

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

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Speaker*

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-First Legislature

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, June 12, 2018

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

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

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Madam Speaker: Introduction of bills?

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): Madam Speaker, on a matter of privilege.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Assiniboia, on a matter of privilege.

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): Madam Speaker, in regard to a matter that was brought up a few weeks ago, you provided a ruling yesterday commenting that my spoken word was not consistent with the written word in the—in Hansard.

I've had an opportunity to review the Hansard, and you are correct, my written word was not the same as the—as what was written in the motion that was handed to you. And in your ruling, you pointed out that it was a learning moment for all of us that they had to be consistent and therefore you did not actually rule on the issue of the consistency or issues around The Legislative Assembly Act.

Therefore my motion, seconded by the member from The Maples, is that the Speaker utilize her full powers under the Manitoba Legislative Assembly act, the—pardon me, the Manitoba legislative act and The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Conflict of Interest Act, specifically sections 1(2) Registered common-law relationship; 2(1), Subsidiary corporation; Control; sections 2.2, 2.3; 3.1, Indirect pecuniary interest.

So this includes not only MLAs, but—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

I would point out for the member that he cannot question the ruling of the Speaker. He challenged the ruling yesterday, and that is as far as it goes. The member is out of order as the Speaker is and has no authority to be determining questions of law.

So he has also not demonstrated what privileges have been breached, so I would indicate right now that the member does not have a matter of privilege.

* * *

Madam Speaker: The—so we will proceed then. Introduction of bills? Committee reports?

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Ian Wishart (Minister of Education and Training): It's my pleasure to table matters under advisement from the Committee of Supply for Education and Training.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Truth and Trust

Mrs. Sarah Guillemard (Fort Richmond): My mother has always been very good at giving advice and allowing my siblings and I to suffer natural consequences if we choose to ignore it. One phrase that was used often was: the fastest way out of a bad situation is to tell the absolute truth.

This advice would be well heeded by all members of this House, as we are all prone to finding ourselves in bad situations by our actions or our words. When you tell the truth, you establish trust and it shows your integrity as a person.

I was also taught that there is no such thing as an innocent lie. Even if you believe it hasn't hurt anyone, it will cause you a certain level of grief, for the truth will always be revealed.

Another wise adage that was passed down through the generations was that you don't need to have a good memory if you always tell the truth. Honest people may be taken advantage of from time to time, but they sleep well at night with a clear conscience.

Madam Speaker, the interesting thing about trust is it can take years to build up and yet be lost in an instant if you decide to be deceptive. This is why trust should never be taken for granted or undervalued.

Our government recognizes the value and importance of the trust that we are building in this province. We accept that it will take more than words and promises. It will take patience and actions

that show we want what is best for everyone in this province to succeed.

You cannot build trust if you don't value the truth. You cannot demonstrate integrity if your word means nothing.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Robert Mendoza

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): As the national president of the largest health-care union in the Philippines, alliance of health-care workers, Robert Mendoza has and continues to stand up and fight for health-care workers' rights. We are proud to welcome him to Manitoba and to the Manitoba Legislature today.

Prior to his advocacy work, Robert served as a midwife and a nurse, giving him a first-hand experience of the successes and failures of the Philippines' health-care system.

Many health workers in the Philippines do not earn enough to meet their basic needs while they continue to work long hours with stretched resources.

Alliance of health-care workers is an alliance of unions that assist with organizing health-care professionals for advocating for the welfare and advancement of health-care workers' rights in the Philippines and people's rights to better public health services.

As the national president, Robert continues to call on his government to increase salaries, pay overdue benefits, end contracting out and ensure appropriate hospital funding. For the past year, Robert has focused the alliance's efforts on stopping the privatization of 72 public hospitals.

I think every member of this House must be aware that Manitoba's health-care system relies heavily on Filipino Canadians. Filipino Canadians serve in every part of our health-care system.

Robert's work in the Philippines inspires many health-care workers to stand up for their rights. He is now encouraging all Filipino Manitoban health-care workers to do the same, since the Premier (Mr. Pallister) broke his promise to protect front-line workers and services.

For health-care providers, their work is more than a job. They take pride in the care they provide to their patients. The Manitoba government needs to stop putting profits before patients, savings before

service, and cuts before care and ensure that Manitoba's health-care workers have the means to provide quality compassionate care every day.

I'd like all members to join me in recognizing and thanking Mr. Mendoza, who joins us here today, for his continued 'advisory' work for Filipino health-care providers.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Truth, Trust and Integrity

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): Madam Speaker, obviously, there is nothing new with the Kinew NDP opposition party. They are carrying on the long tradition of the so-called today's NDP.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

I would indicate to the member that when referring to other members in this situation, and we have not had, I guess, a further discussion on this one, but at this point in time making a reference to the Official Opposition Leader's name attached to the opposition party has not been ruled as anything in order.

So I would ask the member to use the member's official title or constituency.

Mr. Ewasko: Madam Speaker, just for clarification before I continue, not challenging your ruling, but just asking for clarification. *[interjection]* Pardon me? So we can't reference it as an era, even though it's going to be short? *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Lac du Bonnet, to begin over.

Mr. Ewasko: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Obviously, there's nothing new with the Kinew opposition party. They are carrying on the long tradition of the so-called today's NDP, the spendP or the breaking-promise NDP. Truth, trust and integrity are the words that the Kinew opposition party are not breaking. But, once again—are now breaking, but now—but once again, Madam Speaker, should not be a surprise to Manitobans. You see, the member from Fort Rouge—*[interjection]*—

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ewasko: —is in good company as leader of the NDP, with the Doer NDP and the Selinger NDP. They all have said one thing and have done another. You see, Gary Doer did not—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

* (13:40)

Mr. Ewasko: –did not tell the truth to Manitobans about the Crocus fund, Madam Speaker. As a direct result of the Doer's government ignoring the red flags, more than 33,000 Crocus members had lost more than \$60 million. Manitoba's Auditor General stated, and I quote: We believe the department was aware of red flags at Crocus and failed to follow up on those in a timely way. End quote.

Who is the finance—who was the Finance minister at that time, Madam Speaker? Greg Selinger. And what did the NDP do at that time? Named him leader.

Now, we know that the Selinger government was not truthful with Manitobans. During the 2011 election campaign, Premier Selinger said the notion of raising the PST was nonsense. What ended up happening? 2012, they broadened the PST on essential items such as car and house insurance, to name a couple.

But did they stop there, Madam Speaker? No. Budget 2013, they raised the PST to seven, to eight, and if they would have won the election of 2016, we probably would have seen the PST go to nine. And now the 12 individual teams on the NDP side are at it again.

Madam Speaker, it's shameful that the Opposition House Leader, the MLA for St. John's, 'regnid'—reneged on her agreement with the member from Spruce Woods, but again, trust, truth and integrity are words that Manitobans know are not part of the Kinew opposition party's vocabulary.

Sayisi Dene Story of Survival

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): I would like to acknowledge our beautiful people of the way-north, our Dene, especially our Sayisi Dene of Tadoule Lake. A misunderstanding of our traditional hunting practices has time and again led to unjust treatment of my people and nothing can make this more clear than the story of our Sayisi Dene.

The Sayisi Dene were merely getting their food cache ready for the harsh, long, cold winter. A picture of their food storage system was made public, with references such as a wasteful slaughter of caribou or hundreds of slain caribou carcasses. So without consulting the people as to the reason why, a horrific plan was put in place to stop them, a plan so devastating it not only eroded their culture and

traditional lifestyle but it wiped out half of the Sayisi Dene.

In 1956, the federal government forcibly boarded all the Sayisi Dene onto planes and dropped them onto the shores in Churchill. All their needed survival gear, their own tents, boats, traps, sleds, dogs were left behind. I have stood on those shores where they froze in tents given to them, incapable of housing fire, incapable of warmth. The Dene were completely abandoned.

They were finally moved off the shores, but put right next to the cemetery, which horrified the Dene as that's against their culture, to be so close to the dead. But they were forced to live in that location for an additional 10 years before they were moved again to what we now call the Dene Village.

As time went on, poverty, crime from racism left the Sayisi Dene destitute and desperate, so desperate the people frequented the garbage dump in order to eat. It was in 1971 when a few of them, sickened by the destruction, set out on foot to return to their traditional lands in search of real food and the security of the lands they once knew and called home. They settled in Tadoule Lake.

I am very honoured by Manitoba's Sayisi Dene's story of survival. Miigwech.

Truth, Trust and Integrity

Mr. Dennis Smook (La Verendrye): Truth, trust and integrity: those are three words that are important in life. Truth: when you tell untruths, you must remember all of them and who you told them to, but the truth does not change. Trust: if your fellow man does not trust you, you have a problem. Integrity is something we should all strive for. When you tell the truth and others trust you, integrity will come.

Since being elected in 2011, I have noticed that the NDP have a problem with those three words. In election 2011, they made many promises that they had no intention of keeping. So much for telling the truth.

Trust: the NDP lost the trust of Manitobans and election 2016 pointed this out, loud and clear. Manitobans got rid of the NDP and elected a record-majority Progressive Conservative government.

Integrity: the NDP showed Manitobans they have no integrity. You would think that after a life lesson the NDP got in the election of 2016, they

would have changed their ways. But no, Madam Speaker, they are still the same old NDP that can't be trusted.

Madam Speaker, in the business world, if you don't tell the truth no one will trust you. Therefore, it is impossible to build integrity and your business will fail and probably go bankrupt. Maybe that is why we don't see too many NDP business owners in this Chamber.

Madam Speaker, a wise old uncle of mine once told me—and I will quote him—he says: you will definitely be in business in your life and you must be careful, because if you tell a lie, you can expect to be called a liar.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Introduction of Guests

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

We have seated in the public gallery from Sister MacNamara School 54 grade 6 students under the direction of Samantha Villanueva, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Logan (Ms. Marcelino).

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

Concordia and Seven Oaks Hospitals Request to Stop ER Closures

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Like to say hi to all our friends from Sister Mac today and also, of course, to Mr. Mendoza. Mr. Mendoza knows that having good-quality health care is about ensuring that everyone in your society has the freedom to be able to reach their full potential to live free of concern of injury or malady or the threat of death.

Families in Manitoba know that too; families in Manitoba want health care to be close to home, and yet under this Premier emergency rooms are closing.

The people of St. Boniface know that their ER will be more crowded as people have to drive from further away if the other ERs close.

Now, there is another way. The Premier could expand the St. Boniface emergency room beyond the plans that are currently being—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —discussed. The government could also delay closures of the other hospitals until St. Boniface is completely ready, or they could delay those closures entirely, delay them indefinitely.

Will the Premier stand up for health care, stop his plans to close the emergency rooms at Concordia and Seven Oaks and bring forward a more expansive vision for the future of St. Boniface's emergency room?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Madam Speaker, while the NDP continues to advocate for longer waits—and that is the legacy of their inattentiveness to the problem of wait times expanding under their watch—we are cognizant that they created the problem and we are focused on solving the problem.

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

Mr. Kinew: Families across northeast Winnipeg are saying no to the 'conclusion' of—to the closure, rather, of Concordia emergency room. Families across northwest Winnipeg and the Interlake are speaking out against the planned closure of the Seven Oaks hospital.

What they know is that there is a better way than what this government is offering. There is the possibility of investing in keeping people healthy at home and providing health-care services close to where people live. This is what experts in our province say is the future of medicine.

Now, contrary to that expert advice, the Premier wants to close the ER and the ICU at Concordia, even though he plans to continue offering surgeries there. Now, we know that that will bring a ton of risks for people who get surgeries when complications may arise. They wouldn't be able to enter an ICU there. They would have to be shipped via ambulance to another hospital across town.

The Premier's plans don't make sense and they don't jive with what the people across Manitoba are telling us.

Will the Premier begin to listen, and will he cancel his plans to close emergency rooms in Winnipeg and instead embark on real investments for the future of health care in Manitoba?

Mr. Pallister: Manitobans listened for years to the NDP speak about health care but not do anything but

preside over the worsening of the system, Madam Speaker, and its ineffectiveness.

They ran initially on a promise to end hallway medicine, and instead, they created highway medicine: people driving away from our province to get health care, so desperate were they to get treatment, diagnosis and so on.

* (13:50)

Madam Speaker, fully 10 per cent of the people who went to the Concordia waiting room left it before they got care. The NDP is happy with that system and asks us to go back to that time. We won't.

Where they broke the system, we will focus on making it work better for Manitobans.

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

Mr. Kinew: You know, health care is about being there for people at some of the most important times in our lives. It's about being there when we bring in a new member of our family; it's about when a loved one experiences an accident. It's about being there for a relative when they make that journey to the end of life. That's why it's so important to have quality health care close to home in our province.

The Premier just doesn't seem to get it. Not only is he closing emergency rooms, he's presiding over the return of hallway medicine to Manitoba. We know that the real reason the Premier is rushing his plans to close emergency rooms is because he wants to save money. His consultants told him he could save some \$80 million if he jammed through this closure of emergency rooms real quick.

But families in our province are not buying his logic. They say that there is another way, that this government should invest, keep emergency rooms open and bring more services upstream close to where people live.

Will the Premier, then, back off his plan to close emergency rooms and instead invest in real health care close to home for the people of Manitoba?

Mr. Pallister: Well, I appreciate the little mini lecture on compassion from the member, Madam Speaker, but his record doesn't demonstrate any evidence that he understands how to demonstrate it in his own behaviour.

Frankly, Madam Speaker, if he wants to enter into a duel on compassion in terms of the NDP record on health care with our record on health care,

he's coming into the battle totally unarmed because we are shortening wait times where they lengthened them, because we are lowering ambulance fees where they raised them, and we are creating greater satisfaction by concentrating resources intelligently, as every other major centre in the country has done, on the basis of good advice they ignored, which we will follow.

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

Mining Community Reserve Fund Release of Monies to the City of Thompson

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Premier can get mad all he wants, but he still can't persuade Manitobans of the tortured logic that he's trying to persuade them that somehow they're getting more with less health care in Manitoba.

You know, it was July of 2017 when the City of Thompson made its first request to the Premier—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —to be able to access some resources from the Mining Community Reserve Fund. Now, this is a fund that the people of Manitoba pay into for mining communities so that they will have resources to draw on when times get tough in mining communities.

Now, we know that the city of Thompson is facing massive layoffs. Nearly a year has gone by, this government has refused to meet with the local representatives. Through this document that I'll table now we know that the Mining Community Reserve Fund was at \$12.2 million at the end of February, and now the government claims that they can't free up any resources from this fund because there's only \$10 million left.

Why has the Premier refused to use the funds that are set out to help communities based on the mining industry in their time of need?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Again, the member spouts concerns which we should all share, Madam Speaker, about being there when people need us and about the importance of showing up in time of need, yet so many times when he showed up he left people in need throughout his life and again today as he demonstrates he has no understanding of the importance of creating jobs in the North.

He signed the Leap Manifesto. The Leap Manifesto says leave it in the ground, Madam Speaker, and now he talks about creating jobs in the North when, in fact, he signed on to a philosophy that runs exactly counter to what we're pursuing on this side of the House, which is discovering the full potential of northern Manitoba and the jobs that people need in that part of the province.

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

Mr. Kinew: The City of Thompson asked the Premier, can we access some resources from the mining reserve fund, and the Premier's response: leave it in the bank.

Now, again, the Premier's claims that he's unable to help—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order,

Mr. Kinew: —the City of Thompson because there are less than \$10 million in the account, these—this is questionable logic that we've seen reported in the media here. The act clearly states that this fund is to be accessed by communities based in the mining industry when there are cyclical downturns in resource extraction. The \$10-million limit that this government has cited as an excuse for why they can't come to the community of Thompson's aid, it only applies to payments for exploration projects, not to communities that are losing jobs.

Understanding that the rationale that the government has provided to date for its refusal to help the community of Thompson with assistance from the mining reserve fund are invalid.

I would ask the Premier today: When will the Premier come to the aid of the community of Thompson and free up resources from the mining reserve fund?

Mr. Pallister: So many Manitobans devastated by the ineffective leadership of the NDP government, Madam Speaker, and nothing new over there, just a dull repetition of the same mistakes and no representation of any concept of change being important for the betterment of the lives of the people of the province.

The member talks about creating jobs in the North, but just talks. He signed the Leap Manifesto. And not only does it say that you can't do mining or mineral extraction, that you shouldn't do prospecting, it also says we call for an end to all trade deals.

Yesterday, he says he finds the statements of Donald Trump inappropriate. Well, that's fine. We may all do that. But, Madam Speaker, he can't argue that he's for trade deals today when he argued that he was against them yesterday. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

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

Mr. Kinew: So, here's what the Premier's evasions of questions and all the heckling on the government side of this House is designed to obfuscate. There is a very simple truth at the heart of this matter: the mining reserve fund exists so that communities can pay into it when times are good so that they may be able to withdraw resources when their communities fall on tough times.

Think about that logic, Madam Speaker. Very clearly the community of Thompson has paid their fair share into the mining reserve fund over the years.

Now they are losing jobs. *[interjection]* Now their community is in a crisis. And the members opposite know that this is true. That's why they must raise their voices to try and interrupt yet again. But understanding the clear logic of the situation, that the communities have now paid in, are falling on hard times and should be able to access that money now, what is the Premier's response?

Why will this government not free up resources from the Mining Community Reserve Fund to help save jobs in the city of Thompson?

Mr. Pallister: At the core of the member's true beliefs, Madam Speaker, would he care to come clean about them in this Chamber, is that he would like to devastate the economy of Thompson and other communities that depend on mineral resource extraction. He would like to devastate the economy of the province of Manitoba as well, because we are a trading province and depend on trade deals.

He said that he's against those things. Now he claims otherwise, and, Madam Speaker, we don't know what to believe with that member. He's left a trail of distrust behind him, and he's continued that with his betrayal of the House-negotiated end-of-session rules. He—all he has to do, if he'd like to research the issue further, if he cares to, with compassion in his heart, as he speaks of—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: –so often, all he has to do is consult the members around him and ask them who they believe, whether they believe the member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine), had a deal or did not—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: –or whether they believe the member for Spruce Woods (Mr. Cullen). *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: If he does his own research, Madam Speaker, he may begin to start on the road to recovery in terms of his damaged reputation for breaking his word.

Concordia Hospital ER Request to Reverse Closure

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): Madam Speaker, for more than a year now the residents of northeast Winnipeg have tried to get this government to listen to them. They've emailed. They've called. They've held rallies. They've put up signs—a lot of signs—and they've written letters. They've even approached their local MLAs.

And now concerned residents are going door to door in areas like Rossmere, Radisson and Transcona to hear from others, and they hear that other families in the northeast Winnipeg agree. They want the minister and the Premier (Mr. Pallister) to abandon a rushed political plan that's all about cutting costs and not about improving health care, but the government refuses to listen.

Will the minister today listen and tell the people of northeast Winnipeg that he is reversing his plan to close the Concordia ER?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): I know that the member opposite wants to go back to a time when wait times were increasing in Manitoba. Madam Speaker, he wants to go back to a time when ambulance fees were going up. He wants to go back to a time when paramedics were not self-regulated.

I am pleased to stand with all members of this caucus who are advancing health care for the benefit of Manitobans, Madam Speaker.

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

* (14:00)

Mr. Swan: Well, this Minister of Health can't hide the fact that he's refused to be transparent or open with northeast Winnipeg families throughout this process. We've had the changer—the change of the closure dates. He's kept patients, families and workers in the dark, and he's refused to disclose his plan for Concordia.

But we think there must be a plan because the member for Transcona (Mr. Yakimoski) told his local paper that there might be some more things happening that are yet to be announced.

Well, there's no by-election called. The government's not under a blackout.

Will the Minister of Health tell the people of northeast Winnipeg today what the plan is, or was the member for Transcona just making it up?

Mr. Goertzen: Yes, the member for Transcona is correct: there are always great things happening in this government, Madam Speaker.

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

Mr. Swan: Well, we know that the Premier and the Health Minister's caucus members are facing questions from constituents. The member for Rossmere (Mr. Micklefield) told his local paper he's received 100 emails from concerned constituents and the member for Transcona says he can't even go to Safeway without people in his area coming up to him and complaining about this minister's plan to close the Concordia ER.

People are speaking up to their MLAs in the hope that they'll actually advocate for their communities—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Swan: –instead of simply parroting this government's messages.

Will the minister sit down with caucus members, ask them to relay their constituents' concerns and reverse his plan to close the Concordia ER?

Mr. Goertzen: Madam Speaker, for three years that member couldn't go to his own caucus; he shouldn't worry about people going to Safeway.

Little Voyageurs Learning Centre Future of Capital Project

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): It's too bad that the members opposite clap about closing a hospital.

Madam Speaker, Little Voyageurs Learning Centre—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order. Order. Order, please.

Mrs. Smith: Miigwech, Madam Speaker.

Little Voyageurs Learning Centre got approved for provincial capital funding several years ago. This funding was reannounced by this Pallister government last year. After a great deal of community work, the project began, including demolition of the existing building. But now the project has been shelved. Talk about word.

Will the minister explain why this project is not going ahead?

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Families): Our government has made substantial investments in child-care centres across the province. In fact, close to 50 new community centres were announced fairly recently for upwards of 1,200 new spots, Madam Speaker.

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

Mrs. Smith: Thanks to the federal government for building those centres.

The loss of this project means that 16 infant and 40 preschool spaces will not be built and the community has put hundreds of thousands of dollars into this project, including demolishing the existing building. Now yet another project stopped by this Pallister—[*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Smith: —government.

This Province committed to this project. They committed to getting these spaces built—again, going back on their word.

Why has this Province abandoned this project to more community child-care spaces like Little Voyageurs daycare?

Mr. Fielding: This government will never abandon Manitoba families like the NDP did under their administration.

We know what they did in terms of child care, where they took an ideological approach to child care where you couldn't have anything like a community-based child-care parameters that are there. I think if you ask the member from Morris,

he'll tell you that 60 new spaces were just announced and the groundbreaking was held just to the weekend.

We're making substantial progress; have the NDP come on board with our plan to create affordable housing here in the province of Manitoba.

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

Mrs. Smith: You know, thanks to the member for bringing up housing, that they had built one single unit of social housing since being in government.

Little Voyageurs proceeded in good faith with this government. They applied several times for their capital funding and got external funding sources to even help make this project move forward.

Now, rather than working with the daycare to help resolve any problems, the minister simply washes his hands and it says—and says, it's not my problem.

I'll repeat that the minister committed to this project and a building has already been torn down. Hundreds of thousands of dollars has been spent. They've built—no funding; 16,000 child-care spaces under our government.

Will the minister take action and ensure that the project gets built? [*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Fielding: Under this government we are spending more on child care in the history of the province, as opposed to what we saw with the NDP in terms of what they did in terms of child care.

I think if you look at the projects that we've announced just fairly recently, if you ask the—whether it be the member from Morris, I think he'll say that 60 spots in Morris, in La Salle, is an important investment. I think if you ask the member from St. James, important investments be happening in the Assiniboine school. I think if you ask members from across, whether it be from all 'evryers', we have over 1,200 new spots that are created. That's an important start.

We've made an investment of over \$47-million partnership with the federal government to build affordable child care in the province of Manitoba, Madam Speaker.

Community Economic Development Fund Reduction in Provincial Contribution

Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas): Over 1,350 people have a job in northern Manitoba thanks, in part, of the good work of the Communities Economic Development Fund. The fund helps northern businesses put capital at risk when traditional lenders aren't willing or able to provide financing. It's a success story, increasing access to capital for tourism, forestry, construction and fishing.

Yet, the Pallister government cut its contribution to the fund by over 30 per cent and the fund is now providing \$2.6 million less loans than it did just two years ago.

Why is this minister doing such damage to our northern economy?

Hon. Blaine Pedersen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade): Madam Speaker, speaking of damage, that would be the previous government's economic development plan. We'll have a much better plan coming forward with the good work of Dave Angus and Barb Gamey.

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

Ms. Lathlin: I'll remind the minister that his own government estimates that there will be at least 1,500 jobs lost in northern Manitoba over the next two years. Economic diversification is needed now, not when the minister gets around to it.

Businesses in tourism, forestry and construction have not seen a new loan in nearly a year. Meanwhile, northern Manitoba is facing an enormous crisis. Entrepreneurs still believe in the North, but the Pallister government has abandoned even their pretense of support.

Why is this government turning its back on northern Manitoba?

Mr. Pedersen: Madam Speaker, we continue to work with the people of the North and through all of Manitoba, including the Look North initiative.

This is picking up from the damage that the NDP did when they absolutely ignored the North. They ignored the mining sector; they ignored the forestry sector; they ignored the tourism sector. All those have great potential, and we will help that—the North build on that potential.

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

Ms. Lathlin: Even the loan activity to fishers has dropped last year by over 8 per cent. These same fishers were promised by the Pallister government that they would be paid for their catch within seven days, yet that promise has been revoked from the regulations.

The government's contribution to the fund has been cut by 30 per cent and new loans have dropped by \$2.6 million.

Why is the minister focused only on the bottom line when he should be responding to the economic challenges in northern Manitoba?

* (14:10)

Mr. Pedersen: Madam Speaker, this is typical NDP propaganda. They oppose the open market. The open market has created new opportunities for the fishers in the North, across all of Manitoba, and they will do much better on an open market than the NDP ever would consider for them.

Université de Saint-Boniface Funding Concerns

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, enrollment in French immersion across Manitoba has been exploding and there's a shortage of qualified French teachers, including in math and science. We should be investing in education and our future, but instead this government has cut budgets. French math and science positions are being cut and co-op programs closed, while tuition goes up. There is always a gap between what this government announces in its budget and what it actually delivers: cuts that undermine our province's youth and our future.

Why has the Pallister government reduced the budget for l'Université de Saint-Boniface resulting in these cuts to services?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Il n'y a pas de réduction de financement au Bureau de l'éducation française.

Translation

There is no cut in funding for the Bureau de l'éducation française.

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

Street Links and Morberg House Expansion of Programming

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, the recent street census in Winnipeg has found that homelessness has increased under the Pallister government, and we—as often said, Manitoba is in the midst of a meth crisis. St. Boniface Street Links and Morberg House in St. Boniface have been models for their treatment of the homeless and people suffering from addictions, helping them get back on their feet, finding housing and employment.

The government should be supporting and building on excellence like St. Boniface Street Links and Morberg House, but it is not.

Why not?

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Families): I spoke with the member last week and explained to him exactly in terms of housing partnership. That is a fund that was established through the federal government. It is administered through the City.

I can tell you that we have made substantial gains in housing. In housing we built over 487 new units of Manitoba Housing; social housing, 42 per cent, Madam Speaker, 42 per cent of them are social housing. We've also had incentive-increased our Rent Assist. The amount of people that are supported through the Rent Assist is upwards of over \$3,000.

We think that is support. We'll continue to do this to support vulnerable Manitobans.

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

Metal Recycling Facility Environmental Licence

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, there's a metal recycling plant in St. Boniface that has many of the residents concerned ever since the previous NDP government improved and expanded environmental licence for a metal recycling facility. The government and its ministers have often cited the NDP's poor environmental record and say that what the NDP broke, they will fix.

Is the Minister of Sustainable Development making an exception for this plant? Does she endorse and support—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Gerrard: —by the decision—the decision of the NDP premier and his government to expand the environmental licence of this facility?

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Sustainable Development): Well, I thank the member for the question and our government does respect the process and we are following through on the process.

But I will also remind this House that it was the former member for St. Boniface who came into my office just before he departed this House, and said to me, sorry, we didn't always get it right on the environment and we're hoping you'll fix it. Well, we are going to fix it.

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: Prior to proceeding with oral questions, we have some more guests in the gallery and they're only here for a very short time, so I would like to introduce them to you.

We have seated in the public gallery from the EDGE EAL program 15 English language students under the direction of Jane Huck, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for St. Vital (Mrs. Mayer).

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

Transformation Capital Fund Funding Announcement

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): Madam Speaker—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ewasko: —last month the Province created a new, first-of-its-kind Transformation Capital Fund to support innovative initiatives within government to build the modern and dynamic public service Manitoba needs for the future.

Yesterday, the Premier (Mr. Pallister), Minister of Finance were both present to announce a part of its public service transformation strategy by awarding funding to innovative initiatives within government that will demonstrate measurable savings and improve outcomes.

Can the Minister of Finance please tell this House more about this good news story on how our PC government is repairing the services after a decade of debt, decay and decline under the NDP?

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Lac du Bonnet for the question.

The NDP favoured their old approaches of protecting budgets and not looking for savings and siloed approaches.

But a month ago, we asked public servants from—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Friesen: —all departments to submit good ideas for possible funding under a Transformation—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Friesen: —Capital Fund. These projects will now see invested \$21.2 million, which will harness savings of \$191 million over 10 years. That's a return on investment of almost 900 per cent.

We are impressed with the quality and number of ideas that we've received. This is only the starting point. Clearly, the civil service has the talent and the ability to challenge the status quo.

Madam Speaker, we're repairing the services and we're just getting started.

The Homeless and Disabled Social Housing Subsidies

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): Decisions made by the Pallister government virtually guarantee that homelessness will continue to get worse. It's in today's paper, 'statictic' Canada.

They have failed to build a single new social housing unit but have now lost nearly 400 units that we know of.

Why is this minister so determined to balance the books on the backs of the poor while he collects a 20 per cent salary increase? *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Families): This government supports vulnerable people. And I can tell you, if you talk to advocates in terms of homelessness, the issues that most impact that are two particularly important things.

Child-welfare system—we know what the NDP did in terms of the child-welfare system. We saw about an 87 per cent increase in the amount of children in care. Poverty—we know that the NDP had

the child poverty capital of Canada for many years until it recently improved.

We have made substantial improvements in terms of housing. We built over 487 new units, 42 per cent—I'll repeat that, Madam Speaker—42 per cent social housing units were opened and supported through our three budgets, the operating and the rent-geared-to-income. We think that's important.

Also, things like the Rent Assist program: over 3,000 people will be supported.

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

Mr. Marcelino: Homelessness is both the cause and the solution to some of the health-care problems that our vulnerable people are suffering from.

Can the minister please tell us—give me a list of all the social housing subsidies that have been lost under your watch?

Madam Speaker: I would just remind members when asking questions that they be directed through the Chair, please.

Mr. Fielding: Our government has made substantial improvements in terms of housing.

One thing I would like to identify is a \$3-million contribution to Siloam Mission. We think that's important, building 50 new shelter beds for women. We think that's extremely important.

We also know that supporting things like the room and rest program that helps support people in long-term or medium-term in terms of homelessness is something that—very much supported.

We also are very happy that the Fountain Springs opened up in the Wolseley area—around the Wolseley area—a \$9-million commitment to help people with mental health and homelessness issues, as well.

So we think those are important investments. We're going to continue to do that. We're going to continue to support vulnerable individuals. We wish the NDP would support our plan as well, Madam Speaker.

* (14:20)

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

Mr. Marcelino: Village Canadien has reported that the co-op recently lost the subsidy for 30 units for social housing. The people hardest hit have been the disabled and the poor. Many of them have already lost their homes because of the higher rent.

Why did this government not anticipate this problem and solve it?

Mr. Fielding: We did address this problem. In fact, we signed on to the National Housing Strategy. The federal government have identified that they'll be maintaining the rent—the operating agreements, the amount of money that flows to the provinces to administer that. That is something that this government has supported.

We were in Ottawa with all the other ministers for housing. We are working on bilateral agreement to address the National Housing Strategy, whether it be building homes, affordable homes or supporting individuals, people that have operating agreements that are expired. That is an important commitment to this government and that's why we signed on the National Housing Strategy.

Northern Manitoba Roads Infrastructure Investment

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): This government has cut investments in highways to a tune of \$152 million this year alone, slashed funding for northern roads. Under their watch, Provincial Road 391 from Thompson to Lynn Lake is crumbling. Under their watch, Provincial Road 280 to Gillam is crumbling. Under their watch, Highway 39 to Snow Lake is crumbling.

How does this government expect to grow the northern economy, mining, logging and tourism, when they're not even willing to build and maintain northern roads?

Hon. Ron Schuler (Minister of Infrastructure): Well, Madam Speaker, how about we look at the record of the previous government, the NDP, including the member for Elmwood, who spent \$500 million on the East Side Road Authority, and what did Manitobans get? Well, in 2011 Manitobans got, for their \$500 million, 7.2 kilometres.

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

All-Weather Road Construction

Mr. Maloway: The member continues not to answer any question that he's been asked over the last two weeks.

Madam Speaker, the town of Churchill has faced extreme weather, storms, followed by flooding that 'ravaged' the rail line, leaving them isolated. Now they're suddenly enduring a record-breaking heat wave. Monday's high mark was more than 20° hotter than average. Temperatures rose into the 30s in Shamattawa, Gillam and York Landing. The future of northern Manitoba depends on high quality, all-weather roads that can handle extreme weather.

Will this government commit to building long-term all-weather roads for northern Manitoba?

Mr. Schuler: Well, Madam Speaker, one of the things we're going to commit to is not doing what the NDP did under the East Side Road Authority. In fact, the auditor pointed out that out of 41 pieces of equipment, half of the indicated equipment was either inoperable or unsafe; out of 42—out of 41 pieces of equipment, half of them weren't working.

We will continue to supply roads up north, Madam Speaker, as we have done the last two years.

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

Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation Road Repair and Bike Path

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Northern roads aren't just about the economy. They help people feel safe in their communities. The tragic accident in Nelson House made this clear, and it's a tragedy that no one should have to endure.

The road going into Nelson House is in desperate need of repair, and the community would like, in addition to seeing the road paved, lighting added and a bike path built along the side.

Will this government commit to this project?

Hon. Ron Schuler (Minister of Infrastructure): Well, Madam Speaker, over the last 17 years, the NDP neglected many of our roads. In fact, we have hundreds of millions of roads that need repairs.

However, what the NDP did do is took—
[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Schuler: —\$500 million and spent it on ESRA. What did Manitobans get for their more than \$500 million? They got 41 pieces of equipment that either didn't work or unsafe. And, Madam Speaker, in 2012, what did Manitobans get for their \$500 million? They got 15.1 kilometres of road.

Harassment Within the Civil Service Results of External Review

Mr. Alan Lagimodiere (Selkirk): Over the last few months we have heard time and time again about the reign of fear for staff under the previous NDP government, that both civil servants and political staff were told to, and I quote, suck it up, after suffering harassment in a toxic work environment under the NDP.

Our PC government is changing the atmosphere with our no-wrong-door policy, and I hear that today our PC government has followed through on its commitment to report publicly on statistics related to instances of harassment that occurred within government in 2017-18 while protecting the privacy of the complainants.

Can the Minister responsible for the Status of Women please update this House on this important milestone and how our government is creating a different type of work atmosphere than that under the NDP? [interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order. Order. Order.

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister responsible for the Status of Women): I'd like to thank my honourable colleague from Selkirk for that great question.

Our government is committed to building a culture of inclusion, diversity and respect across government. We also promised to provide greater accountability, and today we released that there were 378 investigations into harassment in the workforce last year. To that end, our government has implemented mandatory training for the civil service and all government political staff, and our efforts to increase awareness and better educate staff will be strengthened by the feedback we've received from employee consultations and the results of our external review.

Our PC government stands with men and women who deserve to work in a harassment-free environment and change the toxic culture that was so prevalent under the NDP.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): On a point of order.

Point of Order

Madam Speaker: On a point of order.

Ms. Klassen: I wish for the minister to retract her statement, her answer just now. I tried going to her with how I feel threatened every time I ask questions and I'm stared down by the opposition, especially the First Minister. I feel totally intimidated. And what she did, she did not value what I was trying to say. She shut me down, and I just want to make that clear.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for River Heights, on that same point of order?

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): No, on a separate point of order.

Madam Speaker: I have not ruled yet on this point of order.

Ms. Squires: Well, thank you very much and I—for allowing me to put a few words on the record, and I do appreciate what the member had just said in the House here.

And the conversation that her and I had was about—she was in my office for a briefing on Bill 29, The Wildlife Amendment Act, and she had a lot of remarks about the conservation officers for—whom I represent. And I had said to her that I welcomed her to be part of a new culture, I welcomed her to put aside casting aspersions on our civil servants and I welcomed her to be part of a changed culture where we're trying to build an inclusion.

And I would like to point out that my civil servants and my conservation officers do value and respect the values of diversity and inclusion, and we're also enhancing to bolster our ranks. We've got quite a few of our conservation officers who are indigenous, and that was part of the member's challenge with the conservation officers and her allegations that they were not always respectful towards the people that she represents. And so I reminded her that the head of our conservation

officer association is indigenous and we have several hard-working men and women in the ranks who are indigenous.

* (14:30)

And from there the conversation had evolved to a point where she had mentioned that in the House, and there are—our government had taken offence to that moment when she was casting aspersions on our conservation officers and we were merely standing up for the hard-working men and women of these civil servants.

So I would like to say to the member—she's not here, but I certainly do hope that she would—*[interjection]*—oh, apologize for that. But I would like to say to the member that I certainly do respect and value her opinion. She has always been welcome in my office. She has been in my office in the past. She certainly will be welcome in my office again.

But I will never apologize for standing up for the hard-working men and women of this civil servant, and when any member casts aspersions against our civil servants I will stand up for them and I will do that with integrity.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): On the matter of privilege—

Madam Speaker: It's a point of order.

Mr. Fletcher: —or, on that point of order, thank you.

I would just make a observation that the Premier (Mr. Pallister) is, I think, a good man trying to do a tough job in a difficult environment—and he's six-12 or something. He is an intimidating guy. Does it—you know, I don't find him perhaps as intimidating as others, but people will find him intimidating and without explaining in more detail what is going on here, I—it's a dispersion that the Premier does not deserve.

Thank you.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): On the point of order.

Madam Speaker: On the same point of order.

Ms. Fontaine: I apologize, I didn't have an opportunity to hear all of the minister's response to our sister colleague from Kewatinook. I do want to support our sister colleague from Kewatinook and the concerns that she raises in the House today.

Certainly, I've been dealing with those same concerns since we've been recalled back to the House and have found—and, actually, Madam Speaker, I would suggest to you that I've attempted to raise those concerns in this House and in a similar fashion have been dismissed by the member for—or the Minister for Status of Women of raising concerns in this House on the treatment, in particular by the First Minister, of myself, the member for Point Douglas (Mrs. Smith), certainly the member for The Pas (Ms. Lathlin), and the member, now we hear and understand, for Kewatinook.

I want to take a couple of moments, Madam Speaker, to—if there—I want to take a couple of moments to put some words on the record on what is a really important issue that many of us in this House are dealing with, and it is ongoing.

It is almost every single day when we gather in this House to do our jobs as legislators to have the First Minister stare down individuals in this House, to have the minister—the First Minister—repeatedly, during question period ask members of my caucus who they believe, the member for Spruce Woods (Mr. Cullen) or myself, or—*[interjection]*—I'm not even allowed to finish my conversation in here.

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Fontaine: Or to have concerns brought up in this House absolutely just utterly dismissed as if, Madam Speaker, anything that goes in this House is acceptable.

I can share that it fills me with anxiety to come into this House every day to try and do my job. We see from the member from Kewatinook that it also fills her with anxiety to step into this Chamber.

I know that my sister colleague from Point Douglas has tried to raise these matters, and I know that members before us have tried to raise these matters in this House. But I would suggest to you, Madam Speaker, that it has become particularly toxic in this Chamber. And I would say to you that if the behaviours and the comments and the attacks of the First Minister were to occur outside this Chamber, they would be deemed harassment. They would be deemed bullying. But somehow we gather in this Chamber every single day and it is supposed to be accepted.

The member for Kewatinook (Ms. Klassen), the member for The Pas, the member for Point Douglas and sometimes the member for Burrows (Ms. Lamoureux), we're just trying to do our job.

We're just trying to do what we were elected to do. We are just—[*interjection*] Even now, they cannot show respect and be quiet. The women on this side of the Chamber are saying that there is a problem in this Chamber with the level of toxicity and attacks against female MLAs in this House, and they cannot even be quiet.

All—every single day since we have been recalled to this House, the First Minister has gotten up and outright accused me of lying, and I have repeatedly said we did not have a deal. Every single day since we've been recalled in this House members have used their members' statements—days that we should be honouring individuals and organizations from the beautiful province that we belong to—to put words on the record accusing us, and in particular myself, of lying—every single day.

I wonder how members opposite would be to sit in this Chamber and to hear that, day in and day out, when you're—[*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

Ms. Fontaine: Madam Speaker, the government keeps touting its no-wrong-door policy. Here is an opportunity in this House where we as legislatures make laws and policies that are meant to protect women and children. I am suggesting to you that in this House we are not safe. Some of us in this House are not safe from harassment and bullying, and in particular from the First Minister.

And I also want to point out, Madam Speaker, it is not meant for victims to have to repeatedly try to say how we feel in a particular situation when we're doing our jobs. And just because we're elected officials is no different than women that work in the bureaucracy, or women that work in the service industry or women that work wherever it is. We are being harassed in this place and we are being bullied. And what that is meant to do is to silence us and to molest us in doing and executing our jobs as MLAs.

And so I support my sister colleague from Kewatinook, I support my sister colleague from The Pas, I support my colleague from Point Douglas, and I ask you, Madam Speaker, I ask you as one woman to another woman, to immediately ask the First Minister to stop his harassment and his bullying behaviour so we can get on with our jobs and do what we were elected to do without harassment, and free and to feel safe in doing so.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for River Heights, on the same point of order.

Mr. Gerrard: Two points, Madam Speaker.

First of all, it is against the rules of our House to refer to the absence of a member, and I would ask that the minister's comments to that effect be stricken from the record of Hansard, if that's possible.

The second point I would make is that we acknowledge some progress on addressing harassment within the civil service.

* (14:40)

But, Madam Speaker, we clearly have a long way to go to address it within this Chamber, and I hope you will have the leadership to tackle this issue and get members of all parties together to be able to address it effectively.

Thank you.

Madam Speaker: I would indicate to all members—and I respectfully hear what everybody is saying, and sometimes there's an incredible amount of tension in this room—I would indicate that we do have some progress to be made and we are working as a Legislative Assembly on a respectful workplace policy.

That policy is in the hands of all MLAs, right now, to add your comments to that particular document so that we can apply it, along with—and marry it in some ways to—what the civil service has too, so that we're all working under the umbrella where we can have a respectful work environment. So, all of the MLAs right now have that document and it is to be returned by the end of June with comments, at which point those comments will be looked at very, very carefully and will be put into a second draft so that, through the process, we can hear and understand the, you know, the concerns that people are raising.

The other point I think we may need to look at after that is looking at a code of conduct, and that is another step and it isn't able—we aren't able to do that until we have that other policy in place. So those things are on my radar.

There has been increasing tension in this House and I'm certainly, you know, finding that the level of heckling—which I have to say is better than it was two years ago, and heckling in this place has been around for a very, very long time and, you know, I think we've come a long way in two years and there has been effort made. There's probably some slippage right now in terms of that, but, you know, we have worked on it, and I would ask members that

it's probably a good time to step back and reflect on the comments that we're all making in this House.

And, you know, it goes both ways, I have to say, too. It's not just, you know, a few people. It's—once one person gets going and then we find that others just—they chime in as well, so—and it just creates an environment that does make it a difficult place to sometimes work.

But I think it's going to take a concerted effort of everybody. I think we have the right processes that are—we're trying very hard to put into place. The Legislative Assembly Management Commission, which is—reflects all members here in the Chamber, are looking at that, our respectful policy, and I think we have some work to do. It's also, you know, we've come a long way, but we are in 2018 and we do need to look at redefining, maybe, what our workplaces look like.

I know that as Speakers across Canada, we have had a number of discussions and every province faces similar issues. We are not unique in that. And Speakers from across Canada are starting to, you know, have more discussions about what is the level of heckling that should be allowed in a Chamber? Should there be any level of heckling? Do we change centuries' worth of behaviour and how can we do that? And it's not going to be just me as the Speaker moving this forward. This is—everybody has, I think, a responsibility to do all of that.

Having said all that, too, this is a very different work environment. This is a political environment and it isn't always a—an environment where maybe all the same rules apply that apply in other places, but maybe we need to have that discussion as to how far do we take all of this, and it comes down now to everybody here. You've all got a chance to look at where we are in terms of that draft policy, let's get a second one. And, again, it will be all members that will be invited to have a say. I was very clear on that when we brought that policy forward that I wanted everybody in this Chamber to have a say in what that policy should look like, and I think once we have that policy, it will give us a better opportunity to then take these discussions further and collectively decide what it is and how it is we want—how we want things to evolve and how we want discussions in here.

This is a very passionate place and the one thing I've learned, I think, being in politics, is that in politics we fight with words. I've been to other countries where they fight with their fists or with guns or with other, you know, other tools and fist

fight in the Chamber. We fight with words here, and there is a level of passion because everybody comes in here with something that's important to them and they want to fight for what's important to them. And we don't want to see that passion diminish, because that's why a lot of us are here, is because we have a passion for what we're doing. We have a passion for wanting to make Manitoba a better place.

And we don't want to lose that passion, but I think we have to be careful in how far we take our passion and our words and our behaviours in this House.

So we do have an opportunity right now. I know there are a number of matters of privilege that are probably before us that deal with some of these issues, and I think we have come to a point where it's a good time for us to be looking at, you know, how do we want behaviours to proceed in the future.

So I'm—it's important for everybody to be heard, too, and that is one of the gifts we have in Canada, is that people can speak up in this Chamber. We have freedom of speech, we have the opportunity to say things here, but perhaps it's not always as careful as it needs to be or as respectful or civil as it needs to be.

And, again, while we've come a long way, I was here in the days when it was far, far worse than all of this. But we have to be very, very aware of the political environment we're in and look at what that political environment should look like in 2018 and going forward.

So with all of that, I really do understand the concerns that are being raised by everybody. And I—as much as I am very aware of that and respect the feelings, I would indicate that it is not a point of order, but it is an important point that I think we do need to, you know, all have some discussion and come back with some solutions to this collectively, because we do have students in here a number of times, and I have to say the—it's not always the environment we want to present to students.

So I would ask everybody to, you know, give some thought to this. I think we need to move beyond, you know, some of our tactics and other ways of doing business and find a way that can work in a respectful way. And I would just indicate I feel it's a good point that has been raised, but I would not—I would indicate that in the terms of points of order, it is not a point of order, but I would urge—I think I would—*[interjection]*—I would urge caution.

There was just an example of, you know, sometimes when I do try to bring order to the House it's not always listened to, but I would urge that we've got a democratic institution here and I leave it in everybody's hands. Let's all work together and let's see where we can take this on a go-forward basis.

PETITIONS

Tina Fontaine—Public Inquiry

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

These are the reasons for this petition:

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

* (14:50)

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

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

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

(5) Tina Fontaine's murder galvanized Canada—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: I would urge the member to continue. I'm—I can hear her very clearly and so can Hansard.

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Premier of Manitoba and the Minister of Justice to immediately call a public inquiry into the systems that had a role in the life and

the death of Tina Fontaine, as well as the function of the administration of justice after her death.

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

Signed by Nyaira Moore, Aaliya and Chas and many, many other Manitobans.

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

Gender Neutrality

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

Gender, sexuality and gender identity are protected characteristics of human rights, both federally and provincially, in Manitoba, Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia, and soon will be in Saskatchewan, Yukon and other places in Canada. These governments have realized the need for this option on identification for the benefit of people who identify or who are identified by others as intersex, third gender, transgender, genderqueer or non-binary.

Identification and government documents should reflect gender neutrality to prevent issues that may arise from intentional bias on gender and misgendering. The people described above face anxiety and discrimination in many aspects of day-to-day life, such as (a) interactions with health-care professionals; (b) interactions with persons of authority; (c) accessing government services; (d) applying for employment.

Gender neutrality describes the idea that policies, language and other social institutions should avoid distinguishing roles according to people's sex or gender in order to avoid discrimination arising from impressions that there are social roles for which one gender is more suited than another.

Many newcomers to Canada may already have a gender-neutral ID. Many indigenous persons are coming to identify as two-spirit as the effects of colonization are lessening, and this needs to be addressed in the process of recolonization—reconciliation.

Being forced to accept an assigned gender affects children and newborns as they grow and become part of society. There are many psychological benefits for transgender and non-binary people to be allowed to develop without the constraints put upon them by having their gender assigned based on purely physical attributes.

The consideration to have a third option like X or Other on documents was on the previous provincial government's radar for several years, but the current provincial government has not taken steps to implement it.

The City of Winnipeg is actively making its forms reflective of gender neutrality in respect to all persons who work for or come into contact with that government.

The federal government now issues passports and is educating personnel about the correct language and references for non-binary persons.

An Other option existed on enumeration forms for Elections Manitoba in 2016, was easily accepted, and provided a framework to provide accurate statistics of those who do not identify under the current binary system.

The foresight, along with training and making changes on required forms, acknowledges and accepts persons who fall outside the binary gender so that governments and people can more effectively interact with one another and reduce the anxieties of everyone involved.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to immediately begin implementation of plans to convert systems and forms to be more inclusive of two-spirit and other non-binary individuals, whether it be to include a third gender option or no requirement for gender on forms unless medically or statistically necessary, including health cards and birth certificates.

(2) To urge the provincial government to immediately instruct the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation to offer a third gender option or no gender requirement for licences or any other form of provincial identification.

(3) To urge the provincial government to instruct Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living to offer the option of Manitoba Health cards with no gender in order to reduce the anxieties of transgender and

non-binary persons accessing the health-care system as a first step.

(4) To consider revisiting legislation that may need updating to meet the needs of its citizens in this regard.

Signed by Jess Alexander, Jenna Glass, Alycia Mann and many others.

Vimy Arena

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

One—oh, the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The residents of St. James and other areas of Manitoba are concerned with the intention expressed by the provincial government to use the Vimy site as a Manitoba Housing project.

(2) The Vimy Arena site is in the middle of a recreational area near many schools, churches, community clubs and senior homes, and neither the provincial government nor the City of Winnipeg considered better suited locations in rural, semi-rural or industrial areas such as St. Boniface industrial park, the 200—or the 20,000 acres at CentrePort or existing properties such as the Shriners Hospital or the old Children's Hospital on Wellington Crescent.

(3) The provincial government is exempt from any zoning requirements that would have existed if the land was owned by the City of Winnipeg. This exemption bypasses community input and due diligence and ignores better uses of land which would be consistent with a residential area.

(4) There are no standards that one would expect for a treatment centre. The Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living has stated that the Department of Health had no role to play in the land acquisition for the Manitoba Housing project for use as a drug addiction facility.

(5) The Manitoba Housing project initiated by the province—by the provincial government changes the fundamental nature of the community. Including park and recreation uses, concerning—concerns of the residents of St. James and others regarding public safety, property values and their way of life are not being properly addressed.

(6) The concerns of residents of St. James are being ignored while obvious other locations in wealthier neighbourhoods, such as Tuxedo or River

Heights, have not been considered for this Manitoba Housing project, even though there are hundreds of acres of land available for development at Kapyong Barracks or parks like Heubach Park that share the same zoning as the Vimy Arena site.

(7) The Manitoba Housing project and operation of a drug treatment centre fall outside the statutory mandate of the Manitoba Housing renewal corporation.

(8) The provincial government does not have a co-ordinated plan for addiction treatment in Manitoba as it currently underfunds treatment centres which are running far under capacity and potential.

(9) The community has misled—has been misled regarding the true intention of the Manitoba Housing as land is being transferred for a 50-bed facility even though the project is clearly outside the Manitoba Housing's responsibility.

* (15:00)

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to take necessary steps to ensure that the Vimy Arena site is not used for an addiction treatment facility.

(2) To urge the provincial government to take the necessary steps to ensure the preservation of public land along Sturgeon Creek for the purposes of park land and recreational activities for public use, including being an important component of the Sturgeon Creek Greenway Trail and the Sturgeon Creek ecosystem under the current designation of PR2 for the 255 Hamilton location at the Vimy Arena site, and to maintain land to continue to be designated for parks and recreation activity neighbourhood.

This petition's been signed by Lorraine Engie [*phonetic*], Deborah Park [*phonetic*] and Gary Parker and many other Manitobans.

MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): I rise on a matter of urgent public importance.

Under rule 38(1)—[*interjection*—seconded by—

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Lindsey: —the member from Point Douglas.

I move, seconded by the member from Point Douglas that, under rule 38(1), the ordinary business of the House be set aside to discuss a matter of urgent public importance, namely, the urgent issue of Canada's long-standing equitable trading relationship with the United States of America, the illegitimate tariffs imposed by the United States government against Canadian steel and aluminum workers, the impact on workers and communities that depend on this trading relationship and the importance of standing in solidarity with the Government of Canada in its decision to impose retaliatory tariffs while rejecting disparaging ad 'hominen' statements by the US administration.

Madam Speaker: Before recognizing the honourable member, I should remind all members that, under rule 38(2), the mover of a motion on a matter of urgent public importance and one member from the other recognized parties in the House are allowed not more than 10 minutes to explain the urgency of debating the matter immediately.

As stated in Beauchesne's citation 390, urgency in this context means the urgency of immediate debate, not of the subject matter of the motion. In their remarks, members should focus exclusively on whether or not there is urgency of debate and whether or not the ordinary opportunities for debate will enable the House to consider the matter early enough to ensure that the public interest will not suffer.

Mr. Lindsey: Canada has a long-standing and equitable trading relationship with the United States. The American government has imposed illegitimate tariffs against Canadian steel and aluminum workers with further tariffs on milk and other goods potentially looming. These tariffs will have a negative impact on Manitoba workers, Manitoba communities and the Manitoba economy, along with the rest of Canada.

At this point in time, Madam Speaker, Manitoba must stand in solidarity with the government of Canada in its decision to impose retaliatory tariffs. We must reject the disparaging ad 'hominen' statements by the US administration. We must stand up for trade that is fair, and I emphasize that, Madam Speaker. We must stand up for trade that is fair, supporting Canada's interest and supporting Canadian workers and Canadian consumers.

The President's comments in Singapore made it clear that the US government is not backing down, as he has continued to threaten the Canadian-American

economic relationship. We know that the economy is based on confidence and that even words, when they come from the President of the US, can result in a market downturn and significant job losses. The President's commitments confirm that we need to be resolute and united in our opposition to his illegitimate actions. This could very well be our only chance to do so. If we don't do something now, it may be too late when Manitoba is impacted by a trade war.

Don Leitch, President and CEO of the Business Council of Manitoba, illustrates this immediacy and the gravity of the situation, and I quote: These are complicated, significant supply chains. If they get disrupted by these one-off, arbitrary decisions people on both sides of the borders, companies and employees are going to suffer. There's about 2,000 employees in Manitoba in the steel and aluminum industry. If there are tariffs, generally, that could result—not immediately—but in some long-term unemployment. The answer is yes, it's possible. End quote.

Mrs. Sarah Guillemard, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

We know that here in Manitoba some 400 jobs at the Gerdau steel factory in Selkirk will be impacted by the American President's steel tariffs. We know that some \$100 million in steel products are exported to the US every year and that tariffs on aluminum exports will affect other areas of the provincial economy.

Virtually every piece of equipment for grain bins, farm machinery and livestock handling has steel or aluminum in it. Canada exported about \$1.9 billion worth of agricultural equipment last year, with as much as 80 per cent going to the US. We've heard from farm implement manufacturers in Rhineland municipality; general manager Mike Friesen at Elmer's Manufacturing, manufactures specialized agricultural equipment. Elmer's has enjoyed steady growth and now employs just over 100 people. Quote: It's a tough spot to be in. It's a fact that the material costs are a big part of our pricing and we have to adjust that pricing accordingly. End quote. Friesen notes that his company's growth could be stunted if he's forced to increase prices.

We've heard from manufacturers in Portage La Prairie, Madam Speaker. Cobalt Industries' general manager, Clint Taylor, says steel tariffs will drive prices to the point where projects will simply stop and people will stop building. Cobalt Industries

moves between 1.2 and 1.3 million pounds of steel per year.

Now, Acting Speaker, dairy farmers are also feeling threatened by the American President's tweets. The American President is demanding that Canada's supply-managed dairy industry should be eliminated. We've heard from David Wiens, a dairy farmer from Grunthal. Mr. Wiens is the chair of the Dairy Farmers of Manitoba and vice-president of Dairy Farmers Canada. He says that conceding to the President's demands would, and I quote, make it very difficult to continue the growth and investment we've seen in the past several years, end quote; and quote, would be very devastating, end quote.

Madam Speaker in the Chair

Processors and farmers would be less likely to modernize operations, according to Mr. Wiens. We are calling on this government to recognize the dire threat to the Manitoba economy presented by American tariffs, and support this matter of urgent public importance.

Across Canada the Prime Minister is getting cross-partisan support. On Monday afternoon the House of Commons passed a unanimous motion decrying disparaging, ad 'hominen' statements as counterproductive, while supporting the Prime Minister's threat to impose retaliatory tariffs on the US.

* (15:10)

Even Conservative House Leader Candice Bergen has asked the government to prepare for a potential aid package for workers impacted by a trade war. We want to make clear that by supporting the federal government and the motion introduced by the NDP MP for Essex, Tracey Ramsey, we want to show that all members of this House support our workers, support Manitoba workers, support Manitoba communities and, in fact, support the Manitoba economy. And we want the government of Canada—to show the government of Canada that our support from Manitoba in this negotiation.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader): I appreciate an opportunity to put a few words on the record in regard to this proposed MUPI.

I think, first of all, Madam Speaker, I would question the motivation behind the MUPI coming today. I know we've been able to have a look at the NDP worth ethics over the course of the last week,

and they don't seem to be prepared to come to the Chamber to debate some very important legislation.

Obviously, we've done quite a bit of consulting over the past number of months with the indigenous, Metis community, hunting community, in regards to Bill 29 that we're trying to get through the House, recognizing that it is hunting season coming up very soon, so we want to be making sure that we're protecting Manitobans. And this really—piece of legislation is a matter of life and death. And, clearly, the NDP are doing everything they can to resist that particular bill moving forward. So, clearly, I question the motivation behind this particular MUPI.

I will point out, Madam Speaker, we all know that we're in the middle of negotiations with the United States and Mexico and Canada in terms of what NAFTA will look like. It's—clearly, it's very important for Canadians, very important for Manitobans as well. But it is a long and ongoing process to hopefully come to a positive resolution in hopefully the not-too-distance future.

Madam Speaker, I do find it somewhat ironic that today the NDP seem to be supporting trade agreements. We've debated over the last almost two years legislation in the Chamber here in regard to free trade agreements with our neighbours to the west and, in fact, across Canada. And at every step of the way, the member spoke against those particular trade agreements.

I know, in debate, the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey) said the New West Partnership, that will trade our jobs away without bringing in jobs for people in this province. Clearly, that quote—he's not in favour of trade agreements, and for some reason, today, they seem to be in favour of trade agreements. So some—certainly some irony there.

We also know the leader has signed onto the Leap Manifesto, and the Leap Manifesto says right there, in there, and I quote, we call for an end to all trade deals.

So, Madam Speaker, you know, clearly, it seems interesting the new change we're hearing from today's NDP. In fact, I went back in the records just to see how they voted in terms of the trade arrangements, trade legislation—and we just brought forward, and actually, just last—as of last week, they voted against our legislation dealing with trade agreements. So, clearly, quite ironic in terms of their new-found position on trade.

So, Madam Speaker, I just wanted to reiterate that, really, the trade discussions through NAFTA are an ongoing—they've been going on for months and months, if not years already. And clearly they will continue. There will be continued dialogue as we move forward, so I don't think—although very important, this is probably not an opportunity to set aside the normal course of the House duty to discuss this MUPI today.

Thank you.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Yes, Madam Speaker—

Madam Speaker: The member will have to ask for leave to speak to the MUPI.

Mr. Gerrard: I ask for leave to speak to the MUPI.

Madam Speaker: Does the honourable member have leave? [*Agreed*]

Mr. Gerrard: Madam Speaker, this is an urgent issue because the approach of the current United States government with respect to trade with Canada is of considerable concern because of its potential very negative impact on our economy in Manitoba and in Canada and on our relationship with the United States.

It is an urgent issue of public importance because of the tariffs imposed by the United States on aluminum and steel and their impact. It is an urgent issue of public importance because of the threat of additional US tariffs on the automobile sector and possibly other sectors. It is an urgent issue of public importance because Canada, the United States and Mexico are in the process of negotiating revisions to the North American Free Trade Agreement. The importance of an updated North American Free Trade Agreement to Canada, the United States and Mexico adds urgency and public importance to this matter.

In Manitoba, we are well aware of the significance to people in the farm community and in many other sectors depending on the results of the renegotiated NAFTA, and on the impact of the tariffs already imposed or to be imposed by the United States.

Madam Speaker, Canada and the United States—Manitoba and adjacent states in the United States like Minnesota and North Dakota—have long had an amazing and long-lasting and effective collaboration and mutually beneficial relationship. I personally have many friends and family in the United States. I

have personally spent time training as an intern and resident in Minneapolis in the United States, and indeed working for a short period of time there. Our relationship with the United States is critical in so, so many ways and it is vital that we address this issue of the relationship we have between Canada and the United States, and between Manitoba and adjacent states immediately and in urgent fashion.

I believe that there are some critical measures that the current government of Manitoba could take that would enable a better future relationship at this time when there are some concerns and divisions appearing. We could be, indeed—for example, the Pallister government has talked a lot about tourism. We are doing some marketing of Manitoba. We could use this opportunity to make sure that we are inviting people from the United States to come and visit our phenomenal province of Manitoba. The exchange of visitors back and forth is fundamental to a good relationship. It will also help our economy to have more tourists here.

But I think that at no time has it been more critical to make sure that we are building a positive relationship across the board in areas that can balance out some of the negative things that are happening. And certainly I know that there are many in the United States who feel very positively about Canada. Indeed, one of the first things that happened following the recent tweets by the President of the United States was a text message from a family member who is a US citizen and in the United States, who says to us, you know, I think I'm going to start looking for human resource jobs in Canada.

There are a lot of people in the United States who are friends, who are relatives, who are people that we can have an effective dialogue with and who we can in fact build support. This sort of division has happened in the past. We are going to have this summer, in July, a meeting of the Midwestern legislators here in Winnipeg.

*(15:20)

It is an opportunity for us to have an effective dialogue among leading politicians in the Midwestern United States and to—for us today, we should be taking the time, I suggest, this afternoon to talk about the opportunities that we have as Manitobans and as politicians in Manitoba to make a difference.

There are areas of our economy, our businesses, which it is important that we are adequately

representing and reflecting their needs at a time of these tensions, and we want to make sure that those needs of our businesses are adequately heard here in our Chamber.

I know that in the past where there has been some tensions between Canada and the United States that I've certainly received calls from business people to talk about the need to make sure that we maintain critically important business relationships and that we don't get caught up in a downward spiral going in the wrong direction.

We need to rise above the concerns that are at the moment and make sure that our business people, our tourists, are welcomed and helped and that we are doing everything we can here in Manitoba to make sure that this time of tension can be addressed and addressed in a way that allows us as a province and us as a country to move forward together with people in the United States and together with people in Mexico to achieve something that is wonderful for all of us for the continent that we share together for our economy, for our environment, for our social development as a society.

So, Madam Speaker, I would suggest that this is, indeed, a matter of urgent public importance, and that we should be completing debate and offering the opportunity to other MLAs to provide their perspectives on this critically important issue—a major issue for today.

Thank you.

Madam Speaker: I thank the honourable members for their advice to the Chair on whether the motion proposed by the honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey) should be debated today. I would advise that proper notice of this matter as required by rule 38(1) was provided in a timely fashion, and I thank the member for Flin Flon for that.

Under our rules and practices, the subject matter requiring urgent consideration must be so pressing that the public interest will suffer if the matter is not given immediate attention. There must also be no other reasonable opportunities to raise the matter.

I do not doubt that this matter is one that is of serious concern to all members of this House, as the status of Canada's trading relationship with the United States of America is a very important issue to Manitobans. However, I have listened very carefully to the arguments put forward, and I was not persuaded that the ordinary business of the House should be set aside to deal with this issue today.

I would note that there are other avenues for members to raise this issue, including questions in question period or raising the item under members' statements or as a grievance.

Therefore, with the greatest of respect, I rule the motion out of order as a matter of urgent public importance.

House Business

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Deputy Official Opposition House Leader): House business.

Madam Speaker: On House business.

Mr. Wiebe: Madam Speaker, could you please canvass the House for leave to have a limited debate on what I think we can all agree is an urgent financial matter and an issue of equitable trade with the United States and the impact of tariffs on the Manitoba economy and on Manitoba workers?

If the House is agreed to this, the debate would proceed in the following manner: The debate will last no more than one hour. All speeches will be limited to five minutes each: three speakers, each from the Official Opposition and government caucus, as well as any independent members who wish to participate in the debate.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to have a limited debate on the urgent issue of equitable trade with the United States and the impact of tariffs on the Manitoba economy and Manitoba workers?

If the House agreed, the debate would proceed in the following manner: The debate will last no more than one hour. All speeches will be limited to five minutes each: three speakers, each from the official opposition and government caucus as well as any of the independent members who wish to participate in the debate.

Is that agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

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

Mr. Cullen: Further House business, Madam Speaker. I wonder if you could canvass the House to see if there's leave to debate this topic for two hours later today, from 5 to 7, following the regular House business.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to waive rule 4(4) regarding the usual adjournment hour of the Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, such as the House will sit from 5 to 7 p.m. to consider this issue raised by the official opposition.

Is there leave?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: Leave has been denied.

* * *

Madam Speaker: The House will now proceed to grievances.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(Continued)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader): Would you call Bill 29, The Wildlife Amendment Act (Safe Hunting and Shared Management).

Bill 29—The Wildlife Amendment Act (Safe Hunting and Shared Management)

Madam Speaker: To resume debate on second reading of Bill 29 and the amendment thereto proposed by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, standing in the name of the honourable member for Minto, who has seven minutes remaining.

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): It's a pleasure now to speak to this for the third day in the Legislature, which takes a bit of doing.

When we last debated this, I was talking about the Goodon case here in Manitoba, and some of the important messages it sends us for dealing with indigenous people and their hunting rights. And members will recall that Mr. Goodon was charged with illegal hunting, and his point was that as a Metis person, he did not have to be bound by the same rules as everybody else. And the court had this to say, at page 3, paragraph 8 of the decision: Certain principles have been established by the court in analyzing Aboriginal rights and in particular the effect of section 35(1) of the Constitution Act. These principles recognize the purpose of constitutionally recognized Aboriginal rights as enunciated in R. versus Van der Peet, 1996 decision of Supreme

Court at paragraph 31, and I quote from that decision referred to in the case: What section 35(1) does is provide the constitutional framework through which the fact that Aboriginals lived in the land in distinctive societies, with their own practices, traditions and cultures is acknowledged and reconciled with the sovereignty of the Crown. The substantive rights which fall within the provision must be defined in light of this purpose. The Aboriginal rights recognized and affected by section 35(1) must be directed towards the reconciliation of the pre-existence of Aboriginal societies within the sovereignty of the Crown.

And that case, course, there was certain rights and certain titles being found. The court here in Manitoba went through a pretty good analysis. In the Goodon case, it was actually dealing with the Metis community in Manitoba, but just as in the present situation, there was no doubt that Mr. Goodon was purporting to exercise a right that he believed he had traditionally. In fact, the government did not contest that. And so what the court ultimately concluded is that the issue for determination is where they're compelling the accused, Mr. Goodon, to obtain a provincially generated licence to hunt is an infringement of his constitutional rights.

There are many reasons why, for conservation purposes, for safety purposes—there's valid reasons why a government would want an individual to have a hunting licence, but despite that, the government—rather the court had this to say: Paragraph 80 of the decision: The Supreme Court of Canada in Sparrow suggests there's been an infringement if the right has been interfered with, then three questions have to be asked to determine that issue: First is the limitation unreasonable, second does the regulation impose undue hardship, third, does the regulation deny to the holders their preferred way of exercising that right.

* (15:30)

In paragraph 81, the court went on to conclude: The limitation is prima facie unreasonable, as it makes no accommodation for the Metis hunter. The Wildlife Act contains no reference to Metis people and makes no attempt to accommodate a constitutionally enshrined right. The Metis population is subject to the same regulations as others, which means their hunting season is restricted, the quantity of food they can harvest is restricted without any consideration of their needs

and they must say the—pay same fees for hunting privileges.

Metis people, like others, are properly subject to reasonable restrictions concerning safety and conservation, but the legislative regime has to reasonably accommodate their protected right. Here there is no attempt to do so, which makes the regulations of The Wildlife Act concerning licensing to hunt unreasonable. And the court went on to find the Crown has presented no evidence justifying an infringement of hunting rights in the province of Manitoba in that location, and the court went on to conclude that the Crown has not provided justification and that the charge against the accused is dismissed.

And all this, Madam Speaker, comes back to the major question and the reason why we have brought in the motion and our concern that Bill 29, as it presently stands at the present level of consultation, fails to institute the principles necessary for a real system of co-management for safe hunting in Manitoba.

Now, section 35, consultation is not easy and it is often not swift, and it would be enough, Madam Speaker, if the government was simply starting at zero on this file. But, in fact, when it came to preparing Bill 29, the government was actually several big steps behind in being able to sit down and consult properly and negotiate with First Nations people, and those big steps, of course, were taken by the Premier (Mr. Pallister) with his extremely unfortunate comments that he made early in 2017. And that, of course, was when the Premier made a number of comments about night hunting, saying the practice was leading to a, quote, "race war" end quote. And that statement came from a talk the Premier gave January 16, 2017 in a Progressive Conservative party luncheon in Virden, Manitoba. The CBC obtained a copy of the recording from a reporter and then his office tried to go into damage control mode in trying to avoid the problem.

But then, of course, unfortunately for the Premier's staff and for the Progressive Conservative government, the Premier wasn't in town. The Premier, indeed, was down in Costa Rica, and it was down in Costa Rica that a reporter from Maclean's magazine knocked—went to his property—I don't know if you can knock on the door, I don't know if you'd get past the guardhouse or how you get up there—but she had a discussion with him on his property and he made a number of very, very

unfortunate comments. And I'll just leave it at that. I'm going to just call them unfortunate comments about young indigenous men and about hunting.

And then, when those comments were publicly reported, the Premier's office again had to go into damage control mode. We know, of course, that you can't call the Premier when he's down in Costa Rica. We know that you can't email the Premier when he's down in Costa Rica. We know that he does not want to be bothered. And I can only imagine how difficult it is for those staff.

And it was then that the government pushed into action and somehow they were able to pull together numbers that, over the last five years, they put forward evidence that they said showed that 77.5 per cent of night lighting charges laid involved persons with treaty status.

Well, a number of problems with that: mainly, how they got that information, but secondly, the charges would not stick against somebody who actually has the right. So the government started below zero—

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

House Business

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader): On House business, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: On House business.

Mr. Cullen: Yes, thank you. Pursuant to rule 33(7), I am announcing that the private member's resolution to be considered on the next Tuesday of private members' business will be one previously put forward by the honourable member for St. Vital (Mrs. Mayer). The title of the resolution is Celebrating National Indigenous Peoples Day.

Madam Speaker: It has been announced that, pursuant to rule 33(7), the private member's resolution to be considered on the next Tuesday of private members' business will be one previously put forward by the honourable member for St. Vital. The title of the resolution is Celebrating National Indigenous Peoples Day.

Mr. Cullen: On further House business.

Madam Speaker: On further House business.

Mr. Cullen: Madam Speaker, I'd like to announce that the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations

will meet on Monday, June 25th, 2018 at 7 p.m. to consider the following reports: Annual Report of the Manitoba Hydro-Electric Board for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2014; Annual Report of the Manitoba Hydro-Electric Board for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2015; the Annual Report of the Manitoba Hydro-Electric Board for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2016; and the Annual Report of the Manitoba Hydro-Electric Board for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2017.

Madam Speaker: It has been announced that the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations will meet on Monday, June 25th, 2018, at 7 p.m., to consider the following reports: Annual Report of the Manitoba Hydro-Electric Board for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2014; Annual Report of the Manitoba Hydro-Electric Board for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2015; Annual Report of the Manitoba Hydro-Electric Board for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2016; and Annual Report of the Manitoba Hydro-Electric Board for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2017.

* * *

Madam Speaker: We'll move on now, continue debate.

Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Arthur-Virden): I would like the opportunity to talk on this Bill 29—actually, the reason for amendment put forward by the member from St. Johns about the Bill 29, The Wildlife Amendment Act.

You know, Madam Speaker, if there's anybody that was—it's—this is very—hits close to home, it's myself. Living in Arthur-Virden over the last 25 years, you know, I've been in business for so many—same amount of years. I actually bought a business out there. And I know the area is so beautiful. You know, I—my wife and I have—we chose that as our home, and I always have to say, I've always lived along the Assiniboine valley all my life. You know, I was born in Russell, lived in the valley, and grew up on a farm just out—about few miles from the Assiniboine valley.

And one thing that—growing up in the 1980s, early 1980s, as a child, I remember one of the big issues we had was night hunting. Night hunting went back in the 1980s, and I remember one of the biggest impacts was that when we—when I grew—there was a lot of deer in our area. And I know a lot of people actually was indigenous and non-indigenous people that would actually come out to the area to hunt

during hunting season and realized how much abundance of deer that we had in the area.

And I remember one time in the late '70s, there was—we were—there was a contract to remove railway lines from the track that led from Russell, Manitoba, to MacNutt. And there was a contractor who came out there to do some work out there, and I guess he liked the area so much, and he saw all the abundance of deer that he actually bought a house in Dropmore, Manitoba. It's the hamlet that I grew up close nearby.

And I remember he would bring friends out. And it got to a point where he actually brought friends out that would go hunting illegally at night. And then we also had some issues, too, of indigenous groups that were from Saskatchewan who'd come and know the area too. And there was actually—that's when the night hunting started, and to a point where there was other issues that happened in the area too, that my dad, who was always a community leader, who I—everybody looked up to, he decided that this was enough. Like, people were getting things broken into. There was night hunting, actually, to a point where, actually, the light was shone right in our house, Madam Speaker.

So my dad actually went to the RCM 'polie', build a relationship with the RCMP, with the conservation district, and they all came together, along with Metis in our area. You know, they thought this is—there were also farmers in the area. This was our chance to curb the illegal hunting that was happening and night hunting. And so my dad, when he created this group, it was called Rural Range Patrol. He was the first one to start Rural Range Patrol. Actually, after—I think it went to Rural Crime Watch after. But building those relationships with everybody actually made the difference, because—actually, he was actually featured on, at that time, CKY TV. You know, he actually got interviewed by the program that he created along with the RCMP and the Russell detachment and the conservation in the Roblin- Russell area, and that ended night hunting.

And I thought, you know, for years, I haven't heard about night hunting until just as we've become an MLA. All of a sudden, in Arthur-Virden, night hunting happened again. That was probably one of the big issues that I had. We had a number of councillors from the Pipestone municipality, the Sifton municipality, and they actually—also, I got a phone call, my—in my constituency office, and I actually was here in—at the Legislature, so my

assistant actually went to the meeting to see what was happening. And that's when the media was there.

* (15:40)

This issue came up, and it was a big impact because there was a lot of people coming out to Arthur-Virden for hunting, and night hunting was happening. So we had a lot of farmers in the area complaining because at one time, we only had Whiteshell deer in the area, but since the displacement of over-hunting in the provincial parks of Turtle Mountain, the Riding Mountain and the Duck Mountain has displaced many of the other wildlife that we never saw before.

Like, when I grew up in the area of Roblin-Roseau, we never saw moose. We never saw elk, and now they're moving out of the parks into our area. And now with the wet conditions that we have in the Arthur-Virden area, this is when the moose—our population is expanding. And now we're getting people coming out there to hunt and they're coming from Selkirk area, I was told.

They're taking advantage of the opportunities that they could go hunting, but some of them are going into farmers without permission. So there has to be respect. There has to be a harmony and this is what this whole bill is all about, and I'm not quite sure why the member from St. Johns, who has put this unreasonable of amendment, because the fact is when this bill was introduced, I had nothing but praise for it in the area.

To the councillor, who I know the member from Fort Rouge actually went to meet these councillors one time in Portage la Prairie. The reason why I know that is because our chief, Chief Tacan from Sioux Valley reserve, was the one that told me that one of his contractors who works on the reserve actually is a councillor for the Sifton municipality and went to the Portage la Prairie to meet with the future leader of the NDP govern—NDP caucus. And so they met and there was a dialogue. And I know that the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew) has built a relationship with some of the councillors in the area and saw it, how important this bill is, and I can't see why he doesn't come forward to talk about this bill and vote on this bill because it is going to create harmony in the 'constituey' of Arthur-Virden.

You know, I've actually had a great opportunity to talk to Chief Tacan, who is a very good friend of mine. We go horseback riding. We—I go to powwows. We—I spend the whole evening there. We

talk, you know, he's really—I would say—I've only known him for the four years I was MLA and I often honestly think that I've known him for my whole life, because he is such a gentleman. He is—everybody respects him. He got elected three times, and that's sort of unheard of in—when it comes to First Nation elections. And he's created a business opportunity at the corner of 21 and Highway 1 with a new gas station, Petro-Canada. And, you know, we can sit down and talk for hours.

And I know that the member from Fort Rouge would know the chief too because I believe that he actually used to go out with his daughter, who's now a successful police officer in Alberta. And so, when I talked to Chief Tacan just the other day, I gave him a call, I talked to him a few other times, he doesn't really believe that there's a need for night hunting.

He knows that he wants to create harmony in the—with the people of the Westman. He knows the importance of working together, harmony, and he really believes that this bill is important because the fact is he—his—the only time they go hunting is they go hunting so that they can get a deer so that they can feed some of their elders who probably need a little bit that subsidy of what they've done in the past. And that's the only time they go hunting, is to help out with the elders.

And even that time when he told me about the mishap that the individual from Sioux Valley got shot accidentally, it wasn't that they were night hunting totally at night. It was getting to be dusk and, you know, they—you actually have an opportunity for a, like, almost a half hour after the sun sets, to go get a deer, like, if all of a sudden you shot a deer, you can go after it, the opportunity.

So what happened was, I think they first sort of pushed the envelope of that time, which got a little bit darker, and that's exactly what happens at nighttime. The hunters—you know—that—this is where accidents can happen.

And the—so—Madam Speaker, this is why I believe that this bill is so important to the area. And it—you know—we do have—it's a balance, what we're having right now. We're allowing indigenous hunters to hunt in areas where it's safe, like, unlike the area of the Arthur-Virden. There's just too many—high population. Now we're seeing more and more farms—old farmyards now being purchased so that people are starting to make acreages out of them, so there's a higher population that's living in the area.

Every time—especially with people who work in the oil patch, they don't want—always want to live right in the town of Virden. They also—they want to live in rural settings, where they probably grew up on a farm, and they want 20 acres of land. And so we're seeing right now, Madam Speaker, that lot of the population is growing in the rural areas of our—of Arthur-Virden.

And at the same time, of—tourism is getting big. Right now, the Turtle Mountain, there is more and more population living permanently in the area. So that's why we feel that this bill of—Bill 29 is—give that public safety of looking after Manitobans. And we're seeing that also in the Roblin-Russell area. I believe the member from Swan River who spoke, too, has the same concerns too because more and more people are moving into the Duck Mountain, and they're concerned about the night hunting that happens.

And again, Madam Speaker, it's not fair to the deer who gets blinded. Any animal who gets blinded by a headlight—what if a human being has—you know, gets into a headlight? You know, there's just no way you can—for an animal—it's fair for an animal. So that is why I believe that night hunting should be banned in most of the areas that this bill actually address. And so, Madam Speaker, I'm going to leave it at that.

I—like I said, I have talked to the chiefs in the area, and they believe that this is a good bill, and it's going to—one thing I also have to say, Madam Speaker, before I leave off this is that when I talk to Chief Tacan, his concern was that, lot of times when he's—when his people can go out hunting, some of the farmers only call them to come hunting when they have a problem with the deer. And that's usually when there's a lot of snow, a harsh winter that we saw a couple of years ago in the Turtle Mountain. People were phoning them constantly to come and shoot the deer. And at that point, he says that the deer meat is not that great, because if there's almost like a starvation, the meat's not that good. And also, at the same time, a lot of the female deer are expecting for spring fawns. And so they want—they don't want to shoot the deer. They have a respect for that animal, the Sioux Valley nation. You know, they want to make sure that they're only going to sustain what they need from wildlife.

And so that's why, when I talked to Chief Tacan, thing was—that what he probably wants more of is working more co-operatively with farmers so that his people can go hunting when they need the food. And

so I'm hoping that this bill, along with creating harmony in the Arthur-Virden area, will allow us to go—move forward, and I believe that this Bill 29 is the way to go.

And I want the member from Fort Rouge, knowing that he has been talking to the councillors out there, told them how important this—allowing—banning night hunting in certain areas of the province is so important, he should come on board and vote for this bill. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): It's my pleasure to rise this afternoon to speak to what the member previous to me called a reasonable amendment. I agree with him. I think it is a very reasonable amendment. But no, it is a reasoned amendment that we are debating here today, but it is an important one. And I just want to remind the House on the issue that we are debating here. So the reasoned amendment says: That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word that and substituting the following: This House declines to give second reading to Bill 29, The Wildlife Amendment Act (Safe Hunting and Shared Management), because Bill 29 fails to institute the principles necessary for a real system of co-management for safe hunting in Manitoba.

And I begin there, Madam Speaker, because I think it is so very important to focus on the heart of this debate. Now, I listened carefully to the member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Piwniuk); I've listened carefully to—it's actually all members from both sides of the House, because it is—has been, I think, in all cases, a debate that comes from—usually from a little bit of personal experience or concern or interest in this subject. And I value all of those perspectives.

* (15:50)

I value everyone in this House and the perspective that they bring to this debate, because it is not a debate that we should take lightly. It's not a debate that we should, you know, seek to politicize or seek to unnecessarily ramp up. I think it's a debate that we should make sure that we get right because, as usual, Madam Speaker, I come to this debate as a father and, as I said this morning, someone who enjoys the outdoors and someone who enjoys hunting, as much as I get a chance to get out and do that activity still, with young kids.

But it's something that I've done all my life. It's something that—my father is a big hunter. He is somebody who's been hunting since he was young,

and so I grew up in a household where we respected the hunt; we respected gun safety, where we respected how important this activity was and how important it was in all aspects to be cautious and safe and to do—to conduct ourselves in the—by the rules and by the laws of this province. And that's something that my father instilled in me from a very young age, to the extent that, you know, when I got a little bit older and I started going out on my own, hunting with some of my friends, you know, and I would sort of get that kind of side eye from them, you know, because I would be the guy who was absolutely—made sure that we followed the rules, that we were extra safe.

And, you know, and I've seen all kinds of things out in the bush and out hunting and not too many of them would I like to repeat here, but in all those cases, I very much conducted myself in the way that I think my father would have, you know, wanted me, in those cases, to conduct myself and that is to be extremely respectful of the process of hunting, and I hear that from all sides here in the House this afternoon. That's actually where I think most members are coming to this. If they have any experience hunting—every single member who has spent any time hunting in this province, or I would even say maybe fishing, would know that we absolutely want to be safe and we want to respect the game and we want to respect the process.

We, this morning, had conservation officers in the gallery. You know, they are absolutely essential to making sure that poachers are dealt with, that people conduct themselves in a safe way, and so that's why it is so absolutely crucial that we get this particular bill right, and I think that is what we are debating here today, is how to get this bill right.

This is, as I said, what I think is a very reasonable amendment and a reasoned amendment. But we all have stories. If anyone's spent any time out doing any kind of hunting, you know, they've heard—either heard the stories, they've seen—maybe seen the—had the experience to see somebody breaking the rules and being unsafe. Probably everybody here can talk about a time when they've heard of somebody shooting from a vehicle or across the hood of a vehicle or—you know, I mean the rule is that you can't even touch your vehicle if you're discharging a firearm.

You know, we've all heard stories or seen examples of people taking animals early, seeing

people taking more than their limit. We've all heard of stories of people hunting on land that they didn't have permission for and having, you know, issues with the landowner or safety issues coming from that, and we've all probably heard of stories or seen examples of people hunting at a time of day that they're not allowed to. So it's very specific, Madam Speaker. When you're out hunting, you cannot hunt after sunset. There's just no wiggle room with regards to that and it's because of safety. It's to make sure that as a hunter you're making sure you're being safe. You're respecting the other hunters that are around you and respecting the animals, and I think that's a good place for us to start.

Mr. Dennis Smook, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

I think that is what—where every—as I said, every member of this Chamber is coming to this debate from is that idea of making sure that we have safety. And I appreciate that the member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Piwniuk) mentioned the relationship building that is happening across this province because, as I said, this is not an issue with indigenous hunters and with non-indigenous hunters. This is an issue that cuts across all hunters. There are unsafe hunting practices and there are safe hunting practices, and I think every single member of this Chamber wants to make sure that when hunting is done, it's done in the safest way possible. And those relationships are what is—are at the heart of this amendment and at the heart of the issue that we as an opposition party have with this particular bill.

So this bill talks about reaching out to indigenous people. It talks about having a relationship with those indigenous people. But it's done in a way, it's presented in a way in this bill, that doesn't meet the requirements, as my friend from Minto, I think, clearly pointed out during his time, doesn't meet the section 35 requirements and doesn't actually meet the requirements that are necessary as per the Supreme Court and the constitution, which, you know, asks for, not just a consultation, but a true, a meaningful consultation. And that's where this—I think this bill doesn't meet the standards that are required.

And so, if this government is truly looking for a solution to this problem, if this government truly wants to address the issues of unsafe hunting practices in this province, it would seem to me that they would want to meet absolutely every requirement before they proceeded with this bill because the challenge becomes—and I'm no lawyer,

so I'm certainly out of my depth and I appreciate the support from my colleague from Minto, I'm sure, and as he did in his comments, could give more perspective on this—but if the bill is brought forward in a way that can be challenged in the courts, it simply presents a situation where the government can pass a piece of legislation and then it can become essentially null and void or not enacted until—or followed through on, I should say, until that court challenge has run its course. And, of course, that can—this is a very serious matter that cuts to the constitutional rights of indigenous people in this country. So I would imagine this would be a process that could take a long time, and, in the meantime, those safe—unsafe hunting practices would then continue.

So, again, if this is something that this government truly believes is an issue, if they truly believe that this is something that we as legislators should try to address and try to tackle, then they must understand that by not making sure that they meet all the requirements before the bill comes to committee, before the bill comes to this House again in the form of third reading, that they have met all of those obligations. And that's simply what this reasoned amendment seeks to do.

So I do want to touch back on, you know, where the member from Arthur-Virden, I think, ended his comments, and, again, that was about good relationships. He talked about the Leader of the Opposition spending time out in rural Manitoba. He talked about the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew) going out and talking to reeves and to councillors and building those relationships, talking specifically about this issue and ways to address this issue. This is the work that, amongst much other work, that the member for Fort Rouge is doing. And he's been out there talking to those reeves and councillors and building those relationships all across this province, which, I think, is an important duty for the Leader of the Opposition to do. But he is also spending that time with those indigenous leaders, and this is where the member for Arthur-Virden couldn't be more right. He says, you know, there are different bands, different councillors, different chiefs that have different perspectives on this issue, and I think each one of those is valid, and I think that would be part of this duty to consult. Each one of those perspectives would need to be considered and considered in a comprehensive way, which is no small task, I might add, Mr. Deputy Chair.

* (16:00)

So—but this is the work that is being done by the Leader of the Opposition. I think it's valuable work. I think it's work that needs to be done. And from those conversations that he's had and those experiences that he's had, for him to then bring forward this particular amendment, which, I think, addresses those issues, you know, thoughtfully, carefully and simply gives another perspective or another expanded viewpoint for this government on how to implement this important legislation. I think it's absolutely a vital way to begin this process.

So I—you know, I'm surprised that we haven't heard support from members opposite. And I get it, you know, this is a partisan place and sometimes it can be difficult for members of the government party to stand up, speak against the minister's position or against the Premier's (Mr. Pallister) position. I don't think I'm expecting that. What I think I am expecting is a little bit more nuance. And I may—and, you know, with all due respect, I think I would say that the member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Piwniuk) was sort of bordering on that, because I think he spoke with passion. I think he spoke with experience. Somebody who lives in a part of Manitoba that is being affected by this, somebody who's lived it in terms of his family history—and he talked a little bit about that.

So I think he was getting to those—these points, but what I think he failed to connect in terms of the importance of this particular reasoned amendment is its relationship to the success of the government's bill. This is simply to make the government's bill more successful in accomplishing what every member that stood up in this House has said is the most important thing, and that is to promote safe hunting practices.

Now, that's me being probably the most generous I can possibly be in terms of the motive—what I think the motivations of this government are with regards to this bill. Because, you know, if that truly was where we were starting, if that truly was what we really wanted to talk about in this House, I think we would be having a bit of a different debate.

But we're not starting from that position, right? So that is the problem, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We're not starting from that position. We're actually starting from a position where the Premier has actually gone out in this province and used the words race war to describe the current relationship between indigenous and non-indigenous people. And that is our starting position.

And, you know, I mean, this government talks a lot about tone at the top and it's very—I mean, anybody can see this is a premier-driven government. This is like Stephen Harper, you know, to the max, where it's—all the control is in the Premier's office. All the control, all the say. You know, even when members opposite have reasonable concerns, either they're not presenting them or they're not being heard, but regardless, the Premier's not listening to those things.

And so if it is true that this is a premier-driven government, that this is all about the Premier's viewpoints, when the Premier of this province comes out and uses the phrase race war—now, you know what, the member for Minto (Mr. Swan) called that—he called those comments unfortunate comments. And maybe that's language that was used in the media. You know, I guess that's a nice way of sort of giving somebody a bit of leeway, right? So if somebody says something so unbelievably egregious—like, as the leader of this province, to talk about the relationship between indigenous and non-indigenous people in a time of reconciliation, to characterize that as a race war, you know, the path out of that is to say, well, the Premier made some unfortunate comments.

And I think the intention of using that kind of language is for the member to then stand up—and not in this Chamber, this was said a while ago, although he could still do it—but at any point to just say, you know what, that's not what I meant. That's—I'm sorry. Just come out and say it: I'm sorry. Because we see it time and time again in this place, that—look, I don't want to get into the kind of politics where I question the Premier's motives on this. And again, I'm trying to be generous there. But if we're giving the benefit of the doubt, then all you have to do is stand up and say: I'm sorry, that was just—I said it off the cuff, I said it in the context of a bunch of people that would be receptive to that, but that's not the message I have for all Manitobans—anything. Anything. Like, the rope has been given and we're just—you know, all we asked was for the Premier to walk that statement back so that we could start this kind of important debate that every single member of this Chamber has said it is important, every single one has stood up. Nobody has stood up and said, well, you know, safe hunting practices are not important to me and my family. I mean, come on.

You know, as a father, as somebody who's now out—well, you know, I haven't gone hunting with my son, but we've out—been out shooting and, you know,

heck of a good shot, I got to say, and—but more importantly than that, he's loving it. He's loving the outdoors, he's loving shooting, he's loving being a part of this, and it's such a joy. I mean, I think every, again, father in this place could relate that experience of going out with your children or with, you know, with young ones and sharing that—the joy. You know, I think that's something that everybody can talk about.

So that's the place we're coming from. That's—that should be the starting point, and yet direction from the top. We lead by example; we lead from the top. Okay. And what has the Premier (Mr. Pallister) said? Race war—race war—is the place we start. Not safe hunting; race war.

So it just—it's not genuine, Mr. Speaker, and, if we want to be genuine, this is the kind of reasoned amendment that could make it genuine, that could actually say, wait a minute, there's a way to actually work through this, there's a way to actually build some consensus, build a coalition of those in our community who think this is an important issue and move forward on it, because there are so many issues in our province that we need to start thinking about in a way that doesn't inflame and doesn't promote divisions. We need to start working together on these issues to make sure that we solve them and that we resolve them.

We—you know, we talk about reconciliation. I had students down in the gallery—was that last week? Time's starting to blur together here, Mr. Speaker. Last week, the week before, an indigenous students group from Kildonan-East Collegiate, and these kids—so inspiring to me, I got to say. You know, so there's a few folks in there. There's a few First Nations, a few indigenous people and a whole bunch of people that have no connection, quote, unquote, to indigenous people in the sense that they're not—that's not their background. And yet they come to school—of their own volition they created, by themselves, a group to talk about indigenous issues.

And that's the future. That is the future of this province. It's people coming together. In this case, it's young people, because I think they see through—they see past all of this, this bickering and this unbelievable comments by the First Minister. They see the importance of this. They're going to lead us to reconciliation, but we can't fail them. We can't fail them now when we have an opportunity to come together, when we have an opportunity to actually bring forward legislation that holds up legally, that

holds up in terms of our duty to consult and the rights of indigenous people. There is an opportunity to go forward on this, but, again, we're not starting from that point.

So, again, I ask—you know, and so, you know, members opposite scoff when I say, you know, the Premier's in charge and that it's his show. And, if that's true, then I hope that the next person that stands up from the government side can just say: You know what, those aren't just unfortunate comments, those comments are wrong, they're hurtful and they don't get us anywhere. They don't get us anywhere as a province, and they certainly don't get us anywhere when we're actually talking about safe hunting practices in this province.

So, you know, I guess I just want to end, Mr. Speaker, with the little time I have left, that, you know, as I said, I come to this as a father, as somebody who has learned from my father how to be—how to hunt, how to hunt safely, how to respect the hunt. That is absolutely paramount in my life, and it's something that I'm very proud of. It's something that—you know, I'm proud that I—well, I've been out hunting, you know, lately, in the last couple years—not as much as I'd like. As I said, I've got young kids; I've got a busy family life—but, when I do, it's something that I feel—and I think I've talked to this—about this with the member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine), who I respect as well with regards to this issue—it is a spiritual experience, and it is something that I think a lot of people take in that way. It's a practical experience, and it's a very practical experience for a lot of people, especially in indigenous cultures, but otherwise as well. I know a lot of people in my life that I've met over the years who rely on the hunt to feed their family. That is their primary source of meat over the winter months.

* (16:10)

But it is something, as a recreational hunter, is something that I really do see as a spiritual experience. I want to pass that along to my children. I want them to be able to learn how to hunt in a way that's safe, that's sustainable, that respects the animal and the game, respects the environment and really understands that when we're all united with regards to safe hunting and proper hunting and management of wildlife and making sure that we're doing this in a way that is going to be sustainable into the future, that this is something that is a good thing to hold onto as a practice in this province.

And, when I heard the member, the leader for the official opposition, stand up, and when he gave his speech, it was something that really touched me. It really spoke to my experience, and I think we're very much in—on the same page with regards to how important we think it is for our family to continue this.

But I need to know, just in the same way that when I go out hunting—as I said, everybody has examples of improper or unsafe hunting practices that they've heard of or that they've witnessed. Every single member who's been out hunting has that experience—every single member.

You know, and when I go out, I know that I'm with the good guys, right? I'm with the other hunters that respect and want to follow the rules. And all of us are in opposition to those who are breaking the rules, who are hunting unsafely. That is the starting—that should be the starting point of where we are, and again, as I said, having the conservation officers here this morning simply highlights that truth.

But, when we come to this Chamber and we debate a bill in a way that doesn't truly attempt to address the issue to make Manitoba a safer place to hunt, a more sustainable place to hunt and a place where all hunters, no matter indigenous or non-indigenous, are coming together in common cause, well, it's just—it's a set-up to fail. This is a—this bill has been brought forward in a way that sets us up to fail.

And maybe that's not the intention of every single member across the way. Maybe there are members across the way who are willing to stand up; they're willing to say to this Premier (Mr. Pallister) that your comments were wrong, that this bill is too important to politicize; this bill is too important to not understand how a—excuse me—a reasoned amendment such as what has been brought forward by the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew) could not be considered in a real way.

You know, are there members on the other side that are willing to do that? Well, that remains to be seen, but I think if we continue to have this debate in a way that focuses on everyone's real lived experiences or perspectives, I think we're better off for it, and I think it's going to take some real pushback by this caucus for us to get there, and I hope that there are members that are willing to do that.

Now, before I close my comments, Mr. Deputy Chair, I wanted to address ever so briefly the nature of this extended session because we now are into day four of an emergency session that was brought forward to debate important financial matters. And yet when we bring forward a request for this government to simply bring BITSA for discussion here, we get stonewalled. And, when we ask for them to call concurrence, we get stonewalled.

And yet, this bill, which, I will point out, was on the Order Paper before this emergency session was called, had an opportunity to be brought forward in a way that we could debate it, that we could have a true discussion in this House, about this important issue. It was not prioritized by this government.

And yet, here we are, spending day after day, instead of talking about these important financial matters which the Premier has yet to identify. I mean, the only things that are out there are BITSA and concurrence. Those are the two issues that are—could be debated in this House around financial matters. Well, I shouldn't say that, Mr. Speaker, because the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey) brought a very reasonable matter of urgent public importance today, to get us to talk about trade, which has an important impact on his community and many others.

But, no, the government refuses to call those bills forward. So instead we talk about this issue. And we'll continue to talk about it, I guess, as long as the government continues to call it. That could be, you know, another two weeks, which probably isn't enough time. I hear the member for—yes, I hear the member for Gimli (Mr. Wharton) saying, not long enough. Let's keep going. He says, we can't get through this debate in a month or in three weeks, so he says, well, maybe we could go a month. I think I would support that. I think we would say, why are we going three weeks? We could go six, we could go nine, we could go all year, because this is an important issue.

But what's more important is that this government actually be transparent, that they bring forward their budget implementation bill. That we can have a true debate in this House around those issues that the Premier said were so important. Absolutely urgent. We got to recall the House. Everything's so urgent. Oh, by the way, we're going to bring forward legislation that has already been in front of this House, has been on the Order Paper.

And, you know, just as an aside, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know, I mean, look, this is an important issue and I think we do need to have, as I said, this very proper debate on it. But, you know, look, it's—we're heading into summer. I heard somebody say, the hunting season is about to start. I'm not sure what they're hunting, what they're hunting with—I know bow season is getting earlier and earlier, but that's really early. I know that muzzleloaders are early, but like that's really—it's June. So, anyway, but maybe I'm ready to be educated about that because I think other members would be happy to share their experience.

So I'll simply finish to say that if we are going to debate issues like Bill 29 before this House, in this so-called emergency session, if this is the priority of government, then we should at least do it in an honest, non-partisan fashion. And if we're going to do that, if members opposite are going to rebuke their Premier's (Mr. Pallister) words like race war, and framing the debate in those terms, then I think there's no question that they—all they have to do is look to our recent amendment to see a path forward to strengthen, to improve this bill and to move it forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): Thank you very much, Mr. Acting Speaker.

These are interesting times we are living in, down here at the Manitoba Legislature. I'm—I think I'm obliged to provide some context to the debate under way.

To be clear, the government has—as my hard-working colleague from Concordia just mentioned—has recalled the Legislature after the scheduled end of the normal sitting because they felt there were urgent financial issues that needed to be discussed, which is fine. That's the government's right and purview to do that as they see fit. We had, in fact, been making some progress in concurrence, which for those who have never darkened the doors of this building, as an elected official or a political staffer or civil servant, that might not know what that is. Concurrence, of course, is a stage in the budget process where the opposition has another opportunity to ask questions of the government of the day.

* (16:20)

So we thought that might be what the government had in mind. But, instead, when given the opportunity to decide, as government does, what

we do in the afternoon, they have instead decided that Bill 29 is what they wish to discuss. And nothing against Bill 29 itself, but it's hard to see an immediate dramatic urgent emergency financial issue coming out of a relatively small bill that amends existing legislation under The Wildlife Act. So we can also ask the question why, if Bill 29 is of such dire importance to this government, why they did not simply introduce it in the timelines normally allotted to guarantee its passage. They are months late in doing that, and now, all of a sudden, this is the only topic that they have so far indicated fits under their rather tenuous definition of urgent financial issues.

So we are debating now a motion that we as the official opposition have brought in as regards the government's proposed changes to The Wildlife Act, and I'll read our motion into the official record. It's not very long. It just says: That Bill 29, The Wildlife Amendment Act (Safe Hunting and Shared Management), that on the proposed motion of the honourable member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew), we amend it as follows: first, that the motion be amended by deleting all of the words after the word that and substituting the following: This House declines to give second reading to Bill 29, The Wildlife Amendment Act, because Bill 29 fails to institute the principles necessary for a real system of co-management for safe hunting in Manitoba. End quote.

So my comments from here on will obviously touch on Bill 29 as the context, but I will be speaking to—most directly to the motion that we have brought forward, and, really, as my colleagues from Minto and Concordia have pointed out, the government would probably be very, very well served to listen to this motion and incorporate it because the evidence that we have already put on the record—and I don't know if—how much my comments will add to the collective body of knowledge, but I may have a few additional pieces to contribute, Mr. Acting Speaker. But the rationale that we have been bringing forward, the facts that we have been stating, the history of the constitutional rights and division of powers in our country, the way that the Supreme Court has defined indigenous rights in Canada, all would suggest very clearly that this government has erred in how they have brought about this motion to change The Wildlife Act, and as is so often the case in life, as also in politics, how you do something can be as important or even more important than what it is you're trying to do. And I think that is absolutely

applicable here because under the law in Canada, as has been enshrined in our constitution and supported in subsequent court cases across the country, there is—are very stringent requirements that all governments need to meet in order to meet the test of full and proper consultation with indigenous people, and by indigenous peoples, of course, I am referring to First Nations, Inuit and the Metis.

So, if the government does decide to use its majority to ram through this bill this summer, they could, in fact, be putting all Manitobans at risk of yet another court battle and yet another court challenge, very expensive, which could potentially be launched by people who do not feel this government has met the appropriate threshold for full and proper consultation as required under the constitution. And, indeed, I would point, as yet another piece of evidence that the government should be listening to, the moment that they announced that Bill 29 was coming forward, none other than Grand Chief Arlen Dumas, who serves as the duly elected—democratically elected grand chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, spoke in opposition of this legislation. And, as I understand it, his comments weren't even focused, you know, as much on the content of the bill but, again, on the process. He said quite clearly from the get-go that the way the government has gone about discussing what it wants to do has not met the threshold of full and proper consultation with indigenous people.

And that right there opens this government up to further lawsuits, further court challenges, delays in what they do want to accomplish and, of course, more expenses for Manitobans to have to suffer through. So it is a very serious situation that the government has created all by themselves. They have no one to try and cast the blame onto other than the folks in their own mirror. And we have quite simply raised this and pointed this out to them in the hopes that, for once, saner heads over there might prevail and that the government may see fit to delay the progress of Bill 29 and to immediately start working with all of the stakeholders, indigenous persons first and foremost, to see that the threshold for proper consultation is duly met.

Now, I want to also as context, Mr. Acting Speaker, since we are debating the motion here—and once again I will repeat that the motion calls for Bill 29 to not proceed because it fails to institute the principles necessary for a real system of co-management. And included in that are certainly

the consultation requirements that I've already mentioned.

But I also want to share very briefly a bit of a distinction that needs to be made between different terms that are being used here. Shared management and co-management are very different things. Co-management—and I'm going back to my master's degree in natural resources management, here. Co-management is where there is actually a sharing of power, where the resource users and the associated stakeholders associated with the use of a resource, be that fisheries or hunting or forestry, anything—the principles can be applied in a wide range of settings—there is actually a sharing of power. And decisions on the management of that resource—how much of the resource can be harvested, under what circumstances, at what times of the year, who will have access at what point of time—all of those decisions are made with the stakeholders, the resource users and the government sitting down as equal partners.

And, ideally, you would even see co-management reach the point where traditional ecological knowledge of indigenous people is treated as equally valid and equally important as the—what we would call the scientific or western perspective on that knowledge, and the scientific research that might be being conducted in the field. So it's not that one would trump the other, but that both of them have the ability to come forward and be heard and decisions are made in a collective fashion.

So that's the ideal. And there is—very briefly, of course, there's a—there had been a good working example of that with the co-management of the Lake Winnipeg fishery. Unfortunately, the government has now done what governments tend to do. They don't like sharing power and this government's now been making unilateral decisions around fisheries regulations, which is wiping out that spirit of co-operation and equality around the table. So people of all stripes are certainly correct to be very suspicious of this government talking about doing a co-management type of arrangement when it comes to hunting in general, and on—specifically trying to deal with issues surrounding night hunting.

* (16:30)

But, to be clear, the government is not even talking about setting up a co-management regime. The language that they are using in the bill itself refers to something called shared management. And, in the bill itself, the clauses in there related

to this topic indicate that the minister may create an advisory committee which may make recommendations to the minister. And the minister may decide to implement those recommendations.

None of that is based or rooted in the principles of an equal sharing of power and of a collaborative approach to managing an issue. That is still very much the traditional, heavy-handed, top-down-indigenous people would likely say colonial-approach to relationships with resource users.

So the government isn't even talking, in its proposed legislation, about implementing a co-management scheme. They are talking about something very, very different from that, which is actually very, very similar to existing systems and will not very likely be receiving the support of very many of the people most directly affected.

Madam Speaker in the Chair

Now, for many Manitobans, the goal of reconciliation, awareness of reconciliation, awareness of the recommendations in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is growing. And non-indigenous people, more and more—and I think this is very hopeful—are embracing calls to action, are opening up their own minds and listening and even participating in the dialogue that is happen—that is happening.

And I would certainly encourage all of us, as elected officials, to continue to participate in that process at every opportunity. For many people, however, this whole notion of duty to consult and section 35 in the constitution and other things I have briefly touched on might be completely new information, so a little bit of context as to where these rights came from and why they apply in this certain situation would probably be useful.

And, on this note, I want to thank my learned colleague from Minto, who, I think, gave a very profound and good overview of exactly this process in his comments, in his statements on this bill, and the starting point of this is none other than the constitution of our country. So these are laws put in place in 1982, of course, that cannot be ignored by this government.

I had previously mentioned the co-management board of the Lake Winnipeg Fishery. The government had a rule on the books that a fisher had to be paid within seven days of delivering their catch to a fish dealer. That didn't happen, and now the

government has just ignored that rule altogether and just removed it.

You can't do that when you're talking about the constitution of the country. These laws guide who we are right now as Canadians. They can, in future, be changed, be amended, hopefully, be improved. That will, you know, inevitably happen. The constitution will be updated. But there is a section in the Constitution Act that was originally never even intended to be there.

The government at the time, the Trudeau 1.0 was in power and this was not on their radar at all. And it was only as the topic of the patriation of the—of Canada's constitution took hold, as the government pursued this objective, that indigenous people across the country and their allies at the time started to stand up and demand that their inherent rights and their traditional relationship with the land that we now call Canada, that that was recognized and that they would, in this patriation process, not in any way lose the rights that had been guaranteed to them.

Though very rarely honoured, those rights had been guaranteed to them by the British Crown. So indigenous people, understandably, very concerned about the Crown, had been the entity that that they had these treaties with, and now the Crown is suddenly not going to be a factor, but the federal government of Canada would be. What would happen to their rights?

So they launched a very successful activist campaigns, and it was really only because of the work that indigenous people themselves did to insist that rights that have always existed for them were recognized in the Canadian constitution. It's only because of their activism that that actually ended up happening.

And section 35 of the Canadian constitution now has four sections related to this. And it states: (1) the existing Aboriginal and treaty rights, the Aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed.

Now, I'll just quickly pause here. Once again, I want to emphasize the rights of indigenous people have always existed. This is just Canada catching up to that fact and recognizing them in writing. So—and it's not that Canada gave these rights to anyone. These rights have always existed and for goodness' sakes, so many of the human rights of indigenous people were violated and horribly abused, ignored throughout history of our country. So the first part of

the constitution, it's the first time in Canada's history of that indigenous rights were formally recognized in writing.

Section 2 indicates that Aboriginal peoples in Canada includes the Indian, Inuit and Metis peoples of Canada. Again, I'll push the pause button. That's older language than what we would use now, Madam Speaker, but that is what the constitution currently says.

And then section 3 says, for greater certainty in subsection 1, treaty rights includes rights that now exist by way of land claims agreements or may so be acquired. And that is particularly relevant here in Manitoba where so many treaties are in effect and we are indeed all treaty people. And then section 4, notwithstanding any other provision of this act, the Aboriginal and treaty rights referred to in subsection 1 are guaranteed equally to male and female persons. And, of course, indigenous women were amongst the last to have the opportunity to vote in Canadian elections. Not all women received the right to vote at the same time and so particularly relevant and important for the constitution to specifically mention that these rights are applicable to both male and female persons. And once again, that is language that is changing in discourse these days, but that is the stated situation with the constitution.

So what that section 35 of the constitution does is that it certainly recognizes indigenous rights. It didn't, however, actually define them or provide any great detail on what that meant and what it didn't mean. That has had to evolve through various court cases as indigenous people have again stood up for themselves and declared that they have these constitutional rights and Canada, usually, disputes that and charges them with a criminal offence, and the case goes to court and the indigenous people and advocates quite often have had their rights further recognized and defined.

And one of the best examples of that was the Sparrow decision which happened out in British Columbia, where Mr. Sparrow had been found to have been fishing illegally, as the Crown at the time defined it. And the case went to court and instead we ended up with the Sparrow decision which was ended up being the first time the Supreme Court of Canada actually applied section 35 of the constitutional act. And, in doing so, it defined in the constitution that indigenous people have the traditional Aboriginal right to fish for food, social

and ceremonial purposes, and that that right takes priority over all others after conservation.

* (16:40)

There's a two-part stress test, you might say, Madam Speaker, that came out of the Sparrow decision, which should be guiding all governments in their actions, any time an action a government wants to take could infringe on traditional indigenous rights. So there's two parts to this threshold. The first part is determining whether the infringement is justified at all. You know, is the government pursuing something that is valid? And the second part, and it's the part that is particularly relevant here with Bill 29, is that the government's actions must be consistent with its fiduciary duty towards indigenous people.

And it's the second part, which includes the duty to consult, where this government has completely dropped the ball, and there's nothing, as I have demonstrated already in Bill 29, in the language that the government has chosen to use in Bill 29 already to back up the government's argument that they have met this crucially important section threshold. And the government, further, has certainly not even made any effort to show that they are taking as little infringement as possible on the rights of indigenous people with the course of action that they intend to follow under Bill 29.

So this really is where the heart of the problem lies, and again, it is a problem that this government has created one hundred per cent all by themselves. They could have engaged in proper consultation with the indigenous stakeholders involved. For goodness' sakes, the Manitoba Metis Federation passed their own law in a perfectly valid example of self-governance. I believe—just double check my notes—I believe they did that last year. It was back in—was it September? Yes, September of 2017 voted to ban spotlighting, a particular form of night hunting, and applying it to all of their members. And indeed, on examination, Madam Speaker, you can probably argue that the Manitoba Metis Federation's self-governing decision there is stronger than what the government has brought forward, and yet we have Grand Chief Arlen Dumas coming out the same day the government makes this announcement declaring his opposition to what the government is proposing because they have not engaged in proper consultation, and that's even though you have a very prominent, well-known indigenous organization in

the form of the Manitoba Metis Federation already on side with the issue.

So this is a mess that the government is—has created all on its own, and the other piece, of course, that has to be mentioned here is the role that the Premier (Mr. Pallister) has played in setting such a bad tone for this discussion right from the start. Most people in Manitoba, I would wager, certainly most people living inside the Perimeter Highway, had never heard of night hunting. It would have been a totally new topic for many folks who live in the city who do not participate in hunting, would not have heard of what night hunting is. So the first they would have heard of it is where our own Premier, someone who's supposed to be representing all of us with a fair and equal eye, comes out and declares the practice of night hunting to be leading to a, quote-unquote, race war in rural Manitoba. I—and he goes further, as this Premier is wont to do, and just doubles down and makes the situation even worse when he's asked to clarify what he means, and he gives an interview with Maclean's magazine who quoted him as saying, quote: "Young indigenous men—a preponderance of them are offenders, with criminal records—are going off shooting guns in the middle of the night. It doesn't make sense." Well—end quote, Madam Speaker.

I am hard pressed to understand how even the most reasonable indigenous person could possibly look at that type of behaviour from our own duly elected Premier and think that there is anything even remotely resembling fair and proper consultation or duty to consult going to be enacted by his government. The farthest that the Premier would go after an enormous backlash erupted, deservedly so, calling him out for his comments that the farthest he was able to go was not to apologize. All he could do is say he expressed regret at the direction the conversation has taken since he made that remark.

And you had indigenous leaders imploring the Premier to sign up for his—for an indigenous studies class at the university in hopes of perhaps having a more reasoned conversation with someone who has what many would categorize as an exceptionally hurtful and unhelpful public statement and point of view on the issue.

And, indeed, I listened closely to the comments earlier on from the member for—I want to say—Arthur-Virden, and if I heard it correctly, I believe the member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Piwniuk) told us when night hunting started, and it was when

someone came out to his part of the province to do some work there and that their—the friends of this person, or perhaps subcontractors, came out as well, and said that's where night hunting started.

I mean, that's—I don't know if any of the people involved were indigenous or not, but that's a radically different version of events from what the Premier has described as what's going on in the rural landscape.

So I thank the member for Arthur-Virden for sharing his local knowledge. I just wish his Premier was listening to his own caucus before forming such hurtful opinions and trying to ram through legislation that we do fairly believe is going to cause the government and its relationship with indigenous people far more harm than it is going to accomplish any good.

I also think it might be useful if members of the Tory caucus suggest to the Premier that he may want to stop making government announcements at Tory fundraising events. His initial race-war comment, of course, came at a well-documented and reported Tory fundraising event in Virden, and the Premier announced that this legislation was coming forward at a more recent Tory fundraising event.

When you are the Premier of the province, you are supposed to be governing for the interests of everyone. You do have the right to define what issues are important, but you probably should not be making government statements at private political party fundraising events. And the fact that the Premier continues to do that, that he continues to demonstrate he's not listening, is once again probably going to come back and hurt all of us. It's a problem that has been one hundred per cent created and made worse by this Premier.

And now the Minister of Sustainable Development (Ms. Squires) has put more gasoline on the fire by bringing in a piece of legislation that does not meet modern standards for a proper relationship with indigenous people. And that will be part of her legacy in this building. That's unfortunate, but that's what happens when you don't stand up to a Premier.

And, with those words, Madam Speaker, I just want to thank all of the indigenous activists and all of their allies in the community. I strive to be one of them as best I can in the hopes that we can continue to create a better world rather than a worse one—

Madam Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): I'm pleased to get up today to give my wholesale support to the reasoned amendment put forward by the Leader of the Opposition, my friend from Fort Rouge. I think it's timely; it's principled, and it offers an opportunity here for us to do something as a group in this Legislature rather than as two, three, political parties.

In fact, as you know, we were called back into this emergency session just four or five days ago presumably for a financial emergency. We have yet to hear what the nature of this emergency is or what the financial circumstances are that would warrant the Premier (Mr. Pallister) calling us back into the Legislature in an emergency basis, and we're still waiting for the House leader or the Premier or the Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen) or, frankly, any member of Cabinet or of the Tory caucus to provide us with a sense of why it is we're back in session.

* (16:50)

And so that mystery, I guess, will continue for another day or another week or another few weeks. That's fine by us. We've discussed all sorts of things in the past several days, none of which seem to be related to the very financial emergency that called us back into session that the Premier used as the reasoning in his letter to you, as I understand it, for us to return to session. So this secret that he holds, hopefully, will be forthcoming sometime in the near future.

We certainly would like to get on to having the government introduce the budget implementation bill and then we can proceed with concurrence, as what should be happening at this point, but it doesn't seem that we're going to be going in that direction any time soon.

So we're left to debate other bills, and here we are discussing Bill 29, The Wildlife Amendment Act, in relation to night hunting. And so, while we're here waiting for the terms of the emergency to be defined and articulated for all members of the House it is, I think, an opportunity for us to do something maybe that's quite extraordinary, and that's kind of work together here to try to create the best bill possible in relation to the subject of night hunting. And that's precisely what the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew) has proposed in his amendment.

And so I want to spend what time I have talking about the nature of the amendment itself, the purpose

of it and where it could potentially take us, not just as New Democrats here or Conservatives, but as a Legislature, to create the best possible law to govern a complex but nevertheless important subject, and I think what—by proposing the amendment that he has, the Leader of the Opposition has provided an opportunity for the government to accept what we are suggesting in order to enhance the provisions of the bill in order to make it the best law possible going forward.

I have to say, I love the concept of a reasoned amendment. I'm sure most would expect that most amendments introduced into this House are reasoned—at least I would hope so. I know that during our time in government, for the time that I was here, not all amendments coming from the opposition seemed reasoned or seemed reasonable, and I suppose from the government's point of view, right now they might think that some of the things that we suggest by way of amendment are not reasoned or are unreasonable. And I get the interplay of politics in the determination of reasoned or unreasoned, reasonable or unreasonable.

But, I have to say, the concept of a reasoned amendment is very striking, and I am not an authority on parliamentary language or parliamentary procedures, but, when this concept was raised with us as a possible way of enhancing the bill, of making it much better, of making it more comprehensive and more meaningful and actually having the kind of consequences we want to see happen out in the community, I think the notion of a reasoned amendment provides just that opportunity.

I hope that the government will embrace what's being suggested by the member from Fort Rouge, the Leader of the Opposition, as a reasonable way in which to strengthen the bill and to move forward, and, as my friend from Wolseley just said, to actually engage in a meaningful act of reconciliation, something that there have been far too few of in the last few years, and especially since we all, as a House, unanimously supported the reconciliation bill.

There was camaraderie on all sides of the House about how we, as a group of 57 legislatures, would move together to make sure that reconciliation was at the heart of everything that we did, not merely to repair the damage from colonial relationships of the past, of the paternalism associated with colonization, but in fact to create a much better present and a much more hopeful future.

And so this is one of those opportunities, I would suggest to all members of the House, for us to do that very thing, to engage in a genuine act of reconciliation by recognizing the opportunity being presented to us in the reasoned amendment put forward by the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew) and the Leader of the Opposition.

And it's—of course, a reasoned amendment says that there are—that the elements of the bill each in and of itself are okay with the opposition, if I could sort of use common language, but there's a principle in the bill that's adverse to or differing from the principles or provisions of the bill. And so that's a nuanced appreciation of what an amendment could look at. We're not just saying, you know, we're opposed to this bill because otherwise we could just vote against it or we could say we're against the bill and so, consequently, let's send it off to committee right away—let's have second reading and send it off to committee so that members of the public could have their say. But no, the reasoned amendment says that there—that elements of the bill are okay, even the principle of the bill is okay if it's based on this need for safety for all involved: hunters, farmers, rural residents, for indigenous peoples, for everyone who might be a participant in the debate.

But what the reasoned amendment suggests, Madam Speaker, is to say that the government hasn't gone far enough in what it needs to do in order to actually achieve the ends that they are seeking. And so what we have suggested is that—and what the—what is put forward in the Leader of the Opposition's amendment is to say that the House declines to give

second reading to Bill 29 because bill nine—29 fails to institute the principles necessary for a real system of co-management for safe hunting in Manitoba.

And, Madam Speaker, that is frankly the crux of the matter, the central issue at stake in this reasoned amendment, because it calls for a real system of co-management which you won't find in Bill 29 in and of itself. Yes, it creates some committees and some 'budvisory' groups and whatnot, but it doesn't—and my friend from Wolseley just pointed out, defined what co-management should and ought to look like. It doesn't go nearly far enough in establishing real principles, a real system of co-management which would—and I would suggest and I would submit to the rest of the House is a genuine form of reconciliation. A true gesture of reconciliation which should be at the heart of everything that we are trying to do in this legislature if our desire collectively as 57 MLAs is, indeed, to create a fair, more equitable, more just society for every single Manitoban.

Certainly, that's what inspires members on this side of the House. That's what we work for each and every day. I know that to be true. I talk with my colleagues about it. And so we had a very good and comprehensive debate about Bill 29 in our caucus. We discussed the prospect—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have 19 minutes remaining.

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, June 12, 2018

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