

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

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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Forty-First Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
ALLUM, James	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
BINDLE, Kelly	Thompson	PC
CHIEF, Kevin	Point Douglas	NDP
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	PC
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, Hon.	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	NDP
SCHULER, Ron, Hon.	St. Paul	PC
SELINGER, Greg	St. Boniface	NDP
SMITH, Andrew	Southdale	PC
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	Gimli	PC
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WISHART, Ian, Hon.	Portage la Prairie	PC
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
YAKIMOSKI, Blair	Transcona	PC

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, November 29, 2016

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

**Madam Speaker:** O Eternal and Almighty God, from Whom all power and wisdom come, we are assembled here before Thee to frame such laws as may tend to the welfare and prosperity of our province. Grant, O merciful God, we pray Thee, that we may desire only that which is in accordance with Thy will, that we may seek it with wisdom and know it with certainty and accomplish it perfectly for the glory and honour of Thy name and for the welfare of all our people. Amen.

Please be seated.

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

**Madam Speaker:** Introduction of bills? Committee reports?

### TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sustainable Development):** I am pleased to table the Manitoba Conservation Districts Program 2015-2016 Annual Report.

**Madam Speaker:** Ministerial statements?

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### Carolyn Schwark

**Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson):** We have heard the expression, when it rains, it pours. Many times, the old adage proves truthful, and I wish to use it today to pay tribute to both a dear friend and a distinguished constituent of Emerson and a Canadian leader in the duty-free industry.

The Emerson Duty Free store can proudly claim to be the licence holder of No. 1, the longest operational land duty-free business in Canada. Each year, the Frontier Duty Free Association recognizes one employee who has gone above and beyond in their commitment to their store and the industry. This year, the FDFA chose to honour Carolyn Schwark, the longest serving employee of the longest running land duty-free shop in Canada.

The Emerson Duty Free store, the DFS Ventures, owned and operated by Michael and Simon Resch, has been in continuous operation for 34 years. Of those 34 years, Carolyn has been an employee for 32 years.

As a testament to the work environment that the Reschs have been able to create, they have a—have multitude tenured employees including Ellen Burns, Lori-Anne Irwin, both of whom are in attendance today. This is in addition to the part-time and seasonal summer work in which DFS Ventures provides.

To Carolyn and her husband Ken, whose volunteer efforts cannot be overstated, Emerson owes you a debt of gratitude. To Michael and Simon Resch and DFS Ventures, your community contributions are second to none. For all that you have done and will continue to do to keep Emerson a great place to live, work and raise a family, I ask all my honourable members to join me in a standing ovation of Carolyn Schwark.

#### Pearl Domienik

**Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview):** I rise today to pay tribute to an extraordinary woman who, after a career that spanned four decades with the Province of Manitoba, retired from the public service some two weeks ago.

Madam Speaker, I refer to the magnificent, the incomparable, the simply amazing Pearl Domienik who, among many other positions, served ministers of Education on both sides of the House during her incredible career with the government of Manitoba.

During our time in government, Pearl served many NDP ministers of Education, including, among others, the iconic Muriel Smith, Drew Caldwell, Peter Bjornson, Nancy Allan and last, and certainly least, myself. That she could become such a beloved figure among all of my former colleagues is, I would say, a remarkable testament to her professionalism, her integrity and perhaps, most of all, her infinite patience.

Pearl immigrated to Canada with her husband Eddie in 1974 and began her career with the Province in 1976. Together they built a life in our great province and are the proud parents of Natalie, Katie and Chelsea and the adoring grandparents of Nieve and Jorja.

Anyone who called the Department of Education will know that distinctive, always friendly, British accent that was as charming as it was sophisticated.

Pearl's mastery of the education system was second to none and her attention to detail awe inspiring and more than a little intimidating to those of us—okay, me—who need more work in that regard.

To say that I am just a bit fond of Pearl is an understatement. Over the last few years she meant the world to me and my family in ways that I could never have imagined. I feel very lucky to have worked with her, to get to know her and I feel very privileged to call her my friend.

Madam Speaker, Pearl is obviously not in the gallery today. She made it quite clear to me that she wanted to retire without any fanfare and likely won't be happy at all that I'm making this statement, but I could not let her retirement pass without acknowledging her tremendous career and thank her for all she did for me, let alone so many others.

May you enjoy your retirement, Pearl; you have certainly earned it.

### **DEKALB Superspiel**

**Mr. Shannon Martin (Morris):** Madam Speaker, on Friday the 18th, I had the pleasure to kick off the 9th annual DEKALB Superspiel curling tournament in Morris, Manitoba.

This tournament showcases some of the top curling talent in the world. On the women's side, 32 teams from across Canada, the US, and Sweden competed to oust last year's champion, Team Jones. They put up a tenacious defence of their title against a challenge in the final from Team Englot, winning 8-3.

On the men's side, 32 teams from across Canada, the US, Sweden, Switzerland and Norway competed to oust last year's champion, Team Carruthers. In the end, Team McEwen topped Team Lyburn 9-4 in the final, finishing the tournament with an 8-1 record and clinching the first title of the season.

This tournament has grown and continues to grow in popularity each year and is now one of the top five events on both the women's and men's side, outside of the grand slam series.

While this tournament is a showcase of some of the world's top curling talent, it is also a showcase for Morris and area to show off their new state-of-the-art Cargill Curling Training Centre.

Events like this simply do not happen without the tenacious spirit of dreamers—in this case, the curling dynamo of Chris and Lorne Hamblin. Their

love of curling has taken them from Switzerland to China as coaches of the men's national curling team. In 2015, Lorne was inducted into the Manitoba Curling Hall of Fame as a builder, and builder is a very apt description.

I'd like to thank the organizers of the tournament, specifically Chris and Lorne Hamblin, who are with us here today, for their efforts promoting curling, promoting Morris and whose unwillingness to accept no as a legitimate response has ensured Manitoba truly is a curling centre of excellence. Thank you.

### **Operation Red Nose**

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake):** Operation Red Nose: the best way to get home this holiday season if you or someone you know has been enjoying Christmas cheer.

Spend time with your friends and family celebrating the holidays and use Operation Red Nose's free designated driver program to get you and your vehicle home safe and sound this season. One quick call to Operation Red Nose's hotline and they will dispatch a volunteer drive team to your location.

\* (13:40)

They will drive you and your guests home in your vehicle while a third team member follows in the team's escort vehicle. When you arrive alive at your drop-off location, the team will reunite and continue on to their next assignment.

Please call 204-947-6673 to schedule a ride home. The Red Nose telephone lines are open from 9 p.m. to 3 a.m. on operation nights. Please call 30 to 45 minutes prior to your preferred pickup time to request a ride.

But don't forget, you can also be a volunteer. Get that warm, fuzzy feeling this winter with volunteer with Operation Red Nose. Volunteers dedicate their time on cold winter nights to help make sure those who enjoy the holidays get home and the roads are safe for everyone.

Operation Red Nose starts in the last weekend in November and continues each weekend in December through New Year's Eve.

Volunteers are welcome and needed each and every night to make our roads safe and get our loved ones home safe and sound.

Please put the number in your mobile device, pass it on to anyone who needs: 204-947-6673.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

### Lord Nelson School

**Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows):** Since being elected, I have had the opportunity to develop countless numbers of new welcoming relationships in Burrows. Lord Nelson School is no exception.

With each visit to the school I am left feeling humbled and proud of the community in which I live and represent.

Since its inception in 1917, the school has grown from five classrooms to 26 classrooms, ranging from nursery-age children up until grade 6.

This past September, Lord Nelson School officially opened its 4,200-square-foot gymnasium. What stood out to me most about this event was the choir, who performed an original song that expressed how the struggle of badminton birdies would no longer be getting stuck up in the ceiling pipes. The children were truly thrilled by this.

This expansion also included two additional classrooms and a kitchen area.

Madam Speaker, education infrastructure investment in the North End, such as this one, is something that everyone in this House can be truly proud of.

Just earlier this month, I had the honour of participating in Lord Nelson's Remembrance Day ceremony. The ceremony stood out to me, as the program was completely ran by students. The students exhibited the true meaning of remembrance, and this was displayed through the sharing of songs, stories and even contemporary dance.

Whether it be the laughter, the willingness to learn or the talent that shines through these children, it is evident that the guardians, the teachers and all the staff involved are making waves of healthy education and positive influence.

I want to thank Sandy Stevenson, the principal of Lord Nelson School, for being here with us today. Sandy has put her heart into the school and deserves to be congratulated for her dedication and inspiring work. Thank you for being here.

### Introduction of Guests

**Madam Speaker:** Prior to oral questions, we have some guests in the gallery.

We have seated in the public gallery from Walter Whyte School eight grade 9 students under the

direction of Rob Simpson, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable members for Selkirk (Mr. Lagimodiere) and Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko).

And also seated in the public gallery, from Taking Charge! for opportunities, 15 visitors under the direction of Ms. Carol Haug, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer).

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

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Collective Bargaining Agreements Pledge to Front-Line Workers

**Ms. Flor Marcelino (Leader of the Official Opposition):** The Premier promised front-line workers that they would not be impacted in their jobs by his cuts.

In fact, he called it his pledge to front-line workers. He said front-line workers should feel secure for years to come. He said they should not be made to feel afraid. He claimed over and over again that he wasn't running with scissors, that he would protect front-line workers.

Well, Madam Speaker, we have finally learned that just isn't the case.

Why has the Premier broken his promise to so many Manitobans?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the question from the member.

And I—but before I respond, I'd like to thank the member and many of the members of the House for their participation in the plaque dedication that we made today together, including the interim Leader of the Liberal Party as well, I should mention, who spoke well, and to say that commemorating Nellie McClung's memory and her tremendous contribution, Madam Speaker, was a wonderful thing to share in today.

And in no small way we all owe a debt of gratitude to you for your initiatives in bringing her name forward and helping establish the Nellie McClung Foundation, Madam Speaker, and I congratulate you and thank you. You're tremendous.

With the limited time available to me, I would add that we believe, as Nellie McClung did, Madam Speaker, in getting the job done and letting them

howl, and so we will get the job done that we promised to do, fixing Manitoba's finances.

And we encourage all members of the House to join together in creating a greater life of security and certainty for all Manitobans, including our great government workers.

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

**Ms. Marcelino:** Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I thank the Premier for the acknowledgements of your efforts for this morning's event. However, I wish the Premier would answer my question this time.

The Premier has broken his word and he knows it. During and since the election the Premier has not been at all clear about his intentions to give himself lots of room to cut. He used misdirection and obfuscation to avoid accountability of any of his pledges.

But on one point he was absolutely clear. He would honour contracts that he'd—that had been freely negotiated.

Yet, now, he has broken his word to Manitobans, going into the wallets of Manitoba workers after he promised he wouldn't.

Madam Speaker, why should anyone believe what the Premier has to say about his commitment to workers?

**Mr. Pallister:** Sixty-two years of keeping my word, Madam Speaker.

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

**Ms. Marcelino:** On the morning of April 13th, just days before the election, the Premier solemnly vowed that he would not rip up contracts.

Standing with his Attorney General (Mrs. Stefanson) and the members for Transcona (Mr. Yakimoski) and St. James (Mr. Johnston), he said, quote: I'm not going to be honouring commitments unless they're of a contractual nature, and, obviously, the honour of the government is at stake here. Unquote.

Madam Speaker, it is certainly a dark day for this new government when the Premier is certainly—is—when the Premier is exposed for having broken his word and proposing not to honour collective agreements previously agreed to.

Madam Speaker, will the Premier admit that he has broken his pledge to front-line workers?

**Mr. Pallister:** Quite the contrary, Madam Speaker, no, of course I won't agree, because I am keeping my word as I have a habit of doing.

I want to thank the member for Fort Garry-Riverview, though, for his comments about Pearl. Well said, sir. And I appreciate those comments. A wonderful contributor to our civil service and someone I had the benefit of having—of having the experience that she brought to the job in transition in my new role; a fine, fine person and a fine Canadian, a fine example of what our civil servants do to contribute to our job here.

\* (13:50)

I want to say, also, Madam Speaker, that I appreciate the fact that we were handed a mess by the previous administration and, unlike the members opposite, we are ready to accept the challenge of facing cleaning up that mess and will.

#### **Collective Bargaining Agreements Pledge to Front-Line Workers**

**Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview):** I would say that if Pearl could work for both me and the Premier, then she surely is a woman of infinite patience after all.

But we know, Madam Speaker, that during the Conservatives' rather minimalist election campaign, the Premier made a solemn, but we now know phony, pledge to protect front-line workers. At the same time, he refused to give raises to people on minimum wage and yet gave himself and his chosen 12 and half Cabinet ministers a raise.

So I want to ask him now: Will he back away from this foolish policy and respect the fact that a deal is a deal?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Well, again, the member opposite resorts in his preamble the usual NDP tactic of impugning integrity and attacking people personally. Madam Speaker, an independent commissioner sets the wages for all members of the Legislative Assembly, including the member for Minto (Mr. Swan) who shamed female members earlier in this session.

And I want to remind all members here that they either believe in the independent commissioner making those recommendations or they do not. The NDP continues to falsely put on the record that

members of the government gave themselves a raise when, in fact, the independent commissioner determined that the members opposite in opposition would make less than they would if they were in the Cabinet of the government. An independent commissioner makes those decisions. We support that. If the NDP does not, they need to go on record and say they are opposed to an independent commissioner setting the wages of all members of the Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Allum:** Well, the Premier can deflect, deny and distort his—the words that he said during the election, but we always said that he had a secret agenda. We—and now it's become crystal clear that he wants to rip up fairly negotiated contracts.

We're asking him—in fact, we're imploring him to step away from this foolish policy that will hurt workers, hurt the economy and hurt the people of Manitoba.

Will he render an apology to the people of Manitoba today for breaking his word?

**Mr. Pallister:** I always appreciate a question from a member of the NDP on breaking word, because I recall the NDP going to the doors of the people of Manitoba, knocking, looking Manitobans right in the eyes and promising they wouldn't raise taxes. They made that promise knowing full well—at least the members of the—former members of the Executive Council of the day knew full well that they were planning to raise the taxes of Manitobans at the time that they looked people right in the eye and promised they would not, Madam Speaker.

So any reference from a member opposite of the NDP to breaking their word is, of course, appreciated, and I thank them for putting it in a preamble.

Madam Speaker, we ran on a commitment to clean up the books and the finances of the Province. After a decade of debt, we'd fix the finances. After a decade of decay, we would repair the services. After a decade of decline, we'd rebuild the economy. That's exactly what we'll do.

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

**Mr. Allum:** Well, Madam Speaker, the PST is to the Premier what Kenny Rogers' chicken is to Kramer on

Seinfeld. He says he hates it but he can't get enough of it, you know?

The Premier made a fake pledge to front-line workers during the election—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Allum:** Yes, you got to watch a lot of Seinfeld; that's true.

He made a pledge to front-line workers. He's gone across the province, his ministers have gone across the province, all making the same solemn pledge and then the Throne Speech on—took that promise away and undercut front-line workers.

We're asking him today: Will he remove—not go forward with that policy, and will he keep his word to the people of Manitoba?

**Mr. Pallister:** Again, Madam Speaker, a Seinfeldian question, a question about nothing. The fact of the matter—the member—what the member neglects in his preamble, as he references the PST yet again, which I must also thank him for—he neglects to mention that we immediately took steps as a new government to index all tax brackets in the province to inflation, something the NDP failed to do for 17 years, which leaves millions of dollars in the hands of Manitobans that was sneakily taken by the previous administration and taken and put on their Cabinet table for them to spend on their friends in untendered contracts.

We also raised the basic personal exemption, Madam Speaker, and took thousands of Manitobans right off the tax rolls, moved ourselves in the direction of being more competitive with our neighbours who, in Saskatchewan, for example, don't start taxing people until about \$17,000 of income—here in Manitoba, around nine under the NDP—and we've begun the process of raising that amount.

These are beneficial measures taken to strengthen the finances of our province by strengthening the finances of Manitobans, Madam Speaker.

### **Collective Bargaining Agreements Pledge to Front-Line Workers**

**Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon):** We know how this government treats front-line workers. It refuses their minimum wage increases; it attacks and undermines their basic rights to organize; it interferes in collective bargaining and now it says it will rip up contracts that were negotiated in good faith.

Can this government explain to front-line workers why it does not respect their essential work that they do?

**Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade):** Certainly there was a lot of comments in the preamble there. I will talk about minimum wage, Madam Speaker.

Obviously, we've decided to consult with Manitobans, something the previous government did not do, so we are currently consulting with Manitobans. The issue is before the Labour Management Review Committee.

We're also currently taking input from Manitobans across Manitoba in terms of our budgetary process, going forward, and he can join in the debate at Your Province, Your Plan. We welcome Manitobans' input into minimum wage.

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

**Mr. Lindsey:** The government refused to tell Manitobans their real intention during the election. They pretended they would protect front-line workers in order to get their vote. They said they would protect front-line workers for years to come.

Now we've learned that they want to lay off front-line workers and make cuts. That's not protection, Madam Speaker, that's an attack.

Will this Premier apologize to front-line workers for having broken his pledge, and will he commit to maintaining existing collective bargaining agreements?

**Mr. Cullen:** I appreciate the member's question, although there's a lot of false accusations in his preamble there.

Clearly, we're having discussions with the labour movement, with all Manitobans, in terms of how we maintain front-line services. Obviously, Manitobans expect that we will maintain front-line services. Unfortunately, the decisions that were made by the previous government make it very difficult for our government to sustain those front-line services, but we're doing everything we can to sustain front-line services that Manitobans have come to expect.

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

**Mr. Lindsey:** The government thinks that by manufacturing a crisis, it can justify an attack on front-line workers. They should stop looking to

dump their problems onto front-line workers. They should look in the mirror.

The Premier and his Cabinet took hundreds of thousands of dollars this year in a raise while threatening to rip up legally binding collective bargaining agreements and take money away from workers that negotiated them fairly and openly.

Will this Premier commit to returning the thousands of dollars he's putting in his own pocket and not rip up collective bargaining agreements?

**Mr. Cullen:** I appreciate the comments from the member opposite.

I would say Manitobans made a decision back in April to end 17 years of crisis management. We know the members opposite are always talking about the past. We're interested in the future. And talking about the future and what just happened here in November, if we look at the optimism in the small-business index from CFIB, up 7.6 per cent, a 14 per cent increase in optimism in Manitoba.

\*(14:00)

Clearly, there's more work to do, as the report goes on and say, a lot more work has to be done to address the province's outstanding competitive challenges.

That government refused to do it. This government will get it done.

#### **Provincial Nominee Program Participants Premier's Comments—Apology Request**

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** Yesterday the Premier wholly disrespected newcomers by constructing them as unemployed and dependent on welfare, and I quote: The five-year average is higher for unemployment for these folks when they come here. And again I quote: It doesn't do them a service to bring them from a desperate circumstance in another country and put them on welfare in this province.

And a—as a Manitoban, I am thoroughly offended by this type of discourse used in respect of newcomers.

Will the Premier apologize to newcomers for such disrespectful comments?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Newcomers to our province deserve an opportunity to find jobs and support themselves and their families, and we'll make improvements to the program that was



neglected under the previous administration so that we encourage that to happen. We'll increase the relationship-building exercise that results in jobs and meaningful employment for new people coming to our country, as is important to us, not only to replace those who retire from their positions, Madam Speaker, but also to meet the employment needs of small business in a growing economy.

And we'll do this by building on the open pathways approach that should have been taken years ago to encourage people to have the chance, when they come here, to seek opportunity and to find it, Madam Speaker.

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

**Ms. Fontaine:** In fact, between 94 and 98 per cent of nominees find jobs within their first year in Manitoba, so that's not accurate. In 2014, Manitoba's established newcomers enjoyed the second lowest unemployment in Canada and the third highest employment in Canada.

The Premier says PNP creates welfare cases, but Chuck Davidson, president and CEO of the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce says they are—it is a fundamental instrument in making sure we have the skilled workforce that we need to fill jobs.

Will the Premier apologize to newcomers today?

**Mr. Pallister:** Manitoba has had the benefit—and I've been advocating, as have many on this side of the House, for improved immigration strategies for our province for a long time, since the early 1980s, Madam Speaker. I won't apologize for that.

What the member is advocating for and what she is saying and what is implicit in her preamble is that the program that was offered under the previous administration was perfect and is not—it's not possible to improve upon it. We don't buy that thesis, Madam Speaker, not at all. The program can work better. We'll do a better job of giving people who come to our province an opportunity—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Pallister:** —an opportunity to find employment that suits their skills and to gain the skills they need to find employment. We'll do a better job of that than was done under the previous administration.

I encourage the member to set aside her overreaction and excessive partisanship and join in the challenge of making sure that the land of hope

here in Manitoba is real for all our preferred—all our provincial nominees who come to this province.

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

**Ms. Fontaine:** I'm sorry that the Premier thinks it's an overreaction to negatively socially construct newcomers who already come from situations of oppression and marginalization. I'm sorry that he doesn't see fit to actually apologize to newcomers.

I will, though. On behalf of this House, I apologize to newcomers that our Premier negatively and socially constructed them—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Ms. Fontaine:** —as burdens on Manitoban society. It is disgraceful, and I certainly will not stand by and allow it to go on.

**Mr. Pallister:** Well, while the member's on the apology binge, she might like to apologize for covering up her colleagues who called shame to the female members of this Legislature, and she might like to apologize for that too.

What she might like to also consider doing is apologizing for the years that people have waited in long lineups to try to get into this country and into this province. She might like to apologize for the seven or eight years when people get the runaround from the previous administration and can't get an answer on whether they can get into Manitoba or not.

We're going to—they handed us a mess, Madam Speaker—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Pallister:** The member needs to understand that, and perhaps she could apologize for the mess that they left this government to clean up. But while she's apologizing, we'll be cleaning up the mess, Madam Speaker.

#### **Privatization of MRI Services Government Position**

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia):** Yesterday, the federal Health Minister wrote a letter to the Saskatchewan government demanding that they end their private-pay MRI program. She cited their significant concerns that private diagnostic services defy the fundamental principle of the Canada Health Act and that access to care should be based on medical need and not the ability to pay.

Despite the evidence, Manitoba's Minister of Health admires Saskatchewan's program so much that he's looking to recreate it here in Manitoba.

But, Madam Speaker, it's clear: universal and equitable health care is not just the right thing to do, it's, in fact, the law.

I ask our Minister of Health: Does he agree with the federal minister?

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** No.

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

**Mr. Wiebe:** That's very disconcerting, because in her letter, the federal Health Minister warned that under the Canada Health Act, provinces who charge for medically necessary services will, in fact, have their federal health transfer payments deducted dollar for dollar.

Madam Speaker, after the federal government cut the provincial health payment—transfer payments in half, Manitoba can't afford to lose any more health-care funding.

Will the Minister of Health admit that his plan to integrate private MRI services in Manitoban—in Manitoba is a bad deal for Manitoba families and that Manitoba's health-care system can't handle it?

**Mr. Goertzen:** Well, Madam Speaker, the member, he has come around. He's come around to understanding that what the federal Liberal government is doing in reducing transfer payments to Manitoba by up to \$40 billion over the course of the next five years is devastating to the province. To lose that \$40 million would be terrible for our health-care system. He has finally understood that, how difficult that would be.

What Saskatchewan was trying to do, Madam Speaker, was try to look for innovation and to do things differently, exactly what the federal minister has suggested be done. And now, to turn around and say that innovation isn't going to be accepted is not the right thing to do.

We stand with Saskatchewan in looking for innovation, and other provinces who are looking for innovation as well, Madam Speaker.

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

### **Manitoba Nurses Wage Freeze Concerns**

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia):** Madam Speaker, Manitobans are concerned about this ideologically driven direction that the minister is taking—*[interjection]*—despite reprimands from the federal government.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Wiebe:** And now the Premier's (Mr. Pallister) recent announcement to open up public sector contracts for possible wage freezes just puts more pressure on the families and on our system.

Manitoba nurses are worried that the Premier—what the Premier has in store for them, knowing that their contract is up for negotiation in March.

I ask the Premier: Does he plan to 'impose'—impose a wage freeze on Manitoba nurses?

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** Well, Madam Speaker, I'm glad that the member raised the issue of putting pressure on families.

I remember full well the pressure that was put on families when this government—when the former government of the NDP increased the PST from 7 to 8 per cent, Madam Speaker, increasing the cost of almost everything that Manitobans were purchasing. I know the pressure that is put on Manitoba families when there are excessive long wait times that came into place under the former NDP government. I know full too well the pressure that is put on the health-care system generally, including nurses, when the federal Liberal government arbitrarily decides to reduce the payments to Manitoba.

Those are all pressures. The member is clearly out of touch, because he's not addressing any of those issues when he was in government or now in opposition, Madam Speaker.

### **Fentanyl Addiction Services Timely Access to Treatment**

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the Minister of Health for starting to initiate action in relationship to the fentanyl crisis with his awareness campaign.

However, as we say in our brain health report, the most critical step of all is ensuring quick access to treatment, and that's not being addressed.

\* (14:10)

On Saturday, the media quotes a recovering addict as saying: They—meaning the minister and his staff—need to get people into treatment. People shouldn't have to wait months and months for treatment, because by the time you get it you'll be dead.

When will the minister act to ensure that those in need get fast access to the treatment they need?

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** I believe the member raises a good point. There are a number of different issues that need to be looked at when it comes to not just the issue of opiates, fentanyl and carfentanyl, in particular, but the issue of addiction overall, and certainly aligning the system properly so that mental health and addictions is combined to try to improve the access points for those who are using, but also to recognize that there is a clear correlation between mental health challenges and addiction.

Those are some of the things we'll be looking at in terms of trying to align the system. I take the member's point instructively that there needs to be more done in terms of access and how care is provided for those who are dealing with addictions. We are looking at that as well, in addition to a number of different things we are looking at when it comes to the issue of fentanyl.

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

**Mr. Gerrard:** Madam Speaker, over the weekend the media reported that two people with lived experience said they are frustrated with the health-care system and how it deals with addiction.

The minister could act today. Some facilities, for example, the Behavioural Health Foundation, have extra capacity. At a low cost, more treatment could be available quickly. There is also the possibility of employing peer support workers, as I've previously brought up. The minister is delaying when there are good options to act right now.

When will the minister act to ensure that those with addictions can get the treatment they need, immediately when they need it?

**Mr. Goertzen:** I appreciate the question from the member for River Heights and we know full well that it is a difficult challenge sometimes for those who are dealing with addiction. There are a number of different challenges that come with it.

The kind of treatment that one could have can be a differential and can be different depending on what they're prescribed. One of the things that I've talked about is the ability to have greater access to suboxone, particularly for those who are dealing with addiction to opiates, as an example, Madam Speaker. It's something that we're exploring, to expand the availability of suboxone for those who need an alternative treatment or replacement therapy, so I take the point well.

There are a number of different things that we are looking at and we'll continue to work with experts in the field, Madam Speaker.

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

**Mr. Gerrard:** The minister said a PR came—a PR campaign is a beginning, but it needs to be followed up with action. I'm glad about the minister looking at more availability of suboxone, but we need an announcement; it could be done very quickly.

How many more people will die before the minister actually puts action on the table? The minister needs to ensure that harm reduction strategies are available. The minister needs to act to make sure the suboxone is available.

When will the minister act so that those who need help with their addictions will receive it and will receive it quickly, and with compassion and without stigma?

**Mr. Goertzen:** Well, Madam Speaker, one of the challenges, clearly, that we face is that there are issues when it comes to support from the federal government more generally. We've raised that issue and we will continue to raise the great challenge that we have when it comes to the \$39 million annual that will be lost if the federal government continues to proceed with the reduction in the escalator for health transfer. That is the challenge across the health-care system, and other provinces are facing it as well.

I also—I hope I didn't hear the member right when he said that it wasn't actually taking action to have a media awareness campaign. I believe, in fact, that it is an extraordinary thing to do, it's an important thing to do. It's not the only thing to do. I only wish a member of this House would stand up and ask about the importance of actually having an awareness campaign when it comes to fentanyl.

### Fentanyl and Opioid Crisis Public Awareness Campaign

**Mr. Alan Lagimodiere (Selkirk):** Our government is setting a new course for Manitoba, a course that will lead to economic opportunity, improvements to front-line services and that will put Manitoba back on a responsible fiscal track.

Minutes after the Throne Speech was read, the NDP said there was not a single part of the Throne Speech they could support.

Can the Minister of Health tell every member of this House why they should support public education measures to warn Manitobans about the dangers of fentanyl and counteract the current serious opioid crisis facing Manitoba and other provinces?—[interjection]

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** Madam Speaker, I am, on the one hand, greatly encouraged by that great question by the member for Selkirk. I am equally disappointed by the reaction of the NDP to clap and to suggest that they wouldn't support a public awareness campaign on fentanyl.

I want to advise this House I was pleased to be at Shaftesbury High school along with the Steinbach Regional Secondary school. I was joined along with the Attorney General and the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Stefanson) to speak to young people and talk about the importance and awareness of the dangers of fentanyl and of opiates.

I'm also pleased to report to this House that since that campaign was launched there's been more than 41,000 hits and impressions on social media. That is 41,000, hopefully, young people and others who've seen the danger of fentanyl and hopefully will be saved as a result of that awareness.

I can't believe that the NDP wouldn't support that, Madam Speaker.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

### Environmental Protection Areas Government Intention

**Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley):** The global scientific consensus is clear: 17 per cent of our planet needs to be set aside as protected areas to ensure its ecological viability. This goal is adopted by the

United Nations itself, to be implemented by the year 2020.

The previous federal government of Stephen Harper adopted this goal. Our government adopted this goal. I have given this minister six previous opportunities to adopt this goal. Here's opportunity No. 7. [interjection]

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sustainable Development):** I'd like to thank the member opposite again for the question.

You know, I just met today, actually, with the Manitoba cottagers association, the provincial association, and, you know, they told me, all four of them that were there, you know, that never before have they had such transparency and inclusion and the opportunity to talk with the ministers so much. They tell me it's just such a refreshing change and they just so look forward to having continued consultations with us.

So we will continue to do that, Madam Speaker, and I look forward to having more consultations and discussions with Manitobans who care about our precious parks and resources.

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

**Mr. Altemeyer:** On the theme of consultation, Madam Speaker, perhaps the minister could share with the House what advice she received from other groups on the importance of adopting the goal of protecting 17 per cent by 2020, in particular, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society and, maybe, the Wilderness Committee.

What did they tell the minister that she should do on this very important decision?

**Mrs. Cox:** Thank you so much again to the member opposite. It's a very important question.

I met with Eric Reder, and I've talked to him, you know, with regard to parks and the importance of parks and the impact that they have on Manitobans.

You know, I'd also like to say that 3 per cent is 3 per cent. I can't make it 12 per cent. They didn't preserve—increase the amount of protected spaces by 12 per cent over 17 years; it's 3 per cent, and the numbers speak for themselves.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable member for Wolseley, on a final supplementary.

**Mr. Altemeyer:** All right. At the risk of this coming across as lovely dialogue resembling far too much an episode of *Celebrity Jeopardy!* on Saturday Night Live, under the category of protected areas, can the minister tell the House how many different types of protected areas we have in Manitoba, and how many of them can she even name?

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable—*[interjection]* Order, please. Order. The honourable Minister of Sustainable Development.

\* (14:20)

**Mrs. Cox:** Thanks again to the member opposite.

As I said, you know, parks and resources are important to Manitobans and we've reached out to Manitobans. We've talked to the Manitobans from, you know, all walks of life, not only, you know, the members opposite, who prefer to just talk to, you know, certain individuals. We've talked to everyone.

And I'd, again, like to thank him for his reference to Mr. Harper and all of the good work that he did with regard to protected spaces.

You know, where they failed to get it done, we will. We will protect those resources. We will, you know, ensure that after a decade of debt, decline and decay we'll get it right, Madam Speaker. We're not going to cut \$17 million from our budget.

#### **Lake Manitoba Outlet Construction Inquiry**

**Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas):** The residents and communities along the Lake Manitoba basin need urgent action in order to give them their lives back and to prevent hundreds of millions of dollars in future flood costs.

In their first Throne Speech, this government said they would take immediate action, beginning with the outlet to alleviate flooding around Lake Manitoba.

Can the Infrastructure Minister tell me if construction of the outlet has begun?

**Hon. Blaine Pedersen (Minister of Infrastructure):** I want to thank the member for that question, because where the NDP failed, this government will succeed. And the work that's—it's not about putting up signs pretending to care about infrastructure. This is about consultations with the

First Nations affected around there. It's consultations with all the affected parties around the lakes. The engineering is continuing.

We have started on this project. It's going to take a while to get it done, but we're going to get it done and we're going to get it done right.

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

**Ms. Lathlin:** The Premier is cited as saying that if elected, his government would finish the channel during its first term in office. It's estimated that this will be the largest construction project undertaken in the province since the expansion of the Floodway a decade ago.

Can the Infrastructure Minister tell me: How long would it take to complete such a monumental undertaking if they put shovels in the ground tomorrow?

**Mr. Pedersen:** Madam Speaker, if we look back on the record of the previous NDP government, they decide to hold coffee parties, and that was how they were going to build a channel and we know how that resulted with them.

We're doing real work on the ground in terms of engineering, in terms of consultations. We will continue to do that work as we continue to build this channel out of both Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin. We will get it done where they failed.

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

#### **Consultation with Stakeholders**

**Ms. Lathlin:** If the Premier is going to finish an outlet for Lake St. Martin and Lake Manitoba in a single term, he's going to do—he's going to have to do a lot of consultation with our First Nations and environmental stakeholders first.

Can the Minister for Infrastructure provide me with a list of stakeholders the government has met with regarding this specific issue?

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** The member's right in her first preamble in reference to the lives being put on hold of people throughout the basin—indigenous people, non-indigenous, Métis. The communities themselves have been—in the minds of some—have been sacrificed for the good and

protection of others around the province. This is something that many people in that region take pride in having done. But we owe it to them to get their lives back.

You know, three years ago, as I—or two years ago, as I toured that area, I saw a steady growth sign up on the shore near St. Ambroise. Someone had penciled in—by steady growth, had penciled in, in water levels, and wrote that in in pen.

We can't have that be the case, Madam Speaker. Water levels are very high right now. The soil is saturated. The dangers are real to these folks, and because of the neglect and delays of years of missed opportunity by the previous administration, those lives will be on hold for a few more years.

But we will get that channel built, and we are working towards that outcome.

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

## PETITIONS

### Bell's Purchase of MTS

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background of the petition is as follows:

Manitoba telephone system is currently a fourth cellular carrier used by Manitobans along with the big national three carriers: Telus, Rogers and Bell.

In Toronto, with only the big three national companies controlling the market, the average five-gigabyte unlimited monthly cellular package is \$117 as compared to Winnipeg where MTS charges \$66 for the same package.

Losing MTS will mean less competition and will result in higher costs for all cellphone packages in the province.

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

To urge the provincial government do all that is possible to prevent the Bell takeover of MTS and preserve a more competitive cellphone market so that cellular bids for Manitobans do not increase unnecessarily.

This petition is signed by many fine Manitobans.

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

## ORDERS OF THE DAY GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

### House Business

**Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader):** Madam Speaker, on House business, I'd like to announce that the Standing Committee on Public Accounts will meet on November 30th, 2016, at 7 p.m., to consider the following reports: Public Accounts for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2014, volumes 1, 2, 3 and 4; Public Accounts for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2015, volumes 1, 2 and 3; Public Accounts for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2016, volumes 1, 2 and 3; Auditor General's report, Follow-up of Recommendations, dated May 2016, Accounts and financial statements. Witnesses to be called: Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen) and Deputy Minister of Finance.

**Madam Speaker:** It has been announced by the honourable Government House Leader that the Standing Committee on Public Accounts will meet on November 30th, 2016, at 7 p.m., to consider the following reports: Public Accounts for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2014, volumes 1, 2, 3 and 4; Public Accounts for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2015, volumes 1, 2 and 3; Public Accounts for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2016, volumes 1, 2 and 3; Auditor General's report, Follow-up of Recommendations, dated May 2016, Accounts and financial statements. Witnesses to be called: Minister of Finance and Deputy Minister of Finance.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Micklefield:** Madam Speaker, I'd like to that—sorry. *[interjection]* Okay, thank you. I need to—I'd like to interrupt the Throne Speech, please, to read the following motion, that notwithstanding any rule or practice of this House, Bill 213, The Civil Service Amendment Act—thank you—*[interjection]* Thank you. Sorry.

We're interrupting Throne Speech, Madam Speaker, to call the reinstatement motion for Bill 213.

**Madam Speaker:** It has been announced by the honourable Government House Leader that the Throne Speech debate will be interrupted in order to consider the government motion.

## GOVERNMENT MOTION

**Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader):** I move, seconded by the member for Radisson (Mr. Teitsma), that notwithstanding any rule or practice of this House, Bill 213, The Civil Service Amendment Act, be reinstated during the Second Session of the 41st Legislature at the stage it was at when the First Session of the 41st Legislature was prorogued.

I move—

**Madam Speaker:** The—yes, the honourable Government House Leader.

**Mr. Micklefield:** Let's try that again.

I move, seconded by the member for Kildonan (Mr. Curry), that notwithstanding any rule or practice of this House, Bill 213, The Civil Service Amendment Act (Employment Preference for Reservists with Active Service), be reinstated during the Second Session of the 41st Legislature at the stage it was at when the First Session of the 41st legislator—Legislature was prorogued.

\*(14:30)

**Madam Speaker:** The seconder of that motion was not in their seat, so I would ask the honourable Government House Leader to repeat the motion with the—including a seconder that is in their seat.

**Mr. Micklefield:** I move, seconded by the member for Kildonan, that notwithstanding any rule or practice of this House, Bill 213, The Civil Service Amendment Act (Employment Preference for Reservists with Active Service), be reinstated during the Second Session of the 41st Legislature at the stage it was at when the First Session of the 41st Legislature was prorogued.

### *Motion presented.*

**Mr. Micklefield:** Madam Speaker, it's a pleasure today to rise in support of a motion that will allow Bill 213, The Civil Service Amendment Act (Employment Preference for Reservists with Active Service), to proceed to committee in the Second Session of the 41st Legislature. This bill was brought forward from—by my friend and colleague the member for Kildonan.

As the bill's explanatory notes state, quote, currently, under The Civil Service Act, employment

preference is given to veterans. This bill extends that preference to include reservists with the Canadian Forces who are in active service.

As I'm sure all honourable members recall, there was unanimous support in the House to debate and pass at second reading Bill 213 on November 8th of this year during Remembrance week. I would like to thank all members for their support for this important legislation. Work, however, does remain to be done to see this bill become law, and today's motion is an important step in that process and will allow the bill to proceed directly to committee without further delay.

With that, I look forward once again to all members in this House supporting this important legislation with their vote this afternoon.

Thank you.

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** I'm going to speak to what is really a strange and, frankly, a troubling government motion that the Government House Leader has introduced today.

And, of course, as we read the motion, what does it say? Notwithstanding any rule or practice of this House—and that seems to be a growing theme of this government, a government which, of course, they will all be proud to tell you, you know, won a record victory just a couple of months ago, and yet they are either so disorganized or so unable to manage their own affairs that today the Government House Leader has to stand in this House and say, ignore the rules, ignore the procedures, because we have something that is so important—that is so important—a matter that is so important that we need to interrupt the Throne Speech.

We're in the middle of debating the Throne Speech, which, of course, is one of the most important things this House can do, and yet the Government House Leader, perhaps not of his own volition, but we'll never know, has had to stand up today and put on the record that his government failed to actually pass a bill, which all members of this House were prepared to do, and worse than that, did not seek to try to resolve the problem in any way in the last session.

What he is attempting to do today, Madam Speaker, is he's trying to resurrect a bill, which, like all other bills and all other resolutions and all other information, whether brought forward by

government members or opposition members, that weren't completed in the session with—ended on November 10th and died on the Order Paper.

And this Government House Leader (Mr. Micklefield) is now picking out one item out of a series of very, very important things which remained in this House on November the 10th and is now seeking to set aside all the rules of this House and deal with it differently.

Now, the objects of the bill are worthy, and I will speak about that a little bit, but this move is yet another indication that this government, any time it has an obstacle in its path, any time they have a difficulty, they have no intention of negotiating. They prefer dictating and that's exactly what this motion is today. It'll negotiate nothing and it will try to dictate anything that it—stands in its way. Either that or, of course, this government is simply admitting it is so disorganized that it cannot manage its own affairs.

Now, respecting Bill 213 put forward by the member for Kildonan (Mr. Curry)—a member who I actually have a fair amount of respect for—both the official opposition and the independent members of this House did make it clear to him in the last session that we supported what was contained in this bill. Unlike government bills where there is a usual, fairly formal briefing process before a bill is brought in for second reading, I actually sought out the member for Kildonan, as he is aware of, after the bill was introduced. And we had a good discussion about the bill, exactly what it would do, why it was necessary, and I told the member for Kildonan I would recommend to my caucus that we agree that we would support the bill without any delay and that's exactly what happened.

And, Madam Speaker, it wasn't our choice that this bill would be introduced on October 26th, the 50th sitting day of the session and more than five and a half months after the session began in May. We don't know when the member for Kildonan his bill ready to go, and we never will. Maybe it was in May and he was told, no, we're not going to bring this in. Maybe it was the last minute, but we'll never know.

But the fact remains that the bill, of course, was introduced on October 26th and it could have been debated on the morning of November 1st, the next private members' hour, to which the government side usually has its opportunity. But it wasn't debated and

it wasn't our choice, it was the choice of the Government House Leader who decided which government member's bill was going to be discussed that morning.

The bill came on for second reading on the morning of November 8th, and the bill actually passed second reading that morning, again, with the support of all members of the House. I spoke in favour of the bill. I do believe that an independent member spoke in favour of the bill, as well as government members. And when it passed second reading, the government had a number of different choices.

The Government House Leader could have stood up—well, hopefully, after speaking to the Opposition House Leader first and said, could we waive the time for this bill to go before a committee? The Government House Leader could have said, could we try and waive or shorten the time for the bill to be reported, in the hope of completing all the work that needed to be done before the House rose on the afternoon of November the 10th? Again, the government, which had control and conduct of this, chose not to do so.

The Government House Leader could have approached the Opposition House Leader at any time before the House rose on November the 10th and said, do you know what, we have made an error in our calculations. This bill is very important to the member for Kildonan. This bill has some valid objectives. Do you think we could find a way to carry this bill forward into the new session? That has been done before—that's been done before—by different governments of different political stripes and there is a discussion, an offer to negotiation and there is an order of this House that can be prepared before the House rises, the session ends, the House is prorogued and all of the bills and all of the other government business and opposition members' business die in the Order Paper.

Well, and did the Government House Leader do that? Of course not—and why not? And, again, we're left with only two possibilities: only it was a complete lack of organization—and I'll talk a little bit about that later on; or, what is probably more likely, is this government, under the hand of this Premier (Mr. Pallister) being entirely unwilling to negotiate—unwilling to negotiate with opposition members, and that is being played out, as I will say, in some of the time I have left, in the way that this Premier



(Mr. Pallister) and this government deals with anything they see as an obstacle in their path. They don't like to negotiate. They don't like to listen to people and sit down and have a discussion and come up with something that maybe could be a reasonable path forward. And that is a shame, Madam Speaker, and that is truly a disturbing trend that I'm glad we do have the opportunity to discuss today.

\* (14:40)

And there's been other things which have happened in the last couple of months which seemed to follow this same theme of a government which is unwilling to listen to opposition members, a government which is unwilling to negotiate and a government which is constantly trying to push the envelope on ignoring not only rules of this House, but of practices that have been in place in this Legislature for not just years, Madam Speaker, but decades and decades.

And my friend, the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), talks about committees, and that is exactly the case. We have a government which has attempted to limit opposition members from being able to do their job and being able to pursue questions on an extended basis at various committees that have been set up.

We have Crown Corporations committees that meet. Generally, it's only one opportunity each year to give opposition members a chance to ask questions of the CEO and the chairperson of various Crown corporations, and ask questions about—operational questions about those corporations, policy, projects, performance, all other important things that are so important not just to opposition members because we believe in Crown corporations, but to all Manitobans because of the importance of those Crown corporations.

It's a rare opportunity, indeed, for members to be able to ask these individuals about important questions that are important to Manitobans—and, of course, I'll give an example of that. After literally months of the Minister for Crown Services stonewalling on the most basic questions about the costs and the process for a report commissioned by Manitoba Hydro, it was actually possible at the Hydro committee meeting to find out in just a few minutes to discover that Manitoba Hydro actually paid an American consulting company, Boston Consulting Group, \$4.2 million for a report based entirely on financial information already made public

by Hydro. And further, we learned very soon after that, despite being stonewalled in this Legislature for weeks and weeks and weeks, that this \$4.2-million contract with an American consulting company was untendered, an untendered contract in direct contravention of what this Premier and his ministers have said and have promised and have repeated over and over and over again.

And I raise this as an example, Madam Speaker, because it's very important because of the Crown corporations committee meeting before this one, the government had actually attempted to restrict questions by giving equal time or more time to government members. And those government members, I can tell you, show up to these Crown corporation meetings with their carefully scripted questions that have been prepared for them, I presume by their—by the Premier's office, by their communications people, and what they wanted to do and believed they had the God-given right to do was to tie up those committees with their scripted questions, their set-up questions for as much time as possible.

Why is that? Because they were afraid of what opposition members would be able to uncover. And I've given the example of Manitoba Hydro. It was just one example of some of the things that we have been able to uncover and we are going to continue to uncover as an opposition from a government which repeatedly says one thing and does the exact opposite.

Those committees are an opportunity for opposition members to ask important questions on behalf of constituents and on behalf of all Manitobans, and yet this Premier has made it very, very clear that he sees that process, where there is give and take, where opposition members do have an opportunity to ask questions, as annoyances. And, in fact, after the fiasco at that Crown Corporations meeting, the Premier mused that maybe the opposition with one quarter of the members of this House should maybe only get to ask one quarter of the questions at Crown Corporations committee.

Well, unfortunately, for the Premier, we are the official opposition. We take our role extremely seriously. It's why we ask questions in this House, we ask questions in committee. We ask questions because we are going to expose a government which does not do what it says it is going to do, and where that is becoming more and more clear each day that goes by.

But maybe—I mean, maybe I'm being too harsh. Maybe somebody will say, well, that's just a conspiracy theory. Maybe the government is just incredibly disorganized. I suppose that is also a possibility.

Members will recall that this is not the first time in this government's term that they have set aside debate on the Throne Speech in this House. They had their first Throne Speech—in fact, the first Throne Speech for a Progressive Conservative government since 1998, and they couldn't even focus. They couldn't even have six days of debate without having to interrupt debate and stand up and introduce another government motion.

And what was the vital reason for that interruption, Madam Speaker? Well, it was a motion that was calling on the Manitoba Legislature to voice its support for the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP. And, of course, we heard the justification from the government members that we needed to support a trade deal which largely dealt with free trade with the United States and to which—

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Micklefield:** Madam Speaker, on relevance, we have a motion to seek agreements to move this bill forward, not dissimilar to the leave granted by all members of this House to debate and vote on this motion on November 8th. The member is talking about Manitoba Hydro; he's talking about committee. Now I think I heard about the Trans-Pacific Partnership. We would be grateful if we could stay to the motion before the House.

**Mr. Swan:** Well, Madam Speaker, again, at the start of my comments, I explained that this was a very strange government motion that's been brought forward, notwithstanding any rule or practice of this House.

Madam Speaker, the Government House Leader (Mr. Micklefield) has brought forward a motion which is asking this House to disregard its practice—in fact, to disregard the practice in every parliamentary jurisdiction in the world, which says that when the House is prorogued, every matter, whether it's a government matter or an opposition matter, whether it's a bill, whether it's a resolution, dies on the Order Paper. And this Government House Leader has stood today, interrupting the Throne Speech debate, to say why this is so important.

And, Madam Speaker, I would submit it is my right as an opposition member, to talk about how unusual it is to avoid rules of practice of this House, and I am giving a very, very important factual background which will enable every member of this House to be better informed, so when and if this matter comes to a vote, members would be well advised on whether they should, in fact, favour the government attempting to use its majority to overcome a parliamentary tradition that goes back centuries and centuries.

That's the reason why my comments are going to the extent they are, because this is actually a very, very serious matter that the Government House Leader has brought forward.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. I would indicate that the point of order that is being raised is whether or not there is a relevancy in the comments regarding the motion and if the member is tying his comments to the motion.

I would indicate that some of it has been relevant, but some of it appears to be a little bit veered off from that, and I would encourage the member to continue with his comments and keep them relevant to the motion that is before us.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Official Opposition House Leader):** Madam Speaker, and, on this point of order, I would like to challenge the—Madam Speaker, I challenge the rule.

**Madam Speaker:** I would just like to clarify for the record that members are not able to challenge the Speaker's ruling on a point of order.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Swan:** And I will continue with my comments, again with the intention of making it very clear to members just how serious a matter this is when, again, the Government House Leader is looking to overturn a rule which has been in place for centuries in our parliamentary system.

\* (14:50)

And I was speaking about the other government motion which died on the Order Paper, just as this bill did, and the government never revived the debate. Despite the fact that it was important enough to interrupt the Throne Speech last time around, it sat on the Order Paper for another almost 60 days of government business until the resolution died.

And what other items died on the Order Paper when the session ended?

**An Honourable Member:** ESRA

**Mr. Swan:** Well, an example of that—well, we're going to talk about the positive things, I would point out to the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway).

One of the most important was a resolution by the member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe) calling for a comprehensive opioid strategy, and that was a very, very important and timely item which was before the House. We had an opposition member who appeared to speak against it. We then had the Minister of Health, I presume, who was summoned from his office to come and speak to it, and he praised—damned with faint praise, I guess we would say, the member for Concordia—and said, well, don't worry about this. I'm on this. There's no need to pass this resolution, and said maybe we can come back and debate this resolution another time. And the government members used their majority to talk out the resolution and, unfortunately, that resolution died on the Order Paper.

It would have been possible for the Government House Leader (Mr. Micklefield), had he really been concerned about passing the member for Kildonan's (Mr. Curry) bill, to come to the Government House Leader and to say, you know, we'd like to get this bill passed; and perhaps the answer would have been, that's great, why don't we also make sure that we bring forward the very good resolution brought forward by the member for Concordia?

That would be negotiation. That would be what you would do if you were the government and you were unable to get things done simply by following the rules, to try and speak to the other side and try and come up with a better process to get things done. But, unfortunately, that didn't happen.

Madam Speaker, I introduced a bill in the last session, Bill 214, the family law bill. And that bill, of course, would ensure that the best interests of children are taken into account when a family breaks down.

Bill 33—or—Bill 33, the previous bill, had died on the Order Paper before the election, and I waited to see if the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Stefanson) would introduce some kind of similar family law reform, whether a bill very similar to previous Bill 33 or, of course, as is her possibility, to come up with something that she thinks is different or better, and that would be fine. Although I had asked the

Minister of Justice in Estimates, I had waited for her to give some signal that it would come forward—*[interjection]*

And now the Minister of Justice is chirping from the seat, and that's good if I've—if this debate today has actually sparked the Minister of Justice to speak to some people in her department and move forward on family law, I think that would be a very useful thing.

So I reintroduced portions of Bill 33 in Bill 214 which no one who is concerned about the welfare of children could possibly oppose, except, of course, for the government backbenchers who stood up one after another and did oppose it, talked out the bill and the bill died on the Order Paper.

The Throne Speech made no mention of family law reform. The minister's shown no interest in family law reform. I expect I'll be having to reintroduce and start from scratch on Bill 214.

If the Government House Leader come to the Opposition House Leader and said, we have a real problem with Bill 213, perhaps the Opposition House Leader could have said, fine, then why don't we also keep 214 alive into the new session and we can pick up debate on that bill? But that wasn't done. There was no effort to negotiate. It was a very selective approach by the government.

And what about Bill 207? Bill 207 was the bill brought forward by the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), and that bill would actually involve amendments to the Human Rights Code to prevent discrimination based on weight or size. And, actually, it was a thoughtful bill. I thought we had, Madam Speaker, a very good discussion about that, a good question-and-answer session, some very good speeches. But, again, bill two seven was talked out by, again, government backbenchers doing the Premier's (Mr. Pallister) work. And what happened to that bill? It died on the Order Paper and the member for River Heights has had to reintroduce his bill which he has already done. There's been a lot of interest in that bill.

But, again, maybe it wouldn't have been necessary to reintroduce Bill 207. Maybe it could have been carried on if the Government House Leader had been clear and open about this in the last session. But that's not what happened. The Government House Leader presumably knew that a request to preserve Bill 213 into this session might have prompted the opposition and independent

members to carry some or all of these things forward.

It's been done before, as I've said, by negotiation, by agreement, by having an order in place before the House rises to bring bills forward. If it was as important for the government as we now hear it is today, then there's no reason why that couldn't have been done.

And I would point out, again, that this is continuing a worrisome trend of this new government, which seems inclined to use its majority to try to silence members of the opposition and try to prevent debate.

Now, government has used rules to limit the amount to debate on certain bills. Now those are the rules. It's the government's choice. We can complain about it but it's not something we can stand up in this House and raise a point of order, but I would give an example of that as Bill 7, which the Government House Leader (Mr. Micklefield) left virtually to the last minute to be called for second reading, and left only two days of debate. And, of course, as the opposition, we used the rules available at our disposal to maximize the limited amount of time we had, which is why the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey) stood up and gave a wonderful speech that lasted two days to try to put on the record as much information as we thought was necessary to convince government members of how wrong their ideas were.

And, of course, it was one of the last bills that was sent off to committee by the Government House Leader and it was the last bill that was actually called for third reading. And, in fact, the only opportunity for myself, as a member of this House, and other opposition members to speak on Bill 7 was the opposition day motion that we brought the day before the session ended. That was something we were entitled to do by the rules and that was our effort using the rules to try to have time to speak on that important bill.

And I'm not sure why the government was so scared about debating Bill 7. I'm thinking, and I'm looking at my friend, the member for Flin Flon, maybe they were so worried that the valid points we were putting on the record and the complete lack of any evidence to support their position led Cabinet to be very worried that if we kept talking, they were going to start losing members of their backbench who were actually going to support and understand our view of Bill 7.

So, again, I'm not sure if the government was scared that Bill 7 debate was going to sway its own members, but those are the rules and we agreed to them, and even though we may question the amount of time that was left for debate, we can't stand in this House and we're not going to bring a motion on to claim that there's been some—somehow we've been treated unfairly by the rules of this House being followed.

So today, of course, there's a motion on resurrecting a bill which had support, which the government allowed to die. I think I can speak on behalf of my caucus that when the member for Kildonan (Mr. Curry) reintroduces his bill and speaks about it, we will again speak in favour of it and we will be prepared to have the matter moved forward.

But what's next? What's next? Who knows what this government has in mind. What if this government next time, or maybe tomorrow, introduces a motion to resurrect bills which may be unpopular with the opposition and maybe unpopular by the public?

What about the east side bill, which would destroy the east side authority? Well, it was introduced and, again, because this government couldn't manage its own affairs, that bill died on the Order Paper, and we know they've now stood up to introduce a new bill.

What's to stop the Government House Leader from bringing a similar motion in the next few days, saying, you know what? We're actually tired of all you speaking to that bill. We'd actually just like to go back and go where we left off.

Frankly, that would be an abuse of this House's procedure, to take a bill that died on the Order Paper and bring it back again, and it ought not to be something which the government directs to happen.

Maybe this government will seek to use this motion as a precedent for future motions to avoid having to listen again to opposition members speak at second reading, or maybe there'll be a future bill they'll bring in after the deadline for guaranteed passage and they will use this measure to try to avoid having to hear again from dozens or even hundreds of Manitobans who attended a committee to speak on the bill or avoid having to hear opposition members from speaking again on report stage amendments or even at third reading.

This government has shown so far that it's not only prepared to use rules to limit debate and limit the role of opposition by rules, which is fair game, but it's prepared to try and overturn long-standing practices of this Legislature to try and prevent opposition members from just doing their job.

\* (15:00)

And I'll give a very good example of that, Madam Speaker. Just the other day, the Government House Leader (Mr. Micklefield) stood up and raised a point of order when the member for Burrows (Ms. Lamoureux) was giving her comments on the Throne Speech, and I was listening carefully to what the member for Burrows had to say. She was talking about events that she was going to in her community and around the province, and up got this Government House Leader who stood up and brought a point of order saying that this was irrelevant. It's hard to think of anything more relevant to a member doing their job than talking about what they're doing in their community. And I don't know, I don't know why the Government House Leader—maybe it wasn't his own choice he may have somebody speaking in his ear—why he would stand up and try and prevent another member of the Legislature, who is not even of my party, from doing her job in this Legislature, and, unfortunately, that is a continuing theme with this government.

And we know very well that this is a government which is choosing to dictate and not negotiate—and, boy, has that ever become clear in just the last couple of weeks. We've had a Premier (Mr. Pallister) who sent his agent out to the University of Manitoba to say, I don't care what has been discussed and negotiated between the University of Manitoba and the faculty association, here's the mandate which caused the University of Manitoba to pull a deal off the table, and it took a difficult situation and made it an impossible one.

And we had an almost unprecedented situation where shortly before the strike the University of Manitoba and the faculty association walked in difficult negotiations, jointly issued a letter condemning the provincial government for their choice rather than to let parties negotiate to step in over top and dictate what would happen.

And now, even since the Throne Speech was introduced last week, we've seen yet another example of this government deciding that dictating is a much better way to go than negotiating. And we've seen that when this Premier has made it very

clear that he is quite prepared to force through legislation which would open up existing collective agreements, which would go in and take fairly negotiated agreements and either freeze wages or rollback wages in a way which is not only not the way we do things in Manitoba, but, frankly, not the way that governments are allowed to act under our Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and our Constitution.

So, even though we're speaking about Bill 213, and let me say again that I respect the member for Kildonan (Mr. Curry) who's brought this forward, it'll be the Government House Leader having to explain to the member for Kildonan how they managed this so badly that this bill got in the Order Paper.

Let me say, in conclusion, that we support our veterans and we will support the member for Kildonan's bill when it comes on once again.

But let me say from the other items which—down in the Order Paper, we also support human rights and we also support protecting children who suffer when a family breaks down, and we also support having a comprehensive opioid strategy to try to stop the kinds of tragedies that we're seeing in Manitoba more and more. And those things are important just as important as the member for Kildonan's bill, and I'm not in anyway attacking the member for Kildonan or the importance of this bill, but I don't want to minimize how important a lot of the opposition work that died on the Order Paper is as well.

And, again, I am concerned that this government is increasingly ignoring rules and ignoring practices to try to get an edge any time they think they possibly can, and either that's the case or it is simply the case of a government so disorganized that they did not know what they were doing.

There were a number of things the government caused to die when the session ended. Let's get back to work; let's introduce bills which members think are important; let's introduce, then, new resolutions that members think are important; let's allow opposition members to do their job as opposition members and let's move forward and try and make this session of Legislature work as best it can.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon):** I want to rise today to talk about Bill 13—or, excuse me, Bill 213, the civil service employment amendment act, and yes,

previously when this bill was introduced it had the unanimous support of this House.

But let's talk a little bit about why we're talking about it again today and what the importance of having to rise and speak about it again today is.

We're faced with a government that likes to talk about democracy and the rules, but, clearly, in this case, through—I don't know what the correct term for what I'm thinking is—but, clearly, there was mistakes made and this bill died on the Order Paper at the end of the last session. And I feel bad for the member from Kildonan that brought the bill forward, as I feel bad for, you know, the people that the bill was intended to offer some protection to.

But this government likes to defend the rule of democracy, and the rules of democracy apply to this House as well, I'm sure, Madam Speaker, and it leaves me somewhat perplexed that, when they've made a slight error, that, well, now we should throw the rules away. Because they have 40 members and we don't, that should be a good reason to throw the rules away and do something different. I'm not sure that that's justifiable, that—the rules should be the rules.

They come and then they want to change the rules; they want to break the rules; they want to make new rules. They don't want to negotiate on those rules, Madam Speaker, because, quite frankly, they don't really believe in negotiation.

That's become somewhat evident in things that this government has talked about with other matters before this House. They've talked about, you know, Bill 7, which did pass, much to the dismay of workers in this province that weren't consulted, that weren't negotiated with. They were handed a set of rules and told that this is the way it's going to be. And that seems to be the way this government likes to do things, whether it's this Bill 213 or Bill 7, is really to be dictating to the rest of us how the rules should be applied or not applied depending on which side of the House you happen to be sitting on.

They clearly don't believe that the rules, as I understand them, anyway, should be applied to them the same way. And I guess I'll beg forgiveness, Madam Speaker. I'm relatively new to this Legislative Assembly, and maybe I don't have a full and complete understanding of the rules and the way they work, but I would have expected the government opposite, certainly the Government House Leader (Mr. Micklefield), to have a full

understanding of the rules and how they work. To be here today to—asking us to bend the rules, change the rules, to make new rules, because either they didn't understand the rules or failed to follow the rules, seems somewhat—*[interjection]*—or, as the member from Elmwood said, maybe they just forgot the rules or just forgot about following the rules. Really, I don't know.

I've, over the years, you know, not always followed the rules either, but in this Legislative Assembly I believe we have rules that are the rules of democracy. Oh, wait a minute, this government likes to use the word democracy quite a bit in their speeches. And, of course, it, as we've seen so many other times, doesn't have the same meaning as what we think it means, that their version of democracy is quite a bit different than the version of democracy that, you know, quite frankly, the people that this bill attempts to offer some protection to, that they fought for democracy. They fought for democratic action; they fought for people to have rules to protect them.

\* (15:10)

Those very people, now that this government has forgotten about in their conduct of business in the last session, they're now being told that, well, we'll bring in a different version of democracy to help you out, which—it's unfortunate.

I do feel bad for the member from Kildonan that introduced this legislation—not bad legislation. Certainly, it did have, like I said previously, the unanimous support of the House, but now should we be asked for the unanimous support to break the rules?

You know, we asked for some unanimous support in some other pieces of legislation that were before the House. We didn't get it. We asked for them to support withdrawing something like Bill 7 that was clearly not in the best interests of a lot of Manitobans—*[interjection]*—yes, as the member says—well, several people are speaking, yourself included at the moment, so, you know, there's a proper way of doing things and an improper way. And, you know, with so many other things, they've really chosen the improper way, and this is one more example of that. Unfortunately, innocent people get caught up in this government's conduct, in this government's lack of respect for rules.

And do we see other instances of the lack of respect for rules? Well, the Premier (Mr. Pallister) has made it pretty clear that he doesn't really respect

the rule of collective bargaining, Madam Speaker. It's a pretty serious right that a lot of these people that this bill attempts to protect fought for is the right to organize. It's a constitutionally protected right. The right to collective bargaining is a constitutionally protected right, which is, you know, a right that the people that Bill 213 attempts to offer some protection to as well as every other veteran that went to war to protect the rights and freedoms of Canada and of Manitoba that they fought for, some of them died for, and now we're being asked to ignore those rules.

The government chooses to run roughshod over people's rights. You know, they brought in legislation that disrespected constitutional rights to organize, that the people that this bill hopes to protect should be standing up and raising their voices to say that's not the Manitoba that we fought for. That's not the way we want the government of Manitoba to act.

So let's talk a little bit specifically about Bill 213. This NDP caucus that I'm a part of fully supports veterans, fully supports people that have sacrificed and been prepared to make ultimate sacrifices. Make no mistake, Madam Speaker or the members opposite, we are certainly not against veterans. We're certainly not against the military that defends our rights, that defends the very rights that this government tries to trample on. And, in fact, because they have a majority, feel they have the right to trample on, that they'll dictate to Manitobans how the rules will be applied, which is really, the member from Kildonan should be speaking to his own caucus about the rights and freedoms that so many people—

**An Honourable Member:** We should be asking them why they messed up in the first place.

**Mr. Lindsey:** Well, that's a separate conversation altogether about why they messed up in the first place. You know, it—

**An Honourable Member:** Is that, like, a teleprompter down there?

**Mr. Lindsey:** Well, it is. It's a very good teleprompter, too, by the way. You should get one sometime when you're speaking, you know.

I'd just like to get back on track here, you know. There's a lot of heckling going on in the background that's somewhat distracting every now and again. Some of it is very useful information that's being thrown out; some of it not so useful, and maybe that's why the Government House Leader

(Mr. Micklefield) got confused, forgot to make sure we voted on this bill last time. I don't know. There has to be some reason for it.

It's unfortunate that now, again, we're being asked to stretch the rules, change the rules just to accommodate their own missteps, which is unfortunate.

As the member for Minto (Mr. Swan) brought up earlier, what will they ask us to change next? What rule will they attempt to trample on next? You know, we've—like, he pointed out we've seen them attempt to run roughshod over accepted practices in committee hearings. I was at that committee hearing where some peculiar interpretations of accepted practices were attempted to be forced on us—forced on us—in a very undemocratic manner. And now here we have another instance of them trying to bring their own interpretation of an accepted practice and rule into being that isn't—that isn't—the correct way of doing things.

So, you know, when we're talking about Bill 213, Madam Speaker—

**An Honourable Member:** Point of order, Madam Speaker.

#### Point of Order

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. A point of order is being raised by the honourable Government House Leader.

**Mr. Micklefield:** Madam Speaker, the member is speaking about rules he doesn't seem to understand, or perhaps his House leader didn't explain to him.

The House, including members of all parties, set aside the rules to grant leave for this bill to come forward for debate, and the House, again, members of all parties came together on Remembrance Week to set aside the rules to allow this bill to come to a vote. This House, again, for a third time on November 8th, members from every party came together in unity and non-partisanship to support this bill. And, sadly, today members are standing for a partisanship and tearing up the unity and co-operation. Discussions about labour laws and about the minutia rules are not germane to the debate before us.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable Official Opposition House Leader (Mr. Maloway), on the same point of order?

**Mr. Maloway:** Yes, Madam Speaker, on the same point of order.

Well, I've been listening to the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey) and he has been discussing this particular Bill 213, and all of his comments so far that I have heard anyways certainly pertain to the contents and intent and the history of this particular bill.

**Madam Speaker:** On this point of order, I would indicate that while the member has been speaking to some of the issues before us in terms of this government motion, there have been times that the member is also veering off a bit as well.

So I would urge that, as we continue with this, that the member try to put more—put his comments—make his comments more closely relevant to the content before us, but this is one of those motions that it is quite difficult to rule on because this is all quite broad. But, if we could have the co-operation of the House, to encourage members to try to keep their comments quite relevant and tight to the motion before us.

\* \* \*

\*(15:20)

**Mr. Lindsey:** It's unfortunate that the—these things have to be debated the way they are. And you're quite correct in your interpretation that this is quite broad, and that's where sometimes our comments become quite broad, when we talk about this particular Bill 213 that's before us, because, you know, the whole concept that's being raised by debating Bill 213 again today is quite broad in itself. So, you know, it—sorry that if I've vectored off every now and again, I apologize.

You know, this bill itself is very important to some people, that it's important that members that have served come back and have access to jobs. It's as important that there's jobs for them to come back to, Madam Speaker and, you know, that's where we get into the broadness of the debate around Bill 213 is—while, the objects of the bill are very worthy, it's the intent or the indication, I guess, that the government and how they do business or how they intend to do business. So, you know, while we need to make sure we're talking about Bill 213, we need to look at the broader issues while we're talking about Bill 213 that this reintroduction calls into question.

The Minister of Justice (Mrs. Stefanson), when my friend from Kildonan was speaking, said, you

know, some things that he brought up, some things that died on the Order Paper, she said there's many more sessions to reintroduce those. And that's quite true, certainly couldn't argue with that. There will be many more sessions to reintroduce things that died on the Order Paper, as there would be many more sessions to reintroduce Bill 213 to the Order Paper.

Now, I'm not suggesting that that's what has to take place but, you know, in their own words, that there's the opportunity to do things properly within the context of the rules without having to change the rules. So that's really where we get into the broader discussion, Madam Speaker, and interpreting why we're talking about Bill 213 today and the importance of the rules and how the rules are not just interpreted but how the rules are actually applied and why we need to really focus on the broader issues, as well as making sure that we're talking about the specifics around Bill 213.

And, you know, the entire House was in favour of the context of the bill and what it was attempting to solve, going forward and, certainly, the members on this side are not opposed to Bill 213, but sometimes what we are opposed to, I guess, is what the Government House Leader (Mr. Micklefield) and the government has attempted to do here by, as they've done previously, you know, with different things. So I want to make sure that everybody understands, Madam Speaker, that we do support this bill, that there's no question that we're opposed to Bill 213. And as I've said several times already and I can't repeat it often enough, that certainly the members that the member from Kildonan, that he hopes to help out or that he had hoped to help out when he first introduced this bill, fought for the rules, the rule of order, the order rules.

So, again, we'll make sure that we get back to talk about Bill 213 here now. So we're going to change the rules for the employment preference given to veterans to make sure that that bill—that that protection, extends to reservists, as it should. *[interjection]* Thank you.

So now those reservists deserve our respect, and they deserve the respect of this House. So we do owe quite a tremendous debt of gratitude to each and every one of them that went to conflict, to war, to defend the rights. And it's unfortunate that when we tend to bring in the broader discussion, Madam Speaker, about those rights and what those rights mean, that the Government House Leader rises to object to talking about the bigger pictures, which is



really part of what this Bill 213 is all about, is the bigger picture issues that come up for discussion.

So I guess the question before us right now is, should leave be given to take a step back in time, Madam Speaker, and change a long-standing practice to bring this bill up for debate again today, or should we follow the rules that the people that Bill 213 wants to protect—wanted to protect the rules, the rule of law? So those are the kind of questions that are before us today as opposed to just the very simple rule that the Government House Leader (Mr. Micklefield) would like us to stick to.

You know, Manitoba does have a strong history with the military, and Bill 213 will offer some protection to the people in the reserves that are part of that whole military picture, Madam Speaker. So we need to make sure that we build the protections in to help all members of the Armed Forces, be they reservists or full-time members, that have seen things that most of us would never want to see. And so that's—again, I bring up that Bill 213 is not a bad bill. It's how the government has proceeded with Bill 213 that's causing us problems, isn't it?

It's unfortunate that the member from Kildonan has had to explain to the people that he introduced the bill to protect that mistakes have been made, and he thought the bill was passed. The bill isn't passed. We're somewhat confused. It—I feel bad for the member from Kildonan that introduced Bill 213. I really do. And, you know, people will be making fun and, you know, that's not the time to make fun—that I'm sure that he feels really bad that he thought the bill had been passed and it wasn't.

And it's tough to go back to your constituents and people outside of your constituency, even, that may be protected and say, well, we didn't really pass the Bill 213 that we thought we were passing, and so now we have to go back and try and change the rules so that we can pass Bill 213 so that the government doesn't have egg on its face for the way they've conducted business so far. And they'd like to have the House's unanimous support to take that step back in time to talk about Bill 213 again. And, well, of course, here we are talking about Bill 213 and taking that step back in time to talk about that which we already talked about.

And it's very unfortunate, I'm sure, that the members of the reservists, the Armed Forces that we're talking about, probably aren't very happy with the government at the moment, that they thought the protection had been brought into place and put into

place, and lo and behold, hear they're not, as—you know, as a lot of working Manitobans were not very happy when things were introduced that took things away from them, as the government continues to talk, you know, about taking things away from them, that they were going to rip up collective bargaining agreements and were going to interfere in collective bargaining process, the very rights and things that the reservists and the members of the military fought to protect and fought to stop people from taking away from us. And so the government, in their own—I—ineptitude, perhaps—maybe that's too strong a word, I don't know—but somehow they've missed what they were supposed to do and Bill 213 didn't get passed, didn't get to the proper stage as it should have and which—very unfortunate.

\* (15:30)

*Mr. Dennis Smook, Acting Speaker, in the Chair*

So now, just before I vector off any further and get accused of not being relevant, let's talk about the bill itself. Again, that it's very important that members of the military, be they reservists, be they full-time members, have jobs to come back to. And should they get special attention so that those jobs, they can get them, and the civil service, you know, offers that protection to them. Well, sure; you can't really argue with that point. You know, certainly nobody on this side is arguing that point.

It's, really, the debate today, I guess, is around: Why are we here talking about what we talked about already?

**An Honourable Member:** It's a very existential question.

**Mr. Lindsey:** Yes, a existential question. Yes.

Yes, you know, so it's unfortunate that—like I say, the bill itself, sure, we're all in favour of the bill itself. It's the application of the rules, and we continually have to give leave to change the rules. The government continually ask for leave to change the rules or just attempts to impose their will, Mr. Deputy Speaker—Acting Deputy Speaker—not sure the proper term, there. I'm—I know you, yourself, have been a witness to some of the chaos that ensued when the rules were attempted to be changed unilaterally without negotiation, without discussion.

And that's unfortunate that the government that tries to bully the members of the Legislature into changing rules also tries to bully members of the

public into accepting what their interpretation of the rules are. And that's very unfortunate that while we're talking about Bill 213, which talks about people that did battle to protect our rights, we're also talking—a government that tries to trample on those very rights that we're talking about.

You know, it's somewhat disconcerting to myself, for sure, as a new member of the Legislature, new being a relative term. I mean, it's been, what, seven months already and it feels like a long seven months. But it feels even longer when we go back and have to try and redo what we thought we'd done already, because somebody's made mistakes and forgotten things.

And, as I'm sure it seems like a long time for the reservists that Bill 213 attempts to offer some protection to, that they thought they had that protection, and, lo and behold, here we are how many months later, that they don't have that protection just yet, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker. It's unfortunate, to say the least.

But, while we talk about those things, again, as the member from Minto pointed out earlier, what will they ask us for leave to ignore next time? Where should we draw the line? Should we draw the line at a bill that we all agree that is a good bill? Or will we wait and fight about that on a bill that maybe we don't think is a good idea? Or did they think about it was a good idea when it was one of our bills that really were good ideas, died on the Order Paper, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

I don't think they would be willing to negotiate or ignore the rules and bring all those back again, as clearly evidenced by the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Stefanson) when she commented earlier that there's lots of sessions left to reintroduce things. And certainly, you know, if this bill got reintroduced again as a new piece of legislation, we certainly, as we didn't last time, we wouldn't be opposed to it. You know, maybe it'd give us an opportunity to look at it and see if there's some enhancements we could make to it. And maybe those are the kind of things we should be doing here, is looking at that.

You know, our government, when we were the government, just in case anybody thinks that we didn't support our military, we introduced a lot of new measures that made it easier for military personnel to transition to civilian employment: Red Seal certification for civilian trades—free of charge. You know, those are good things that we did as a government to try and help our military men and

women going forward. So, you know, some of the members opposite may start to think that we're against the reservists or against the military, and nothing could be further from the truth, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We want to support all the members of the military to make sure that they're afforded the protections, and we look at federal governments and some of the things they've done to not look after veterans when they got home with pensions and one thing and the other, and we certainly don't want to see any government go to those kind of extremes to not support the members of the military that have done their job and come home.

So, while Bill 213 is not a bad bill, it protects to offer some preference to reservists and that's a good thing, and certainly the member is to be commended for bringing such a bill forward for debate and for discussion. And it's very unfortunate that the—very unfortunate that's—that we're back—taking a step back in time and trying to fix the mistake that the government made by forgetting—neglecting to pass the bill last time—very unfortunate, indeed. Very unfortunate for the members of the reservists; very unfortunate for the member from Kildonan that brought it up.

So let's make sure that everybody understands that we're not opposed to the bill itself. We're perhaps questioning the practices of the government itself that they need to look at their practices, their policies, their procedures to make sure that things that are supposed to be passed are passed, or things that have been agreed to be passed are passed.

You know, my time here is pretty near run out, so I'm sure—I'm pretty sure that there'll be other members of this Legislature that wish to speak to this bill as well, so I reluctantly relinquish my spot on the floor to the next speaker.

**Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows):** And I promise my remarks are very, very short.

I'm happy to rise today and speak to the resolution to reinstate Bill 213, the civil service amendment act, that was brought forward last session by the member from Kildonan.

Bill 213 articulates and brings forth clarity, and, on top of that, it helps keep veterans and Manitobans in our great province.

Here in Manitoba we have Canadian soldiers who have stood up for our freedom, who continue to stand up for our rights and for our democracy. The last thing we want to see is someone go serve our

country and make us all extremely proud; then have them lose their job or be unable to find work when they return home.

You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, our party does find the language used in the reintroduction concerning—quite alarming. As new MLAs, we are trying to learn all of the rules and the practices of this House, and for those precedents to be disregarded seems unfair.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, will all MLAs be able to continue this? A stage is being set. Or, is this practice exclusively only going to be accepted when used by the government?

To conclude, our party is, let's say, reluctantly in agreement of this resolution to reinstate Bill 213 at this stage as it was last session.

Thank you.

**Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas):** It's an honour to stand here today to put a few words on Bill 213, The Civil Service Employment Amendment Act (Employment Preference for Reservists with Active Service). I would just like to share here our position on Bill 213, is that our team is a strong supporter of the military in Manitoba and supports its current members and our veterans on the services they receive.

\* (15:40)

We will stand alone, as one voice here in the legislator, for our military and our veterans and their services.

The military has played a very, very important role in the past and present in Manitoba. This was a very important role to see when I had attended a—our past services within our community. It was an absolute honour to see our families come out and see our veterans, and it was my first time actually as MLA to march with our veterans from the Legion to the high school to have our service.

Also, too, I just wanted to put on record, too, that our team believes in a professional and diverse public service that reflects the diversity of Manitoba. We welcome the different experiences and perspectives former members of the Armed Forces bring to the civil service, which brings me back to when I was a civil servant myself with the Government of Canada. I worked with the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and that's one thing that—a committee that I sat on regarding diversity, the Manitoba employment—

Aboriginal employment association and that was one of the committee issues and messages that we always sent out to our employees and employers regarding experiences and perspectives that all people can bring to a diverse workforce, which includes the Armed Forces.

Also, too, I just want to put on record that a tremendous debt of attitude—of not attitude, sorry—gratitude to the brave men and women who put their lives at risk for the rights and freedoms we enjoy here in Canada. By believing in Bill 13, I truly believe this is—will honour the rights and freedoms that we enjoy here because of those veterans that we—and armed service—Armed Forces services people as well. We also believe in giving back to military families when they have given so much to us in their dedicated service and sacrifice.

Just to share some stats here within the House that right now, in the province, based in this province, we are—have—we have more than 4,000 troops, primarily in Winnipeg's air force base and the Canadian Forces Base in Shilo. And also, too, just to share and put on record that Manitoba is also Canada's regional headquarters for NORAD, one including the many civilian jobs in addition to military positions, the Armed Forces is one of the province's largest employers, which brings the province's strong connection to the military that has touched the lives of all Manitobans at one time or another.

Also, too, the Canadian Forces repeated its pivotal role in helping the city of Winnipeg during the flood of century in 1997. As the Red River rose, over 8,500 soldiers, one-tenth of the Canadian military from across Canada, were on duty in the Manitoba flood zone. Engineers assisted the highways department and other personnel patrol the dikes and helped to evacuate affected communities, provided medical assistance and, once it was all over, helped thousands of people to return to their homes.

So there is also work done on an ongoing basis by the military throughout the province such as search-and-rescue operations. Such peacetime services are often looked—overlooked by our yet another component at the vital contribution of the military to our communities.

So, in regards to Bill 213, in supporting our military families, in spirit of, Manitoba works hard to give back to military families in recognition to the unique job requirements and in honour

of their dedicated service. In 2015, our NDP team brought forward a resolution affirming the Legislative Assembly's support for Canadian troops abroad and at home, which passed unanimously by all members of the Assembly. And with—along with support of Bill 13–213, our NDP team introduced new measures to make it easy—easier for military personnel to transition into civilian employment, Bill 13. They can also now obtain Red Seal certification of civilian trades, free of charge, since after years of service, many of the training and experience necessary and very important to work in the trades.

Also, too, are—the—our former government brought in changes so military personnel could find a family doctor more easily, which is very important to military families when they move into our provinces and into our communities.

Also, in 2014, our NDP team supported and passed a unanimous resolution urging the provincial government to adopt a national military driver's licensing program in partnership with other Canadian jurisdictions and governments.

In regards to—our former government, as well, created a special envoy for military affairs in Manitoba, a position that works and supports and works with the military community in the province on issue of an 'importants', such as a former envoy to the military, a member for St. James has been a strong advocate on behalf of military families. By formalizing this position, our former government has helped ensure that the voice of military families is heard.

We also extended the right to vote in provincial elections to armed forces personnel serving outside of Manitoba—another support there. Two thousand eleven, our NDP team introduced legislation that allows military personnel to end their rental agreements before they expire, if they are deployed into military service, without penalty or needing to find a new tenant to take over the remainder of the lease. Military personnel may often need to relocate quickly to best serve our country, and to help provide support systems for their families as well. While the Canadian Forces will reimburse them for money lost, there'll be a more efficient system; in this way, our personnel will not have to initially pay out of their own pockets.

And, also on record: in June 2007—excuse me, we enacted legislation to ensure that we protect reservist civilian jobs and benefits when they take

leave of absence to serve their country. Reservist civilian jobs and benefits will be waiting for them when their service is completed.

And, also on record: in 2002, our NDP team enacted legislation to ensure that Manitoba military personnel and their families can retain their Manitoba driver's licence while serving in other countries and will allow personnel to continue to earn merits, as if they were renewed on time—another support system put in place.

Under the same legislation, military—Manitoba military personnel will keep their voting privileges even if they have been in a province or country for six consecutive months prior to an election.

And another on record: in 2004, we created a new tax exemption for military personnel—the exempt implement earned by military personnel serving on high-risk deployed operational missions outside Canada from income tax.

In 2011, our former government announced \$200,000 in new funding for the Military Family Resource Centre's Childcare Centre located in St. James. These funds will go towards expanding that facility, and the Province will also fund 24 new infant spaces for that centre.

Our NDP team also bought in the Yellow Ribbon of Support campaign to the Manitoba legislator to support our military and their families, and also, too, Manitoba was also proud to support those who risk their lives for our safety and freedom.

So, with that, in regards to Bill 13 in supporting our veterans, we owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to our veterans for the sacrifices they have made defending Canada around the world in wars and peacekeeping missions.

Our veterans have fought for our rights and freedoms and sometimes at the cost of their own lives and their families and friends and our community members.

We also have to acknowledge that we all have a shared responsibility, and government, schools, and parents alike to continuously remind ourselves and our children of their sacrifices. I believe it's the highest importance for students to participate in Remembrance Day ceremonies, as demonstrated in my community, in our Remembrance Day ceremonies, when our MGEU rep put in place his children to lay the wreath, which I thought was a pretty change there and very

important for our youth to understand the importance of why we lay a wreath and have those important ceremonies. And, in fact, it was the first time that we engaged our powwow drum inside the ceremonies, the first time in history in The Pas. And I can truly tell you that it was such a moving experience to hear the bagpipe along with the drum within the same room. It was a moving experience for both sides of our community, and that's going to be a tradition that's going to follow through from now on. It was an honour to be a part of that.

\* (15:50)

And also, in regards to Bill 213, I just want to put on record too in regards to support for this, that in 2012, with the support of our former government, the legislator passed a bill which proclaims, excuse me, November 5th to 11th each year as Remembrance Day Awareness Week, and requires schools to hold Remembrance Day exercises on the last day school before Remembrance Day. And that was truly demonstrated when my six-year-old niece was extremely honoured and proud of her poppy which she still has today and holds in her special box. And she also kept on asking me many important questions on the importance of Remembrance Day, so it was an honour to explain to her and it was also great to hear and learn that she's engaged in this process to learn this very, very important day with our country and across the world. So it was great to answer her questions, my little six-year-old.

And also, too, on—sorry. Also to put on record that our former government values and will always value the dedication and bravery of our servicemen and women, and we will work continuously to honour our veterans.

And the Province offers a special, specially designated—no, specially designed motorcycle plate to honour Manitoba veterans. The veterans' specialty licence plate pays homage to our veterans and peacekeepers for their dedication, bravery and sacrifices they have made. Several years ago, our NDP team introduced veteran plates for passenger vehicles. We are now enhancing this special licence program. The veterans' motorcycle plate displays the symbolic red poppy, which has become a lasting memorial symbol to fallen soldiers.

And also we will continue and always continue to support the family resource centres to assist veterans' families and work with the federal government to ensure the needs of veterans are being

met. On Armed Forces Day, we hold a remembrance service where a candle was placed on each of the military graves in Brookside Cemetery, one of the largest military cemeteries in Canada.

So, with that, just to end my words towards this, is that, again, I want to repeat our position, that our NDP is a strong supporter for the military in Manitoba and supports its current members and our veterans and the services they receive. And we will stand as one voice here in the legislator for our military and our veterans and their services.

Also, too, in regards to Bill 13 and in regards to our procedures as well, I believe it was that week that these bills were brought up, there were other important bills that were on record to be discussed, such as The Legal Profession Amendment Act and The Human Rights Code Amendment Act and The Family Maintenance Amendment Act.

So, with that, I just want to say that my final note—I just want to say that our—my final note that while the objects of the bill are worthy to be 'scussed'—to be discussed, this move is yet another indication that this government intends to dictate and not 'agotiate' anything can get its hands on—either that, or this government is simply disorganized that it can't manage its own 'refairs'—affairs. So, respecting Bill 213, those are the few words that I have on record to provide.

Thank you.

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** Miigwech, Deputy Speaker—

**An Honourable Member:** Acting—

**Ms. Fontaine:** Acting, okay.

**An Honourable Member:** Temporary.

**Ms. Fontaine:** Temporary, miigwech.

I'm pleased to put a couple of words on the record in respect of Bill 213, and, of course, as many of my colleagues have said we—our NDP team is a strong supporter of the military in Manitoba, and as I've shared several times, of course, my grandfather was a part of the Canadian military, and he's very special in our family, and so I'm proud to be able to speak in support of our military in Manitoba.

And I think it's important that we do recognize the work that military—our military do and our veterans, our current members, and I think it's equally important that we ensure that the services are

there for them after or concurrently with their service.

As I shared, I think, on National Aboriginal Veterans Day, a lot of Aboriginal veterans didn't get the benefits that they were guaranteed or they were promised. That, despite even in order to enlist in the army you had to—you had to become enfranchised.

So I think it's—it's always important for me to be able to speak in support of our military, so we do, of course, support this bill, and I think that it is important to recognize the strength that public service inherently can execute when we have diversity in respect of our public service, and, of course, military have a range of expertise and experiences that contribute to our public service, so, you know, we welcome these different experiences and perspectives.

And, of course, I think all of us in the House can recognize that we do owe a great deal of debt to individuals who enlist in the army, in the Canadian Forces, similar to the way in which I think that we recognize that, you know, our police officers here in Manitoba and across the country play a very key role in our safety and our protection and every day do put their lives on the line.

Clearly, our military does the same thing as well, and, you know, I know that we probably, in some respects, maybe take it for granted that we don't think about it every day, obviously. We're busy with lives and with our lives, but, you know, when you sit and watch the news every day and you see the relative safety that we enjoy in Canada, you know we have to be very cognizant that our military plays a key role in that safety and that security that we enjoy as Canadians and certainly as Manitobans.

We know that, interestingly enough, you know, I know that during memorial week and when they announced the mother who would represent all mothers who have lost, you know, a child, you know it does really make you appreciate and think about your own children and that your own children are safe. And I have two sons, and, you know, to think about the ultimate sacrifice that these mothers tragically have made for our safety and security I think really does beg that we acknowledge and honour also the families of our military because, as we know for some military, they are away from their families from extended times, and then for some families, their daughter or son or their husband or their brother don't come home, and I don't think that

we would wish that on anybody, any of our—even our worst enemies we wouldn't wish that on.

\* (16:00)

So, I mean, we do know that there's about 4,000 troops based in our province and we—who have a lot of positions within the—in the military. I do just want to say, as well, you know, again, I do recognize that we are in support of this bill. I am honestly a little confused on why—how this whole process came up to that where we're looking at this again. And the reason why, I mean, I think we have to be clear, like, why I think it's—I think that on this side of the House, why we think it's kind of unusual or strange, is that the government really just ceased debate on their Throne Speech, which is really problematic. I think that there was—there's a lot of things that were mentioned in the Throne Speech, a lot of things that were not mentioned in the Throne Speech, that we really should be, as MLAs, debating right now. So I'm not really sure why we're resurrecting a bill at this point, particularly since we know that it—they were not completed in the last session which ended on November 10th. So I just want to be very clear in my comments, that I'm a little concerned with this.

But, more importantly, you know, as a member of this House, but even as a Manitoban, I'm concerned that we've kind of ceased debate on the Throne Speech, you know, particularly when we look at, you know, legislation that is coming down the pike in respect of—well, you know, the public sector's—their wages that we know people are fundamentally reliant on, and that we know that Manitobans have worked so hard for and continue to work hard each and every day to serve all of us. And, you know, we're talking about our teachers and nurses. And I'm not sure why we're not debating the Throne Speech, why we're not discussing the things that were omitted in the Throne Speech.

And, you know, I—for instance, I mean, there wasn't a heck of a lot noted in the Throne Speech in respect of supports for, let's say, women, women and children. We know that in the Throne Speech there wasn't a mention, again, of a minimum wage increase, which, again, I know that members on—in the House have heard us on this side just completely baffled that this government wouldn't even give, like, a 25-cent raise to people who are—who work really, really hard each and every day—

**An Honourable Member:** Have to go to relevance again?

**Ms. Fontaine:** Well, I mean, I think it is relevance when we talk about the fact that Manitobans are struggling. And Manitobans work really, really hard; if it's the folks that are kind of under threat right now, that their collective agreements are under threat; or if it's for individuals that work really, really long hours; or if it's for women that work really, really long hours, single moms who are working sometimes two or three jobs just to make ends meet. And still this government had nowhere mentioned even just a 25-cent increase. And that's not even the 50-cent increase. It's certainly not the increases that we're seeing out in Alberta from the Rachel Notley government that they've committed to.

So I think that I would argue, and I would submit to you, that Manitobans would—or are very concerned with what they're seeing in this last Throne Speech. And so, again, in respect of kind of resurrecting this bill, again, at the demise of discussion in respect of the Throne Speech, I think is really problematic.

You know, like, is that an attempt to, by this government, to kind of dictate, you know, the process even in here in respect of what we can discuss? Because I know that on this side we are prepared to discuss the Throne Speech and what's missing and that. And, unfortunately, I wish there were more people in the gallery to kind of hear the discussion or see actually what kind of plays out every day in this House because I think that Manitobans would be really concerned with what they're seeing.

I'm not sure how we get more Manitobans politically engaged in what's going in this House. But I think that, like, moments like today, in respect of resurrecting this bill again is—you know, kind of highlights this government's approach in what it considers priorities. And so it certainly doesn't consider a priority the ability of us on this side to be able to discuss their Throne Speech, which, again, is, I think, problematic in the sense that they seem to be so proud of their Throne Speech and yet we can't even really have a debate on it.

Again, I think that—soon enough, I think Manitobans will start to see the results of some of the ideologies from the government in respect of, you know, really, in some respects, attacks on families, that when we're not—when this government is not even prepared to raise the minimum wage and people will be required to work even harder and longer, I think that Manitobans will start to see that for what

it's worth. And activities such as kind of resurrecting these bills as—I mean, I don't know, deflection, I suppose. You know, Manitobans will start to see that, and I'm pretty sure that they're not going to be happy.

In the same way that I think that, you know, Manitobans will not accept and certainly won't applaud when we construct whole groups of people as kind of 'burdens' on the Manitoba economy as we've seen yesterday and today in respect of some of the comments made or—and some of the social constructions we've seen of newcomers. And I know that there seems to be, you know, some discussion on whether or not it was appropriate to construct newcomers as, you know, a burden on the Manitoba economy and as being on welfare and chronically unemployed. I don't think that Manitobans, if they actually heard and saw that, would appreciate that coming from the opposite side of the House when we know that that's actually fundamentally inaccurate.

We know that, you know, newcomers are acutely aware of the privilege it is to be able to live in Manitoba. And the newcomers that I've worked with for so, so many years are wanting to take full advantage of the life that we have here and the opportunities, and so work really, really hard and want to give their families a good life and a better life. And, you know, some of the statistics that we heard today that I was mentioning, that, you know, upwards of, you know, 94 to 98 per cent of newcomers have a job within their first year. And actually—of course, time doesn't allow while in question period, but actually, some of the statistics as well shows that within actually five years newcomers actually—a huge majority of newcomers in five years also have home ownership.

So, you know, we know that newcomers work very, very hard and are very—again, very cognizant of what a privilege it is to live here in Manitoba. And so why am I bringing that up? I'm bringing it up because I just think that, you know, it's important for Manitobans to know what's being said in this House, you know, particularly when it's so egregious and so disrespectful and in many respects just so wholly divorced from the reality that newcomers in Manitoba face and live day in and day out.

So, again, moments like this, kind of resurrecting this bill and being forced to kind of, you know, discuss on this instead of the Throne Speech goes to kind of this spirit in which we can't have dialogue. We can't have dialogue in Manitoba about

what's going on and what the government is actually attempting to do in what is the last seven months.

\* (16:10)

I know that every day when we're in the House, I'm always shocked with a lot of the things that are said in this House. And I know that as a Manitoban, as a First Nation woman, as a mother, like, I'm concerned. I'm concerned when I see, you know, in the last six months, you know, almost 12,000 jobs gone. And then really what ends up happening is the ripple effects of that loss obviously to the immediate for those families and the individuals that we're talking about, but then the ripple effects into our economy, which we—I—you know, to my knowledge we still don't even have a real kind of environmental scan on what that loss will look like for the economy.

So then, you know, we don't know what that piece is, and then at the same time we've got this, you know, all these jobs that are lost and then we're starting to kind of utilize this discourse and this narrative of what a burden newcomers are on the economy, and it seems very, very similar to the narrative and the discourse that we saw down south, and then really the detrimental effects that we've seen with that when you start to again negatively construct and divert attention from this to then this imaginary kind of problem of, you know, newcomers being on welfare, you start to shift the discussion and the perception for Manitobans on individuals, and I don't think that that's good.

I think it's actually quite dangerous when we start to kind of look at some of the things that are going on in the Manitoba economy that shift our narrative and our focus on people who left really damaging, scary, in some respects many hopeless situations, and left family, left their homeland to come here and are doing everything that they can to actually to be able to be a part of the economy, to be a part of the community. But in this House then we start to use our negative social construction of them.

I think that that's really, really problematic, and, you know, I think that we need to be discussing this a little more, and I'm sure—I mean I would suspect that the members opposite, you know, would agree that it's not fair to socially construct or negatively socially construct whole groups of people and put them all into—lump them all into one category as a bunch of, you know, people on welfare when it's not true.

And, you know, we only have to look back at our own history in respect of, you know, some of the negative social constructions in respect of indigenous people, the legacy and the long-lasting legacy that, you know, these constructions have for indigenous people, and really the detriment that it has towards the relationships that we have with one another when one group of people think erroneously some nonsense of another group of people to fit whatever ideological kind of strategy or world view is being executed at that moment.

So the other piece that I wanted to say in respect of—and again I mean in many respects I don't know again why we're discussing this again, and it's not to say and to lessen in any way shape or form our support for military. I think it is so important.

But, you know, as I said earlier, there was very little mention of women in the Throne Speech and certainly no supports of women. So, you know, I know that the colleague across the way has announced in this House that November is domestic violence month which is, you know, permeates so many different families and so many different individuals and, you know, I don't understand why that wasn't language that was embedded in the Throne Speech in respect of really the eradication of violence against women.

And, you know, I know that on this side of the House that was—and I would imagine that for everybody that—I would suggest that for everybody violence against women is particularly offensive and that none of us want to see that and all of us want to see its eradication. But then it's problematic that there wasn't really substantial concrete plans or measures within the Throne Speech to eradicate violence against women.

So, you know, even when we look at some of the programs, you know, we're starting to hear now that there are some programs that funding has been cut. And so I know that the other day we were discussing the Islamic Social Services funding that got cut. They do really extraordinary work in respect of preventative work within their community. And, you know, they were advised that there were already lots of programs like that. But actually that's not true. That's actually quite the antithesis to what the needs are and what's available. And I know that our government, the NDP, supported the Islamic Social Services because we fundamentally understand the value in preventative work, that it keeps children out of the system, that you also have to have a very



specific understanding of the world view, of the history, of the narrative, of the religion to work with particular groups of people. And so we know that the Islamic Social Services are best suited to work with their community in preventative work. But there—but we didn't hear any of that in the Throne Speech, and we know that, in fact, their funding has gotten cut.

So, I mean, these are really, really key, important things that have real, long-lasting impacts on the lives of children. I know that everybody in the House wants children to stay with their families. And that type of program helps to keep children with their families. And that's—there's no arguing that; that's a bona fide fact. And nothing to that end was noted in the Throne Speech, nothing. And yet we know that the Islamic Social Services has even—

**The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook):** Order. I know the member has started out on the right foot with being relevant to what's going on. I'm sure she'll bring that relevance back into her speech shortly. So I'd appreciate the member do that. Thank you.

**Ms. Fontaine:** It is actually all relevant. I know that we—I mean, sometimes it's hard to—for some members of the House to kind of make the connections and connect the dots, but it is fundamentally important in this House that, you know, we recognize the importance of having these—this discussion in this House. That's what we're elected for. We're elected to ensure that Manitobans' rights, to the best of our ability, that we ensure that—their freedom, their safety in the same way that the military does. You know, it is also our responsibility to ensure that Manitobans are safe and free, free from economic violence, free from marginalization, free from oppression. So I know that maybe it's a little difficult for some members to kind of understand, actually, the connection, but there is a fundamental connection and relevance.

There's a fundamental connection and relevance in respect of the honour that we give our military and the services that we guarantee our military, and the services and rights and freedoms that we guarantee all Manitobans. And one of them is that, you know—and on this side of the House we have committed to Manitobans' economic safety. And we did that every year by raising the minimum wage. It is the first time in, obviously, 17 years that the minimum wage has not been raised. That has a fundamental connection, then, on what—on families' safety and health and well-being.

You know, those of us that grew up in poverty, those of us that, you know—and I know that there was a lot of us that were students and had to work as students. I know that, you know, when I was a student doing my B.A. or my master's or even some of my Ph.D. work, I had children. I've always had children, so I've had to work.

\* (16:20)

And so we know that today there are single moms that are working in minimum wage jobs, one, two or three, sometimes—many, many jobs, that are also going to university, that are attempting to give the best life to their children, the lives that we, as Canadians, you know, will espouse and that we believe in, that people, that children should have all kinds of opportunities, that they should have equitable opportunities to all that Canada has to offer or all that Manitoba has to offer.

And so the relevance is that, you know, these same freedoms that our military fight for and they put their lives on—at risk are in jeopardy, when at the same time we don't support the economic viability and health of our citizens. It's—that is the connection, and those are married. Those are married variables that can't actually be divorced from one another.

And so, you know, again, I want to, I guess, use this opportunity as well to just really encourage the government to look at raising the minimum wage. And I would actually encourage the government to look at a living wage, which for Manitoba is about \$14.10. So, I mean, I would encourage this government to not only just look at, like, a 50-cent raise but, actually, this government, you know, if—as we keep hearing that it wants to make the—Manitoba the most improved province, which I'm not entirely sure what that means, but if they do, then I would recommend or I would ask that this government looks at instituting a living wage for Manitobans so that, you know, the safety, the health and well-being, the freedom of Manitobans is guaranteed, that they—it is guaranteed that people have the dollars that they need to be able to survive.

And I would venture to argue that our military, those men and women that enlist, that risk their lives day in and day out, they don't want to see Manitobans struggle. What is the purpose of them putting their life in harm's way every day if when they come home all they see is those same people struggling?

And so there absolutely is a 'revelance'—a connection, and I hope that people in this House would see that. And, I mean, it would be interesting to actually even have a discussion with a lot of our military brother and sisters to see, you know, their thoughts in respect of, really, the disparities that we are seeing and we know that will only grow exponentially worse if we don't make those investments, if we don't simply, you know, again, even at its bare bones, raise the minimum wage to 50 cents, never mind to, you know, over \$14.

But it would be interesting to see, you know, how these men and women would feel, knowing that they're risking their lives day in and day out to come back and have, you know, the people, the folks that they're risking their lives for struggle so much. How would they feel knowing or how do they feel knowing and seeing that the very children that they are dedicating their lives for or sacrificing their lives every day are struggling, and are struggling just to eat or are struggling even just for any extracurricular activities, things that people kind of take for granted?

So, you know, that is—I'm glad to have been able to say a couple of words. Again, you know, as the granddaughter of someone who enlisted, and as I shared a couple of times, you know, who gave up his status to be able to enlist, he did it for his family, his grandchildren, but he did it for his community, but he did it for all Canadians. I'm sure that my grandfather would be particularly offended if, all these years later, these, you know, how many years later, he would still see his community struggle, or he would still see even members of his own family struggle and face economic violence or physical violence or social violence or marginalization. And so in the same—

**The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook):** The member's time has expired.

**Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview):** Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, it's great to see you in the chair there. You're looking like you belong there, and so we're always proud as all members of the House who'd take the opportunity to sit in that chair, and I've had the chance to do that myself from time to time during my brief life in the House. It is an important position, and so I welcome you into the chair this afternoon and hope you get the opportunity to do it more than just this one time and, hopefully, on several occasions, and I hope other members get that same opportunity so that everyone can experience the variety and assortment of duties and

obligations or the myriad, to quote my friend from St. Johns, of duties and opportunities that are available to all of us in this House.

I think I could hardly do better than what my friend from Minto had said earlier, what my friend from Flin Flon had said earlier, what my friend from The Pas had said earlier, and, frankly, what my friend from St. Johns just finished talking about in relation to the issue that we're addressing this afternoon. But I'm going to not try to do better than them, necessarily, but continue to articulate, I think, the position of this side when it comes to this particular matter, that we find ourselves in a bit of a dilemma because the reality is, is that this is a bill that I want to congratulate the member from Kildonan for putting forward. It's the kind of bill that—and I mean this in the right way—that comes from the backbench and comes from the heart and comes, I think, as a by-product of his experience.

And so here he is putting a bill before the Legislature that is an expression of not only his experience but those of many others around him, who, in one way or another, have served this country, especially on the field of battle, something that I never did, and so I have to always, always take my hat off to those who have the bravery and courage, the wherewithal, the conviction to put their life on the line in defence of common values to all Canadians of freedom and democracy and all of those things that we embrace as Canadians, regardless of where we come from or who we are.

And so in that respect I don't think any member of this side of the House has had a particular problem with the bill. I have to admit if I was to say—had a chance to talk to the member for Kildonan (Mr. Curry) a little bit more, I guess I would have liked a little bit more detail, a little bit more context, a little bit more education, if it comes to that. I'm just—I'm just sort of a—the predicament that reservists find themselves in, especially when they were in active service and then come back and start searching for employment, needing a job, need to support their family, need to pay the mortgage, need to put food on the table, need to send their kids to school.

All of those things are worthy. I have to admit I would have wanted a little bit more discussion, a little bit more education, and I regret very much that it's our side of the House proceeding with the debate this afternoon, not really getting anything from the government side in terms of additional discussion,

additional explanation, additional opportunity for education, so that we could come together and try to do what the member from Kildonan is asking this House to do, so I want to make that point crystal clear.

\* (16:30)

Kudos to the member for bringing this to the floor of the Legislature. Kudos to all members of the House for engaging in it—with it, as we did, and kudos to those people who this bill is intended to help, because they're the true heroes in all of this.

But I started off my remarks, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, by saying that we find ourselves in a dilemma because, as worthy as this bill is and the merits that the bill has, what the government is asking us to do today is not consistent with parliamentary procedure. And I want to say that again because it's a really important point for members of the House to recognize how important the rules are that govern this Chamber.

And so my understanding of the sequence of events is that this bill was tabled in the last session, such as it was. I believe it was debated to a certain point. I don't know that if it went to committee or not; it didn't even make it that far in our process. And let's remember, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, that that committee process is unique in Canada. It's something that all Manitobans, and especially members of this Legislature, should take tremendous pride in, that there's a public hearing in order to review the bill, to understand it, for there to be public input into legislation passed in this House, whether it's unanimously or by the government and in opposition to us, a very, very important part of that process and something we should celebrate.

But the truth of the matter, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, is that the bill never made it that far. And that's not our doing on this side of the House. We don't control the agenda in that respect. We don't decide which bills the government wants to put forward and which they don't, which they want to take to second and to third reading and then on to royal assent. And you'll recall that always, whether you're in opposition or in government, that always very interesting part where the lieutenant 'governant'—governor comes in and we do royal assent of the bill and our table officers do their wonderful magic that they're always doing for us. And, you know, it's a reminder, I think, that that piece of the process, as much as it kind of seems pro forma, is not only how interesting that it is and how

it kind of puts a finality on the activities of this Legislature, but it's a reminder of the point I was trying to make earlier of how important the rules are that govern the way in which we operate in this House.

So somewhere, somewhere along the way, during the last session of this Legislature, this bill did not make it through the process, and the—those responsible for that aren't the NDP members on this side of the House, not our independent friends in the Liberal Party, quite frankly, not my new-found friends in the backbenches of the Conservative Party. They—I don't hold them accountable for this circumstance, this situation that we find ourselves right in.

*Madam Speaker in the Chair*

The fact of the matter is that responsibility for this dilemma, this predicament, is really the responsibility of the front bench of the government, and, of course because he's the Premier (Mr. Pallister), the 'frem'—member for Fort Whyte, holds a considerable responsibility for this bill not making its way through the proper parliamentary process, even though there was pretty much unanimous consent that it was a pretty good bill. So the member for Fort Whyte, the Premier of this province, needs to be responsible for the legislative agenda of the government, needs to make sure that the bills that they really, really want to see go through first, second and third reading and then royal assent is done in the way that it's supposed to be done.

And so the responsibility starts with the Premier. I really think, in some respects, that some responsibility for this predicament, this situation, is in the hands of the current Health Minister who was the House leader for a long, long time in the last Legislature before the election, and was—I think, was—

**An Honourable Member:** He didn't negotiate it.

**Mr. Allum:** Yes—was House leader, I think, at least part time or helpful or mentor or something in the first little bit of this—of the last session—and in the first session, I should say. And then, in the last session, and then my friend from—[interjection] Rossmere was given the very, very heavy responsibility to be House leader in the new government, and I kind of feel bad for him, because I think that he was kind of—and I know, because I was acting, temporary, sometimes House leader in the

last—[*interjection*]-yes, yes, yes, my friend from Minto understands that role completely, as I did.

I was glad for that, because I think my friend from Rossmere would recognize that it's actually quite interesting, quite educational, quite complicated and sometimes, in the course of events, things got missed. And so I'm really trying to say to my friend from Kildonan that between the Premier (Mr. Pallister), who really orchestrates the government's agenda in this Legislature, the Minister of Health, who has been their House leader it seems since time immemorial—I know it's not been that long but for a very long time—he was House leader. And then—some unfortunate responsibility to my friend from Rossmere, the newest House leader for the government side, that this bill didn't make it through the process in the manner in which it's supposed to.

And so we find ourselves in this dilemma, this predicament, and we had presented to us that, oh, no, members of the opposition, could you look the other way, ignore that mistake or a misunderstanding or an absence of communication, or just, you know, blew it. One of those things happened. Say to us, on this side of the House: Can you just look the other way? Can you just ignore what happened? And let's just pretend that we didn't make a mistake. Let's just pretend that we didn't do things the proper parliamentary way; let's just pretend that the rules don't matter; and, if you don't mind, could you just let this one go?

And therein lies the predicament for us. The dilemma, Madam Speaker, is that if you do it on this, then what's next? And precedent, as I know the Speaker would understand completely, precedent is important in this Chamber, as it is in a court of law. Once precedent is set, then it can be referred to over and over again, and it might be that we were to say, well, oh, fine, we respect this bill. But what if it's a bill that's actually quite contentious? What if it's a bill that doesn't do what Manitobans want them to do? What if it's a bill that is a great error of judgment, is a great mistake, could cause great harm? What then? And what will come to us? We'll say, yes, but it's okay; you did it before, so let's do it again.

And, as Her Majesty's loyal opposition, we have—[*interjection*] I actually am a loyal guy. What then, as Her Majesty's official, loyal opposition? We have an obligation to do the job in the way in which it's intended for us to do. And that's not to look sideways, look the other way, when frankly, the

government procedurally makes a mistake, makes an error. And it is true, my friends. I know they're dying to get up to speak to this bill and to say more about it. I have no doubt about that, but I intend to use my time that allotted to me to make this very important point, because—and I learned this myself when I first came into the House, you know, and I'm—being kind of a laissez-faire kind of guy over the years and said, ah, rules, you know, they're meant to be massaged. [*interjection*]

Yes, I roll with the punches, as my friend from St. James says. And, you know, I get that, but then, once in this House, once having the great privilege and the great honour to have a seat in this House, then you have the obligation to defend the rules. And we've seen already—and I'm really not trying to be more partisan than usual in saying this—but we've seen already, in the short life of this government over the last seven months, a propensity to steamroll the opposition when it feels like this is what they should do.

\* (16:40)

Now, I have no doubt, 40 members, you're the government; concede the point. And you're the majority government. And so you can get the bills passed that you want to get passed because you're in that position of power and influence in the Legislature. But, when you make a mistake, when you don't do it right by the rules, then we have to sort of call you on it, call the government on it. And we have to defend those rules, because if we don't, then the rules cease to be meaningful. And then democracy itself has the ability to be undermined. And we don't want that to happen.

**An Honourable Member:** It would help if Micklefield learned the rules too.

**Mr. Allum:** Well, really, my friend from Fort Rouge is saying, actually, we're trying to contribute to the educational process of our friend from Rossmere, the new House leader for the government side, in trying to educate him and help him to recognize how important it is that we stick to the rules when mistakes are made in the parliamentary process.

And so just to come along and say to us, you know, ah, okay, we're going to reintroduce this bill; we're going to do it in the middle of a Throne Speech debate, which is, like, just weird, frankly. But then we've seen it from this government before. Their very first maiden Throne Speech in I think it was

maybe day one, day two, they threw up another motion altogether. And that's because—we know why they did that. It wasn't because they were interested in that particular topic, because that particular motion never saw the light of day ever again.

**An Honourable Member:** Nor should it.

**Mr. Allum:** And nor should it, says my friend from Flin Flon, and I'm inclined to agree. And I have a good feeling we won't ever see it again, just to assure him so he can sleep well tonight.

But what we've seen is a propensity for the government that, when they feel like it, they can just steamroll the opposition. And, that, we're not prepared to do that. I said in this—in the House before and I'll say it again, we'll respect the rules; we're going to work hard to do our part, as obliged as Her Majesty's official opposition.

**An Honourable Member:** Loyal.

**Mr. Allum:** But—loyal opposition, that's right. I thank my friend to St. James for getting the words all correct there.

But we're never going to roll over. We don't do that. We're New Democrats. We're—we have a strong backbone that says we're willing to work with you, but if you're going to try to roll over us, if you're going to try to steamroll us, well, then, that's not going to happen. We're going to stand tall.

And so what we've tried to do is to make a point with the new House leader, my friend from Rossmere, and, you know, I like Rossmere, I have to admit. I love the golf course up in that neck of the woods, played it very many times and—but I would say to my friend from Rossmere, well, there was a way—there was a way to do this that could have worked for all parties. And when that offer was put on the table by my—by our House leader and my friend from Elmwood, my understanding is that our attempt to reconcile matters, to get an agreement, to work in collaboration and to work collegially together, was summarily dismissed. They said, sorry, we're not doing that.

And that's not—another thing about this institution that we're all so lucky to be a part of is when there's an opportunity to negotiate, then take advantage of it. Take advantage of it. Because that will make for a better outcome from your side but will also give our side of the House some better outcomes on the things that we really care about.

So the House leader for the government side had the opportunity to say, you know, we made this mistake in process, we admit it was a mistake, we recognize that all members of the House are primarily and generally in support of the bill, but since we made the mistake, then let's have a negotiation. Let's 'howt' a—have a discussion about how we can get to outcomes that work for all of us.

I know, in my case, with my friend from Concordia, we've been working hard, as I know the Health Minister has, because I don't doubt in this respect, on the fentanyl crisis in this province and in this country and, frankly, internationally, and I think it was put to the House leader at that point that, you know, if you want to resurrect Bill 213 when it was mistakenly left off—left out of the process last time, that there was a chance there to also resurrect the resolution put forward by this—outside of the House that we should have a anti-opioid strategy, a very full and complete strategy that deals not only with public awareness, as the minister had set out, but also with very significant and important harm reduction initiatives as well as other treatment options. And we could've had that conversation. We could have had the negotiation. We could've said, you know, if you want to do this, then we're willing to be pliable if you want to negotiate mutually beneficial outcomes for everyone in the House. And that particular offer to work collaboratively and collegially together was dismissed out of hand; said, we're not going to do that.

So I think, then, it was put that my friend from 'minfo'—Minto had put a really important resolution, a bill on the floor regarding family law and best interests that of the child at the heart of family law, and few—few—would dispute the importance of that particular resolution before the House. And we could've had a negotiation, a discussion, a conversation that could've worked to provide mutual outcomes, beneficial outcomes, for both sides of the House. And, again, that offer for collaboration was summarily dismissed by the House leader, I believe, on behalf of the Premier (Mr. Pallister), because I recognize that he actually does seem to want to work with us. And so you have to put responsibility where it most certainly belongs, and that's the member from Fort Whyte who holds that responsibility.

And—but then, you know, we could've brought our independent members from the Liberal Party into the equation themselves—no doubt that they've put resolutions for us to consider in the last session of

the Legislature—that one of those could've been resurrected as well in order to ensure that there were mutually beneficial outcomes for everyone in this House if the rules are not to be held hard and fast. And I'm sorry to say, and I regret to say, that every attempt to negotiate, every attempt to work in collaboration for all sides of the House—and we hear the Premier talk about his big team spirit all the time and that we should be joining his team at every opportunity, when the chance to work as a team in the House for mutually beneficial outcomes on resolutions that were left off the government's process last time, didn't want to do it, said no, and quite flatly and quite coldly in that respect. There was no sort of give and take, no negotiation, no discussion, no back and forth on this matter.

And so, you say to yourself, as the—Her Majesty's loyal opposition, you say, well, what is our responsibility here? And our responsibility, then, if the government's not interested in working in collaboration, if the government's only interested in steamrolling the opposition, is to say, well, I don't think so; I don't see how we go forward with this.

**An Honourable Member:** Well, they're trying to steamroll Manitobans.

**Mr. Allum:** Yes, well, and my friend from Flin Flon's not wrong on that when he says that, really, the steamrolling of this bill is simply a metaphor, a reflection, of the steamrolling going on with Manitobans right now, and I certainly don't disagree with him on that.

\* (16:50)

We needed to be talking about the Throne Speech this afternoon, Madam Speaker, and we needed to be doing it because the people of Manitoba expect us to be discussing the issues that matter to them in their home, day in and day out. And, instead, we have been forced to speak to a procedural matter that the government made a mistake about. And there's a simple resolution to the problem. I just outlined one, which is, let's negotiate. The other, quite simple resolution to this problem is simply, quite simply, reintroduce the bill this session. Yes, it will go through the same—some of the same hoops it went through already, but not many.

**An Honourable Member:** An hour of debate.

**Mr. Allum:** An hour of debate, as my friend from Minto tells me.

So there's really no difficulty in just reintroducing the bill such as it is, having it go through this session. I have no doubt that it will fly by. We'd be actually interested to go to public hearings in second hearing on this—second reading on public hearings on this bill. Going forward, we want to hear what Manitobans have to say about it as much as my friend from Kildonan does.

The simple solution is to reintroduce the bill into this session. No harm, no foul. It's simply done and off we go. It's exactly what we've done in reintroducing—and will be doing—in reintroducing resolutions that were not—didn't make it through the process during the last session, and so my friend from Concordia will be certainly putting in something on the Order Paper around anti-opiate strategy. Frankly, we think it now has come to the point where it's a public health emergency, and we need the Health Minister to really start taking concrete actions. I mean, if he were to do that, for example, safe injection sites could be set up in a temporary location tomorrow to make sure that we're doing what needs to be done in the midst of that crisis, and that is saving lives—and that is saving lives.

So I would suggest to my friend from Kildonan in the short period of time I have left is that, you know, we can see this through if that's the desire, I suppose, and, you know, it was still going to determine what the outcome of this debate this afternoon is going to be. But we ought not to have got into this circumstance to begin with, and I say through you, Madam Speaker, to my friend from Kildonan, it never should have been this way, and the Premier (Mr. Pallister), the Health Minister is the former House leader, and the House leader today made some procedural errors which now they're just saying to us, oh, just do it—just do it.

And so I—you know, we'll see what the outcome of this debate this afternoon will be. But I can tell you, Madam Speaker, the just do it advice from that side of the House doesn't work for us. We have a job to do here. You did it extraordinarily well during your time on this side of the House. You know the responsibility that we have as Her Majesty's loyal opposition to uphold the rules.

But we also know that we can also collaborate and negotiate when the time comes when oversights are made, and it's unhappy; it's disturbing that we didn't—that olive branch that we offered across the

floor of the House was simply rejected and thrown back and said, no, just do it.

Well, I can tell you, just do it doesn't work for us. Just do it doesn't work for New Democrats; not only in Manitoba, it doesn't work across this country. We don't just do something. We're principled, value-based individuals who work here day in, day out, in Manitoba and across this country to make sure that every Manitoban has a place.

And so to just roll over for government oversight is not something that we do easily, even if we don't really have a problem with the member's bill. That's because, as I said earlier, we have a backbone and we have values and we have principles and we respect rules of procedure and rules of order in this Chamber which have been built not only over decades in Manitoba and generations, but over the long life of democracy since its inception back in the deep mists of time.

And so, with that, Madam Speaker—I know my friends want me to go on longer, but I am running out of time, and so I want to just summarize where I've gone on this important speech before the House.

The first and most important one is that rules in this Chamber matter. And we want the government side to recognize and to take those things seriously. Second, if there's been an oversight, if there's been a problem, then negotiate your way out of it. Don't just say, just do it. And if you don't like that option and you don't want to abide by the rules, reintroduce it.

**Ms. Flor Marcelino (Leader of the Official Opposition):** I am delighted to have a few words on Bill 213, the civil service employment amendment act. It's employment preference for reservists with active service.

Madam Speaker, this is a bill I will personally support and I think my caucus will support. I haven't heard anything negative from members of our caucus. We will support this bill.

This bill, Madam Speaker, brings to mind an already established practice of giving preference to members of the military when it comes to employment, not just in Canada but also in the United States. I know of several members of the

military forces, when they retired and they apply for civilian jobs, they don't have problems getting the jobs that they have applied for. That happens in the army, the navy, the air force. Actually, those retirees, and they're still very young when they retire, the jobs that they land on after retirement are even plum positions in various institutions of government, federal government or even private sector.

So to treat our reservists and give them some employment preference is not objectionable at all. We want to honour our members or personnel in the Armed Forces. They still want to get to be employed or still want to work, so why not give them that preference?

Our position is that our team is a strong supporter of the military in Manitoba and supports its current members and our veterans and the services they receive. We will stand as one voice here in the Legislature for our military and our veterans and their services. So, as I've said, I support this bill. We will support this bill, and I thank the member from Kildonan for bringing this bill to our Legislature.

Madam Speaker, the military has played an important role, past and present, in Manitoba. Our NDP team believes in a professional and diverse public service that reflects the diversity of Manitoba. We walk—we welcome the different experiences and perspectives former members of the Armed Forces bring to the civil service. We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to the brave men and women who put their lives at risk for the rights and freedom we enjoy here in Canada. We believe in giving back to military families when they have given so much to us in their dedicated service and sacrifice.

Madam Speaker, speaking of gratitude, I was heartened and warmed by the program this morning—

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have unlimited time remaining.

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

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, November 29, 2016

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