Let us use that as a symbol for the true founders of the province of Manitoba, and indeed the true father of Confederation in terms of this province, Louis

Riel. Let us never forget 100-plus years of the forgotten people, and let us make sure in the next decade and into the next century the Metis will never again be Canada's forgotten people.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples): Mr. Speaker, I am rather very grateful and very pleased to speak on this resolution and add my support and my comments.

I think it is very essential from a human perspective to look at this mistake of more than 100 years. When we talk about any individual who has done so much for humanity, for the race and for his people, when I look at the contribution made by Louis Riel, I think it is one of the finest examples of any human being who has lived.

It is so important for people to understand that when you try to express—or try to derail individuals and nations from their human path, ultimately human decency will succeed and that is one of the finest examples of this individual who has done so much for his people, who has contributed in a major way and was the founder of this province.

Mr. Speaker, it is very essential for new Canadians to understand the truth, and the truth is the history books must tell what actually happened. I am sure this resolution will go a long way, but will not correct, 100 percent, the mistakes. It is again, in the emotional speech given by the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry), an example that we learn from other individuals, other nations and that the human behaviour and the human nature surpasses all the boundaries, all the colours, all the races. But we in this age have to correct the mistakes of the past.

I want to end by saying that I am truly very happy today to see that one mistake is being corrected in this great nation. Thank you.

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take part in this debate today and very briefly say a few things about this resolution on the recognition of Louis Riel.

In reading the resolution, I noticed with interest that the last WHEREAS reads: "... since the death of Louis Riel, the Metis people have continued to honour his memory and have struggled to reaffirm those rights which are contained in the Manitoba Act." So in our caucus room I looked up the Manitoba Act, and Section 31 says that land shall

be given to the Metis people to the extent of 1,400,000 acres.

* (1220)

We know, however, that this was not completely carried out, that although scrip was given for land, at later times this scrip was sold and there have been allegations that it was fraudulently sold and the land was lost. In more recent times the Metis people have tried to negotiate with the federal government to receive compensation for the land that was originally allotted to them. That was unsuccessful and so they went to court but the matter is still unresolved.

However, there is new hope since a negotiator has been appointed to try to reach an out-of-court settlement so that this historical wrong can be corrected. We are hopeful that there will be an out-of-court settlement so that protracted court proceedings are not required again.

In doing some background reading, I read with interest that the buffalo hunt that was organized by the Metis was a very democratic process, because they elected their own leaders. It may well be that that process was much more democratic than that that existed in many other societies where the franchise was based on property rather than one person, one vote. So I think their form of social organization, their election, is something that is commendable, something that we followed but in later generations.

What of the Metis people since the time of Louis Riel, and where are they in our society today? We know that there is a history of poverty and oppression, and the evidence is not just in the written records, but there is very moving photographic evidence as well. If you were to attend the Metis pavilion at Folklorama, you would see an excellent display of photographs of the Metis people in Manitoba, a very disturbing and moving archival display, because it depicts very graphically the poverty of Metis people over the years in Manitoba.

Many of those people live in my constituency of Burrows, and many of them are employed and they fit in our society and you would not know who they are. Many belong to the Manitoba Métis Federation, and they are very proud of their history and their ancestry and their status as Metis people. Regrettably, many of them live in much less than desirable conditions.

I would recommend that everyone in this Chamber read *In Search of April Raintree* by Beatrice Culleton, a very moving and sad story about Metis children in child care and in foster homes. It is interesting to note that this book, in an edited form, is on the high school curriculum for many schools in Manitoba, so that our children are becoming educated to the problems of Metis people in today's society.

Why do we have this resolution, and why does it address some of the historic wrongs? The reason is that the historic wrongs have not yet been corrected. Land is an important consideration. Many Metis people today still want a land base for their communities. I think that is not surprising. If we look at immigrants, many immigrant communities have linked land to freedom. If you look at the Ukrainian homesteaders in Manitoba, they equated ownership of land with freedom. If you look at the Mennonite communities in Manitoba, their land is a very important part of their heritage and history in Manitoba, and treaty aboriginal people have a very strong tie to the land. So it is not surprising that some Metis people want a land base for their community.

I will conclude now, Mr. Speaker, by saying that we on this side are very happy to support this resolution. It is long overdue. It gives recognition to Louis Riel and his nation that should have been given many, many decades ago in Manitoba. It is finally being done today.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour for me today to rise as the seconder of this very important resolution. I am most honoured to do it because it is a particular issue that I and some others have been working on for many, many years. I remember when I first became active in politics during 1985-86 when I first ran for the Legislature, I had the opportunity to meet many people involved with the Manitoba Métis Federation in the Lac du Bonnet constituency and in communities in that particular part of our province. During my tenure as an assistant to the federal minister, the Honourable Jake Epp, I had the opportunity to work very closely with members of the Manitoba Métis Federation. I remember on several occasions, and some of those individuals who were there in the gallery today, we talked about a resolution coming to the Parliament of Canada and to this Legislature recognizing the role of the Metis

people and of Louis Riel in the founding of our province.

Today, as a matter of fact, a week or so ago, on Manitoba Day, all of the stars seemed to cross in the right order and this resolution was able to be announced by our Premier and to come forward. I must say to the member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar), and I appreciate that he was not involved in the development of this resolution and the framing of its wording, but I can assure him that the work that went on between myself and others on this side of the House with representatives of the Manitoba Métis Federation, we worked very hard to develop a wording that was acceptable to all and suitable to the occasion.

The changes that were brought in today were not the result of, I think—I say this very legitimately, too—they were not the result of the fact that consultation did not take place. They were the result of the fact that there was consultation, and it did take place.

The member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) pointed out one error that I will take some responsibility for in missing it on the draft, and that was an error in the date in the first part of the WHEREAS of 1867, and I would ask when I conclude my remarks, Mr. Speaker, if you could canvass the House if there would be unanimous consent to amend that to the correct date of 1869-1870, and then this resolution will, I think, accurately reflect its intention.

Mr. Speaker, I know time is short as we draw to the end of this sitting day, and I know members are anxious to see this resolution passed by the Assembly, but I would like to say for just a few brief moments how honoured, again, that I am that we are today in this Assembly correcting I think a historical inaccuracy in our province and recognizing an individual and the community of which he was a part, in fact, the majority of people who were in Manitoba at the time of its founding and their so very important role. If it had not been for Louis Riel and his provisional government and the Métis community from which it came, Manitoba would not be a province today and we would not be in this Legislative Assembly today.

My colleague from Lakeside, the Honourable Harry Enns, I think made a point that all Manitobans I would hope would take note of, that the reason why we had a provisional government in 1869 was because of a Government of Canada, because of

the Hudson's Bay Company making arrangements about our lives in this part of the world without taking into account the interests of the people in this part of the world.

If you look at the history of the Canadian Confederation in a nonpartisan way, no matter who has been in power in Ottawa and who has been in power in the provinces, that lack of concern for provincial issues, that lack of consultation has, from time to time, been an important part of our history. As we struggled with our constitutional task force, that issue of having more input into the national institution was one in which all three parties found some agreement.

Mr. Speaker, today, as we close this debate and we recognize the role of Louis Riel, we should remember how the battles of 122 years ago continue to go on, and the inspiration that Louis Riel provides to us today should certainly be recognized.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to correct in the first WHEREAS the year from 1867 to 1870? [Agreed]

Is the House ready for the question? [Agreed]

The question before the House is on the proposed resolution of the honourable Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey) as seconded by the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) in the recognition of Louis Riel.

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

Hon. Darren Praznik (Deputy Government House Leader): Just before we adjourn the session, Mr. Speaker, if I may, with the indulgence of members I would like to invite the family members from the Riel family and many of our guests who are here today to a brief reception in the private dining room.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Is it the will of the House that I do not see the clock for a few minutes? [Agreed]

Mr. Ashton: I am wondering if the record would show that the vote was unanimous.

Mr. Speaker: The record will show. That is agreed.

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

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Friday, May 22, 1992

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