

**Fifth Session - Fortieth Legislature**

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

**DEBATES**

and

**PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report**  
**(Hansard)**

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The Honourable Daryl Reid  
Speaker*

**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Fortieth Legislature**

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ALLUM, James, Hon.	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
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<i>Vacant</i>	Southdale	—

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Thursday, February 25, 2016**

*The House met at 10 a.m.*

**Mr. 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.

Good morning, everyone. Please be seated.

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

**Mr. Speaker:** Second reading of public bills. Are we ready to proceed with Bill 200?

**An Honourable Member:** No.

**Mr. Speaker:** No? Okay. Are we ready to proceed with Bill 201?

**An Honourable Member:** No.

**Mr. Speaker:** No? Under debate and second readings of public bills, are we ready to proceed with Bill 215?

We are? *[Agreed]*

**DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS—  
PUBLIC BILLS**

**Bill 215—The Prevention of Interpersonal and Family Violence Through Education Act (Public Schools Act and Education Administration Act Amended)**

**Mr. Speaker:** All right, we'll call Bill 215, The Prevention of Interpersonal and Family Violence Through Education Act (Public Schools Act and Education Administration Act Amended), standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Healthy Living, who has two minutes remaining.

Is there leave for this matter to remain standing in the member—Minister of Healthy Living's name?

**An Honourable Member:** No.

**Mr. Speaker:** No? Leave has been denied.

Is there further debate on this matter? The honourable member for Lakeside (Mr. Eichler)—no? Okay.

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Mineral Resources):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak to this bill and I—what I'd like to discuss generally is on issues of family violence and domestic violence. I've been very, very proud of this Legislature and particularly committee hearings that have been conducted on bills that have gone through and the non-partisanship nature of dealing with these matters. It's been a remarkable example of what we mostly do in this Chamber, which is we mostly, notwithstanding observations of outside observers, we mostly agree on what is right for Manitobans.

And it is very clear, Mr. Speaker, that the issue of domestic violence and financial security, job protection, and flexibility and domestic abuse is of great importance, and we have bills that are coming back, we know, from a committee reading which we hope and believe that will be passed in this Legislature, certainly, given comments of all members of the House. So there's no question these are important issues.

I also do not question the intentions or the sincerity of the Liberal member for bringing forth this bill. As Government House Leader, Mr. Speaker, and as also a private member, I always find these issues difficult in terms of the role that I should assume because I'm House leader and because of the interaction that I have as a private member as to positions that I can and should take.

I also want to indicate that we've had a very healthy history in the last few years of passing and dealing with non-partisan issues by members of the opposition and by members of the Liberal Party. I—this is not meant as a criticism—but, for the nine years that I was in opposition, we were able to pass one private member's bill—one in nine years. And we've passed many, many more in this Chamber in terms of bills and in terms of private members' resolution. So I commend this Legislature for that.

The—there are problems with this bill. There are some fundamental problems with this bill. We're not

in opposition with the intent of this bill, Mr. Speaker, but there are some structural problems otherwise. Now, when the member introduced the bill, we had a discussion, and I—the member had discussions with the Minister of Education about how do we fix this, how do we fix the difficulties in the bill. And I believe the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) attended a meeting that was set up and established by the Minister of Education in order to try to hammer out some of these issues. Most people agreed with the intent of the bill, but pointed out there were some severe structural problems in this bill.

Yesterday, the member—I don't think it's a secret—copied us on some of the correspondence that he had received, and I had a chance to review some of the correspondence, and I have to admit that we're in an awkward position, Mr. Speaker. We're in an awkward position insofar as the bill is, in intent, is very commendable but, in structure and actual application, has some flaws.

The question, then, becomes how do we as a Legislature deal with these flaws and how do we fix it, Mr. Speaker. And, of course, that is one of the most fundamental issues that we always do it. Certainly, there are bills that we are able to fix prior to committee. There are bills that we are able to fix in committee. Sometimes bills have to be reconfigured or restructured prior to going to committee, because the committee process sometimes isn't the best venue to reconstruct some of the fundamentals of a bill if it's not completely thought out. And I'm not suggesting the bill wasn't completely thought out; I'm just suggesting that there are complications and difficulties with the bill, and, in terms of some of the pressures that we're putting on teachers, school divisions and others, and we know how hard and difficult it was to put in place Bill 18, in this Legislature recently.

So I'm looking for some assistance or some instructions from fellow members in this Legislature. I know that I—or rather, I would suggest that members of this Chamber are in agreement with the bill in terms of intent, but I have to say, as the House Leader and as someone who does—who has recently come actually to enjoy drafting bills, which is something when I was a lawyer and when I was in law school I said I would never enjoy. I've had a change in my midlife to actually enjoy drafting the legislation.

\*(10:10)

The Minister of Education, I believe, has offered to the leader—to the member of the Liberal Party to sit down with drafters to actually look at this bill and to try to co-ordinate some of the flaws of the bill, as reflected in the responses from the superintendents' association, the teachers' society, and other individuals that have been contacted. I think that's wise. I think an opportunity to just actually sit down with drafters would be really important knowing, as I do and as—in fact, the late House leader of—in of the Blair Labour government, when asked who would be the most important people he would hire in government, said more drafters, which is, as some would say, well, it's, you know, just more lawyers, which some would say is a problem. But, frankly, for drafting legislation, Mr. Speaker, you know, as I do, that getting it wrong has some significant unintended consequences.

So, in some ways, Mr. Speaker, there's a lot of work to do on this, but I don't want to negate the importance of this particular bill and this particular matter. So I'm thinking of several solutions, of possible solutions, that we could offer with respect to this. I'm not sure if passing it on at this point is the best. I'm not suggesting it's not an option. I'm kind of suggesting, on the nature of this bill, that perhaps the member from River Heights would take up the offer of the Minister of Education and perhaps meet with some drafters and see if something can be done relatively quickly.

Another issue that I'm prepared to offer to the member for River Heights, as he's already spoken on the bill, I think we're prepared, at least on our side to give him leave, to speak again on the bill to—I'm prepared to do that this morning—[interjection]—pardon? [interjection] That's—the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) has pointed out an issue that could arise but, I think, in the non-partisan spirit of this House that won't necessarily happen today, or this morning anyway. And I'm prepared to offer leave to the Leader of the Liberal Party to speak to some of the flaws and some of his suggestions on the bill.

My primary role as Government House Leader, although I'm speaking as a private member, is how can we work this out to make it functional, and I think the best way to do that at this point is to have the Minister of Education and the Leader of the Opposition sit down with drafters, look at the comments that have come in, see if they can be

incorporated and possibly bringing it back, which would be the best.

Second, I'm recommending—I will, when I sit down, I know that a lot of my members—a lot of members in this side of the House, and it is private members' hour, want to speak to this bill, but I'm prepared to, when I complete my comments, seek leave of the House to let the Liberal leader speak again to the bill to deal with some of these issues. And in that way, perhaps, we can work through some of the difficulties and, at the same time, move forward what is clearly a positive intention on the part of—and I reflect—I don't want to sound too legal, but it's the old concept, it's both catholic and both legal, of mens rea and actus reus. That is, the thought is there and the intention is good but the action itself is problematic, and you've got to have the right intention and the right action to actually be—for it to be functional.

And so, in the spirit of non-partisanship, we're—I certainly am offering as—and I am House leader this morning—to offer the Liberal leader those options, sit down with the Minister of Education, look at the information that's come in, sit down with drafters, which are—or—and/or alternatively prepared to give leave to the Leader of the Liberal Party to spend some time discussing other options and this issue in this Chamber.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### **Point of Order**

**Mr. Speaker:** The Official Opposition House Leader, on a point of order.

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader):** A point of order, although it might fall into more of a point of advice or clarification.

If the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) would like to speak to this, I'm certainly prepared to offer leave. It might be more beneficial, given the Government House Leader's (Mr. Chomiak) comments, if we would have a 10-minute question-and-answer period similar to what normally happens when a bill is now introduced for second reading, because the government seems to have questions about how things could change. They could engage in 10 minutes of questions, and then if the member for River Heights would like to speak after that I always love to hear him speak, and I'd be happy to do so this morning as well.

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

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Yes, I can respond to the point of order, and it gives me a moment to speak to some of the issues that were raised by the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak).

We have, at this point, I think that I can briefly explain the situation. We have tried to work together with the Minister of Education. We were offered the opportunity to walk—work together with drafters from both parties, but we were told from our drafter that this was not something that was a normal practice or ever done. But I don't see why we can't forge some new way of doing things and work together with drafters who will figure out what the solutions are.

I mean, the fact of the matter is that we have had comments from the association—Manitoba association of school boards, from the Manitoba Association of Parent Councils, from the association of school board officials, and they've been very helpful in pointing out and making some recommendations for changes. And so, really, it's a matter of taking those recommendations and looking at the best way of incorporating those recommendations which have been very carefully thought out after consultation into the bill. And I think at that point the bill could then go to committee, and at committee stage there would likely be other input from other individuals and, if necessary, there can be further changes.

That would be my suggestion, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure that there's need for a question-and-answer period. I think, with this explanation that the basic questions that the government has, I think are—you know, we put the situation pretty clearly.

**Mr. Speaker:** I think I've heard enough information on the point of order at this point. If other members who have not spoken wish to speak to this matter, they'll have that opportunity to do so.

But, on the point of order raised by the Official Opposition House Leader, I must respectfully rule that there is no point of order. I understand, though, that there may be some discussions that may be required between the House leaders to have further decisions made on how members wish to have this matter addressed and the best method to handle it, and I'll leave that to you to have that conversation outside of a point of order in here. But I must

respectfully rule that there is no point of order on this matter.

\* \* \*

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'm seeking leave of the House to have—to allow the member to speak to the bill for a second time in this debate.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there leave of the House to permit the honourable member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) to again address this matter before us? *[Agreed]*

The honourable member for River Heights, on Bill 215.

**Mr. Gerrard:** Let me put in pretty clearly. I think that there is pretty solid agreement from all sides that the intent of this bill to reduce family violence through education is very positive intent, right, and that the goal of this bill is worthwhile and it fits in the context of some of the other measures that have been put forward to try and help us address domestic family violence, interpersonal violence, right, and in that context if we can find a way to move this forward that that would be highly desirable. And that if, you know, my pledge would be to the minister, there are two alternative ways, as I would see it, to move this forward. One is—*[interjection]* One of those ways would be to pass it and let it go to committee stage, and we can work together as it goes to committee stage and make sure that the amendments that are brought forward are satisfactory to all sides of the House.

The alternative is to take the bill, go back to the drafters and bring forward the amendments which address the concern and then, hopefully, be able to bring it back, for example, next week so it could pass the second reading and go to committee stage.

\* (10:20)

The one concern about the latter approach is that there may be a number of people who would like to present at committee stage, and with a very short, you know, window of 12 days of this session, that, in some ways, it would be better to have it go to committee stage. We can get the full input from anyone who wants to present. We can make sure that we have a bill which meets the wishes not only of Manitoba Liberals but of Conservatives and NDP.

This is a non-partisan issue, I believe, for all of us in Manitoba. And I believe what we're trying to

find out today is what's the way to move it forward. And I suggest there are two alternatives, basically, and we can get it to committee and we can make the amendments in the context. I would say to the Minister of Education, we would make the best effort to have amendments that will work. If we can't, then, you know, it won't go through beyond committee stage and third reading. But, if we can get amendments that we can all agree to at committee stage, then we can move it forward and get it passed at third reading.

And the alternative, as I said, is to pause now and get drafters involved and, you know, move it back. It will involve a little bit of delay and there may be some repetition because we may have more amendments and recommendations coming at committee stage. I'm happy with either way. I think there's an advantage in having it go to committee stage because I think it will get and allow for public input as quickly as possible.

But the alternative is there, and if the Minister of Education is committed, as I am, to actually make this, in the very best effort we can, a bill that we can produce as a result of this legislative sitting, that would be wonderful.

**Mr. Speaker:** Just for information of the House, before I recognize the next speaker to this matter, because it is a normal practice for the mover of the motion to be able to close debate on this, I'm of the understanding, then, that that matter was not, by giving leave to the honourable member for River Heights, was not closing debate on this matter.

**An Honourable Member:** Correct.

**Mr. Speaker:** Okay, I just wanted to clarify that for the House. So the debate will continue then.

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Mr. Speaker, we often speak about non-partisan efforts in this House, and I think any time someone brings forward ideas to counter domestic violence, those are supportable and should always be agreed in principle. And I look forward to this matter being worked out between the members who have spoken and others, most particularly the stakeholders.

But, of course, in the non-partisan context that we've been talking about, I have some comments to make. I want to make sure, Mr. Speaker, that people

are alerted to what I believe is afoot here by our friends in the Liberal Party.

You know, we know that in Manitoba this province disproportionately suffers from domestic violence. Manitoba has for way too many years been disproportionately high in terms of the rate of domestic violence. I think it has followed Saskatchewan, and that is not acceptable. Our women and children have been put to a great risk and that has rightly compelled so many across this province to work steadfastly on this challenge.

We have, I understand—and these aren't my observations—been told that Manitoba, in fact, has the strongest continuum of responses to domestic violence in the country. And I would say, well, that's a good start but that's not good enough, given the rate. We just heard last week from the federal government that Manitoba had the biggest drop in self-reported domestic violence over the last decade.

That is a good sign. That shows that all of the efforts are paying off, but it in no way should send some signal that we should take our foot off the gas and slow down our efforts whatsoever. In fact, they can just only compel us to do more of what we have been attempting, and that is to work across the divisions, that we make sure that both the shelters and the counselling, the other supports for women and children, the corrections approaches, the community corrections approaches, even the access and visiting approaches that have unfolded continue unabated and, in fact, go in full force ahead.

So we have so much to do. Manitoba women deserve no less. We have to end this terror, Mr. Speaker. So this bill, certainly, should be supported by all the members of this House in principle, and if there are issues that the stakeholders and the education community need addressed, then I would urge that be done as soon as possible.

I want to just talk about the Liberal Party, though, and my concern that this bill is just a front, actually, for an approach to domestic violence that is not in the best interests of the women of Manitoba. You know, the ways that Liberals approach issues, I thought, was best characterized a number of years ago when we brought in legislation to get rid of the time limits within which people can sue for abuse as a child, and there was historic—child abuse, in our view, should be dealt with by lawsuits regardless of the passage of time. There has to be accountability for sexual violence or violence against children no matter how many years have gone by, and that was

particularly important in the context of justice around residential schools in Manitoba.

So, when that bill came before the House the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), in what I think is a classic Liberal approach, said, Mr. Speaker, Bill 8—that's what it was called—is bad law. He vigorously opposed that law. He said Bill 8 is bad law. I am, in fact, going to hold my nose and vote for it. So he was speaking to two different audiences, with two different messages. And we, the now-Premier (Mr. Selinger) and myself, yes, we met with leadership in the Roman Catholic Church and others to talk about what this legislation really meant and how important it was for survivors of residential schools. But it's important that when you take a position that it be consistent.

So here we have a situation facing Manitobans where between 2004 and 2013, 20 per cent of homicides in Canada were with a firearm. That was the second most common weapon used, and just recently Statistics Canada reported a 14 per cent increase in firearm-related homicides in Canada, claiming 156 lives including 83 intimate partner homicides. That was 11 more than in 2013, and indigenous women, we know, are even more at risk.

Something has to be done, and we know of the tragedies of Selena Keeper and of Camille Runke—and if we can look at some of the lessons from the tragedy of Camille Runke: she went to get a protection order, and at least she got one, but she told the court that she knew that her partner, her former partner had a firearm, and yet that was not taken from him. And, as I understand it from the reports, the conclusion was that that former partner killed her with the firearm. We can always speculate as to what might have been, but what we have to do is act on what we do know, and we would certainly have reduced the risk of Camille Runke's death if that firearm had been taken.

And so legislation is before that House that I trust will come to a final vote, to make sure that in all circumstances where there is an understanding of a firearm in the possession of the alleged abuser, that the firearm is taken as a mandatory condition of the protection order—the first of its kind in Canada.

So what does this have to do with Liberal approaches to domestic violence? I am absolutely perplexed, Mr. Speaker, as to how their nominee, their candidate in Radisson would take such a vigorous stance against the mandatory prohibition of

firearms for protection orders. Here we have a practical, on-the-ground improvement to the law that is supported by leaders in the domestic violence continuum of care and responses. And the candidate in Radisson, the Liberal candidate, said, that is ineffective; he said it's a serious 'imperson'-impairment of a person's liberty. In other words, he has taken the position that Liberals are more concerned about a wife beater's liberties than a woman's life. That's their real position.

\* (10:30)

And, Mr. Speaker, when the member for Fort Rouge (Ms. Howard) put out a press release to draw attention to the Liberal Party position on firearm possession by wife beaters, this candidate in Radisson got into a vigorous debate with her on Twitter, saying that the provision was unconstitutional. Well, the Department of Justice has a cadre of some of the most skilled constitutional lawyers; this bill was lawyered up like crazy, I can tell you. We worked day in and day out to make sure that that provision could withstand a constitutional challenge, but they're taking a position that that should come out of the bill.

So, Mr. Speaker, that—what would come if we ever—ever—saw a Liberal government in Manitoba, they would make sure that there was no firearms ban for wife beaters, and, I think, that that says they are, once again, giving two messages to two different groups: one message in here today, which is laudatory, and another message out there, with the would-be attorney general for the Liberal Party of Manitoba.

So, Mr. Speaker, I find that really disheartening, and, I think, that what we have to do is watch very carefully for the positions of Manitoba Liberals when it comes to protecting women and, indeed, the children of Manitoba, because we have to continually, relentlessly improve our responses. We can do no less.

So I urge members of this House to work together and make this legislation work. Yes, on its own, absolutely supportable, and I, for one, recognize the important role of inculcating in people the importance of respect for others, of non-violence, Mr. Speaker. But there are some deep-seated social challenges that have to be addressed if we're going to seriously ratchet down domestic violence in concert and in partnership with protection orders that are available, that are strong, that contain firearm bans

and the continuum of care that we continue to invest in, whether that be shelters or resource centres, we always have to look to see how we can serve those who need us most better, each and every day. I ask the Liberals to join us.

**Mr. Dennis Smook (La Verendrye):** I'm pleased to get up this morning and put a few words on record in regards to Bill 215, The Prevention of Interpersonal and Family Violence Through Education Act.

Everyone in this House can all—we can all agree that whatever we can do to prevent family violence or domestic violence is important, and we need to work as hard as we can as legislatures—as legislators to make sure that the bills that we pass do what they're supposed to do. We're here this morning speaking to a bill brought in by one of our members here, and it's been brought forward before in the last session and—I believe it's a few times, and it was spoken out and to me, that's important that we have this bill go to committee, where everybody who has an—who's interested in speaking this—to this bill has an opportunity to do so.

It's important that we work together and to see this bill—whatever needs to be discussed on it or changes made to it have—are done. Consultation is an important part of any bill that's out there. We need to make sure that we consult with all the people who are—have anything to do with the bill. I understand that some consultation was done to this bill, but maybe not necessarily enough, which brings us back to the reason to take it to committee. I'm hoping that at committee there will be presentations brought forward in speaking to this bill, so, whatever needs to be done to this bill will be done properly.

Stakeholders have an important part of any bill that we bring forward, so I'm looking forward to listening to them in committee. The NDP don't have a great record for passing bills on to committee. This afternoon there'll be a number of private members' bills brought forward, and I'm looking forward to having the same type of co-operation on some of these bills to send them to committee, especially anything that has to do with children or family violence.

There's a bill being brought forward by the member from Lac du Bonnet, The Cyberbullying Prevention Act, and I hope it gets the same attention to members as this bill is, and that we listen to it and move it on to committee.



Thank you very much.

**Ms. Theresa Oswald (Seine River):** Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to rise in a House today to speak to a very, very serious issue, and also add some words of advice, I say humbly, on the subject of the legislation at hand.

I was relieved when a member of the opposition got up to say a few words. I—and I appreciated them. I believe that they were thoughtful in nature almost in their entirety, but I was concerned, of course, that I would have to stand and speak following the member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh), which is always, you know, one of the worst hands that you can be dealt in this Legislature. The member for St. Johns is a wonderful speaker and a thoughtful individual, and his passion on the issue of protecting victims and survivors of domestic violence is arguably second to none in our Legislature. His knowledge of the law and the need for changes to the law are—is also without peer, in my view.

And I know that many members of the Legislature, indeed, all members of the Legislature will join me in acknowledging to wish the member for St. Johns well in the days ahead, because, of course, we know that he's going to find a way to do some good in whatever role he plays in our society. And I know that I have been the beneficiary of his wisdom and his good counsel throughout my political career in formal ways and in informal ways. The days when I had the privilege to sit next to him in the Legislature are arguably my most favourite of all, because while we see him stand in the House, Mr. Speaker, and give passionate speeches, what not everybody gets to hear is the colour commentary that goes underneath. But I did and they were among the best days that I've had sitting in this Legislature. So your passion on this very issue, I applaud the member of St. Johns, and on everything that you've done for the people of Manitoba. I really want to say that I wish you all the best and I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

On the subject of this bill and the importance of not only doing everything that we can to prevent family violence and domestic violence, interpersonal violence, I want to say to the member of the Liberal Party that I commend you absolutely for bringing this concept forward. It is, as others have said in correspondence to you, commendable.

Indeed, I think that the one way that we can ensure that our daughters and our sons grow up in a

world where there is no such violence absolutely must come through education. It has to come through the kind of education that is provided in our school system and it must come absolutely from the kind of education that happens at a parent's elbow. From the moment that that child is born to the time that they go out into the world themselves, they are going to be profoundly and deeply influenced by how they see their own parents behave, which is why I think it's absolutely critical that when we put forward any sort of legislation on this subject, that we do it in a very consultative way with the school system and with parents themselves. This would be really important—and I know that some of this work has been done, but I do believe that there is an opportunity for even more to happen.

As a teacher, this is my chosen profession, I've always had great respect for the work of parent councils. They are the lifeblood of many schools, to be sure.

Recently, I've had the opportunity to join the parent council at my son's school. Finding myself with a little more time on my hands, I have been able to engage in these things I've not previously been able to do. And I know that as a member of that parent council, I would really appreciate having the opportunity to review with our school administrators and, indeed, with our teachers and our student—our school resource officers in shaping the kind of education that could be given to our teachers and to our educational professionals on the issue of identifying issues where—and situations where family violence may indeed occur and how it is that the school system should respond to such situations.

\* (10:40)

I would say, quite honestly, that I believe many teachers in the system today, very well-meaning, excellent teachers, are not even a hundred per cent clear on the law that exists now, about the requirement for mandatory reporting to CFS any observations of abuse or any kind of negative circumstances that a child might be under.

I think there's a great opportunity for us to provide fresh and new education for our teachers about that very requirement, but also, putting in with that, the kind of issues that are contemplated in this bill—some really strong education on how to speak about issues of domestic violence and interpersonal violence within a classroom setting in an age-appropriate way. And I think that the best way for us

to do that is to ensure that there's a very, very strong voice from the Manitoba Association of Parent Councils who have, in turn, received advice from parents across our province. I think that this would be a critically important part of consultation that could make this bill even stronger.

While I was not privileged to sit in a meeting that was held recently with the Minister of Education and the member bringing this bill forward, and many representatives from our education system that, I believe, included the association for school superintendents, the association for parent councils, the teachers' society, the school business officers, and there may have been more, I'm not sure. I wasn't sitting at the table, at that meeting, but it is my understanding that coming out of that meeting, there were a number of pieces of concrete advice that were brought forward about how to make such a bill even stronger in the name of protecting our children.

I have heard, I may stand to be corrected on this fact, that the nature of the kinds of changes that need to be made to such a bill, I think, are quite significant, that may indeed not be achieved through amendment at committee, for example. They would be quite complex in nature. It may even be a situation of a whole redrafting of the bill in order to address these quite serious issues that these stakeholders identified would be very, very important to them, to enable them to be able to deliver the intent of this bill, which, again, is commendable.

And so I would just caution the member about wanting to make so many amendments at committee stage that it would make the bill, in and of itself, unrecognizable and, indeed, illegible in some respects, not as clear and crisp as, quite frankly, I know the member opposite likes his legislation and his communications to be.

So I think at the heart of the bill is something that I believe to be truly important and I believe truly comes from the heart of the member opposite. Its construct now, I believe, is a barrier to that, and, again, in no way criticizing the idea that's come forward, let's make sure that the construct of that document and therefore its ability to enable us to implement it in the way that it was intended, I think that that's where the work needs to happen, and I know that there has been some dialogue in the Chamber today, on the floor of the Chamber, about how to proceed with this.

It is, in my heart of hearts, likely recommended that a whole redraft of the bill with what is good about the bill now and what our stakeholders in the education system, those people in the department of education and, indeed, from the voices of parents, can come forward and reshape this bill into something that will be clear and that will be easy to deliver and implement.

And I would also add one thing, that enabling this kind of education to happen for our teachers, who can in turn best teach our children, some resources need to be brought to bear.

We cannot expect our school system to take on a very, very serious issue such as this, and do it in the right way with advice from the best possible professionals that are out there and, dare I say, women with lived experience having a voice in this. It needs to be accompanied with resources, and those people that have their hands on the steering wheel as we go forward absolutely must take to heart that if we are going to be serious about preventing domestic violence and we're going to be serious about intervening in situations where we see it happening we have to make sure that we invest every resource that we possibly have that we can bring to bear to ensure that this is done properly and that's for all of our families.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Mohinder Saran (Minister of Housing and Community Development):** I would like to put a few words on this issue.

We think the domestic violence is an important issue and that's why we have brought in legislation that ensure victims of domestic violence have financial security, job protection and flexibility to take time away from work to recover from violence.

Also, being from a different culture, from minority culture, I have a different perspective on how to define family violence. And, if we only look at one perspective from the major cultural point of view that may be family violence, but, on the other hand, if we look from the other cultural point of view that may not be family violence that may be creating some good values in the person's character.

For example, in the western culture person could be older person and we will call them—and a younger person will call them Mr. Smith or just to call by name John, but in the eastern culture that's not respectable, you have to call according to the

person's age, you can say grandpa, you can say grandmother, if it's your uncle there, you are *[inaudible]* you can say uncle, and you can say auntie. If you say John that will be disrespectful and people in the village they will stop you saying that.

Will that be violence? Will that be interference and violence against that kid? No, that's different culture values. All those culture values we have to bring in the perspective. We cannot impose one culture's values on the other culture.

My suggestion is instead of imposing this kind of restriction, there should be kind of teaching over there comparing history of religion and the school, comparing history of the culture and the school so people will understand different cultures and even of a system will see that even with judicial system will see that the same people have a way of look at the eastern culture they have some kind of difficulty. If a person, grandparent wants to give some kind of education to the kid and say you don't have to do that, you cannot do that and the kid will take—pick up the phone and call the police. So that's totally violation of the grandparent's right to give the proper value to the child.

So that's why I don't think we can impose just one culture's value on the other culture. We have to understand all those cultures. That's why sometimes you see people standing outside, two of these they are children. That's not—that's I think that's contradiction in the cultures, different way of putting those values into it. I wouldn't say that person should be slapped, but when I was in school I got slapped by stick on my hand but that did not make any really bad impression on me. It gave me some good value because I made a mistake at that time, although I won't really say that it should be part of the culture but that's the way it come and we can improve slowly, slowly on that basis.

\* (10:50)

I don't think that violence can be reduced just by teaching teachers. Okay, you can act this way, you can act that way. It needs—a whole complex issue should be discussed openly, should be different cultures should be brought in, different speakers should be brought in the schools time to time, because those teachers will tell you, okay, that culture, this is violent and this putting, well, you and the—correct it; in that culture, this is considered this way.

For example, it will be disrespectful, like, looking down when you're talking to the elders. And, on the other hand, in major culture, you have to look on—eye to eye. So is that—that difference is not sometimes understood, and people think he's hiding something, and hiding something, because of that, the person can be rebuked and that will be accept—emotional violence.

So I think, first of all, there are unclear definitions for family violence. It is unclear what responsibility teachers and the school staff will have if they suspect violence in the home. As written, this bill makes it so every adult employed at a school is responsible to police and report domestic violence that, by definition, occurs outside of school. Teachers have expressed great concern about being held responsible for the conduct of parents within their own homes.

We are concerned that some parents are victims of violence may be too scared to come to school and be involved in school life, because they will be reported by school staff. We think schools should be safe places for students and parents. We are concerned that a blanket requirement to teach about domestic and family violence, as written in this bill, could revictimize children that have experienced or witnessed violence.

School divisions already have a requirement to have policies around violence, and principals have a responsibility regarding discipline and decorum in our schools. The bill does not recognize, in any way, existing requirements.

We feel that many of the things this bill attempts to do are not something that schools and school staff alone can be held responsible for. We think a strategy around domestic violence needs to be broader than just in our schools, and that's why we have introduced other bills through Justice and Labour that make sure victims of domestic violence have the supports they need.

The fact that the Liberals did not consult with teachers and schools makes it very difficult to support the bill as it is.

Preventing family violence, our government took some steps. Our government believes that victims of domestic violence should not have to worry about holding onto their jobs as they work to rebuild their lives. Our proposed first-in-Canada legislation would ensure that victims of domestic violence have financial security, job protection, and

flexibility to take time away from work to recover from violence.

This ground-breaking bill will provide employees experiencing domestic violence with up to 10 days of job-protected leave to use as needed and up to 17 weeks of continuous leave in a 52-week period. This includes up to five days of leave paid by the employer.

We also brought in legislation that will make protection orders easier to obtain and ensure domestic abusers don't get to keep their guns. Our NDP government is working hard to protect and maintain the safety of victims of domestic violence.

Continuing tragedies demand stronger efforts. We must do more to ensure help is there every step of the way. And also I would like to point out, by the Liberals' platform, that all the liquor stores should be privatized. You know how violence through that will occur, because kids will be able to buy drinks, buy alcohol from the private stores, and somebody have to stop them and that will create kind of a contradiction and kind of a conflict within the families.

So how privatizing those liquor stores will help to reduce the domestic violence, I think Liberal Party should have their platform really thought about so that that contradiction and that—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable minister's time on this matter has elapsed.

**Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Municipal Government):** It is a pleasure and a privilege to be able to stand in the House today and put a few words on the record with regard to the member's bill. I do appreciate the member bringing this issue to the House, and I do appreciate his comments as the—as to this being a non-partisan concern of all honourable members in the House. Family violence, domestic violence is certainly something that we are all concerned about and many of us have—may have even experienced such violence in our own families throughout our lifetimes, so I know that this is a very sensitive and important issue of concern and I do appreciate the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) bringing it to the House in, as he says, in a non-partisan manner.

Mr. Speaker, as we read through the bill proposed by the member and as we reflect on advice given to us from the public school system, from teachers and from superintendents, trustees, other stakeholders within the public school system, it is

clear that we need to do some more work on this legislation moving forward. And I'm encouraged by the comments from the Minister of Education and Advanced Learning (Mr. Allum) in terms of providing support for making this bill truly something that the entire House can get behind and support as we move through the discussion and the debate on the bill that the member for River Heights has brought to the attention of the House.

And, in fact, there were and have been a number of concerns raised from within the community with regard to the bill around the expertise of teachers and the skills of teachers in regard to this proposed reporting and responsibility for domestic violence reporting and domestic violence awareness and engagement within the classroom and being able to provide teachers with—well, teachers are in the classroom to teach, primarily, Mr. Speaker; that is their job, in fact. As a former teacher myself, I do know that the role of a teacher is very diverse. It doesn't just extend to fulfilling the curriculum. You are confronted on a daily basis with a myriad of issues, many social issues, issues of poverty, issues of support for students in terms of nutrition and support for students in terms of their family situation as they come into the school system.

And I know as a government we've worked very hard to provide for support for early learning. We've provided significant support for families, Mr. Speaker, Healthy Child being the preschool years to be able to provide for an environment for children to come into the school system with the best possible opportunities and the best possible supports. And, again, this bill would, as brought forward by the minister—member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), tend to support those sorts of proactive initiatives that help families, that help students, help young people, but we are—

\* (11:00)

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable Minister of Municipal Government (Mr. Caldwell) will have five minutes remaining.

The hour being 11 a.m., it will be time for private members' resolutions, but before I call the resolution I want to remind the House that, just to be absolutely clear, that the matter will be open for debate, and when the honourable member for River Heights was provided leave to speak to this matter again, that it did not close debate and that the debate will be—remain standing in the name of the

honourable Minister of Municipal Government and perhaps other members of the Assembly.

### RESOLUTIONS

**Mr. Speaker:** Now, it's time for private members' resolutions, and the resolution under consideration this morning is entitled Manitoba Needs a Social License for Agriculture, sponsored by the honourable member for Midland.

#### **Res. 2—Manitoba Needs a Social License for Agriculture**

**Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Midland):** I move, seconded by the member for Lakeside (Mr. Eichler),

WHEREAS social license for agriculture refers to the level of public trust granted to a corporate entity or industry sector by the community at large and its key customer base; and

WHEREAS public trust is the belief that activities are consistent with social expectations and the values of stakeholders as earned through industry engagement, operating practices and expressed values; and

WHEREAS the building of public trust in agriculture includes such things as ethics, shared values, transparency, certification, verification, obligations for food safety and countering myths and perceptions;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to stop its practice of blaming the agricultural industry for the provincial government's own failures to stop the degradation of the environment, instituting oppressive tax policies on agriculture and taking on an adversarial attitude towards agriculture; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba be urged to engage in building an environment of social licence for agriculture that will address the farm-to-plate knowledge gap where there is an increasing cultural and social divide between those who are and those who aren't involved in the agricultural industry.

**Mr. Speaker:** It's been moved by the honourable member for Midland, seconded by the honourable member for Lakeside,

WHEREAS social license for agriculture refers to the level of public trust granted—

**Some Honourable Members:** Dispense.

**Mr. Speaker:** Dispense? Dispense.

The resolution is in order.

**Mr. Pedersen:** The definition of social licence is privilege of operating with minimal formalized restrictions based on maintaining the public trust by doing what is right. Social licence also refers to the level of public trust granted to a corporate entity or industry sector by the community at large and its key customer base. Public trust is the belief activities are consistent with social expectations and the value of stakeholders as earned through industry engagement operating practices and expressed values.

So where does agriculture fit for having a social licence? Well, the public loves farmers, but they're not sure they love farming and, as such, is questioning their food, the food sources, and, by extension, food processors and retailers.

Building a successful trust or social licence for agriculture is a three-prong approach. First of all, it's by doing the right things: certification, verification and meeting reasonable obligations for food safety. It also involves having a conversation with consumers, explaining current farming practices, addressing trends, countering myths and perceptions by using such things as—such tools as social media. It also involves a plan for defence. Ethics, shared values, transparency, availability to explain and defend practices when questioned by the consumer.

Today's food is safer, more available and more affordable than ever, but it is under more scrutiny than ever before due to the accessibility of both information and misinformation that comes with a higher disposable income of today's consumers.

So we have social licence versus social control for agriculture. Social licence means lower cost, flexibility in production methods and processing, being market responsive while operating in a consistent manner of ethics, values and expectations of your stakeholders, who are the consumers. Social control means operating in a rigid, bureaucratic higher-cost environment using regulation, legislation and litigation to achieve compliance. And this, unfortunately, is the NDP way in Manitoba. They far prefer social control over social licence.

So, in order for the agricultural industry as a whole to be able to operate in an environment of social licence versus social control, the role of government should be defined as the following examples.

It's about protecting and developing market access at home and abroad. We face the challenges—as an example, we face the challenges of the provincial versus federal meat inspection where you can't move provincially inspected meats across borders.

We could start by applying to join the New West Partnership; that would certainly help agriculture here in Manitoba.

We could facilitate opportunities for rural development. The burdensome red tape of this government, the centralizing of the control over the local economic development agencies, which took away the development agencies' local touch by a government that's big on control and not on actually helping local communities.

We could facilitate opportunities for further processing and—both in rural and urban Manitoba. The best example I have of this is, there's a pharmaceutical product being developed right there in Swan River, and this company now is forced to go to Alberta to test their product, because there is no support at all from this current government.

We could build an economic environment for innovation. You do not build an economic environment for innovation by expanding the PST and increasing it to 8 per cent; you're not competitive with other jurisdictions.

And finally, government should ensure environmental enhancement and protection. And this government has failed in even beginning to have a long-term plan for flood- and drought-proofing—flood mitigation and drought-proofing in this province, and it's come to the detriment of the ag industry.

Government as a whole must work to resist the temptation of social control in order to allow the agricultural industry to thrive and build the confidence of the consuming public. By building an environment of social licence, this will address the farm-to-plate knowledge gap where there is an increasing cultural and social divide between those who are and those who are not directly involved in the agricultural industry.

There is a role for government to play in addressing the diversities within agriculture; whether it be GMOs, high tech, low tech, organic, farm direct sales, there's a multitude of different facets within agriculture. But this is difficult for a government to address these diversities when there's a 25 per cent vacancy rate within MAFRD.

A common goal of safe, healthy foods; secure jobs and a growing economy is achievable only if government promotes a social licence rather than social control for agriculture. But social licence is not static. Perceptions, markets and values evolve, so industry and government must be flexible to adapt to these changes. It should be industry driven, government supported, not the other way around. In Manitoba right now, it is government driven at the detriment of the industry.

There will always be food production and marketing issues arising, but by enhancing social licence, not social control, we can ensure these issues are dealt with positively, ensuring a strong agricultural sector, a vibrant food processing industry and a consuming public having the confidence in, and understanding of, a social licence for agriculture.

\* (11:10)

This is why social licence for agriculture is so important today and for the future of the agricultural industry as a whole, and I challenge this government to get involved in developing a social licence for agriculture rather than their current agenda of social control. I know that they were pulled kicking and screaming to the table to get involved in social licence, so hopefully they will pick that up and begin to work on it because agriculture will be stronger than ever with their government-supported social licence for agriculture.

This is why social licence is the new—we call it frontier for agriculture right now. It's about having our consumers understand what is happening in agriculture and to understand it and to be able—and for agriculture to be able to answer those questions when the consuming public has questions. It's a—social licence will become more and more important to the ag industry as we move forward.

There's a lot of companies, large companies that are very involved in helping to develop social licence. Government needs to get in step with these companies and with the agricultural industry as a whole. Our farm organizations are recognizing this, and it seems to be this government is not interested in helping develop this ag industry to the potential that it should be.

So I would urge the House to support this resolution. It will help agriculture become even stronger than it is today.

Thank you.

**Hon. Ron Kostyshyn (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development):** Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to talk about the hard-working farmers, the family farms that exist today and continue to grow in the province of Manitoba.

I'd like to just make some comments regarding the member opposite maybe needs to be somewhat informed of the great work the province of Manitoba, the government of Manitoba has done the last number of years about the importance of agriculture.

Truly, Mr. Speaker, as we look at historical cash receipts in the province of Manitoba, we basically set record in the last number of years of income from producers and the opportunity to continue to expand in the farming sector is there, and that is our No. 1 vision as a government, as a department to work towards the benefit that this government has brought through a number of initiatives, and we continue to partner with outside stakeholders and resources.

*Mr. Jim Rondeau, Acting Speaker, in the Chair*

Mr. Speaker, we are listening to our farmers and we are committed to building a trusted relationship between farmers and Manitoba families. The best way to growing the economy and creating new jobs in agriculture is investing in innovation, research and targeted on-farm infrastructure. Our government has actually put considerable resources into social licensing activities to build public trust in our agriculture industry. We know the best way to protect the jobs we have is by keeping agriculture insurance programs strong, and let me remind the member opposite. When we come into power in 1999, the farmers' producers were asking for excess moisture programs. The silence, the wishes of the members opposite never entertained that subject. Soon as we came in, that was brought in.

Today, Mr. Speaker, we have—the crop insurance components have now paid a considerable amount of dollars to producers who suffered through excess moisture programs to the tune of about \$236 million that producers have got in their pockets bar members opposite not recognizing the importance of one—that one particular program. They've invested in ensuring farm families will remain viable, giving young farmers opportunities to stay working on the family farm and raising their families.

The oppositions really don't care about Manitoba thriving in agriculture industry. We are committed to continue to grow Manitoba's economy and through

agri-business and, in fact, undertaken several initiatives to help farmers and producers and families better understand how their food is made.

Social licensing is a priority, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Manitoba is part of the social licensing committee which includes representatives from the federal, provincial and territorial governments focus on advance common understanding of social licensing in agriculture. This group works to develop national strategy that provides consistent roles and responsibilities for the provincial government.

We believe that a co-ordinated effort with other levels of government is important to give one's jurisdiction that may have a different effect on other provinces. We have directly invested into social licensing, building activities and increased market accessibility to market products and to building public trust in our agriculture industry.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we introduced The Farm and Food Awareness Act in 2014 to foster the thriving and resilencing farm and food economics throughout the province. The proposed access was to increase awareness and the availability to Manitoba food and other ag production. We also developed new markets opportunities for Manitoba's farmers to locally and around the world to produce and aware and move.

MAFRD has invested in agriculture awareness through Growing Forward 2 policy framework. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we've invested, with the province of—with the federal government and have an opportunity to expand up to \$176 million in innovative programs that we continue to work with and we are in the third year of a five-year agreement.

We do know that in conjunction with the national programs like Ag in the Classroom, the farm and food care, education, the public on how crops and livestock are grown is very key, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to our farmers.

We continue, as a government, the provincial government, to meet with stakeholder groups. And one of them being very noticeable is the Keystone Agricultural Producers and the various opportunities with canola growers, the Manitoba Beef Producers, the Manitoba pork organizations. We continue to meet with stakeholders groups. And I'm very proud to say our department, our government, has had that opportunity numerous times throughout the year, and in fact, twice a year, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have gotten together with the stakeholder groups and

asked them, what is that we need to work together to provide additional support towards the small industry and the large industry in the province of Manitoba?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to share some additional information that I have in front of me, is that Manitoba exports by industry in 2014, billions of dollars, a total of \$13.4 billion has been. And agriculture is 25 per cent of that, which is a grand total of \$3.4 billion.

So, for the member opposite to say that this government is not continuing to work with the importance of agriculture, I think he needs to be corrected in some of the information, but we'll gladly share with him sooner than later if need be.

In January of this year, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Manitoba and the federal government committed \$500,000 towards 12 projects that will increase the use of biofuels. By increasing our capacity to make and use green energy, we are reducing the carbon emissions and will promote the growth of the new industry in the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, we've installed 15 new automated weather stations all around Manitoba, bringing a total of 61. These stations will provide timely and detailed free information to farmers. The stations are solar powered, can help make decisions surrounding soil conditions, drop diseases and insects and crop residue burning, as well, flood protection and drought forecasting.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that we continue to work with stakeholder groups. We work with other government departments to make opportunities that exist in our importance of agriculture.

Let me remind members opposite, when we talked about the federal and provincial partnership, but there are certain things that we've been challenged because of previous decisions by the previous federal government, the Harper government, chose, Mr. Speaker–Deputy Speaker, to elimination of the community pastures. And I know there's a number of members across that were involved in the beef industry and know full well the importance of what the community pastures meant to the young-generation beef producers who have gone through the COOL scenario and the BSE scenario.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I lived through the BSE scenario, and let me tell you, it was very challenging. I've seen a lot of my friends and neighbours suffer

very hard in that challenging times. And for the members opposite to say that we as a government have done nothing to support the agriculture industry is a total, outright misleading information.

We've invested, we've invested now to put in a working group that retains the importance of the community pastures and the importance of the ecological uses of the community pastures when we talk about flood protection, that is appropriate location for water retention in the community pastures, also for a number of other benefits.

And yet members opposite, not once, not once did they ever raise their voice of a disappointment by their federal cousins, the Harper government, saying that we should not dispose of community pastures. And they still remain silent on that subject, Mr. Speaker.

\* (11:20)

I can continue to talk about the importance of what we need in the partnerships, and I look forward to working with the new federal Agriculture Minister of an opportunity that we continue to expand of added value in the province of Manitoba.

Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, we have–Deputy Speaker, we have now moved in–I just recently had a meeting with the pulse growers. And let me remind members opposite: This is the year of international pulse crops, and we have had a very good conversation with the pulse growers organizes and the soybean. And I think it quite resonates of the importance of the soybean industry in the province of Manitoba. And we continue to work with them by providing financial support through GF2 programs and other opportunities that move forward of the importance.

But let us remember, the soybean is an alternative source of a cash crop, which is very need in accordance and the opportunity. But it also provides the opportunity of the research and innovation dollars that continue to go into the agriculture industry. At the end of the day, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think what the members opposite should look in the mirror and consider what they did when they were in power and look at what this government has done and will continue to support the agriculture industry, the added value of the Manitoba food processing and the opportunity for small-scale food processors to continue to –. And we notice that in the farmers' markets, and I think we



know they're darn well—what—their accusations are totally incorrect and look forward for the next number of years of the importance of small-scale food processors gaining the 'notification' that they should be recognized for the importance and the added value.

Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Jim Rondeau):** Thank you.

**Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside):** I would like to just take back, just for a second here, in regards to the Minister of Agriculture's comments, in regards to COOL, and back in the BSE days—I realize he wasn't part of government at that time, but he asked about what the alternatives were.

*Mr. Speaker in the Chair*

And I can tell you very clearly, we on this side of the House offered all kinds of solutions. We asked him to get involved. And I will give the member from Swan River a little bit of credit in regards to supporting COOL. He did join forces with us, and it's interesting that he gets up and he slams a former federal minister of Agriculture. He stood side by side with him, making announcements after announcements and said, boy, this is great—this is great—we're doing so many things together. And now, today, he's throwing him under the bus. In fact, I was at several conferences with this very minister, and he made it very clear he was glad to work with Minister Ritz who went and advocated time and time again with this very minister—with this very minister—but now—now—he's no good. They've been defeated; it's moving on to bigger and better things.

So I really don't know if you can believe anything this minister has to say if that's the path he wants to go down. So we'll see who this next minister, when he starts making these announcements and we've got 50-some days left to listen to what this minister's going to say. So we'll listen to the people of Manitoba before we will take what this member has to say.

Now, social licence, I want to talk about that too. And, first off, I want to thank the member from Midland for bringing this forward for us to talk about food and food safety. The very minister, the member from Midland, the member from Emerson and myself was down to Denver to an agricultural conference. And I know that we all are on the same page in this; at least, I believe this side of the House is; I know we are, and that's food safety. Whenever we talk about farm to the plate, was the No. 1 issue

that we did surveys right across North America—right across North America. They trust the farmers and their integrity to provide the safest, most affordable food to this world than any other sector—than any other sector.

We have an opportunity to give those farmers that opportunity. And, coming back to the BSE, I know one of the things we asked for was interprovincial trade. What did this government do? They said no. No, we're not interested in that at all. We don't want to sell to our neighbours; that would be crazy. We have interprovincial trade, processed meat in Manitoba cannot go to Ontario. Our lake in Ontario, where some of the cottages are, some—the very members on that side of the House go, but they can't take, legally, meat from Manitoba to Ontario. Why would that be? Why would they fight that? And yet they stand in the House and they talk about how great it is for the farm communities to be able to process that food and sell it in an interprovincial jurisdiction from one area to the other.

Food safety and security: We know that Manitoba Hydro's on a very aggressive plan with Bipole III. When we're talking about food safety and those that provide, again, as I said, some of the safest, most affordable foods in the country, and yet we have a company being forced by this government to build through the best land in the province of Manitoba, the food belt, the grain belt of this province. And we know biosecurity's not being followed. In fact, clubroot has been an issue that we're very much focused on, and we know that the Hydro is not taking it serious enough because this government has mandated them to move forward as quickly as possible. They're not cleaning the equipment. They're not focusing on making sure protection is, in fact, in place. And this could harm our farmers.

And we talked about the red tape in order to ensure that we're able to make sure that those checks and balances are in place. In fact, we—I remember not three or four years ago, this very government, we had a taste of Manitoba, right here in this very building, of which one of the recipients of the first prize was awarded that prize. It went back and carried on production. What did this government do? They shut them down. They shut them down three months later, saying that this was not a safe product. Yet they went out and promoted them as being the best product that was here. Where's the checks and balances? Is the red tape really where it needs to be? Yes, we want food—safe food. Everybody does. That is what the

farmers want. That's what we want. That's what Manitobans want. Want to make sure that we have those check and balances in place in order to make sure that we have that social licence that we talk about.

Whenever we also talk about biosecurity, groups like Snoman, I want to give them full credit. They're out making sure that their snowmobilers are educated. When they take a snowmobile across a farmer's land, that's just not land that's out there for Mother Nature where we make our living, and they take it very seriously and they work with the farmers and their group to make sure that safety is first and foremost. In fact, we have one of our members on this side of the House, the member from Portage la Prairie, that I take great pride in, the former president from Keystone group, that offered lots of advice to this very government—this very government. And what did they do? They turned a blind eye to most of those recommendations. Unfortunately, for them, they didn't listen to that great advice.

And I know the Manitoba Wildlife Federation also has made it very clear that they want to be on the safe side of food safety. Biosecurity's very important. They understand it. They get it, and they're part of the solution, not part of the problem.

So I know, Mr. Speaker, others want to speak on this resolution brought forward again by the member from Midland, and we hope—we hope—that Manitobans will see the difference clearly between a government that wants food safety, food security for those here in Manitoba, at affordable price in the safest and most prosperous province that can be if we let a government that wants to listen to them.

So, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin):** It's very much interesting to see the words that are written on this resolution. I think what it does, very clearly, Mr. Speaker, is it allows for us to take stock of the way the two main parties in this Legislature view agriculture.

What we see here in this resolution is very much a corporate view of farming, very much a corporate view. We see this over and over again with the Conservative Party in Manitoba. We've seen this for decades with Conservatives who really don't care much for farmers, but they sure care about Cargill grain or they sure care about the CPR. They will defend the corporate interests to the 10th degree, but not once do I ever hear a member opposite stand up

and talk about a real farmer in their constituencies who need real help and some real support.

One of the biggest myths—one of the biggest myths—in Manitoba is that the Tory party actually supports the agricultural community. It's a myth that has grown. It's a myth quite often that is undeserved of the Conservative Party, but you see it happening all the time.

\* (11:30)

My advice to farmers is that if they really want to improve their lot, improve their communities, improve their family farms, they should stop voting Conservative because these Conservatives just take them for granted, Mr. Speaker. They figure that the farmers are going to vote for them come hell or high water, every election, over and over again. So they really don't care about farmers or the communities that farms support. Because agriculture is a very important industry here in Manitoba. It is a large part of our gross domestic product, but you know what? It's more than that. It's the lifeblood of communities, communities that I represent and members from our side of the House represent in this province.

And I'm very proud to represent farmers in the Dauphin constituency and in the Parkland region, Mr. Speaker, and I want to say I was very proud to be the Agriculture minister in a government that supported farmers, a government that consulted with farmers, a government that listened to farmers, and we're going to continue to do that.

Let's take a little look, let's take a little peek, shall we, at some of the words in this resolution, Mr. Speaker. The first couple of whereases, there's some pretty big words in there; there's some capitalistic gobbledygook that they put into this resolution. Let's take a good, close look. What do they think of farmers? Well, gosh sakes, I don't see the word farmer in there anywhere.

Now, if I've missed it some place, maybe the member for Midland (Mr. Pedersen) can point it out. They don't even talk about farmers or the communities that farmers support. They don't even mention them in this resolution. What do they mention? Where do they put their attention? Corporate entity. Oh, that sums up Gilbert Plains; that sums up Minitonas; that sums up Sprague, doesn't it? A corporate entity.

Well, they get a little more personal a little later in that resolution by talking about the industry sector.

They can't even bring themselves to talk about farmers; it's the industry sector, Mr. Speaker. Ooh, that's personal. That's passionate; that's emotional; that's connecting with farmers and their needs and their families' needs. You like Cargill way more than you like farmers.

Mr. Speaker, then they go on—[interjection] Yes, you're welcome. Then they go on to talk about—get this—now they go on to talk about public trust. Where was public trust when they had a chance to stand up for farmers when the federal Harper government ran a knife through the Canadian Wheat Board? Where were you? You were not—oh, you were standing up for Cargill, I suppose, but first and foremost, you wanted to protect your buddy Stephen Harper in Ottawa. So you ditched the farmer; you ran him off the road—you ran him off the gravel road and what did you do? You took every opportunity to defend Stephen Harper rather than defending the single-desk advantage of the Canadian Wheat Board, which actually was an advantage for the Manitoba farmer that you claim to represent, that you claim to like.

Then, Mr. Speaker, the other thing that has always bugged me a little bit about the Conservative Party's approach to farming is that a number of them—a number of Conservative MLAs have been farmers; I'll give them that, and that's a good thing. Farmers need to be represented in this Legislature; I'm okay with that. But for Conservative MLAs to assume that they know more than an actual farmer about their own operations has always kind of bugged me. You know, you've got to listen to farmers. And in this—in this—resolution, they assume they're smarter than any other farmer in Manitoba. And I've seen this for 21 years that I've been in this Legislature over and over again, examples of politicians on the Conservative side of this House assuming that they are smarter than farmers. It's something that, you know, members opposite, you know, I think they should maybe spend some more time talking to their farmers; maybe their own farmers can help them along with this.

But here's another thing—here's something else I see in this resolution that has bugged me about the Tory approach to farmers. When they need to do this, and this could bite them at some point; there's an election around the corner. I don't think I'm spilling any beans to anybody there. We know there's an election. And what Tory MLAs and the Tory party has done systematically is they've needled away at this urban-rural split. And every time they need to pump themselves up in their communities, with their

farmers, they blame all the city folks for all the problems. And they say, oh, Perimeteritis. Oh, those city folks, they don't know what they're—they don't know what it's like to live in a rural community. You do it all the time. It's—it does our province a disservice. It might make you feel good, and it might help you out with a few votes in the next election in your ridings. But it doesn't do the Manitoba farmer any good. It doesn't do people in the city of Winnipeg any good.

My experience isn't quite that. My experience is that people in rural Manitoba want to get along with people in the city of Winnipeg because we are co-dependent. We need each other. Farmers need a market to sell their products. They don't need politicians playing that kind of politics, that ugly, split, divisive, Donald Trump kind of politics, Mr. Speaker. What they need to do is understand how much better farming could be if we got along rather than split each other between Winnipeg and the rest of the province.

The other thing is that the Tories very arrogantly always assume that they know better on this side of the House about farming than our side of the House. Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to use my grandfather as the example. I have a picture of my grandfather, and I put it up on the wall when I was Ag minister. It's my grandfather with his herd of Hereford cows in—near Sprague, Manitoba. When my grandfather was born in the 1890s in Brantford, Ontario, very early on he wanted to ranch in western Canada. So he moved out to Cabri, Saskatchewan. He bought some land when he was a teenager. He went off to fight in World War I. He met my grandmother in London, England, brought her back to Canada, got on the train and made the trek from Ontario out to Cabri, Saskatchewan.

They got out to Saskatchewan. They didn't like it at all. It was dusty, it was flat. Manitoba's much better. But you know what? Along the way, they saw an area that they thought they would like to live in. So they got back on the train, sold their land in Cabri, came back to Sprague, Manitoba. They loved the place. He started ranching Hereford cattle there. My grandfather, my—and my grandmother raised seven kids, including my dad, in Sprague, on the farm, during times that were pretty tough. They did not see this as a divisive issue. They did not see this as a way to make politics. They saw it as a way to grow their family, to grow Sprague, to grow their community and to contribute to the Manitoba economy.

Mr. Speaker, we on our side of the House understand agriculture just as well as people on the other side of the House, and we'll make good decisions for farmers.

**Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson):** It gives me great pleasure to stand and speak to this well-written resolution that's been brought forward by the member of Midland. It's been well thought out.

And it's obvious after listening to two agricultural ministers, one current, one former, and when the former one talked about provincial disservice, he was part of that. He was part of that provincial disservice to agriculture. It was under his reign that he closed Ag offices. It was under his reign in the man-made flood of 2011 by the NDP government that he made promises to many of the farmers, ranchers, along the lake, that there would be multi-year coverage with crop insurance, multi-year coverage. And what did he do? He just took on a different portfolio. He took on a different portfolio. He took off running. That's what he did. And between the two of them—and there was another one previous—three of those Ag ministers have fired 10,000 farmers. Ten thousand farmers that they fired in the province of Manitoba—

\* (11:40)

**An Honourable Member:** Your corporate buddies have fired 10,000 farmers.

**Mr. Graydon:** You fired 10,000 farmers that helped make ghost towns throughout Manitoba, ghost towns. The businesses in them towns had to shut down because—because—of the inaction and the disservice that this NDP government has done to rural Manitoba. That's—that is unfortunate that that would be allowed to happen and then have them stand up here and do all the—oh, we did this and we did that, but really the things that mattered, and we've heard it, the interprovincial trade has never taken place—never taken place.

It's not something new; it's not rocket science to sit down and join the New West Partnership. It's not rocket science to promote the businesses, but they're our businesses—little rural businesses that did succeed, and I heard the member from Dauphin about his corporation and his corporate farmers. Here was a little business—a little business—almost in the back door of where his grandpa started ranching—almost in the back door, in a swamp, they started a little business, and it was called the hog business.

That hog business has grown exponentially. Five years in a row they were in the top 50 companies in Canada. They're now international, and you're dumping on them because they were successful in spite of—in spite of—the NDP government.

That is criminal. You should look in the mirror and shame yourselves. You shouldn't have to have a cowboy like me stand up and do it for you. My goodness. You closed Ag offices throughout rural Manitoba. They were there to serve the people that were on the land—the farmers. Why did you close them? In fact, one of the potential leaders before the union got involved and re-instated the last Premier that you have, or the last Leader of the NDP party, one of the potential leaders stood up and said: We made a mistake in centralization. I would decentralize again because that was the right thing to do. He stood up on your behalf and you guys wouldn't vote for him. Aw, you're shameful.

The interprovincial trade is so terribly important to so many small businesses. These businesses put up with all your red tape—they put up with all the red tape that you put out there, but you limit their market. They and—but you limit their market. You limit the market.

**An Honourable Member:** You don't know what you're talking about.

**Mr. Graydon:** Oh, I have a good idea. I don't need a lawyer, but I could tell you a little story, but I won't right now, about lawyers.

We heard the Minister of Agriculture talk about this is the year of the pulse, and he's right. This is the year of the pulse and he doesn't care—he doesn't care—and neither does the Minister responsible for Hydro care, because there is no biosecurity—no biosecurity—whatsoever. They don't even know the meaning of the word, and, if you're going to participate in the year of the pulse, you certainly don't want Manitoba Hydro vehicles hauling clubroot from field to field; you don't need that. You need to have some way of controlling that; that's called biosecurity—just for your information. Going forward, you might want to talk to that minister responsible for that.

We in Manitoba—we in Manitoba—produce some of the low-cost, high-nutritious, healthy, safe food, and the Minister of Agriculture and the NDP government will not allow us to share that with our family—with our families that have been fired from farming and had to go to Alberta or Saskatchewan or

Ontario to make a living. They won't let us share that with them. They can be picked up at the border and charged for trafficking in some of our best food, and you're causing it to happen.

But I'm sure that there's a lot of wisdom on the other side, and there's an individual that seems to know way more about farming than farmers. Perhaps he would like to get up and say a few words.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. James Allum (Minister of Education and Advanced Learning):** Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to get up and speak to this resolution that was tabled by the member from Midland. I'm glad he was 'reafing' through his dictionary or thesaurus and came across the term social licence and then came off as an expert on social licence. As my friend from Dauphin has just pointed out, there are so many contradictions, so many gaps, so many things that are just not accurate in this particular resolution. Not only members of this side of the House—not only members on this side of the House would not support a resolution like that, but no rational-thinking human being would support a resolution that looks like that.

I have to commend my friend from Dauphin for pointing out that the word farmer doesn't actually exist in the resolution. I mean, what an enormous absence, an enormous gap; the very, very folks he pretends to get up and represent aren't even included in the very resolution that he puts forward. Where's—whereas the additional term the Minister of Agriculture reminds me about farm families and the importance of farm families and the role that they play in rural economic development, not going to find that in this resolution, Mr. Speaker.

In fact, I have to assume that it was purposefully left out. And why would that be? Because on the other side of the House their primary interest is to protect corporate interests, and that's exactly what this says—trust granted to a corporate entity. Oh, my gosh, Mr. Speaker, this is giving away community licence; it's giving away social licence and says that we should genuflect in front of the corporate community. What a scary vision for our province. What a scary thing it would be for this side—the other side to actually take the reins of government and then propagate this kind of nonsense with the people of Manitoba. It would be a very, very sad day.

But I have to say when the opposition talks about social licence, we don't have to talk about their term in government a while ago—admittedly, a long

while ago—because the people of Manitoba don't have any faith in the other side. They don't respect their views, and for four elections, one after the other after the other, the people of Manitoba came to this side of the House because they had confidence in our ability to deliver on behalf of all Manitobans because, let's remember, everybody matters, everybody counts on this side of the House.

On that side of the House the only ones that seem to matter are corporate bigwigs, and that's really a shame and an embarrassment, I'm sure, for the members opposite, that there's no such reference to farmers or farm families or, I have to say as a MLA representing a very progressive community in Fort Garry-Riverview, no mention of food security, no mention of urban agricultural production, no mention of the kinds of things that make it so that families living in urban centres can feel confidence in food production and food security at the most basic level for folks who need it most. And that's what this government does, day in and day out, because, as I said earlier, everyone matters in our Manitoba, whereas no one matters in their Manitoba except corporate interests and corporate bigwigs.

But, as I said, you don't have to look at their record on agriculture 16 years ago to reflect on just how poorly they served Manitobans, but let's just look at a few examples. If they were really, really interested, Mr. Speaker, in rural economic development, they surely wouldn't have said on one day, we're never going to sell a Crown corporation called MTS, and then the very next day actually sell it.

Those things—that Crown corporation belonged to the people of Manitoba, to urban dwellers and to people in rural Manitoba, and one day they just got up and gave it away. And who did they give it to? *[interjection]* Their corporate friends, says my friend, the Minister of Children and Youth Opportunities (Ms. Wight), who works every day to make sure that those kids are taken care of. And so it's unbelievable to me that the Conservative opposition to come forward on an issue of social licence when they've never actually ever practised it.

\* (11:50)

And so for me, as a proud Canadian, I say that—I ask the member for Midland (Mr. Pedersen), I ask any member across the way, where was the social licence when the Harper Conservatives sold the Canadian Wheat Board, disbanded it? Where was the

social licence there? *[interjection]* The member for Midland laughs about that. It's still a joking matter to the opposition Conservatives, still a joke, still a laugh, that when they tore down the Canadian Wheat Board, they didn't leave farmers hanging and they left families across Canada hanging, because suddenly the movement of agricultural goods and services, which had served this country and served this province very well for generations and generations, was one night, one day in the middle of the night, the cord was pulled, it was over, deal was done, no social licence, no political licence.

But, in fact, Mr. Speaker, it reflects the very authoritarianism at the heart of conservatism in our province and in this country, and it was practised by the Harper government over and over and over again. The Canadian Wheat Board was only one example of that authoritarianism that exists at the heart of conservatism, that says, top down, do what we say. And yet the member here can table a resolution about social licence. He just discovered the term. He's never practised it. His party's never practised it. And, when the federal Harper Conservatives were in government, they never ever practised social licence.

We engage in it all the time, Mr. Speaker. I can tell you, when it comes to public education, we engage in it all the time. That's why, when my friend from St. Vital, the former minister of Education, tabled a very important antibullying bill, there was broad social licence for such an important thing in our schools, a broad social licence across all kinds of sectors, based on community, with the idea of making sure that kids were safe in classrooms and in schools every single day, no matter how they defined themselves, no matter what their personal identity was. We came to that very important, to date, with broad social licence.

And what happened? They dragged it out all summer. Day in, day out, dragged it out all summer. Made it so that it was clear, and when it happened and when it came to a vote, did they vote for it? No. There was social licence personified, about a new community that is inclusive and accepts those for who they are, and the members opposite, including the member for Midland (Mr. Pedersen) who tabled this resolution today about social licence, voted against it.

So, when it comes to practising social licence, both at the provincial level, as I just used one example, there would be so many others, and I know my friend the Minister of Agriculture could think of

countless examples to describe the way in which the Conservative opposition, when in government, either provincially or federally, has not practised—used the practice of social licence, but also nationally, with the Harper government, it was never practised. It was a very authoritarian, top-down model of governance.

And I have to say, Mr. Speaker, as we head to an election in a short period of time, we'll make clear to Manitobans the very authoritarianism that exists with the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Pallister). He's not a guy who's ever suggested that he could do anything wrong. He's a guy who's never said, you know, when I don't open my door for the Christmas open house, when I leave it closed and in the dark and Manitobans come and knock on it and he's not there, does he ever apologize for that? Has he ever said, you know, I don't always get it right? Oh, of course not. He hides and covers; he doesn't speak about it. Not part of his vocabulary. The term that we could've done better, not part of that vocabulary. When the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Fort Whyte, stood up and gave his Christmas greetings to infidels, did he ever, the next day, decide, for a moment, to get up and say, you know, that was not a very intelligent thing to say? I should have reworded it. I should have found different phrasing.

The point is, Mr. Speaker, it is—it is—relevant, because the fact of the matter is, the Conservative opposition who wants to be in government has never practised social licence. It's not at the heart of conservatism, and it's certainly never ever been practised by the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley):** Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to share a few thoughts on this motion brought forward. I think my colleagues have done a very good job of exposing the agenda that is actually behind this private member's resolution.

I wouldn't mind picking up on the Canadian Wheat Board story that some of my colleagues ahead of me have already talked about very well. And there's an organization attached to the Broadbent Institute. They're called Press Progress. They do a very good job of getting behind the scenes and informing Canadians of what's actually happening on in the public realm. As we all know, Canadian Wheat Board was, of course, designed to ensure that farmers got a fair shake in the marketplace, that they were not taken advantage of by very powerful corporate interests. And I note here, according to the Press Progress website, in 2011-2012 alone, the

board, the Canadian Wheat Board, when it was still in place, sold \$7.2 billion worth of grain to more than 70 different countries, and the vast majority of that revenue went back to farmers.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there's a very interesting chart as part of this article, and the member for Emerson (Mr. Graydon) is mumbling about grain elevators; well, let's just explore this a little bit. Why might it be that grain elevators are so interested in what has happened to the Wheat Board? If you look at this chart, for four years in a row, from '06-07 to '09-10, the numbers are really very similar. The price of wheat at port would fluctuate from year to year, but the amount of money that the elevators would receive per metric ton is about the same, about \$10. The amount of money that the rail companies would receive at port for a metric ton's about the same, again, about \$10. And, when you're talking about the average sale price being \$200 or maybe even up to \$350, well, all the rest of the money has been going to the farmers. That's what the Wheat Board accomplished.

Now, what happened in 2014 when all of a sudden the Harper Conservatives and their disciples across the way here want to do exactly the same sort of thing, hiding their hidden agenda under, you know, flowery terms like social licence? I don't know which one of their researchers had to scour the Internet late at night and into the early hours of the morning to try and find a term that would disguise what they're actually up to. In February of 2014, the price at port for a metric ton of grain was almost \$450. Wouldn't you know it? Two hundred and twenty dollars of that went to the farmers? Of course not; went to the elevators. The rail companies have quadrupled the amount of money they're making on a metric ton basis. They're up about \$40, leaving the farmer back down about \$160.

So, under this mythical idea that the members opposite want to put forward that they actually have the interests of producers at heart, one chart, all by itself, one article, blows it to pieces. That's why I get so bored in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker. Members opposite do not have a hot, frigging clue what they're talking about. Sometimes I wish I could actually

have my own talk show. You know, we could invite John Oliver in, you know, Jon Stewart—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

We have a long tradition in this House of using parliamentary language, and there are lots of rules and examples of what is appropriate and what is inappropriate. So I'm going to caution the honourable member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer) to pick and choose his words very carefully to stay within the rules that we have lived with for a long, long time here. And the words that he chose, which I'm not going to repeat and put them back on the record again, I think were inappropriate, and I'm going to ask him to withdraw those particular words and to refrain from using those words again in the future. So I'm going to ask for the co-operation of the honourable member for Wolseley.

**Mr. Altemeyer:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have to admit I'm not sure where I crossed the line, but I will endeavour to be more careful. Like, honestly, I don't mean any offence at all. I—did you ask me to retract something?

**Mr. Speaker:** Yes.

**Mr. Altemeyer:** Oh, I didn't hear that. I retract whatever it was I said that offended the parliamentary process.

**Mr. Speaker:** I thank the honourable member for Wolseley, and I'll let the honourable member for Wolseley continue his comments in the last few seconds that he has.

**Mr. Altemeyer:** Great. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And, again, I apologize. I certainly meant no offence.

The factual—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

When this matter's again before the House, the honourable member for Wolseley will have five minutes remaining.

The hour being 12 noon, this House is recessed and stands recessed until 1:30 p.m. this afternoon.

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Thursday, February 25, 2016**

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