

Third 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

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, June 6, 2018

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. Good afternoon, everybody.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

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

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

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

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): Madam Speaker, since the last time I was in this Chamber, a number of matters have come up. I wish to table six documents to support what is about to be said.

Madam Speaker, Aikins law firm represents a company in Manitoba and they have used, in my view—or their position to nefariously damage my reputation, make insinuations that are not correct about me and the company they represent—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

The honourable member is raising a subject matter that is the same as the matter of privilege that the member has already spoken to, and I have taken that under advisement. So the member is not able to proceed with this matter of privilege until that ruling is forthcoming.

Those are our rules, and the member is not allowed to take that issue further—*[interjection]*

The only—the honourable member for Assiniboia.

Mr. Fletcher: Madam Speaker, I have made no reference to the—you do not know what I'm going to say, so—

Madam Speaker: The member has already alluded to the fact that it is related to what Aikins MacAulay

has done. He has, indeed, brought that forward. That subject, that whole subject is something that the member is not able to bring forward today as a matter of privilege because that information has already been brought forward into a previous matter of privilege. And as long as I haven't ruled on it, it is not—there is no ability for the member to bring it up again in this House. And my word is final on that.

* * *

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): On a matter of privilege dealing with the PC Party of Manitoba.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

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

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): The PC Party of Manitoba legal counsel is affiliated with many clients and, as I say, I would like to table a letter that I am sending to the Manitoba Law Society about the conduct of this PC Party lawyer.

I am also tabling a letter and other related materials to the Clerk.

My motion is prima facie because it has come up to my attention as late as last night, early this morning, and it is relevant as it deals with a lot—many things that will become apparent.

But my motion for this, Madam Speaker, is: I move, seconded by the member from The Maples, that—I usually have it written out; I can't read the writing today—the Speaker investigate that the privilege of any MLA that has been violated by MLT Aikins or overzealous politicians—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

The member is going down the same path I have just ruled on with reference to Aikins, and I would indicate that, as I have already indicated, that this is under review by the Speaker. The member has no ability whatsoever to raise any of that or anything about Aikins at this time, and the member is coming very, very close to questioning the position of this Chair.

So I would urge him, his previous matter of privilege is already under review. He cannot speak about it in the House in any way whatsoever. Those

are the rules. So the member is not able to bring up the same situation in any context at this point in time.

So the member is out of line in raising a matter of privilege.

* * *

Madam Speaker: And we will now proceed with routine proceedings.

An Honourable Member: On a matter of privilege, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Assiniboia, on another matter of privilege?

Mr. Fletcher: Yes.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

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

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): I move, seconded by the member from The Maples, that the leadership of the governing political party not use legal firms to intimidate, molest, harass or obstruct—

* (13:40)

Madam Speaker: Okay. The member is reflecting on a ruling I have made. He is trying to put it under a different guise, and this will cease immediately. There is no way that any topic like this can be brought up in this House. It has already been taken under advisement, and I will no longer recognize the member for Assiniboia on any matter of privilege at this point in time related to any of these issues.

* * *

Madam Speaker: So we will now move forward with routine proceedings.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 231—The Municipal Harassment Policy Act (Various Acts Amended)

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): I rise, seconded by the member for Burrows (Ms. Lamoureux), that Bill 231, The Municipal Harassment Policy Act, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Ms. Klassen: The Municipal Harassment Policy Act would require municipal councils to establish codes of conduct as well as specific ways of dealing with harassment complaints made against members as part of their codes of conduct.

If passed, this bill would allow municipal politicians a platform to file harassment complaints with the Human Rights Commission, the Association of Manitoba Municipalities or a municipal ethics commissioner.

Miigwech, Madam Speaker.

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

Committee reports? Tabling of reports? Ministerial statements?

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Truth, Integrity and Trust

Mr. Shannon Martin (Morris): It is my pleasure to rise today in this House and put some words on the record about truth, integrity and trust.

Our government has demonstrated that we're open, transparent and accountable, Madam Speaker. Today's NDP has always been the opposite.

During a decade of debt, decay and decline the NDP never made a difficult decision. Our government has begun the hard work required to repair the damage, correct the course and move towards balance in a sustainable way. We are focused on fixing the finances, repairing our services and rebuilding the economy.

The NDP made politically motivated quick fixes that resulted in unsustainable spending growth and massive debt, so, Madam Speaker, in an ode to Jeopardy!, I'll take poor fiscal management for \$1 billion.

This government spent \$500 million of taxpayer money to build just 50 miles of road. Answer: Who is today's NDP?

During the 2011 election campaign, this party said the suggestion that they would raise the PST was nonsense and ridiculous. Answer: Who is today's NDP?

This government broadened the PST in five separate budgets, raised the gas tax and increased the land transfer tax. Answer: Who is today's NDP?

When female staff came forward with allegations of sexual harassment and assault at the hands of NDP MLAs, they were told to, quote, shut up and suck it up, end quote, by this government. Answer: Who is today's NDP?

This government sole sourced Tiger Dam contracts to the friends—to their friends for flood protection. Answer: Who is today's NDP?

This party's leader was arrested on June 27, 2004, for assaulting a cab driver in Winnipeg. Answer: Who is today's NDP?

This government manipulated the way children in care are counted in a desperate way to show a reduction. Answer: Who is today's NDP?

Final Jeopardy!, Madam Speaker. This government believes your word is your bond. Answer: Who is the Pallister government?

Thompson Friendship Breakfast

Mr. Kelly Bindle (Thompson): Yesterday I had the pleasure of meeting up with a group of 20 former Thompsonites, now retired and living in and around Winnipeg, some of whom had worked at developing and constructing the Inco mine site in Thompson in 1957 and many of whom I had worked with at some point when I was an Inco employee in Thompson and Indonesia.

The group meets every Tuesday for breakfast, coffee and camaraderie. Attendance varies between 15 to 20 or more, and among the regulars different people show up from week to week.

Although not all of them are Inco retirees, including a retired police officer, postal delivery person, real estate agent and entrepreneur, they are all past Thompsonites and they all understand how trust and working together was necessary to develop the North.

It is this understanding of trust and integrity that unites them. It has created lasting bonds of mutual respect and friendship, and their sense of pride and accomplishment from working together is evident.

Truth is everything, Madam Speaker, and trust is more important than anything else. You can have a legal contract two feet thick between two parties, seemingly to cover all aspects of an agreement, but it ain't worth a hill of beans if one side decides they aren't going to honour their word.

I'm calling out the NDP for breaking their word. We are sitting in the House in an extended session today because the NDP decided to renege on their word by backing away from an agreement between House leaders. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Bindle: After voters punted the NDP from power two years ago for breaking their word to Manitobans, nothing has changed on that side of the House, Madam Speaker. I believe those who did not—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Bindle: —have a close—who do not have a close relationship with the truth need to be challenged because the truth matters.

The truth matters to all of us on this side of the House; it matters to the retirees who built their lives and careers on it; it matters to Manitobans and it will always matter.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Clean Air Day

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): Today is Clean Air Day. You wouldn't know it. The government missed the opportunity to acknowledge this important day—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Altemeyer: —same as they missed World Environment Day last week. So it's up to us to recognize this important event and put a few interesting facts on the record.

I want to start off by thanking the South St. Boniface Residents Association for a number of really good posts on their Facebook page. They have indicated, on the subject of air quality monitoring, that the provincially run monitoring stations in Winnipeg, on Scotia Street, and in Brandon and in Flin Flon have all stopped reporting data. The Winnipeg one stopped back in October of 2017; the Brandon and the Flin Flon ones stopped in May. This is hardly a good way to assure Manitobans that our air is being properly monitored and the quality of our safety is being assured.

Meanwhile, the government has also failed to implement any of the initiatives they've talked about but not done which would further improve air quality here in Manitoba.

When we were in office, we shut down the Selkirk coal station. When we were in office, we reduced the Brandon coal station by 90 per cent of its operations. We worked with different transit authorities to help them get to electric buses; that's already started. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Altemeyer: The government's done absolutely nothing about that. And the good citizens of Brandon—[*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Altemeyer: Thank you, Madam Speaker. They always have trouble with facts.

It's also true that in Brandon, the landfill site, we worked with the city hall there and got that one to stop emitting methane, same as with the Brady landfill site, which the City of Winnipeg's now expanding without a wooden nickel of support from this government.

I'd love to celebrate Clean Air Day; there's nothing to celebrate.

National Indigenous History Month

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Happy Pride month, Madam Speaker. It was really nice to see everybody out on the weekend.

This is Pride month, but it is also National Indigenous History Month. So I wanted to take a few moments to put some words on the record about that.

Now, we know that indigenous languages have named our city, our province, our country: Wiinibiigong, Manito abi, Kanata, which means that whether or not you have indigenous blood, by virtue of being a Winnipegger, a Manitoban or a Canadian, some part of your identity has an indigenous character to it, and this is the month where we can take the time to celebrate that.

Now, we know that indigenous nations had powerful civilizations that flourished for millennia on these lands, that indigenous nations, post-contact, participated in the first economic boom of what would become Canada.

In the pre-Confederation period, we were the military allies who prevented the United States of America from taking over what became Canada.

Post-Confederation, many members of First Nations and Metis communities fought and served in the world wars. That generation came back and helped launch the civil rights movement in Canada.

Our peoples were there to help repatriate the Constitution in the early 1980s and, of course, our people are still here throughout Canadian society, Manitoba society, in business, in the arts, in sports and, yes, of course, in politics.

* (13:50)

Now, it's very important for us to recognize that celebrating indigenous history in this era of reconciliation is not just about rectifying past wrongs, but it's also about creating a society where every child can reach their full potential.

Every single one of us here in Manitoba will be better off when every child in this country can get a good quality education, have a situation where they're proud of themselves, but also be able to find a meaningful career.

So every day is indigenous peoples' day at my house, but it's also really nice to have a time of year like this one where we can take the official time to recognize it.

I would invite everyone in the House to participate in National Aboriginal Day and all the other celebrations going on this month.

Miigwech gi-bizindawiyeg. [*Thanks for listening to me.*]

Madam Speaker: I believe, according to the rotation, the member statement is for the member of Assiniboia today.

Carbon Pricing and Efficiency Manitoba

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): What a pleasure to have an opportunity on this glorious Manitoba day to speak about the importance of cutting carbon—the made-in-Manitoba carbon tax, which will not do one thing about reducing carbon, but just cause Manitobans extra expense.

This is a great day to reflect on why hasn't there been a Hydro inquiry or why don't we have up to-date conflict-of-interest legislation in this place.

Madam Speaker, why do we have to deal with Efficiency Manitoba, which is a very oxymoronic name, as it is inefficient? It regulates potable water, transportation, natural gas and electricity. It's trying to reduce electricity demand in Manitoba.

We have way too much of it; more of it's coming online. Why would you do that? Just cost Manitobans more money and it won't have helped the environment one bit because we have great hydroelectric power for almost a hundred per cent of our profile.

So the Crown corporation that the government is creating is a farce and I hope they will hear about it this summer.

Introduction of Guests

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

We have seated in the public gallery from Blumenort School 44 grade 6 students under the direction of Cameron Hiebert, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living (Mr. Goertzen).

Also seated in the public gallery from Dufferin Christian School we have 14 grade 9 students under the direction of Blaine Vandermeulen, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade (Mr. Pedersen).

And also in the public gallery we have with us today students and teachers from St. John's Ravenscourt School, Kelvin High School and École New Era School in Brandon who are the guests of the honourable Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Wishart).

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

Budget Implementation Bill Request to Introduce

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): The Premier has called the House back for an emergency session to consider financial matters; however, he's withholding some vital information.

We agree that there are some urgent issues to discuss, but we can't really proceed with a part of those discussions without seeing the government's budget implementation bill, also known as BITSA. The Premier has refused to bring that forward to the House for debate up to this point.

Now, for decades this bill has always been tabled in the spring in this House, the only exception, I believe, being in election years.

Now, last year we saw that there were serious cuts to municipalities, particularly cuts to transit which were contained in this budget implementation bill, so it a very important part of the budgetary deliberations.

Now if the Premier believes that there are urgent financial issues to discuss, let's discuss them.

But I would ask the Premier: Will he bring in his budget implementation bill immediately?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, Madam Speaker, it looks like we'll have to go back to the old days of getting agreements in writing. The member's misrepresented the fact that there was an agreement to conclude the session with the passage of an appropriation and loan act which would ensure civil servants, they would be paid in a timely manner, and now he has broken his word to the people of Manitoba, to every civil servant and to all members of this House.

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

Mr. Kinew: So far this afternoon we've seen how little the Conservatives like to work in June, but I remind them that most people in this—

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —province still have to go to work this month. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: Most schoolchildren in this province still have to go to school this month.

We're an opposition that works. We don't mind coming to work on behalf of the people of Manitoba.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Kinew: Again, we have always—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —been willing to pass the Interim Supply bill.

Madam Speaker: I am having a lot of difficulty hearing. We're just starting oral questions.

We do have a lot of students in the gallery right now and I don't think this type of demonstration is going to be a very productive message to them about how this place works or how democracy works, and I think they expect better of us because that's how they are expected to behave in their classrooms.

So I would ask for everybody's co-operation, please.

The honourable member for—the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, to conclude his question.

Mr. Kinew: Thank you for your guidance, Madam Speaker.

So, again, we've always been willing to pass the Interim Supply measure, but we're not willing to give up on our ability to ask questions before we see this government's budget implementation bill. That's always been the substance of the discussions. Nothing has changed on that front.

We know that last year in the budget implementation bill the Premier hid numerous cuts to transit funding for municipalities right across the province. That's the reason people are paying \$100 a month for their bus passes in Winnipeg right now, because of this Premier's cuts.

Will he bring in his budget implementation bill immediately so we can see what his plans are for this year's cuts?

Mr. Pallister: The member's trying to cover his tracks, Madam Speaker, but despite his best efforts, the record of the previous opposition PC Party was to sit, not only in June, but also in July, August and September, because we were standing up for Manitoba people against the high-tax jurisdiction, high-tax authority that the NDP government thought they were.

We'll continue to stand up for Manitobans. The member can work on his image. We'll work on improving the province.

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

Mr. Kinew: The reason bus fares rose in this province last year is because of the cuts that this Premier brought in in his budget implementation bill. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: The BITSA bill from last year is the reason that people pay \$100 a month in Winnipeg Transit bus fares now.

Now, there's two options in terms of what the Premier is laying out here by asking us to stop asking questions before he's brought in his budget implementation bill. Either he is trying to bring in that bill without due scrutiny, in which case he's being undemocratic, or, on the other hand, his government still hasn't written their budget implementation bill, in which case they're incompetent.

So I would ask the Premier: Which one is it? *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: I recognize the member's making excuses for breaking his word, Madam Speaker, but they are just excuses, aren't they, and whether he had his fingers crossed behind his back or not, he's broken his word.

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

Concordia and Seven Oaks Hospitals Request to Stop ER Closures

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Well, I'll take that answer as incompetent with a side of personal attack.

Madam Speaker, we know that there's tens of thousands of Manitobans in northeast Winnipeg who are saying no to this Premier's health-care cuts. Patients and families will see the Concordia Hospital closed next year and it will be a shell of its former self when it loses the emergency room and the ICU.

Now, surgeries will still be conducted there, but there would be no ER, no ICU. Any front-line worker that you speak to will tell you that that just doesn't make sense. If complications arise in surgery, if things go awry, those surgery patients need to be able to get quick access to intensive care.

Now, this Premier, in his rush to cut costs and close hospitals and emergency rooms, could be putting patients at risk. Now patients in an emergency room may need to be put in an ambulance and shipped to another site.

So I would ask the Premier: With the benefit of a few extra weeks of sitting this spring, will he commit to reversing his plan to close the emergency rooms at Concordia and Seven Oaks hospitals?

* (14:00)

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): The member whines about personal attacks and then calls me incompetent in the same breath, Madam Speaker. We have a little bit of a problem with consistency. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: We have a problem with consistency over there.

A member who talks about competence also admitted earlier in the session that he would be willing to sign \$70 million of hard-earned Manitobans' money away to the Manitoba Metis Federation on a proposal which he has yet to read.

I rest my case on incompetence, Madam Speaker. The member stands and demonstrate it—demonstrates it daily to this House and to the children in the gallery today.

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

Mr. Kinew: You know, the Premier is free to take whatever run he wants to take at me, but let's please leave the kids in the gallery out of it.

And we know he doesn't want to talk about—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew:—Hydro, because the one time where the Premier is speechless, the one time where he has no response is when one Mr. Sandy Riley gets up to speak. Mr. Riley, the outgoing board chair, said that this Premier was guilty of refusing to discuss the critical issues of finance and governance. I seem to detect a pattern here, because now we're going into extended session because the Premier is unwilling to bring forward the budget implementation bill, critical issues of finance and governance for this provincial government.

However, the issue that most concerns people in Manitoba right now is health care. They're standing up in the communities around Concordia, in the communities around Seven Oaks, asking for this Premier to reconsider.

So I'd bring their voice forward today and ask the Premier whether he will back off his misguided plan to close the ERs at Seven Oaks and Concordia.

Mr. Pallister: We'll fix a lot of things the NDP broke, including the health-care system, but, Madam Speaker, we can't fix the integrity problems of the member opposite.

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

Concordia and Seven Oaks ER Closures St. Boniface ER Renovations

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Many people in St. Boniface are worried about what will happen to their emergency

room if this government proceeds with their plan to close the ERs at Concordia—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew:—and at Seven Oaks. The reason being is that there's tens of thousands of patients who are served in those communities as well as out-of-town areas such as the Interlake, tens of thousands of patients who will now have to go to the St. Boniface emergency room or to HSC.

What this government's own expert wait-times panel concluded was that the current renovations being planned for St. Boniface are insufficient and that the closures of Concordia—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew:—and Seven Oaks should not proceed until there's a completely new and much more expansive emergency room there to serve St. Boniface.

So I'd ask the Premier: If he is unwilling to back off his mistaken plan to close Concordia and to close the Seven Oaks emergency rooms, will he commit to a much more broad renovation of the ER at St. Boniface Hospital?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Previous NDP administration didn't have a clue when it came to the problems of health care. Then they admitted they had a problem and so they commissioned expert advice. Then they decided not to follow it because that would have taken courage.

We are demonstrating the courage they lack.

Changes to Health-Care Services KPMG Report Recommendations

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): The Premier's refused to say which additional KPMG recommendations he'll act on. Manitobans are already seeing him cancel essential health-care services in order to cut costs.

The Premier cancelled coverage for outpatient physiotherapy and occupational therapy, cut coverage for orthotics, cancelled the special drug program and forced some of the sickest Manitobans to pay hundreds or even thousands of dollars in medication expenses despite warnings from nurses and doctors it would hurt our health-care system.

The Premier ignored them—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Swan: –and made cuts because he prefers the views of KPMG's accountants to Manitobans who rely on health care.

Will the Premier (Mr. Pallister) admit he's following KPMG's recommendations just because they cut costs?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Acting Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): Certainly, I don't accept the litany of false assertions from the member opposite.

Madam Speaker, we inherited a mess when it comes to all–our health-care system in Manitoba from members opposite.

Where they failed, we'll deliver.

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

Health-Care Services Privatization Inquiry

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): Well, minister needs to know there is 408 pages in the KPMG report and we'll ask questions about them all summer until we get some answers from this government.

And that report recommends privatizing certain surgery–*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Swan: –ranging from emergency plastic surgery to cataract surgery, to even general pediatric surgery. That would mean families would have to pay to have the surgery they need. It'd be a huge burden on Manitobans with loved ones, especially those with children, who'd be forced to make hard decisions and try to pay for health care.

The Premier owes it to Manitobans to be clear about his intent for surgeries.

Will he reject those recommendations to privatize pediatric and other surgeries in the province of Manitoba?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Acting Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): We look forward to sitting here all summer and answering those questions from the member opposite.

Madam Speaker, the fact is that we inherited a health-care system that was dead last in our country. Where they failed, we will deliver. We will clean up

the mess from the members opposite that they left for Manitobans.

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

Mr. Swan: Well, no answers yet, Madam Speaker.

Unlike Progressive Conservatives, we know that privatization doesn't lead to a strong public health-care system. In fact, we know it doesn't save money for the Province at all. After Gary Filmon privatized home care, his Health minister even had to concede it was neither more efficient nor more cost effective. Even–*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Swan: –KPMG says there's currently no clear metrics to describe the scope of savings associated with alternative service delivery options.

Privatization makes health care an immediate luxury for the selected few and it weakens the public system for everybody else.

So will the Premier just stand in his place today and just answer the question: Does he plan to privatize more surgeries in Manitoba?

Mrs. Stefanson: Certainly, Manitobans know what doesn't lead to a strong health-care system; it's an NDP government, Madam Speaker, and that's why they voted them out in the last election.

Madam Speaker, we inherited a mess in the health-care system from members opposite. Where they failed, we'll continue to deliver on behalf of Manitobans.

Employment and Income Assistance Recipients Cuts to Transition Support Services

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): Transition support services does exactly what the name says: it helps vulnerable individuals and families make connections they need to get good jobs and participate in the economy.

Now, without warning or consultation we've learned that this program is being shut down. It isn't accepting new clients.

At this time of year many young people are moving from school to work and they need these supports to realize their dreams of getting good jobs.

Why doesn't this minister support helping individuals get off of EIA?

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Families): We know what the NDP did in terms of vulnerable Manitobans, who had the low—the highest child poverty rate in the nation. You also know what they did in terms of things like the amount of children in care, a despicable record in terms of their approach to this.

We've taken a new approach in terms of EIA, getting people back to the work world. We're very proud of that.

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

Mrs. Smith: I don't know how this minister can stand up in this House and talk about poverty when they've been in government for two years and they don't even have a poverty plan.

There are 10 social service co-ordinators—
[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Smith: —who help vulnerable individuals and families. They help them move off EIA. They help them get the training they need. They help them prepare for jobs. They are the sport—the supports that make a difference in peoples' lives. And this Premier is cutting this program.

After raising rents for—in housing and slashing Rent Assist, the Premier is removing more supports for people who want to work.

Why is this Premier cutting transition support services programs?

*(14:10)

Mr. Fielding: Talk about creating situations for vulnerable Manitobans. We know what the NDP did in terms of housing, in terms of leading—numerous amounts of deferred maintenance on things. We know that the child poverty rate grew substantially.

We're not going to make the same mistakes as the NDP.

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

Mrs. Smith: I don't know why this minister can't answer this question and support people who are trying to get off of EIA.

This government continues to make it harder for people to move off assistance and get into good jobs and have financial responsibility. They cut assistant

supports for Manitobans who are on EIA. That makes it harder to move past the so-called welfare wall.

Now the government is ending a program that actually provides supports to individuals who are trying to overcome challenges and get jobs. We know that this government cut economic development programs for businesses, and now they're targetting individuals.

Will the minister commit to reversing his cuts to Rent Assist and restoring the transition support services program?

Mr. Fielding: The proof is in the pudding. We've seen the amount of child poverty rate drop from, I mean, the last in the nation under the NDP to fifth. We've made substantial improvement in terms of the growth of EIA, half as what the NDP.

We're going to continue that path to enhance situations for Manitobans who are on EIA.

Human Rights Commission Budget and Staffing Concerns

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): The Minister of Justice (Mrs. Stefanson) misled the House last week regarding the Manitoba Human Rights Commission. In 2016, Madam Speaker, the wait times for complaints with the commission was actually six months, not 22 months as the minister suggested, and that's in the annual report.

The minister is looking for any explanation to justify her cuts. She's ready to simply make things up and present them in the House.

Human rights must be protected and so should the supports to Human Rights Commission.

Why is the minister cutting the Human Rights Commission?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): The member speaks about misleading and making things up. We negotiated a deal between House leaders. She's a House leader. I'm not sure if she's trying to just mislead us, I am afraid she's also trying to mislead the members of her own caucus.

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

Ms. Fontaine: I'll remind the minister again, wait times in 2016 for complaints with the Manitoba Human Rights Commission were only six months,

not 22 months, as was just said by the minister. It's right in the annual report.

Since 2016 the minister has cut 24 per cent of staff that support the important work of the Human Rights Commission, nearly one out of every four workers in the commission.

I'll give the minister another opportunity to just admit the obvious, that she made these cuts because of the Pallister government's intent on only focusing on the bottom line.

How does she justify these cuts to the Human Rights Commission?

Mr. Pallister: Responsible government, Madam Speaker, requires truth, honesty and it requires trust, and when a negotiation between House leaders occurs and a resolution is arrived at, it's incumbent on both House leaders to stand by that agreement.

Now, when the member fails to do that and then accuses others of misleading and making things up, she enters a vulnerable phase of her political career. And she is asking her leader to now go out and defend the indefensible, Madam Speaker, and that's a tangled web that she's weaving.

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

Ms. Fontaine: Well, like the myth that was just espoused in here, the myth of compassion from this Pallister government is just that, a myth. A 24 per cent cut to staff in the Human Rights Commission, then the minister misrepresents what's really going on.

The minister's buzzwords mask the reality—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Fontaine: —straight cuts to an agency that protects the public against human rights abuses.

Why is the minister only focused on the bottom line when she has a responsibility to be advancing the cause of equality here in the province?

Mr. Pallister: Well, let's some dispel some myths, Madam Speaker. First, the myth of cuts: \$1.3 billion more invested in education, health and social services than the NDP ever did; the myth—the myth—of cuts.

As far as compassion, Madam Speaker, 10th in education, 10th in health care and 10th in dealing

with poverty is not a record that demonstrates compassion.

We'll clean up the mess they left us to clean up, Madam Speaker.

Health-Care Case Concern Request for Meeting with Minister

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): Melodie Harper is a 39-year-old mother to a beautiful 7-year-old baby girl, yet Melodie is unable to enjoy precious time with her daughter because of the appalling treatment she has received from numerous hospital visits and surgeries here in Winnipeg.

Sadly, Melodie was again admitted to a hospital last month, where during her stay she went into cardiac arrest. It was a frightening situation for her husband, as he had to perform CPR on her three times before hospital staff came to Melodie's aid.

Melodie has suffered enough.

Will the minister commit to meeting with me today to discuss Melodie's situation?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Acting Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): I thank the member for the question.

We don't typically discuss individual cases on the floor of the Chamber, but if the member opposite would like to get me the information we can certainly have the minister look into it.

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

Indigenous Health Care Patient Advocacy Supports

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): Melodie arrived by medevac again on Monday after two whole weeks of intolerable pain. Upon arrival, she was forced to endure a further 26 hours of excruciating pain before hospital staff would finally listen to her pleas for help.

She was finally able to get sleep in four short hours of pain reprieve. I was with her for the past couple of days, trying to ensure that she and her husband were truly listened to by medical staff.

Minister, of the number of admissions to hospitals, what per cent of those are indigenous patients, and what are the systems of support currently in place for those who do not know how to advocate for themselves?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Acting Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): I have already undertaken to look into the specifics of the case that the member opposite is alluding to today, and so we will endeavour to do that.

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

Health-Care Case Concern Call for Inquiry

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): I do not want this minister to wait for another tragedy. I want an inquiry called to investigate Melodie's situation when it comes to navigating within the health-care system. I want it called today because she is still with us. I want her pain, her frustration, her strong, determined spirit and especially her voice to be heard and recorded so that we may learn and never repeat what has happened to her.

Will the Minister of Health call for an inquiry into Melodie Harper's situation today so that my people don't have to face another post-mortem Brian Sinclair inquiry?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Acting Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): We will undertake to get the answers to the member on this specific case.

Gun Amnesty Month Program Announcement

Mrs. Colleen Mayer (St. Vital): Last week, my good friend, the Minister of Justice took part in an announcement that focused on public safety in Manitoba by kicking off a month for gun amnesty which will allow Manitobans to safely and securely hand in unwanted firearms to law enforcement.

Can the Minister for Justice please update this House on how this important program can help to make our homes and our communities safer?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I want to thank the member for that excellent question.

I was proud last week to join members of the RCMP, the Winnipeg Police Service, Brandon Police Service and other law enforcement agencies to announce a province-wide gun amnesty. This amnesty allows Manitobans to turn in unwanted firearms to the police, reducing the chance a weapon could be stolen and used in a crime.

* (14:20)

Madam Speaker, Manitobans can safely and legally have guns or ammunition removed from their home this June. Just pick up the phone, call the emergency line and the police will come and pick up your guns or ammunition.

Madam Speaker, I encourage all Manitobans with unwanted firearms to participate in this very important public safety issue.

Fishers in the Interlake Timely Payment Requirements

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): Madam Speaker, we have documented on no small number of occasions instances where this government is saying one thing and doing quite the other. What we now have evidence of is that this also extends to existing Manitoba law.

The regulation under The Fisheries Act, section 13.2, states, and I quote: A licensed fish dealer who purchases fish from a fisher must pay the fisher no later than seven days after the date of the sale. End quote.

Fishers in the Interlake of Manitoba are still waiting for their money, and yet this minister has taken no action. What is she doing to protect the rights of fishers to get paid for their fish here in Manitoba?

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Sustainable Development): Madam Speaker, this member opposite, he talks about saying one thing and doing another, something him and his NDP caucus know much about. We had an agreement on the House session; they broke it and we're here to—we're going to make them hold to account for that.

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

Mr. Altemeyer: That's not the first time the minister has avoided answering the question directly, and here's the proof of why.

Under regulations, which I table here in the House, this government has now removed the requirement for a fish dealer to pay a fisher within seven days. That's their response to the enormous scandal and fiasco occurring in the Interlake fishery business after they got rid of the single desk.

You cannot imagine, Madam Speaker, anyone in a business—a farmer, hog farmer, cattle rancher—not having a requirement that they get paid for what they are delivering.

How on earth can this minister and this government pretend they care at all about the welfare of thousands of fishers in Manitoba?

Madam Speaker: Prior to proceeding with oral questions, I have asked for order a number of times and I continue to hear heckling in this House. I continue to hear yelling across the floor. I don't think that serves any good purpose in trying to achieve what we need to achieve here.

So, I have sadly had to start my list again and there are a number of you on this list already. I would ask for everybody's co-operation because I really don't think you want your constituents to know that you're not behaving civilly in the House, and I think that a lot of people care to see and want to see more respect shown in this House.

So I'm giving everybody fair warning.

Ms. Squires: Madam Speaker, flying down to Mexico and sticking taxpayers with a \$5,000 cellphone bill, that is an enormous scandal. Learning that your environment plan will not meet its targets and ignoring that for five years, not updating your plan for five years, that is an enormous scandal. Proposing a \$300 price on carbon tax, this is an enormous scandal.

I would say this member is an expert in enormous scandals.

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

Mr. Altemeyer: Madam Speaker, personal attacks say far more about the person delivering them.

I hope the minister will listen to a fisher directly.
[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Altemeyer: This is a personal communication sent to me by Mr. Kris Isfield. Quote: I'm not at all surprised that this government changed these regulations removing protections for fishers again, without care or consultation with anyone within the industry, and they did it again while most of us are too busy working to even address it. It's just another example in a long line of actions and decisions made within the secretive closed doors of the Department of Sustainable Development that is designed to negatively impact commercial fishers. That is why they are repeatedly and ruthlessly attacking our industry, one that has proven itself sustainable and historically successful for generations.

Does the Premier want to call Kris Isfield a liar or is he going to address the accurate accusations made here today?

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): The cries of Manitoba fishermen for help and support went unheeded by the NDP government for a decade and a half, Madam Speaker. We've been working diligently to improve and enliven the opportunities that they need to enjoy and deserve to enjoy for their hard work.

The previous government put up a steady growth sign in Gimli, Madam Speaker, and the only steady growth in Gimli was in the number of zebra mussels in Lake Winnipeg.

That, Madam Speaker, is not support for the fishermen of our province. We'll demonstrate support for our fishermen and work diligently with them. We appreciate their efforts.

Sale of Crown Assets Estimated Revenue

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Last Friday, the Pallister government released a request for proposals for a massive restructuring of how government sells its assets and its land. Now, they would not embark on this RFP process if they'd not had an idea of how much money would be raised through this process.

Like to ask the government: Can the minister provide this House with the amount of money this government hopes to raise as its sell-off of government assets and lands?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): You could work pretty hard to find a better example of NDP incompetence than the handling of the sales of Crown assets and land, Madam Speaker. And, as an example, the percentage of requests that met with a favourable response when people applied around the province to buy Crown land was—just under 90 per cent got a no.

The special irony of that NDP mismanagement was that that took, on average, about four years. So we were actually paying more for the process of dealing with the applications than we were getting from the sale of the land.

That calls for an investigative study, Madam Speaker. That's what we're going to investigate.

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

Mr. Maloway: The Premier is deliberately not answering the question.

No government would embark on a massive sale of public assets and land unless it had an idea of how much money it was going to raise through the process.

So I ask the Premier again to answer the question: What is his government's target for the amount of money it hopes to raise with the sell-off of these government assets?

Mr. Pallister: Well, the member's misrepresenting the nature of the RFP, but that would be customary, Madam Speaker. The nature of managing assets is that it is a responsible and obligatory aspect of being a good government.

The previous administration failed in this respect in every measurable manner. And so, where they failed, we'll succeed.

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

Mr. Maloway: Well, it's a fundamental question and the Premier is deliberately not answering the question.

No government anywhere, of any stripe, would put out an RFP to sell off Crown lands and Crown assets without having some idea of how much money they would hope to receive as a result of these sales.

And I ask the Premier to come clean here and tell us how much he expects to raise?

Mr. Pallister: Where do I begin, Madam Speaker?

Our mad rush to construct a stadium that resulted in, so far, tens of millions of dollars of waste and unnecessary expenditure. That's what the NDP did just prior to the '11 election.

There was the announcement by—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —Greg Selinger, just prior to the last election, of a rush to sell off five parking lots, all of a sudden, Madam Speaker, just on the eve of the election.

There was the hurry to get these east-side-road deals all signed so they could continue their habit of spending, what, \$500 million, Madam Speaker, which no one can trace, that resulted in 50 miles of road construction.

Madam Speaker, this is a litany. The previous government had a litany of failures when it came to managing responsibly the assets of the people of Manitoba. That record of failure isn't hard to better.

* (14:30)

We do want to be the most improved province, but we want to be much more than that. We want to be responsible managers of the public trust.

Environmental Protection Government Initiatives

Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River): Madam Speaker, our government has taken strong action to protect the environment and support green growth with our Made-in-Manitoba Climate and Green Plan.

Yesterday was World Environment Day.

Could the Minister of Sustainable Development update the House on the progress our government has made over the past two years on the environment after 17 long years of NDP mismanagement?

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Sustainable Development): I'm pleased to take that excellent question from the member for Swan River.

On Monday I was pleased to celebrate World Environment Day with Manitobans who were cycling to work throughout our province. I was pleased to run into many cyclists on my commute from my home into the Legislature and today we're celebrating Clean Air Day with Manitobans.

There is a lot of Manitobans who are optimistic, lot of room for optimism. We have a government and a Made-in-Manitoba Climate and Green Plan that is going to reduce our carbon footprint while reducing taxes and improving the economy here in Manitoba.

And where members opposite failed to get it right on the environment, we're going to succeed.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order. Order. Order.

Conflict-of-Interest Legislation Government Intention

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): In over two years this is my first question.

The—Madam Speaker, I'd like to table the documents that I referred to earlier just to make sure that they are tabled.

Madam Speaker, we have not had a proper conflict-of-interest legislation in this place for decades. I've raised this issue time and time again, nothing's happened.

I wonder if the government thinks it's appropriate to intimidate, harass, molest, or obstruct—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): I sincerely wish the member all the best in his campaign for the nomination in the federal riding.

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

Quality of Life in Manitoba Deputy Premier's Position

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): Yes. I would say that it is inappropriate to use the same legal counsel as another company to—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Fletcher: —push a political agenda.

But I'd like to ask the Deputy Premier (Mrs. Stefanson) why Manitoba is glorious and free.

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): We're very excited about Efficiency Manitoba, Madam Speaker. It'll be—it'll cost Manitobans less and save them more money with their hydro bills, which have gone up too much because of NDP mismanagement. And I know the member would want to stand with us in support of making sure that Manitobans don't leave their windows open and their doors open in the middle of winter just because we have lots of hydro.

The fact is, for most Manitoba households, they care about their bills and we want their hydro bills to be lower, not higher.

Madam Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

PETITIONS

Tina Fontaine—Public Inquiry

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

These are the reasons for the petition.

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

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

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

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

(5) Tina Fontaine's murder galvanized Canada on the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls, MMIWG, as she quickly became our collective daughter and the symbol of MMID—G across Canada.

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Premier of Manitoba and the Minister of Justice to immediately call a public inquiry into systems that had a role in the life and the death of Tina Fontaine, as well as the function of the administration of justice after her death.

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

Signed by Tasha Halcrow, Robbie Brass, Sarah Fontaine and many, many other Manitobans.

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

The honourable member for Point Douglas.

An Honourable Member: St. Johns.

Madam Speaker: Sorry. The honourable member for St. Johns.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): Madam Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

These are the reasons for this petition:

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Manitoba—the Premier of Manitoba and the Minister of Justice to immediately call a public inquiry into the systems that had a role in the life and death of Tina Fontaine, as well as the function of the administration of justice after her death.

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

Signed by many Manitobans.

Miigwech.

Vimy Arena

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

* (14:40)

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

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

(6) The concerns of residents of St. James are being ignored while obvious other locations in wealthier neighbourhoods, such as Tuxedo and River Heights, have not been considered for the Manitoba Housing project, even though there are hundreds of acres of land available for development at Kapyong Barracks or parks like Heubach Park that share the same zoning as Vimy Arena site.

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

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

(9) The community has been misled regarding the true intention of the Manitoba Housing, as land is being transferred for a 50-bed facility even though

the project is clearly outside of Manitoba Housing responsibility.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

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

This has been signed by many Manitobans.

Thank you.

Gender Neutrality

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

Gender neutrality describes the idea that policies, language and the other social institutions should avoid distinguishing roles according to

people's sex or gender in order to avoid discrimination arising from impressions that there are social roles for which one gender is more suited than another.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

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

To urge the provincial government to instruct Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living to offer the option of Manitoba Health cards with no gender in order to reduce the anxieties of transgender and non-binary persons accessing the health-care system as a first step.

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

Signed by Jessica Selwood, Jamal Pratt, Rodrick Wells and many others.

Madam Speaker: Grievances?

ORDERS OF THE DAY GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

House Business

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader): Could you please canvass the House to see if there's leave to waive rule 3 regarding the daily sittings of the Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceedings of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly such that, for any emergency sitting days during the remainder of the Third Session of the 41st Legislature, the House shall meet on Fridays in addition to Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave—can I just say is there leave to waive rule 3 and have the House sit on Fridays during the emergency session?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: Leave has been denied.

* * *

Madam Speaker: The honourable government—
[interjection]

Order.

The honourable Government House Leader.

Mr. Cullen: For today, Madam Speaker, would you call Bill 29, the—

Madam Speaker: It has been announced that the House will consider second reading of Bill 29, The Wildlife Amendment Act (Safe Hunting and Shared Management).

The honourable minister for—oh, the honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader): On a matter of privilege.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Madam Speaker: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader, on a matter of privilege.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader): I appreciate rising today. I rise on a matter of privilege, Madam Speaker.

Certainly, we all know in this House that the Premier (Mr. Pallister) recalled this House for an emergency session to consider financial matters, but we see yet again that we are not considering financial matters in the House today. We are not debating the budget bill, BITSA. We are not actually discussing the budget, arguably the most important bill presented to this House, a confidence motion, I will remind everyone.

* (14:50)

When the Premier said the point of this session was to consider financial matters, Madam Speaker, in fact, I would suggest to you that in a move that has no parallel in modern history in our province, the Premier has not even introduced the budget bill in this House this spring.

Certainly, I would suggest that everybody could agree this is actually unprecedented. It represents a disservice to the people of Manitoba and, really, the elected representatives of this Chamber. It disrespects the rules, practices and certainly the traditions of this House, Madam Speaker.

I ask you, Madam Speaker, that you call this Premier and this government to order and ensure that the proper debate on this government's budget bill take place immediately.

Madam Speaker: Before recognizing any other members to speak, I would remind the House that remarks at this time by honourable members are limited to strictly relevant comments about whether the alleged matter of privilege has been raised at the earliest opportunity and whether a prima facie case has been established.

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader): On to this issue, recognizing that it is Clean Air Day, I was hoping the member was going to get up and actually clear the air on why we're actually sitting here today, Madam Speaker.

Clearly, we're ready to work on this side of the House. I just asked for leave—[*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Cullen: —to sit on Fridays as well. Opposition members declined to come to work on Fridays. I don't know why but, hey, we're here to work, Madam Speaker, and I want to clear any misconceptions up and maybe clear the facts on this one, in terms of BITSA itself.

BITSA itself, there will be ample opportunity for members opposite to debate in second and third reading the BITSA bill, and when it gets to the Committee of the Whole, unlimited time for debate in BITSA, Madam Speaker.

Now, I don't know if the members haven't read the rules in regard BITSA bill, but they maybe should bone up on the rules relative to the House procedures. Madam Speaker, the BITSA bill is really just one component of the whole Capital Supply. We're eager to move loan and Capital Supply along.

We'll have BITSA introduced to the House at a later date. Clearly, we have a confused relative, the federal Liberal government, some of the information coming out there, or else we would have BITSA tabled by now.

But, Madam Speaker, I would just hope that the members opposite would brush up on the rules of the House so they're familiar with what the implications are.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Yes, Madam Speaker, I would make a couple of points.

First, there have, in fact, been years in the past—I think probably 2007, if I remember correctly—when we did the Estimates in the fall and the budget debate occurred in the fall.

So this is not without precedent, but, that being said, we have—[*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Gerrard: —we have an emergency session. That emergency session was called specifically to address financial reasons and financial questions. It is up to the government to explain exactly what financial reasons it wants to address and if the government could work quickly and bring in their BITSA bill, if they've got it, the government has other budget bills on Capital Supply that it could produce.

We have, you know, some more financial questions that we could ask in concurrence, before that's completed. There's ample financial issues which the government could be dealing with, and clearly that's where the government should be going, because that's what that emergency—this emergency session today was called for.

Madam Speaker: On the matter of privilege raised by the honourable member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine), I would like to inform the House that a matter concerning the methods by which the House proceeds in the conduct of business is a matter of order, not privilege.

Joseph Maingot, in the second edition of Parliamentary Privilege in Canada, states on page 14 that: Allegations of breach of privilege by a member in the House that amounts to complaints about procedures and practices in the House are by their very nature matters of order.

He also states on page 223 of the same edition: A breach of the standing orders or a failure to follow an established practice would invoke a point of order rather than a question of privilege.

On this basis, I would therefore rule that the honourable member does not have a prima facie case of privilege.

Ms. Fontaine: Respectfully, I challenge your ruling.

Madam Speaker: The ruling of the Chair has been challenged.

The question before the House is, shall the ruling of the Chair be sustained?

Voice Vote

Madam Speaker: All those in favour, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Speaker: In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

Recorded Vote

Ms. Fontaine: A recorded vote, please.

Madam Speaker: A recorded vote having been called, call in the members.

Order.

The one hour provided for the ringing of the division bells has expired. I am therefore directing that the division bells be turned off and the House proceed to the vote.

The question before the House is, shall the ruling of the Chair be sustained?

Division

A RECORDED VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:

Yeas

Bindle, Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Curry, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Friesen, Graydon, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Martin, Mayer, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pallister, Pedersen, Pivniuk, Reyes, Schuler, Smith (Southdale), Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Wowchuk, Yakimoski.

Nays

Allum, Altemeyer, Fletcher, Fontaine, Gerrard, Kinew, Klassen, Lamoureux, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Marcelino (Tyndall Park), Saran, Smith (Point Douglas), Swan, Wiebe.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 37, Nays 16.

Madam Speaker: The ruling of the Chair has been sustained.

House Business

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader): On House business.

Madam Speaker: On House business.

Ms. Fontaine: Pursuant to rule 78(4), I am tabling the official opposition list of the government ministers to be called for the next sitting of Committee of Supply to consider the concurrence motion.

The following ministers shall be called: the Minister of Justice and Attorney General (Mrs. Stefanson), the Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen), the Minister of Infrastructure (Mr. Schuler), the Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living (Mr. Goertzen), the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Eichler), the Minister of Crown Services (Mr. Cullen), the Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade (Mr. Pedersen), the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Wishart), Minister of Families (Mr. Fielding), Minister of Indigenous and

Northern Relations (Ms. Clarke), Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage (Mrs. Cox), Minister of Sustainable Development (Ms. Squires), Minister of Municipal Relations (Mr. Wharton)—[interjection]

* (16:00)

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Fontaine: These ministers will be questioned concurrently.

Miigwech, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: We thank the member for the tabling.

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader): Would you please canvass the House to see if there's leave to waive rule 4(2) regarding the Friday sittings of the Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba such that for any emergency sitting days during the remainder of the Third Session of the 41st Legislature, the hours of sitting on Fridays shall be from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., with routine proceedings to commence at 10 a.m., including a 40-minute question period.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave of the House to waive 4(2) where the House will be sitting on Friday from 10 to 5 with an oral question period of 40 minutes?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

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

Mr. Cullen: Could you also canvass the House to see if there is leave to waive rule 4(4) regarding the usual adjournment hour of the Rules, Orders, and Forms of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba such that for any emergency sitting days during the remainder of the Third Session, 41st Legislature, on which any steps of the main and Capital Supply procedure are considered, the House shall not adjourn until 9 p.m.

Madam Speaker: Now, is there leave to waive rule 4(4) regarding the usual adjournment hour of the Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba such that for any emergency sitting days during the remainder of the Third Session, 41st Legislature, on which any steps of the main and Capital Supply procedure are

considered, the House shall not adjourn until 9 p.m.? Is there leave?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: Leave has been denied.

* * *

Mr. Cullen: Madam Speaker, again, could you call Bill 29, The Wildlife Amendment Act (Safe Hunting and Shared Management).

Madam Speaker: It has been announced by the Government House Leader (Mr. Cullen), that the House will consider second reading of Bill 29, The Wildlife Amendment Act (Safe Hunting and Shared Management).

The honourable Minister for Sustainable Development—prior to that, the honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader): I rise on a matter of privilege, Madam Speaker.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Madam Speaker: On a matter of privilege.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order. The honourable Official Opposition House Leader, on a matter of privilege.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader): Miigwech, Madam Speaker—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Fontaine: The Premier (Mr. Pallister) recalled this House for an emergency session to consider financial matters.

Madam Speaker, we are not considering financial matters in the House today. We are not debating the Premier's budget bill, BITSA, We are not asking questions in concurrence. We are actually not discussing the budget, arguably, again, Madam Speaker, the most important bill presented in this House, which, again, I remind the—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Fontaine: —House is a confidence motion.

When the Premier said the point of this session was to consider financial matters, we are not able to ask questions in concurrence. The Government

House Leader (Mr. Cullen) said it was of the utmost importance to finish concurrence prior to the House rising in order to ensure proper consideration of financial matters and that they take place, but the government is not even willing to call concurrence in orders of the day. They are refusing to answer questions about their budget, which, again, Madam Speaker, I will remind the House they have not even tabled. We have not even seen what is coming down from this government.

Again, Madam Speaker, I ask you to call this Premier and government to order and ensure that the proper debate on this government's budget take place immediately.

Madam Speaker: I would just like to point out to the member that I have already dealt with this matter of privilege and there is no further opportunity to discuss it. This is, in substance, the same matter of privilege that the member raised before, and I have already ruled on that. So I would indicate that the member does not have a matter of privilege.

Ms. Fontaine: Madam Speaker, I would suggest to you that it is a different matter of privilege. I was specifically—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Fontaine: —referring to concurrence. And, Madam Speaker, respectfully, I do challenge your decision.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

I would like to indicate to the member, with the greatest of respect, I have already ruled on that issue as a matter of privilege, and I will draw to her attention that it was raised by me as a matter of order, not privilege, and because it has been raised again by the member, she is reflecting on the ruling of this Chair, and the ruling of the Chair has already been sustained on this issue.

An Honourable Member: Point of privilege, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for—

An Honourable Member: Matter of privilege, Madam Speaker.

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

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

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

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): Yes, today in question period, I mean, there were a number of answers which were not even closely related to questions, but when the Premier (Mr. Pallister) got up to answer questions of the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Stefanson), in the Minister of Justice's stead, from questions from the matter of St. Johns, about cuts to the Human Rights Commission, the Premier was so far from the topic that he actually affected the privilege of the member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine) to ask important questions on behalf of her constituents on—or within her critic responsibilities.

And on behalf—[*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Swan: —on behalf of the people of Manitoba.

Now, you will recall, Madam Speaker, that there were questions today about cuts that have occurred in the Human Rights Commission. The Premier got up and—instead of the Minister of Justice, as he's entitled to do, but what he did, of course, is made personal attacks against the member for St. Johns and other statements which were completely unconnected to the question.

First of all, he made no reference to the actual cuts in the Manitoba Human Rights Commission. Second of all, he said nothing at all even having to do with the Human Rights Commission. And, thirdly, nothing he said in any of his three answers had anything to do with the Department of Justice at all.

We appreciate that when ministers, or even the First Minister, answers questions, they are entitled to a certain amount of latitude, but a government minister is not entitled to completely ignore the question which is posed to them. And so it is very important that the member for St. Johns, and every member of this opposition, has the ability to ask questions, fulfilling our role as the official opposition. We're entitled to get answers.

* (16:10)

Again, it is possible for the government to perhaps not answer the questions directly as we would like, but it is incumbent, so that we can fulfill our job in this House, for the First Minister and other ministers to at least touch upon the government department that's being asked about.

Now, I was going to raise this tomorrow after reviewing the Hansard, but instead, in the time that

the bells were ringing, I did discuss this with my colleagues, and we all agree, and you will agree, Madam Speaker, that there was not a single reference made by the Premier to the department about which the question had been asked.

So, for that reason, I believe the member for St. Johns' privileges have been breached. In fact, all members of the opposition's privileges have been breached, and I would ask that you direct the Premier to answer the question that was posed to him in question period today.

Madam Speaker: Before recognizing any other members to speak, I would remind the House that remarks at this time by honourable members are limited to strictly relevant comments about whether the alleged matter of privilege has been raised at the earliest opportunity and whether a prima facie case has been established.

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, and I certainly will appreciate and look forward to your ruling on this matter.

Just to clarify, certainly, the letter from the Premier identifying the emergency session, it's very clear it is to consider financial matters and other important undertakings which serve in the best interests of Manitoba, Madam Speaker.

It's clear the NDP do not want to debate Bill 29. Bill 29 is huge safety issues for many Manitobans, life-and-death safety issues. We believe this is an important bill and should be debated today.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader): I do just want to put on the record that the Government House Leader did not even address the matter of privilege that was just discussed by my colleague from—the member for Minto.

It is incredibly important that we get the answers to the very important questions that we are asking in question period. That is what an opposition does. And so I would suggest to you that my privileges have been breached.

And I do just want to put it on the record here as well, in respect of the Government House Leader, it's not our fault that they didn't do their job and deal with Bill 29 when they had the chance. So either they deal—[*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Fontaine: –with the financial matters at hand–
[*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Fontaine: –and actually do their job adequately, or we'll be here all month, all summer.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, the point of privilege that was raised by the MLA for Minto had nothing to do, that I recall, about the Bill 29. It had all to do with the answers that the Premier (Mr. Pallister) gave in question period. And clearly that's what we should be focused on here.

The issue here is whether these were reasonable answers or they were not. And I think that there's enough that was raised by the MLA for Minto that this issue should be given serious consideration.

Madam Speaker: A matter of privilege is a serious concern. I'm going to take this matter under advisement to consult the authorities and will return to the House with a ruling.

* * *

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): I rise on a matter of privilege.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Madam Speaker: On a matter of privilege.

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Thank you, Madam Speaker. [*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

Mr. Wiebe: Well, it's quite interesting, Madam Speaker, that as I start this matter of privilege, members of the 'opposit'–or of the government side are heckling me, because that is specifically what I'd like to raise in this matter of privilege.

And that is, in keeping with the matter that was raised by the member for Minto (Mr. Swan), we asked some pretty serious questions here of the government this afternoon during question period, and yet, through a combination of dodging the questions, but also of heckling by the government side, it was quite difficult for us to get any kind of answer at all out of this government.

Now, we understand that there is a certain level of back and forth that happens off the record in this place. It's been commented on multiple times. But we've also been given very clear direction by you, Madam Speaker, that the heckling in this place has gotten to levels that is completely unacceptable.

And there were times, not only during question period, but also during the important House business that was raised either by the member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine) or the Government House Leader (Mr. Cullen) that I struggled to hear. I struggled to hear what the answer was.

And as a member for a constituency, my constituents have brought important issues to me, not least of which, of course, is the closure of their community emergency room, an important issue to them. I know that because they come to me on a regular basis and I know they come to other members of this Chamber, and yet when those questions are raised, as they were today by the Official Opposition Leader, it was difficult to hear the answer.

And so it's my duty as an MLA to take those answers, to take that back-and-forth and bring it to my constituents and relay whatever information was given to us during question period.

And, because of the unbelievable heckling that's happening in this place–and I might add, Madam Speaker, and I know you have commented on this, that it is just a very few members in this Chamber who are quite vocal and you've mentioned them by name in the past and you threatened to do it again today, and I think that might be the only recourse in dealing with this ongoing issue. But because of those–that heckling and that noise and the out-of-the-record conversations that are going on, it impeded on my privilege as a member for Concordia to hear those answers and be able to bring them back to my constituents.

I think this is a serious issue. I–again, it's been commented on in the media; it's been commented on by members of this Chamber. I think it's time to take it to the next level to put that into practice and to send a very clear message that we as legislators can treat each other with respect, we can listen to the questions respectfully and we can listen to the answers respectfully, and I think that will only serve to make this place better.

So I move that as a matter of privilege.

Madam Speaker: The–can the member specifically indicate what his motion is and what the second–who the seconder is, and I understand that it should be sent up as a written motion as well.

So we–[*interjection*] Pardon? Yes.

I would ask the member for Concordia, then, to read out his motion.

Mr. Wiebe: I appreciate the patience of the House as I scratch this out.

I move, seconded by the member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine), that my ability to execute my duties as an MLA are being impeded by the heckling in the House and need to immediately cease.

Madam Speaker: Before recognizing any other members to speak, I would remind the House that remarks at this time by honourable members are limited to strictly relevant comments about whether the alleged matter of privilege has been raised at the earliest opportunity and whether a prima facie case has been established.

* (16:20)

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader): Well, Madam Speaker, I think it's painfully clear what's taking place here. I certainly will look forward to your ruling on this. You know, the opposition say they want to come to the Chamber to do some work, but we've got some work in front of them and they seem to be unwilling to do that work.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, the point's an issue that has been raised deals with heckling, you know, some might say attempts at harassment and intimidation at times. This is a serious matter which needs to be considered. And I—as I reflect upon the last few days and weeks, in fact, months, it is an issue which you, as Speaker, have raised very frequently in this House and cautioned people.

So it's not unreasonable for this to be brought to a head here with this resolution. I think the government needs to address the issues which are brought forward—brought forward, rather than trying to, you know, deviate and get things sidetracked.

We're clearly waiting for the government to bring forward BITSA bill and other financial matters, but right now we're focused on this important issue that has been brought forward by the member from Concordia, and that's where our focus should be. And maybe it's time to complete this resolution and to address the issue which you yourself have phrased many, many times.

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): I'm just going to say that this has come up over and over and over again. The—I raised this just a few weeks ago where we had a male member 'sh-sh-sh-ooing' a female

member in a very condescending manner. We get heckled when we speak. Even the members in this Chamber who do not heckle get heckled. It's one thing if you heckle, you might want to be right—to be heckled. But to be heckled when you never heckle, well, that's just rude.

And, Madam Speaker, I don't heckle. And I've never been heckled in 11 years in Ottawa or two here. And there's no reason anyone in this place needs to heckle, especially in a condescending way. Come on.

Madam Speaker, thank you. I agree with the matter—with the motion.

Madam Speaker: A matter of privilege is a serious concern. I'm going to take this matter under advisement to consult the authorities and will return to the House with a ruling.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader): I rise on a matter of privilege.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Madam Speaker: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader, on a matter of privilege.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader): It is an unfortunate matter and a difficult matter, yet again, Madam Speaker, but I would suggest to you that it is a very important matter, one that cannot be ignored or set aside. It is a matter that affects every member of this House and deals directly with the rights and privileges of all members of this Assembly.

As all members of this House well know, a matter of privilege is a very serious matter. It is a matter that requires the utmost attention to detail and to the rules that govern this Assembly.

Madam Speaker, according to Beauchesne, a matter of privilege must be a matter which has the effect of interfering with or impeding the ability of a member to exercise their privileges as a member. The privileges of this House and its members are required in order for this Assembly to fulfill our democratic mission.

So, Madam Speaker, I would suggest to you that when one member of this House arbitrarily flouts the rules of this House and takes it upon themselves to decide which rules it will follow and which rules it will break, this fundamentally interferes with the rights of all members to exercise their privileges as members.

Madam Speaker, it certainly prevents members from exercising their freedoms as parliamentarians. It undermines the confidence members have in the very rules of this House. And it certainly, I would suggest, threatens members' confidence in the fact that the rules of the House are set by the Assembly and are enforced by the Speaker and not by the Executive Council.

Madam Speaker, given that the member for Spruce Woods (Mr. Cullen) did knowingly and wilfully flout the rules, practices and traditions of this House yesterday—or Monday, and that the member for Spruce Woods did knowingly and wilfully refuse to follow the rules which govern all members, the member for Spruce Woods' actions constitute a breach of members' privileges.

Madam Speaker, I would suggest to you that those privileges are necessary for this Assembly to execute its powers.

If a member flouts—flutes—flouts the rules of this Assembly, then this prevents other members from exercising their rights as members insofar as their rights are necessarily dependent on all members respecting the rules of this House.

Certainly, Madam Speaker, once a member is able to breach the rules of this House according to their arbitrary will, the ability of this House to fulfill its function is gravely threatened.

Madam Speaker, the details are as follows: the Government House Leader has clearly put false information on the record numerous times. He has attacked the character of members of this Chamber without cause or justification. He has done so in a clear attempt to distract from his government's mismanagement and own incompetence.

Madam Speaker, I would suggest to you it does a dis honour to the members of this Chamber and, quite simply, it must be called out and it must, I would suggest to you, be called to account.

Therefore, I move that a committee of this House be struck to—and seconded by the member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe), that a committee of this House be struck to examine the member's statements and recommend whatever action is necessary to restore trust and honour to this Chamber.

Miigwech.

Madam Speaker: Before recognizing any other members to speak, I would remind the House that remarks at this time by honourable members are

limited to strictly relevant comments about whether the alleged matter of privilege has been raised at the earliest opportunity and whether a prima facie case has been established.

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, I would welcome a committee to address the issue.

Madam Speaker: A matter of privilege is a serious concern. I am going to take this matter under advisement to consult the authorities and will return to the House with a ruling.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): I didn't want to raise this today, but, then, this is the most opportune time for me to raise a matter of privilege, in the sense that when I asked the honourable Office of the Speaker for a copy of the letter from the Premier (Mr. Pallister) of the province recalling this House, I was told, in no uncertain terms, that I could just pop by the honourable Office of the Speaker and read the letter.

* (16:30)

The reason behind my request is that, as a member of this House who was elected twice, in 2011 and 2016, I wanted to have some of those documents and not electronic reproductions in my files. I wanted to be able to read them in a way that will satisfy me that the contents are in accordance with the rules.

And I was told that I could just pop by the Office of the Speaker and read them there as I was told the correspondence—I'll read the answer to me: You can come by and look at it, yes, however we don't make copies of correspondence addressed to us from one party to another—for another. Hope that helps. Thank you.

And it is my assertion that my privilege has been breached by me having to engage with electronic communications. I need a copy of that letter from the Premier recalling this House and the specific reasons behind the recall.

I am currently 71, going on 72 years old, and for me to read from a small screen that I have with my iPhone, I need to read the particular letter itself or a copy thereof.

And I'm raising that as a matter of privilege in the sense that I needed the openness and transparency of the Office of the Speaker, most

especially that it is not up to me to be so demanding, but I need a copy of that letter and I want that to satisfy my privilege.

Therefore, I move, seconded by the member from Elmwood, that the issue of my privilege being breached in accordance with what I said before in those statements, be examined by the Office of the Speaker and to be ruled accordingly, as today is the only day that I could raise it.

Thank you.

Madam Speaker: I would just ask the member to put his motion into writing please, and the page will bring it forward. The member for Tyndall Park (Mr. Marcelino) needs to put that motion in writing, please.

The honourable member for Tyndall Park, if he could read his motion, please.

Mr. Marcelino: I move, seconded by the member from Elmwood, that my privilege as a member be honoured by providing me with a copy of the Premier's (Mr. Pallister) letter recalling the House, as referred to in the records of this House. And I signed it.

Madam Speaker: Before recognizing any other members to speak, I would remind the House that remarks at this time by honourable members are limited to strictly relevant comments about whether the alleged matter of privilege has been raised at the earliest opportunity and whether a prima facie case has been established.

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): If there's a letter, let's see it. Very reasonable.

Thank you.

Madam Speaker: A matter of privilege is a serious concern. I'm going to take this matter under advisement to consult the authorities and will return to the House with a ruling.

* * *

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader): I rise to motion to adjourn the House today. *[interjection]* Oh, sorry.

I move, seconded by the member—

An Honourable Member: Madam Speaker, on a point of order.

Point of Order

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Assiniboia, on a point of order.

Mr. Fletcher: Yes, Madam Speaker, the debate and discussion—I'm quoting from a private document—is legitimate and long overdue when it comes to Manitoba's conflict-of-interest legislation.

I can go on, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Can the member indicate what his point of order is?

Mr. Fletcher: The point of order is I am unable to table documents that I have raised earlier today and at question period for reasons that do not seem to exist in the rules or anywhere else. So this private document, which I just quoted, has not been allowed to be tabled.

Madam Speaker: I would indicate to the member that members cannot just table documents without context, and what the member was trying to table was in relationship to a matter of privilege that is under review right now. And therefore there is no ability for the member, by our long-standing rules, to table any documents.

So I have pointed this out to the member numerous times, and I would indicate that if he goes any further with this, he is actually ruling against the Chair and making some very serious comments here. And I would urge the member at this point to cease and desist what he was trying to do, because he would be grossly out of order.

The honourable Official Opposition House Leader (Ms. Fontaine)—oh, the—I did see the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) stand on that. The honourable—oh.

The honourable member for The Maples.

Mr. Mohinder Saran (The Maples): Under Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, under 40(5): "Where in a debate a Member directly quotes from private documents, including digital representation or correspondence, any other Member may require the Member who is speaking to table a printed copy of the document quoted."

I would like to get a copy of the documents, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: I would indicate to the member that he is out of order in asking for any documents that have not been tabled in this House and are not allowed to be tabled, by rules, based on the fact that the member has been trying to work around me all afternoon. And I'm taking great offence to the

member for Assiniboia (Mr. Fletcher) for trying to undermine my rulings.

* (16:40)

I have ruled on this numerous occasions, and I do not find it very respectful what the member is trying to do in a guise of something different. The member is extremely out of order, and I would ask him now to cease and desist with what he is trying to do, because that is very disrespectful to this Chair and to this Speaker.

And, if the member thinks he knows the rules, this is a big one, and I would ask him to please cease and desist with what he is trying to do now and undermining and obstructing what this Speaker is trying to do.

* * *

Madam Speaker: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

An Honourable Member: Madam Speaker, on a point of order—on a matter of privilege.

Madam Speaker: Which one is it?

An Honourable Member: You'll never know if you don't recognize it.

Madam Speaker: Well, you said both matter—you said a point of order and a matter of privilege. Which is it?

An Honourable Member: It's a matter of privilege.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Madam Speaker: Matter of privilege.

An Honourable Member: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, we are first among equals in this place. The comments that were just made constitute harassment, bullying and is beneath the Office of Speaker. We are in—within the rules, absolutely within the rules of tabling public interest documents.

And to say that, on one hand, we are within the rules and then to say, on the other hand, oh, no, we're going to make up rules or not follow the traditions of this place, is not acceptable, and, Madam Speaker, we have to recognize that the No. 1 principle are the democratic principles and the ad hoc nature and the inconsistency—which we've experienced even this afternoon—are not worthy of this place.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

This member is now reflecting on the Speaker. I would urge him to discontinue from proceeding or else I may have no choice but to name him, and I would indicate he is still continuing to raise the same issue that I have ruled on a number of times.

I am trying to follow the rules of this House, and I would ask the member to do the same because he is not following the rules, and I refuse, now, to recognize the member for any other comments this afternoon because he has been disruptive of this House. He's abusing the rules and I will no longer acknowledge the member this afternoon.

* * *

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader): I move, seconded by the member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe), that we adjourn the House today [*interjection*]-that the House now do adjourn-[*interjection*]-do now adjourn.

Madam Speaker: It is been moved by the honourable Official Opposition House Leader, and seconded by the honourable member for Concordia, that the House do now adjourn.

Madam Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: Leave has been denied. [*interjection*] The motion has been denied.

The honourable official-[*interjection*]-a motion.

Voice Vote

Madam Speaker: All those in favour of the motion, please say aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Speaker: In my opinion, the Nays have it.

Recorded Vote

Ms. Fontaine: Madam Speaker, a recorded vote, please.

Madam Speaker: A recorded vote having been called, call in the members.

* (17:40)

Order, please. The one hour provided for the ringing of the division bells has expired. I am therefore directing that the division bells be turned off and the House proceed to the vote.

The question before the House is, shall the House adjourn?

Division

A RECORDED VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:

Yeas

Allum, Fontaine, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Marcelino (Tyndall Park), Swan, Wiebe.

Nays

Bindle, Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Curry, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Graydon, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Mayer, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pedersen, Pivniuk, Reyes, Schuler, Smith (Southdale), Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Wowchuk, Yakimoski.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 8, Nays 34.

Madam Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

Madam Speaker: The hour being past 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, June 6, 2018

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