

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

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The Honourable Myrna Driedger
Speaker*

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-First Legislature

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, November 9, 2016

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

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

Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

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

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Cliff Chadderton

Madam Speaker: The honourable Minister for Sustainable Development.

Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sustainable Development): Thank you—

Madam Speaker: The required 90 minutes notice prior to routine proceedings was provided in accordance with rule 26(2).

Would the honourable minister please proceed with her statement.

Mrs. Cox: Madam Speaker, regardless of where one looks this week, we see people wearing a poppy. It serves to remind us all of the tremendous and, indeed, ultimate sacrifices that have been made on behalf of the brave men and women of our Armed Forces. Today, we are honouring the men and women of the Canadian Army.

Most of us are familiar with the name of Cliff Chadderton. We can all recall seeing countless television commercials with Cliff Chadderton who became, to many of us, synonymous with the War Amps.

Cliff Chadderton was from Winnipeg. He worked for the Winnipeg Free Press, attended the University of Manitoba, played hockey with the

Winnipeg Rangers, and when war broke out in 1939, at just 20 years old he enlisted.

He served with the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, rising to the rank of major. He was stationed in Britain, France, Belgium and the Netherlands. He was wounded twice: once by a bullet in Normandy and once by a grenade near the Leopold Canal in northern Belgium. It was the injury from the grenade which cost him his right leg.

Cliff Chadderton devoted most of his post-war life to helping veterans like himself who have lost a limb in battle. Later, under his direction, the War Amps cause included child amputees known as CHAMPs.

He retired from his position with the War Amps when he was 90 years old in 2010. Three years later, in November 2013, he passed away at the age of 93. Throughout his life he received many honours. He was a member of the Order of Canada, later promoted to be an Officer of the order and, finally, was made a Companion of the Order of Canada. He also received the Order of Ontario, many honorary degrees and was also made an Officer Brother of the Order of St. John.

Today, I am proud to announce that the government of Manitoba has named a geographic feature in honour of Cliff Chadderton: Chadderton Lake. Chadderton Lake, located in the Duck Mountains in southwestern Manitoba, will forever bear his name and remind all of us of a truly outstanding and brave Manitoban. An easel showing its exact location is located just outside the Chamber in the Rotunda for all of us to see later today.

We have with us today members of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles and also a representative of the Canadian War Amps.

Please hold your applause until after the names have been—after all of the individuals have been introduced.

Let me start by introducing Mr. Merrill Loepky of the War Amps.

Representing the Royal Winnipeg Rifles are: Major Brian Orton, Major Don McKay, Captain Ron Wardle, Chief Warrant Officer Gerry Woodman, Captain Pat Hickey, Chief Warrant Officer Larry

Blair, Captain Debbie Lang, Master Corporal Walker Brown.

Madam Speaker, as we approach November 11th, let's also remember—let's also never forget those who did not only die in battle, but still paid dearly for our freedom, like the extraordinary Manitoban and Canadian we honour today, Major Cliff Chadderton.

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): Madam Speaker, I thank the minister for her statement this afternoon.

Cliff Chadderton was not only a World War II veteran, but a tireless advocate for amputees, veterans and a devoted community leader. Today Mr. Chadderton becomes the latest veteran to be honoured by having a lake named after him, and deservedly so.

In 1939, Mr. Chadderton enlisted and served in the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, where he eventually rose to the rank of major. He was stationed in Britain, France, Belgium and the Netherlands, and was wounded twice, including losing his right leg below the knee from a grenade explosion.

Following the war, Mr. Chadderton became the CEO of the War Amps and founder of the War Amps Child Amputee Program. Living with his injury, he understood the challenges faced by those living with a disability and championed innovative programs for civilian, child and war amputees. He became the public face of the War Amps for many years.

Although Mr. Chadderton passed in 2013, many are inspired to continue his legacy of leadership and compassion.

I'm very pleased we are joined today by Major Brian Orton, president of the Regimental Senate of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles and Mr. Gerry Woodman, president of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles Association, as well as other members of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles Regimental Family, a family to which I am very proud to belong.

Madam Speaker, Mr. Chadderton was a truly amazing Canadian.

On behalf of our NDP caucus, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and honour Mr. Chadderton's legacy.

I also thank the amazing staff and volunteers of the War Amps who are continuing Mr. Chadderton's incredible work with just as much passion and dedication as he had.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I ask leave to speak to the minister's statement.

Madam Speaker: Does the member have leave to speak to the ministerial statement? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Gerrard: Madam Speaker, I want to welcome the veterans, the representatives of our Armed Forces and the War Amps who are here today.

I want to speak to the incredible life and work of Hugh Clifford, Cliff, Chadderton. Cliff served, as we've heard, in the Second World War and then joined the War Amps immediately upon his return to Canada. He served 44 years as the chief executive officer. Known to Canadians as Mr. Veteran, Cliff Chadderton was recognized both nationally and internationally as a developer of programs and services for war, civilian and child amputees. He was the founder of the War Amps Child Amputee—or CHAMP—Program which provides child amputees with funding for artificial limbs, education, counselling and seminars. It remains the only program of its kind in the world.

* (13:40)

He also established several other programs, including: PLAYSAFE, to promote child safety with a kids-to-kids approach; Matching Mothers, to bring together new and experienced CHAMP families for advice and support; and Jumpstart, which ensures that multiple amputee children have the computer skills they need for an independent future.

The War Amps have contributed so much over the years. In particular, the key tag service they provide to everyone has saved countless Canadians when they lost their keys. They've also been a familiar participant in festivals, as for many years I've seen them at the Morden Corn & Apple Festival.

Cliff and the War Amps demonstrated caring over so many years. It's fitting that today we honour Cliff by naming Chadderton Lake in Manitoba in his honour. Thank you. Merci. Miigwech.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Canadian Armed Forces

Mr. Jon Reyes (St. Norbert): Madam Speaker, I rise in the House today to honour members of the army for their dedication in defending Canadian values throughout the world.

Members of the Canadian army are the first point of contact for any military operation. Each and every mission they put their lives at risk, leaving their families behind and loved ones to courageously defend Canadian values and promote international peace and security.

The First World War saw 622,000 men and women serve from a country that was only 7 and a half million people. Canadian soldiers would distinguish themselves during battles at Ypres, the Somme, 'passcheldaele' and Vimy Ridge, to name a few. At the conclusion of the First World War more than 60,000 Canadians had died, another 170,000 wounded.

During the Second World War, over 1 million Canadians and Newfoundlanders followed France, Britain and other Commonwealth nations in the fight against the Axis powers. More than 45,000 Canadians were killed in the Second World War while 24,500 of those served in the army.

Following the invasion of South Korea by the northern communist forces in 1950, 26,000 Canadians would enter the Korean War; a total of 516 were killed.

The Canadian army would continue to play a key role to UN peacekeeping missions, as more than 125,000 Canadians have served in peace-support operations in over 35 countries since the Korean War.

Following the attacks of September 11th, 2001, the Canadian army supported NATO operations in Afghanistan, fighting the Taliban, initiating a combat role that would last 10 years, in which 158 Canadians were killed and over 2,000 others were wounded.

The sheer number of men and women who have served, fought and sacrificed during our country's history is truly outstanding. Let us never forget their sacrifice and dedication to our country so every day we may enjoy the freedoms that we cherish.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MITT YouthBuild

Mr. Kevin Chief (Point Douglas): Two years ago, the Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology partnered with YouthBuild International to start a program based in Point Douglas to reach out to indigenous learners in Winnipeg and the surrounding areas.

MITT YouthBuild is helping young people in the community to develop careers through training, education and employment.

Based at the Social Enterprise Centre, the program helps participants overcome challenges, upgrade their education. This makes a difference for families and creates a positive role model for the community.

MITT YouthBuild is an education program with cultural supports for indigenous youth ages 19 to 35 that focuses on academic, vocational and on-the-job training.

The program encourages students to get involved in the community, stay in school, build their self-esteem and develop a career plan. Participants are also encouraged to take their driver's education and complete a variety of safety certificates.

Students can participate in one of two streams: the Trades Exploration Program, where students learn about a variety of trades, including carpentry, framing, roofing and electrical and allows them to graduate with a mature high school diploma in 10 months and be work ready.

The second stream is Carpentry level 1 program accredited by Apprenticeship Manitoba. This is a pre-employment training program where participants learn the skills to be an entry level carpenter.

The YouthBuild program was started in Harlem almost four decades ago when youth were given the opportunity to rebuild an apartment building.

Since then the YouthBuild model that empowers youth by giving them the opportunity to improve their neighbourhoods and develop skills for employment and has been duplicated in 16 different countries and works with over 16,000 young people a year.

Please join me in congratulating the students and staff of the MITT YouthBuild who are with us in the gallery today.

Miigwech, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for St. James.

435 Search and Rescue Squadron

Mr. Scott Johnston (St. James): Thank you, Madam Chairman.

I rise to recognize 17 Wing Squadron 435. I am also happy to present my private member's statement on behalf of the honourable member from Assiniboia and the honourable member from St. Norbert.

Madam Speaker, recently I was invited to tour operations at 17 Wing's 435 Search and Rescue Squadron, and while I was there I was told about a mission that resulted in a commendation for extreme dedication and duty from the Wing commander.

I will read the citation to the House:

Responding to a call for a downed aircraft, 435 Squadron personnel were forced to hike uphill on snowshoes for several kilometres through dense woods to reach a crash site after deteriorating weather prevented a parachute insertion. They remained overnight at the site and extracted a deceased pilot the next morning after clearing a landing zone by chainsaw.

Madam Speaker, what this commendation does not detail is that all told these two search and rescue personnel trekked over 12 kilometers through dense bush and over frozen marshland to reach the victim of this crash and ultimately recover a fellow Canadian.

Needless to say, these feats would stagger myself as well as, certainly, my legislative colleagues who find negotiating traffic sometimes in the morning to Broadway a challenge.

But it was made clear to me during my tour of 435 that the events detailed above are considered just a part of their job and simply another day at their office for the SAR Techs who routinely perform this service for their country.

Madam Speaker, I ask names to be included in Hansard, and I am very proud that the exceptional men and women of 435 Search and Rescue Squadron call St. James-Assiniboia, Winnipeg home and ask for all—excuse me—to recognize Warrant Officer Hood representing Squadron 435.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for St. James (Mr. Johnston), your time has basically expired. Did you have a concluding remark?

Mr. Johnston: I just wanted to clarify my introduction. I should have indicated, Madam Chair, as opposed to Madam Chairman. My apologies.

Some Honourable Members: Madam Speaker.

Mr. Johnston: Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: That's fine.

Is there leave of the House to allow the names to be included in Hansard? *[Agreed]*

Warrant Officer Hood.

Harry Paine

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): Madam Speaker, it is my honour today to say a few words about my dear friend, Mr. Harry Paine.

With an activist resume that spans his entire adult life, Harry has been a political father figure to me and hundreds of others in our Wolseley community and beyond. To say that he has been part of history is no overstatement. During the civil rights movement in the United States, Harry actually sat right next to the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. at organizing meetings that led up to the bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama.

It was music, that sweet folk music, that actually brought Harry to Manitoba. In 1974 when Wolseley resident Mitch Podolok had this crazy idea for a summer folk festival, he tapped his friend and master chef Harry Paine to run a massive outdoor kitchen that would feed all of the entertainers and volunteers for free. Forty-three years later, the Winnipeg Folk Festival and its famous kitchen are still going strong and Harry has been a part of it every single year.

Harry's other volunteer contributions to our community are quite simply too numerous to name, but here are just a few highlights: past president of the Manitoba Society of Seniors; chairman of the Broadway Seniors' Resource Council; he served on the boards of the Manitoba Council on Aging, the Daniel McIntyre-St. Matthew's Community Association, the Transportation Options Network for Seniors and the Arts Accessibility Network for Manitoba; all of which made him a deserving recipient of the Lieutenant Governor's Make a Difference Community Award.

An unwavering socialist, Harry has taken up many fights and many causes for other people. All of us who have benefitted from his efforts stand with him now as he wages his personal struggle against pancreatic cancer.

No matter how that battle turns out, it is my deep honour to announce the creation of the Harry Paine Community Scholarship, which I will present to a junior high school student at Gordon Bell High school every year from now on. The scholarship will

go to students who are connecting with seniors to make the world a better place.

Thank you, Harry, for bravely joining us here in the gallery today, for all that you have done and for all that you have inspired the rest of us to do in these very difficult times. Thank you, my friend.

* (13:50)

Morden Corn and Apple Festival

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I recognize today the 50th anniversary of the Morden Corn and Apple Festival.

The festival held each year on the fourth weekend of August started in 1967, and why corn and apples?—because the Manitoba agricultural—the Canadian Agricultural Research Station was a centre for research for corn and apples and other crops to enhance their suitability to Manitoba's harsh climate.

Known as the Corn and Apple Belt of Manitoba, a committee was formed to promote the town in 1967, and Jack Dunbar became the first chairperson of the committee with a budget of \$200 and donations from local business and farms, and a new festival was born. Events included a farmers' market, free corn and apple cider, a barbecue, a fashion show, costume contest, bike race, queen and king contest and an old-time and teen street dance.

This year, thousands of visitors from all ages and backgrounds came to enjoy their free corn on the cob, apple cider, a parade, midway and entertainment. In the first year, the festival served 200 cobs of corn and 80 gallons of cider, and this year, 60,000 cobs of corn and 33,000 units of apple juice were given out. The festival wouldn't be a—the success it is without the 750 volunteers who put in countless hours.

This year's festival was highlighted by a Celebrate Manitoba designation by the Minister for Sport, Culture and Heritage, and the Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre received Signature Museum status the same weekend, which Her Honour, the Lieutenant Governor, unveiled and christened—and Rick Mercer of CBC, as the Rick Mercer Report—attended the parade and filmed a segment.

The queen pageant is now a memory, but, in its place, a new Youth Ambassador Program is working to acknowledge young people and their many accomplishments.

Madam Speaker, I congratulate the city of Morden, the Morden Corn and Apple Committee and the countless volunteers that have made the 50th anniversary of this celebration and this festival something to remember.

Introduction of Guests

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

I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery, where we have with us today members of the 38 Canadian Brigade Group, including Captain William Huculak, Captain Sean Hennessey, Master Warrant Officer Gordon Ladyka, and Master Corporal Benjamin Rennie. Today, I was honoured to be escorted to the Chamber by these members, who are the guests of the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Reyes). And, on behalf of all members here, we welcome you to our Manitoba Legislature.

And, to my loge to my left, we have Robert-Falcon Ouellette, Member of Parliament for Winnipeg Centre, and we welcome you here today.

Seated in the public gallery from Garden City Collegiate, we have 50 grade 9 students under the direction of Lia Baffour-Awuah and Brooklyn Linnick, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Curry).

And, also in the public gallery, we have from Maples Met School, 29 grade 9 students under the direction of Will Burton, and this school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Burrows (Ms. Lamoureux).

On behalf of all of us, we welcome all of you here today.

ORAL QUESTIONS

University of Manitoba Contract Collective Bargaining Negotiations

Ms. Flor Marcelino (Leader of the Official Opposition): New Democrats have a vision for the future of Manitoba that works for everyone and respects the diversity of the province.

Today, we were all surprised by the outcome of yesterday's US election. The words we have heard surrounding that campaign were hurtful, and now we hope that love, tolerance and respect will carry us through.

The campaign reminds us all that our words matter and have a real impact, so I ask the Premier: When he said that he respects the collective bargaining process, does he mean those things?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, Madam Speaker, frankly, in the heat of election campaigns, things are sometimes said.

The members opposite conducted themselves in a reprehensible manner in the last election campaign, even going so far as to try to frighten cancer patients receiving care—a loss of their services.

So things have happened which, I think, all of us in this House should recognize should not be repeated here. That being said, the politics practised in the United States presidential election are not, I believe, for the most part, politics that are admired by citizens here in the province of Manitoba.

But what is admired is the valour of our veterans, Madam Speaker. And I wanted to say thank you, a special thank you, to our men and women who serve in uniform today and who served in the past, and say we are honoured by your presence here today and we are honoured by your conduct and we follow your example. and we will do the best we can to uphold the fine work and the traditions and the legacy that you and your forebears have created for the people of Manitoba. Thank you.

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

Ms. Marcelino: The Premier's words matter. Yesterday, when speaking about the negotiations at the University of Manitoba, the Premier said, quote: It would be unprecedented and unhelpful to enter into the foray in the middle of negotiations, and certainly that is not what we did, unquote.

I ask the Premier again: Is this the truth?

Mr. Pallister: Well, again, Madam Speaker, of course, we all want a resolution of the collective bargaining process to the satisfaction of both sides in the negotiation at the University of Manitoba, just as people across Manitoba wanted a resolution of the previous strike in Brandon—strikes, I should say; two occurred under the previous administration's watch.

But I would like to go a little further and say that today I was particularly touched by the comments from members in each party in this House in respect of paying tribute to our veterans, and I wanted to mention a proud part of our history as a province is

punching above our weight. We didn't need to be conscripted to serve in the first war. We led the country in volunteering for service in the second war as well. The young people in the gallery need to know and appreciate that Manitobans, men and women, stepped forward to serve voluntarily, and it is that volunteer spirit that's alive and well in Manitoba today.

Thanks very much to the veterans and the tradition that they began years ago and that we will continue today in this province with this government.

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

Ms. Marcelino: The Premier's words matter. In the media he said that he would do everything he can to assist in the negotiations at the University of Manitoba.

I ask the Premier: Is that true?

Mr. Pallister: Madam Speaker, we all want to see resolution. Labour disputes are never pleasant to watch. Certainly, they're not pleasant for the professors at the current time, nor are they pleasant times for the administrators at the University of Manitoba. But we wish them well, and we have offered to do our best and continue to do our best to make best efforts towards a satisfactory resolution for the benefit, of course, most predominantly, of our young people.

I wanted to also add my thanks, if I could, and I wanted to compliment the member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer) on his comments in respect to Mr. Paine. I think that there is an embodiment of that fine volunteer spirit that so many of us see as an exemplary motivation to try to follow. And whether it's the Folk Festival or the numerous other causes that he has supported in his life, I think it's important for us to pay respects again to this gentleman and to those people in our province who give so much to build the future of this province on a volunteer basis, not in self interest but in the public interest and with the public interest at heart. That's a public interest we have in the case of the strike, but it's also a public interest we have in respect of every other aspect of Manitoba society.

I thank the member from Wolseley for his comments.

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

Ms. Marcelino: I would like to table a copy of an unfair labour practice filing from the University of Manitoba Faculty Association.

Madam Speaker, in it, it is alleged that the Premier's own Cabinet secretary on compensation intervened at the University of Manitoba negotiations by directing the University to put forward a lower salary offer in a shorter collective agreement time frame that was on the—than was on the table.

* (14:00)

The Premier's words matter.

Did his Cabinet secretary direct the university to make a lower offer than had been made, and did the Cabinet secretary direct the university to offer a shorter time frame for the agreement than what the university had offered?

Mr. Pallister: Madam Speaker, again, the opposition chooses to make a rather clear attempt to place blame in respect of the labour disputes and uses, as an example, a filing of an unfair labour practice to support their specious argument. It is not a valid argument. During the time of the previous NDP administration, unfair labour practice allegations were made by management and by bargainers on behalf working men and women in the province—over 900 times.

So, Madam Speaker, I would not say that the member's hypothesis would hold water. But, if she thinks it's a valid hypothesis, point it at the previous government and use 900 examples to support it. I don't think it's valid. I don't think the previous administration tried to manipulate the election that we just had or tried to influence unfairly the labour negotiations that took place in our province. And I haven't made those allegations, and didn't make them during the time of the Brandon strike. And I don't 'apprecion'—appreciate them being made now by the member opposite.

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

Ms. Marcelino: The Premier should read their chronology of events contained in that document.

Madam Speaker, yesterday, the Premier said that, quote, it would be unprecedented and unhelpful to enter into the foray in the middle of negotiations and certainly that is not what we did, unquote. Yet UMFA has now said that that is exactly what this government has done—various correspondence

between the Cabinet secretary on compensation and the University of Manitoba that details the government's dictate.

Will the Premier, today, release these emails so Manitobans can find out the truth about what this government has done?

Mr. Pallister: Madam Speaker, as difficult as it is for the members opposite to accept, the people of Manitoba chose a new government this spring. They gave us a mandate, and they—and a strong mandate, and they asked us—a record mandate, in fact, an historic mandate—and they asked us, because we did ask them for permission, to do our best to fix the finances of our province, which are in dire circumstances as a consequence of a lack of attentiveness to spending controls under the previous administration.

We've seen a decline in our credit rating as a consequence of that in Manitoba. That takes tens of millions of dollars away from front-line services, community-building exercises, support for children, support for our seniors. And we can't see this continue, Madam Speaker. So we've acted on that mandate and Manitobans have every right to feel confident we'll continue to keep our word to them.

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

Ms. Marcelino: I don't think that mandate included intervening or interfering in the ongoing bargaining [inaudible]

As we have been saying, it is unprecedented for a government to intervene in labour negotiations after a salary offer has been made. The Premier has told us, in this House and in the media, that he did not intervene and that he respects the collective bargaining process, but this filing claims that the agent of this Premier's Cabinet did exactly that.

I ask again: Will the Premier, today, release the correspondence between his Cabinet secretary on compensation and the University of Manitoba so we can finally find out the truth?

Mr. Pallister: Here's the truth, Madam Speaker: there was a negotiation under way. There was no progress being made. The previous administration didn't help, in fact, by having no mandate whatsoever in terms of helping the productive dialogue between the management and labour union representatives.

The people of Manitoba intervened in—on April 19th, chose a new government. We chose to

take an approach which corresponds exactly to what we committed to do, which was to address the spending difficulties that this province is facing.

And we need to face those things together, but I recognize that the member continues a fine tradition of blame-placing, which is counterproductive to the resolution of this, though it was on display two years ago when members on the other side chose to rise in a rebellion of historic proportions and chose to try to dispose of and depose their previous leader, the premier, duly elected in the province of Manitoba.

I see this blame-placing again, Madam Speaker. They have learned nothing from the behaviours of the past. But we have, and we'll continue to work for the resolution of this labour dispute effectively on behalf of all Manitobans.

University of Manitoba Contract Collective Bargaining Negotiations

Mr. Wab Kinew (Fort Rouge): There are serious allegations of interference in the unfair labour practice claim tabled by the Opposition Leader.

It alleges that the secretary of the Public Sector Compensation Committee directed the U of M to offer a wage freeze on October 6th. To be clear, this is an official who would be acting on the direction of Cabinet, and to be clear again, Madam Speaker, this wage freeze would have been directed after the U of M offered a salary increase to the faculty association. And if true, all of this would have contributed to the strike which now affects students at the University of Manitoba.

Can the Premier confirm for the House whether or not his secretary of Public Sector Compensation did, in fact, interfere and whether he was acting on the Premier's directions?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Again, I refute, as I have in the past, the preamble of the member opposite and encourage him not to endeavour to take sides in the dispute on behalf of his former professorial colleagues, which he is clearly doing.

I would invite him to investigate at length the over 900 submissions which allege the previous government was involved in unfair labour practice. I would like him to review those and then ask himself honestly and objectively if he feels there was merit in each and every one of those 900, any more than there is merit in the one alleged now.

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

Mr. Kinew: We're simply trying to ascertain the veracity of the allegations contained within this claim that is before the House today.

So, it also alleges that the secretary who acts on behalf of Cabinet directed the university not to agree to mediation. Students deserve to know whether this, in fact, took place, because if the Province was directing the university not to agree to mediation, that could've made a strike more likely. If the Province made a strike more likely, then students deserve to know.

Can the Premier tell the House whether his staff, in fact, directed that there be no mediation and table the documents to prove so?

Mr. Pallister: I remind the member opposite that under the previous government's administration, a strike was imminent for months and no progress was made whatsoever and, of course, it was inevitable that it would lead, at some point, barring a resolution by the parties negotiating—which are not these parties, but those parties involved in the negotiation—barring a resolution satisfactory to both sides, that a strike would happen.

It is not helpful for the member to now take sides in that effort. It is not helpful for him to try and impose himself upon the Manitoba Labour Board and to substitute his judgment and his inquiries for those that are duly and legislatively given to the Manitoba Labour Board. The Manitoba Labour Board has the onerous responsibility of dealing with these allegations. In fact—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —over the time of the previous government they dealt with over 900 of them and, in fact, the cases disposed were—over 900 were disposed and, actually, taking action—*[interjection]* The member from Minto, the member who shamed—

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —women in this Chamber, who is now heckling from his seat, needs to learn respect in question—

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —period for all members of this House.

There were 71 granted of 968. The member needs to understand that not just because an allegation is made does it become true, and he needs

to understand and respect the process that's going on—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Prior to proceeding, I would indicate that we are trying very hard in this Chamber that when questions are asked that we have the due respect of allowing the member to answer.

* (14:10)

So there has been some heckling to the point where it is quite obvious, and I would just urge all members to, you know, please try to ensure that we can have a respectful environment here with questions and answers. And I would appreciate that from all members. Thank you.

Mr. Kinew: Thank you for that direction, Madam Speaker.

I would remind the Premier that he has the power to lay bare the truth as to the quality of these allegations before the House today. As for judgment, I will pass none. I will leave that for others to make. I merely ask the questions about the veracity.

This claim also alleges that this Cabinet secretary indicated to the university that the government would not fund binding arbitration. If that is true, of course, we'd like to know why a restriction like this was placed on negotiations, but first we would like to know the facts.

Will the Premier confirm for this House whether or not his government indicated they would not fund binding arbitration?

Madam Speaker: Prior to proceedings, I would just like to indicate to members in the gallery there is to be no participation in any of the proceedings, which includes clapping, and I would ask your—if you could please respect that. Those are the procedures of the House, and our guests are not allowed to participate. So I appreciate that very much.

Mr. Pallister: What we should all want, and what we want on this side of the House, is a resolution to a labour dispute. And we would continue to encourage all members not to take sides in a labour dispute, but to let the bargaining process unfold as it should and can.

Madam Speaker, we have chosen, unlike the member opposite, who has clearly taken the side of the faculty at the U of M, to take the side of students and we'll continue to take that side.

Post-Secondary Institutions Collective Bargaining Negotiations

Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas): The Public Service Alliance of Canada represents 500 English-language teachers, markers, teaching assistants and research assistants at the University of Winnipeg and about 150 markers, teaching assistants and research assistants at Brandon University. They're afraid that this government will interfere with their negotiations.

Given what we heard about UMFA's allegations against this government, will the Minister for Education and Training (Mr. Wishart) vow that these sorts of practices won't continue at other academic institutions?

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): Well, I thank the member for that question, Madam Speaker, but I assure her that she has it exactly wrong. The government has made very clear that it has a responsibility, and that responsibility is to provide a mandate, to provide that backdrop, and that is what this government has done. We've provided that mandate to all Manitobans when we said that there is a fiscal challenge facing all of us as Manitobans. This is the backdrop for all the activities in this province at this particular time.

This government chooses to accept that. This government chooses to address that. This member should not be spreading fear.

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

Ms. Lathlin: Marianne Hladun, PSAC regional executive vice-president, was quoted in the Free Press last week, saying that it's completely inappropriate for the government to insert itself into negotiations between unions and educational institutions.

Ms. Hladun is worried that this government will direct other universities to seek a one-year wage-freeze.

What kind of assurances can this government offer to Ms. Hladun, given what's already taken place at the University of Manitoba?

Mr. Friesen: Well, this member was asking questions, Madam Speaker, without a possession of the facts, and I want to take this opportunity to remind this member that when the previous administration was in place, indeed that previous administration did ask and receive pauses. So, first of all, the premise of her question is wrong.

I repeat, though, that this government has provided to all Manitobans this backdrop. We are quantifying the challenge, the fiscal challenge, that faces every one of us as Manitobans. This is real. It is substantial. It must be addressed. Manitobans expect us to address it. Manitobans have given us a mandate to address it. This member should not take this opportunity to do this politics-of-fear approach. It is not helpful to the processes that are under way.

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

Ms. Lathlin: Negotiations are just getting under way between PSAC and Brandon University. Many PSAC members at the University of Winnipeg who help international and local students improve their English are bargaining a second contract, while some members are negotiating their first collective agreement.

Will the minister or Premier (Mr. Pallister) commit, today, to forgo this disruptive tactic and just let unions settle their own agreements?

Mr. Friesen: Madam Speaker, I would suggest to this member that it is unhelpful to try to agitate or create fear for political purposes. That's not—it's not going to resolve—it's not going to help in the situation.

The government has been clear about the role that it takes in respect of providing the backdrop of that mandate. It's not helpful for this member to try to suggest otherwise. This is a very real challenge that faces every one of us. It informs all decisions. We need participation. We need the support of all parties in this.

So, certainly, we expect, as the situation develops at U of M and with other negotiations that are under way, this will continue to be the case on the part of this government.

Home-Based Child Care Wages and Working Conditions

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): Research by the University of Manitoba notes two thirds of Canadian home child-care providers are dissatisfied with their income and half are dissatisfied with their overall working conditions.

The research found low wages are the primary reason for home child-care providers quitting their jobs and which contributes to the high child-care closure rates.

Will the minister increase wages for early childhood educators and home child-care providers?

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Families): This government is committed to enhancing affordability in child care. We much value people that—whether you're a child-care provider under home care or facilities, we much value their work.

We also know, under the last decade, a decade of decline and decay in terms of some of our services, that the opposition was—left us with over 14,000 people, families, on the wait-lists in terms of waiting for spaces. We also know that there is excessive NDP red tape when it comes to child-care services.

The NDP got it wrong, and we'll get it right, Madam Speaker.

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

Ms. Fontaine: The research notes that home child-care providers work long weeks and have little or no access to employment benefits and very low pay.

Families in Manitoba need reliable, responsible child care in whatever form they choose. Child-care providers deserve to be well paid for work that they have identified as stressful and, at times, overwhelming.

Will the minister improve working conditions by creating provincial benefit program for both unlicensed and licensed home child-care providers?

Mr. Fielding: When the member opposite talks about benefits, you can look at the affordability, the amount of money that was taken out of the pockets of Manitobans, which make it less affordable through the PST in-hike from the previous government.

We also know that the red tape—or let's call it the orange tape—the orange tape of the former government in terms of child care has made it more difficult for spaces to be created. I was speaking to a lady, a lady named—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Fielding: I was speaking to a lady named Cindy [*phonetic*] who runs a home child-care centre just out of Portage, who talked about the excessive red

tapes and hard ability to start home and child-care centres.

That's why this government is incorporated that a part of our plan. We think it's a balanced plan. It's a plan that will work for Manitobans.

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

Ms. Fontaine: The research notes that family homes reported for quality control breaches 'significantly' more than public child-care centres, meaning that it is more difficult for home child-care providers to maintain spaces that meet provincial standards. This is not only dangerous for Manitoba children, but for workers. Child-care providers deserve to have a workplace that is safe.

* (14:20)

What will the minister do to ensure that home child-care providers have good working conditions with good pay and that Manitoba children are safe?

Mr. Fielding: In ensuring we have affordable child care that's safe for everyone is something that we value as a government. We had Pat Wedge [*phonetic*], who recently came out to one of the consultation sessions that our Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen) talked about and talked about the value of choice, choice within the system. Home-based child care is a part of that choice.

We also know that you need to streamline to ensure that there's not as much NDP red tape that we've seen in the past. The orange tape that was there compared to other provinces, in terms of the red tape, to help start child-care centres where they're home-based.

We believe ours is a balanced approach and it offers choice to parents.

Guaranteed Income Supplement Clawback Concerns

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows): The Manitoba Shelter Benefit for family allowance is a program that we can be proud of. This allowance is based on a person's annual income and is strictly put towards assistance and having roofs over the heads of Manitobans in need.

A while back, the Minister of Families assured this House that those receiving 55 Plus benefits, a different program from shelter allowance, would not be impacted by the Guaranteed Income Supplement increase that was implemented federally.

Today I am asking if this government will commit that people eligible for the shelter allowance payments will not be affected by the GIS increase.

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Families): Ensuring the people who are poverty have enough money is extreme priority for this government.

We know under the last decade, the decade of decline in terms of some of the services that we've seen, we've seen the amount of people living in poverty has doubled under the previous government.

What this government has done is a number of things to address poverty: No. 1, we've enhanced the basic personal exemption for over 2,700 people. We've enhanced things like the Rent Assist program which we think will work well. And as the member indicated, we had no clawbacks in terms of some of the income assistance programs.

We think that the previous government didn't get it done and we will get it done.

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

Ms. Lamoureux: Earlier this year the federal government increased the Guaranteed Income Supplement for seniors. Many of the seniors in my constituency will receive hundreds of dollars more every year as a direct result. Our most vulnerable single seniors could receive up to \$900 more a year.

Madam Speaker, will this government assure the House that those receiving the Guaranteed Income Supplement will not be penalized in any fashion through provincial programs or policy?

Thank you.

Mr. Fielding: This government has a big priority ensuring people who are the lowest income have more money in their pockets, and that's why we've introduced a number of measures to enhance that, to ensure people have more money in their pockets, to be more affordable, whether it's enhancing the basic personal exemption, whether it's investments in housing—which I'm sure you're going to hear of more in the near distant future—or items like the Rent Assist program.

Also, the clawbacks—ensuring that we didn't have clawbacks on the CCC program—CCB program, that was part of it—is a part of this government's plan for the future. We encourage members opposite to join our plan and make it more affordable for Manitobans.

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

Ms. Lamoureux: The minister is mentioning many programs, which I commend them for, but here we have our federal government trying to help seniors get out of poverty, and at the same time we have this provincial government not denying that they will be clawing back money from people who are in need of financial support.

Madam Speaker, the federal government giving more money does not give the provincial government the right to take that money away. The Guaranteed Income Supplement program is of critical importance here in Manitoba. In many ways, with this program, seniors would be in serious poverty situation.

Will the government consider exempting the GIS when a senior applies for the government programs such—as part of their gross income?

Mr. Fielding: We want to make sure that people have more money in their pockets so they can live more effectively.

We know that under the previous government the amount of children that are visiting food banks have increased; we know that child poverty has gone up; we know that indigenous people living in poverty have dramatically improved.

This government will continue to do a look at different initiatives, and initiatives to ensure that people have more money in the pockets. That's what this government is all about. We're going to have incentives for low-income people to be supported and to have more money to live a proper quality of life here in Manitoba.

Election Financing Act Update on Legislation

Mr. Shannon Martin (Morris): Madam Speaker, as we know, the New Democratic Party is neither new nor particularly democratic. Just yesterday, the NDP caucus voted against Bill 4, The Elections Amendment Act, because, in the words of the interim Leader of the Opposition, and I quote: If it ain't broke don't fix it, end quote.

Can the Minister of Justice please explain to Manitobans about the important steps our new government is taking to improve democracy here in Manitoba?

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

Of course, Madam Speaker, we know that Bill 4 will implement recommendations made by the Chief Electoral Officer for the past 10 years—10 years that were ignored by the—by members opposite. We also know that it will improve democracy here in our province. So we're very proud of that.

But it's pretty clear, Madam Speaker, that the only thing broken was the previous NDP government, and Manitobans fixed that on April 19th.

University of Manitoba Contract Collective Bargaining Negotiations

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): Yesterday, I asked the government if it respected the collective bargaining process, and I'm not sure I got a positive answer. And, I guess, today we know why.

Their Cabinet secretary of compensation is now accused of interfering in labour negotiations, apparently urging the University of Manitoba not to agree to mediation. If this is true, it shows the government—that the government that says it cares so much about working people seem to want a strike at the University of Manitoba.

I ask, and I urge this minister: Will he respect the collective bargaining process, going forward?

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): So the government has been very clear. This member would like to place blame in respect of the strike that is currently under way. That's not the path that we as the new government choose.

Obviously, it is unfortunate to have this situation that he refers to at this point, but we understand that it wasn't a day or two in the making. This is a negotiation that was ongoing nine, 10 months that was obviously not facilitated by the former government that did not provide a mandate.

We've provided a mandate. We have faith in the process that is under way. We're watching carefully, and all of us, of course, I know, are hoping for a quick resolution.

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

Mr. Lindsey: The government funds dozens of organizations across the province that have collective bargaining agreements.

Today's revelations that the government interfered by urging the employer not to accept mediation is deeply troubling.

Will the minister commit to allowing fair negotiations of collective bargaining agreements without interference?

Mr. Friesen: So, Madam Speaker, to be clear, the member is incorrect; it is not a revelation; it is an allegation that is made, and that allegation is available to be made.

I remind that member that under the NDP, 900 similar allegations were made. In those cases, those members did not record those as revelations.

* (14:30)

Let us be clear about what this is and what it is not. Madam Speaker, this is a labour dispute between an employer and an employee. We wish all the agents that are in discussion, even today, the best as they continue to undertake to find a settlement. The conciliator has been appointed. We have faith in this process. We hope that all Manitobans share that faith and confidence.

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

Mr. Lindsey: I have faith in the bargaining process too, providing it's not interfered with by the government.

Madam Speaker, you'll forgive me for taking with a grain of salt the Premier's attempt to bill himself as someone who cares about the rights of working people and what's come out of the House today.

Will the minister—will the Premier commit to allowing fair negotiations in all contract talks and cease the government's interference?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): I just really reject the premise the member operates under, Madam Speaker, clearly torqueing for partisan purposes in trying to place blame—[*interjection*] really counterproductive to the resolution of a labour dispute.

Using an allegation and stating it—[*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —as a fact, Madam Speaker, is fundamentally flawed logic, and frankly, it's reprehensible conduct on the part of any member.

Now, when the NDP were in power there were over 900 unfair labour practices filed—[*interjection*] over 900, Madam Speaker. Were they all factual or were they merely negotiation tools? The member is a former union rep, as an I—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —and he knows that these allegations are sometimes made in the interests of the bargaining agent. Six hundred and forty-one were withdrawn. I put that on the record so the member understands that quite often it is dangerous, and in his case especially so in the context of the current situation, to take an allegation and assume it's fact. I encourage him to do his research and read the facts.

Crime Rate Increase Government Reduction Plan

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): Last week we learned through CrimeStat, where the Winnipeg Police Service publicly reports various crimes, that the crime rate in the six months from 8 October has increased by 8 per cent over the same period last year.

The Premier provided a theory for this which, if accepted by his Cabinet caucus, would justify increasing the minimum wage and taking substantial action to turn back the tide of 12,000 jobs lost in this province.

Does the Minister of Justice agree with the Premier or does she now have any other ideas why the crime rate, which had been declining for the past 15 years, is now up sharply?

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

Of course, the—after a decade of debt, decay and decline, we were elected to fix the finances, repair the services of this province and rebuild our economy, and that's exactly what we are going to do, Madam Speaker, especially when it comes to the justice system.

The member opposite had an opportunity to make those changes, to make those improvements. He chose not to do that.

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

Mr. Swan: If the minister would talk to the very, very capable people in her department, they would tell her that crime declined by half in the past 15 years.

The minister needs to stop blaming and needs to start acting. In the last six months in Winnipeg, commercial robberies are up 30 per cent; non-commercial robberies are up 28 per cent; commercial break and enters are up 20 per cent, and residential break and enters are up 10 per cent. Even car theft is up 9 per cent over the same period last year.

It is not hard to conclude that increased crime has driven the increase in the adult jail population, which has put inmates and staff at risk and will make it more difficult for rehabilitation and positive outcomes.

What is this minister's plan to deal with this sudden rise in crime?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, I have to reference the member's preamble in which he exhorts our minister to stop blaming. I recall two years ago when he rebelled against his own leader and blamed his own leader for every problem he had. Cared so little about the justice system in our province, he walked away from his responsibilities as minister and now exhorts us to stop blaming.

He epitomizes blame-placing, Madam Speaker. We're interested in getting a safer society for Manitobans. We've encouraged all members opposite to work with us in the pursuit of those goals. We have and we appreciate the support of the Liberal caucus members who have participated as equal members, as we have invited the NDP members to do. Instead, they decide to continue the culture of blame-placing, personified by the member for Minto.

Madam Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

PETITIONS

Pediatric Insulin Pump Program

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And the background to this petition is as follows:

According to the Canadian Diabetes Association, there are 94,000 Manitobans living with diabetes, which will increase to 139,000 by 2020.

Although Manitoba's pediatric insulin pump program—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Wiebe: —makes pumps available for free to Manitobans age 17 and under, pumps cost approximately \$10,000 for adults, while British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario and all three territories offer coverage for all ages.

(3) These pumps make it easier for people to manage their diabetes by eliminating individual insulin injections and then placing them by—and replacing them by delivering short-acting insulin 24 hours a day through a catheter.

(4) According to a report by the Canadian Diabetes Association entitled *The Economic Benefit of Public Funding of Insulin Pumps in Manitoba*, the pediatric insulin pump program is projected to save Manitoba \$7.6 million by 2030.

And (5) giving more type 1 and type 2 diabetics access to insulin pumps would reduce the annual cost of treatment for serious complications from diabetes and would indirectly produce savings from decreased diabetes mortality and disability.

Therefore, we petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to extend the pediatric insulin pump program to type 1 and type 2 diabetics over the age of 17.

And this petition is signed by many, many Manitobans.

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

Grievances?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, I'd like to call Bill 7, *The Labour Relations Amendment Act*, for report stage amendments.

Madam Speaker: It has been announced that we will consider report stage amendments on Bill 7 this afternoon.

REPORT STAGE AMENDMENTS

Bill 7—The Labour Relations Amendment Act

Madam Speaker: Report stage Bill 7, The Labour Relations Amendment Act, standing in the name of the—*[interjection]* Oh, the honourable member for Flin Flon.

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): I move, seconded by the member from Fort Rouge,

THAT Bill 7 be amended in Clause 3, in the part before clause (a) of the proposed subsection 40(1), by adding "the employees were not subject to intimidation, fraud, coercion or threat and that" after "is satisfied that".

Madam Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable member for Flin Flon, seconded by the honourable member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew),

THAT Bill 7 be amended in Clause 3, in the part before clause (a) of the proposed—

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense?

The report stage amendment is in order. Debate can proceed.

Mr. Lindsey: I introduce this amendment in a further attempt to try and make labour legislation fair and balanced that works for everybody. Ideally, I would stick to my original request, and I will ask again that the government simply withdraw Bill 7 and let's get down to business of governing. But so far, they've refused to listen.

* (14:40)

Madam Speaker, we had committee hearings on three separate nights with 50-some presenters that came out and were consulted. Well, they would have been consulted if the minister would have bothered asking any questions of any of the non-management people that made presentations. It's very unfortunate but it spoke volumes about the complete lack of respect for working people in this province that this government has shown, that the minister showed, that he refused to engage with any of those presenters other than the ones that fully supported his opinion.

When we asked several—in fact, we asked most of the presenters if they'd been consulted, there was only two that said they had been, both of them management representatives. In fact, they didn't even consult with all of their own people.

We learned from the worker member of the Labour Management Review Committee that, in fact, the government did talk to them prior to introducing the legislation. But they introduced the legislation before they got the answers back from the Labour Management Review Committee, which again speaks volumes about this government's concept of consultation: we might ask you something they think, but we don't care what your answer is.

Of all the people that presented at committees and in my various conversations with so many union folks, so many working people in Manitoba, the one thing that really came to the surface in each and every presentation, and it didn't matter, Madam Speaker, whether it was a union person talking, a university professor from that left-leaning Asper School of Business that quite clearly had some expertise in labour relations and quite clearly said that intimidation, coercion, threats, firings and all the things that everybody else talked about, he said those were real things, not just in this country, not just in this province, but throughout the world of labour relations. As unions try to organize, those are the tactics that management uses.

Madam Speaker, we—we've tried to introduce a bill that talked about—well, if they won't withdraw Bill 7, here's some ideas that could make the bill better. We tried to introduce, you know, a timeline that says that if there has to be a second vote, and make no mistake about it, it is a second vote—this supposedly secret ballot vote that the government is so hung up on, even though there's already been a secret ballot vote—that it has to be done within five days because the longer the period of time once the unscrupulous management finds out that there's a union drive going on, that's when the threats, that's when the intimidation, that's when all the bad things happen.

And were not suggesting, Madam Speaker, that every employer in the province of Manitoba is a bad employer. We never once suggested that but what you'll find is the good employers generally aren't the employers that are in the process of being unionized.

Workers clearly express their desire to join a union when they sign those cards under threats of being fired. Well, now, Madam Speaker, some

people will say, well, that's just not true, it never happened. But we listened. While those of us that listened, listened to working people that showed up and told us their stories, their factual stories of what happened to them, to their friends, during organizing drives, that they did get fired. We listened to organizers, people on the ground, people who were out talking to people, people who were out signing cards, organizers, not somebody sitting in an office somewhere. Well, that's who the government listened to.

They told us very clearly, each and every one of the presenters that had any expertise, any involvement in an organizing drive to get a workplace unionized, each and every one of them told us about threats, intimidation, coercion. And yet the government in Bill 7 chose to remove that part from that part of the regulation, from that part of the act.

At the very least—at the very least, if this government won't listen to working Manitobans and withdraw the bill, if they won't listen to the opposition members and withdraw the bill, if they won't listen to common sense and withdraw the bill, then the very least they can do is make sure that there's some protection in there for working people when they're trying to organize.

So far they give us the impression that they're not listening to anybody, because person after person, working Manitoban after working Manitoban showed up at those committee hearings, Madam Speaker, took time out of their lives. In fact, some of them showed up probably knowing full well that when they told what happened in their workplace when they were trying to get organized, that there'll be repercussions for them now, even, when they go back to work. That's how strongly they believe, based on the experience that they've had in the process of trying to organize. And yet this government refuses to listen to them simply because some of their business buddies said: Make it harder to organize unions. We don't like unions.

That's not right, Madam Speaker. This government stands here, day after day, and says, we believe in consultation and, in fact, you guys should join us in a consultation on a budget. What would be the point when they don't listen to anybody that makes a presentation, when they don't listen to people that try and be consulted? They flat out refused to listen to all those working people that showed up at committee and told us about threats and coercion.

Madam Speaker, we've gone through Labour Board rulings. Not once have we found an instance of the union threatening people, because, at the end of the day, what would a union threaten somebody with when they're signing a card? We can't threaten to take their job away if you're the union organizer; we don't have that power. The union doesn't have that power. Only the employer has that power. The union can't threaten to discipline somebody, because the union doesn't have that power. Only the employer has that power. The only instances that we found were employers threatening, intimidating and firing hard-working Manitobans that were merely trying to make their life better and their family's life better.

This amendment, Madam Speaker, is only an attempt to make bad legislation a little bit better. Ideally, the best answer is, do away with the legislation. Do away with what's been proposed in Bill 7 altogether, because there's no need for it, a solution looking for a problem that doesn't exist—doesn't exist—in this province. But it will now. With the introduction of Bill 7, there will be problems with people trying to organize, with working Manitobans trying to make their lives better. And I'm not sure why this government is against hard-working Manitobans trying to get ahead.

What do they have against hard-working Manitobans? Why do they want to leave the door open that those workers can be threatened and intimidated? That's not right, Madam Speaker, and, again, we plead with this government to listen not just to us, but to listen to each and every one of those presenters that was at the committee hearings that all said this was bad idea—this was a bad idea—it wasn't needed, it's not needed, withdraw Bill 7.

At the very least, Madam Speaker, listen to what we're saying and put some protection in there for people, at the very least. It's still not enough. Ideally, do away with Bill 7. Let's get down to talking about something. Let's get down to solving a problem that really exists, because the problem that this government pretends exists, with Bill 7, does not exist.

Not one person, not even the management people that were at presentation, said there was a problem. Madam Speaker, introduce this amendment—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): It's my pleasure to be able to rise and to put a few

words on the record with respect to the member's amendment that he has submitted.

Madam Speaker, I listened carefully to the member's comments, and he is erroneous in many of the statements he makes. The fact is we did consult with Manitobans on this bill. We consulted with all Manitobans. This government consulted with Manitobans prior to the April 19th election, and we were very clear that this was a protection that we wanted to bring for workers in this province to protect workers, to afford to workers in this province the same type, degree, measure, quality of protection that workers in many other jurisdictions of Canada enjoy.

* (14:50)

Now, this member says that this is about common sense. So, in so saying, he implies that in British Columbia workers there, labour there and government there has no common sense. By saying common sense here, he implies that in Alberta, in Saskatchewan, in Ontario, in Nova Scotia, in all of these provinces and jurisdictions and others, he would suggest that labour here has no common sense. Labour in those jurisdictions and government there has no common sense. What I want to convey to the member is this idea of best practice.

By adopting here, by restoring here these same measures that ensure that a secret ballot is taken in respect of any effort to organize a labour vote in an organization, we join the ranks; we become the seventh province in Canada—

An Honourable Member: To take away workers' rights. You should be ashamed of yourselves.

Mr. Friesen: So I can hear the member chirping from his seat.

Now, he's saying, take away the members' rights. But he would then signify that in all those other jurisdictions they got it that wrong. I suggest to that member what he's not seeing is a concept called best practice.

But let's understand, I listened to this member and, in addition to these statements that he said, we must understand the backdrop for his comments. The context is that members have—is—his own party have put onto the record statements signifying how vitally important the secret ballot is. Even in respect of the recent leadership convention in the NDP party, those members of the party reserved for themselves the

right to a secret ballot. Now, all of these arguments have been put on the record in the context of this debate in the second reading. You know, and this debate will continue in third reading.

But, Madam Speaker, to be clear—and, of course, the minister has made these same remarks and many members on the government side have made these same remarks. But I must underscore the importance of context here. I must underscore the fact that other jurisdictions have these same protections. I must underscore that these same members want for themselves what they would take away from labour in this province, and that should be the lens through which this discussion is viewed.

The member talks about protections for workers, and that is exactly what this legislation will provide for: to make sure that—to use the language from his own amendment—no employee is subject to intimidation, fraud, coercion or threat either by employer or by a labour group. This member is—he says that they looked and they could only find examples. They could only find examples in which an employer exerted a pressure of intimidation, fraud, coercion or a threat. I would suggest to the member he didn't look far enough.

We have never suggested in this debate that an employer could not be the party to exert that pressure on a worker; we've never suggested that. We know all too well from the consultation that we've done that can happen. But we know all too well, and this member, if he were being fair today, would obviously admit that that pressure can come from either side in the same way that an employer could say that they really want to affect this result, because they have a vested interest. How can that member suggest that a labour group—that there could be no situation, there could be no context, that there could be no situation in which a labour group could not also decide because of their vested interest to cross that line. For the member to suggest it couldn't possibly be so is ridiculous. Of course, it's possible. Of course, it's been done. Of course, the anecdotal evidence points to it. Of course, the body of evidence points to it. So the member must be fair in his comments.

The—I want to also add, Madam Speaker, that in respect of—to the member's amendment, there's nothing here that strengthens the bill. The bill, in and of itself, is sufficient. It provides sufficient protections. It restores those sufficient protections to all workers in this province.

So, for the reasons that I have outlined, we feel that the amendment is simply not needed; that the legislation, the wording, is strong. It has been contemplated. It's been discussed. We are glad for the opportunity to have had the input of Manitobans at the committee stage, and we are pleased with the bill in its—in this form.

So I do not accept that this member has made his argument today. His arguments are specious. They are not substantial. We have pointed to all the reasons for which these—this—you know, saying that an employer is the only party who could ever exert a pressure, saying that somehow, if you respected democracy, you would do this. Well, democracy is founded on that secret ballot. Cornerstone—one of the cornerstones of our democracy.

They would decide to have one set of protections for themselves and deny those protections to labour in Manitoba. That's not the way ahead for this province. We join the vast majority of other provinces by bringing this legislation, by passing it and restoring these rights to Manitobans.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): I'm pleased to just put a couple of words on the record in respect of my brother's amendments. I do want to just first off acknowledge—and I know that I have in the past, but I actually have learned quite a bit from the member from Flin Flon, and so I am eternally grateful for what I have learned. And so I want to put it on the record. And I certainly do respect and appreciate and admire his dedication and his vast experience and knowledge in respect of labour rights and in respect of the rights for Manitoba workers.

As I said, I do respect that, and I want to put that on the record. I think I've shared before that, you know, for many, many years, when working in the indigenous community, it is often—the narrative is often just about getting a job. And so I have learned quite a bit from all of my colleagues but particularly for the—from the member of Flin Flon.

I find it interesting that, you know, day in and day out, every time we're in session and we're in question period, we hear from the government this narrative which is really kind of this illusionary narrative about, you know, asking this side of the House to work with the government and to come on board, and let's work together in partnership. And yet we don't really see that in action. And so a prime example is the three days of committee that we all just went through, and, again, headed up primarily from our member from Flin Flon.

But I find it particularly disheartening to know that we all engaged in a process for three days—three nights—listening to over 50 presenters talk about and offer their recommendations, their expertise, their experiences in respect of unionizing, and this government chose to not really listen and chose very strategically who they would actually ask questions to. I think that that's pretty telling, and I think—I have to say in the most gentle of ways that it is absolutely, I think, disingenuous of the Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade (Mr. Cullen) not to have at least asked even, like, one or two questions to, you know, all other presenters save for the two or three that he did ask questions for which we know are good, you know, friends of members opposite.

*(15:00)

I don't understand how the government can, day-in and day-out, kind of espouse this narrative of trying to work together and work in partnership when actually they don't actually live it and they don't actually even take the time to really, truly listen to all of the experts who came—who took time out of their evening to come and present to this government in respect of really regressive legislation.

So, I want to put that on the record for the House that I think, you know, not only as a member of this House, but as a Manitoban, I find it highly disrespectful to have engaged in those committees in such a manner.

I also just want to again, you know, juxtapose the narrative that the government repeatedly uses in respect of union, and there's these undertones as if union and union bosses, in quotations, as they say, are somehow just so negative, and just, it's just a horrible word. Like, I just don't—I don't really even understand it when I've been so blessed to actually meet just phenomenal human beings and phenomenal Manitobans who work in a variety of different unions. And, you know, I just want to maybe just mention a couple of them. And, you know, we know that there's a union member, Dave Sauer, who I have just a phenomenal amount of respect for, who is so incredibly respectful to women, actually sat on a committee in respect of trying to get a monument at the Union Centre in honour of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls and all women who have lost their lives to domestic violence.

He does not stand in front of women, but he stands beside or in back of women, letting women lead and supporting women's vision and direction and leadership. And so I do want to just take a

couple of moments just to recognize his work because I think that Dave Sauer is a really quintessential example of a union member or a union employee or labourer or whatever—however you want to say it, who best illustrates fighting for Manitobans and in the most humble, respectful and loving ways. That's what I know from union and from labour.

I want to talk about a woman who I really have come to call a sister. And she works—also she's a part of labour, Gina Smoke. And so Gina Smoke is an indigenous woman and, again, she is a part of labour, and she is, again, just like a really humble, loving, extraordinary indigenous woman who, again, through her work, through what her passion, through her path, tries to educate and bring in indigenous peoples in respect to a unionized workplace or, at the very minimum, to try and educate what that actually looks like because, as I said, you know, there's not, you know, there's not that much unionization in respect of First Nations in Manitoba, or perhaps across Canada, but she executes her roles and responsibilities in such a gentle and loving way that she has really become a sister and a friend, and actually I've learned quite a bit from Gina as well.

And, in fact, I know that Gina is actually working on a project right now and, again, this is all under the umbrella of labour, which the members opposite, the government, tried to kind of construct, you know, they—this negatively construct labour, but she's working on this project to start engaging First Nation youth in the political process to actually educate indigenous youth in respect of, you know, what does the political process look like in Manitoba and how can we engage indigenous youth to be a part of that and to actually gain agency in the political process. Because I'm sure that everybody knows in this House that, you know, for a myriad of different reasons, indigenous peoples are not necessarily the most politically engaged in these systems, because, for many years, we don't feel like we're a part of them. And that's neither negative or positive; it just is. We don't feel that we're a part of these systems. And yet I would also argue that most people would recognize that, actually, if indigenous peoples in Manitoba, in Winnipeg or across Canada actually had a sense of agency and were more politically engaged in the political process, it actually changes elections. Oh. It actually has—indigenous people here in Manitoba would fundamentally change election results. And that is the bottom line here.

And so, in the context of labour, again, through Gina Smoke, who I have so much respect for, here she is starting this process to educate and engage indigenous youth, which I hope, you know, will certainly change political—the political landscape in Manitoba.

So I do just want to take a moment, again, just to juxtapose, really, that kind of insidious, like, negative social construction coming from the government, of labour. It's unfounded. It's disrespectful. And it's certainly not accurate.

Miigwech, Madam Speaker.

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows): I rise before the House today to offer my comments on the amendments to Bill 7 that was proposed by the member from Flin Flon. To ensure that workers' rights are protected, the member proposes that Bill 7 be amended by adding in the part before subsection 40(1)(a) the clause, "the employees were not subject to intimidation, fraud, coercion or threat, and"—after that—after the clause, "is satisfied that," in the part before clause (a) of the proposed subsection 40(1).

With some research and further understanding, I commend the member from Flin Flon's intention and desire to protect the workers' rights. However, it must be noted that the amendment proposed is similar in principle and spirit to the bill that he has authored and introduced before, namely, Bill 211.

Madam Speaker, the member's proposed amendment appears to be redundant, as section 41 of The Labour Relations Act provides adequate protections for workers' rights to unionize. Specifically, section 41 of The Labour Relations Act grants certification if the board finds that there were unfair labour practices in the process. To be clear, unfair labour practices pertain to the infringement on union membership rights. This includes the right of workers to be a member of a union, to participate in activities of the union and to participate in the organization of the union. Therefore, the proposed clause—intimidation, fraud, coercion or threat—can constitute as infringement of the aforementioned rights.

I feel that the Labour Board should be given confidence to interpret section 41 of The Labour Relations Act in a way that upholds the right to unionization.

Madam Speaker, we can also look at the member's proposed amendment to Bill 7 from a different perspective. Assuming for the sake of

argument that the proposed amendments are included in Bill 7, I believe that there are still inadequacies in ensuring that the secret ballot process remains neutral and fair. We should consider how the courts have contemplated on the concept of coercion. You know, case law indicates that there are at least two distinct types of coercion. The first involves the use of force or threat of the use of force. In essence, this type of coercion imposes a restriction on an individual's free will leading to compulsion.

The second type would be when there is a promise or expectation of benefit, an incentive that serves self-interests over the collective interest influences one's exercises of free will.

Madam Speaker, I believe that the language in the clause proposed by the member from Flin Flon focuses heavily on the first type of coercion and I have—that I have discussed. Put another way, the amendment focuses on the possibility of employers restricting workers' rights and free choice.

*(15:10)

However, in order to fully protect these rights, we must account for the second type of coercion. By the way of hypothetical example: An employer can undermine the unionization process by approaching an employee and offering that employee an incentive to go against the unionization process, perhaps a promotion. I think that the member can improve his proposed amendment by taking this into further consideration.

Furthermore, the scope of the proposed amendment may not adequately protect rights. By this, I mean there's a possibility that the amendment can be interpreted as the follows: Protections against intimidation, fraud, coercion or threat only apply to the application for unionization. What about the portion of unionization procedure pertaining to secret ballot? We must also ensure that the individual's worker's freedoms to choose is not compromised.

In closing, I am in agreement with the spirit of the amendment proposed by the member from Flin Flon; however, I believe that we can make further improvements to ensure adequate protections are given to union rights and the individual's worker's freedom of choice. I look forward to speaking further on third reading of Bill 7 later today.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas): It's an honour to stand here today to provide a few words on Bill 7, The Labour Relations Amendment Act.

I just wanted to start off in regards to our amendment. Basically, our amendment reinstates language that employees be protected from intimidation, fraud, coercion or threat. Because of this, we've heard during the committee stage of this bill, we've heard hundreds of stories of employers threatening employees and abusing their power.

Also, too, my concern is that this government's changes to the union certification rules are fixing a problem that just doesn't exist and only makes it harder for Manitobans to join a union. Also, I want to add that rather than increasing workers' freedom, Bill 7 makes it harder for workers to be represented in their workplace. And my concern is—too, is that this government clearly does not listen to Manitoba workers and does not value the protection and support that they get from unions the workers themselves have chosen to join.

And I also want to put on record that our position is that the current legislation is fair and balanced, and it's highly respected and seen as a crucial part of the strong and stable labour relations that exist in Manitoba. Right now we are extremely disappointed that this government is attacking workers' rights to organize and be protected from intimidation.

Mrs. Colleen Mayer, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

Also, too, to put on record, the labour movement is a essential part of the fabric of our province. Manitobans believe in collaboration and the right to be—right to a safe and fair work environment. Workers have the right to be heard.

A couple of weeks ago in my community in The Pas, the Manitoba Federation of Labour held their Health and Safety Conference at the Kikiwak Inn. It was an honour to bring greetings to the—to my brothers and sisters who gather there to discuss very, very important issues. There was concerns, too. I've heard from the crowd; they had concerns regarding this Bill 7 as well. And I just wanted to put on record—I think it's important to put on record the important issues that we discussed and the workshops that I attended with my brothers and sisters in The Pas.

Basically, one of the workshops I had the honour to attend was The ABCs of workplace health and safety. It's basically making workplaces safer, an—

one of the most important things that we do as labour activists. The workshop is geared at new health and safety committee members or those who haven't yet received formal training. It was an introductory course for anyone new to the health and safety world. The workshop provided an overview of provincial health and safety laws and the rights of workers and the roles and responsibilities of effective workplace health and safety committees.

Another workshop I had the honour to sit in was the introduction to workers' compensation and advocacy for injured workers. Many workers encounter challenging circumstances in dealing with the WCB after they're injured or become sick on the job. This workshop was designed for union activists, stewards and representatives who play roles in assisting injured workers with recording injuries and filing WCB claims. The workshop provided an overview of important WCB rules and procedures, tips for working effectively with the WCB and advice for assisting injured workers through the claims process. Very important discussions happened there, and a learning experience for myself as well.

Another workshop that I had the honour to attend regarding dealing with stress, harassment and violence in the workplace—very important. Workers face serious hazards related to stress, harassment and violence in their workplaces. I'm sure some of us have a few stories to share about that. The workshop was targeted at union activists who are interested in developing a deeper understanding in these threats and how to deal with them.

The workshop also dealt with reviewing employers' legal responsibilities and examine tools for preventing and responding effectively to situations, to stress and harassment and violence at work. And it also covered new provincial regulations to pacifically address workplace violence. It was actually a full two days here for me.

Another workshop I prevented was preventing violence, psychological bullying and harassment and federal regulated workplaces, which basically deals with workers employed in the federally regulated workplaces. The workshop provided information and better enforcement tools in the Canada Labour Code, requirements on violence prevention and as well as applicable regulations. This included highlighting legal requirements on violence prevention, helping activists understanding the existing resources available in preventing and dealing with violence occurrences in the workplace and assisting members

in better understanding the rights and obligation of worker—of workers, workplace committees and unions.

Again, another busy day here. I attended a workshop regarding the intro to new National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace. Psychological health in the workplace is an issue that impacts all workplaces and can't be ignored. I can share a story about that but I'll save it for another time.

The recently launched National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace is a voluntary set of guidelines, tools and resources focused on promoting workers' psychological health and preventing psychological harm from workplace factors. The workshop introduced participants to the new standard and provide advice on how to champion improvements in workplace psychological health and safety by increasing awareness, facilitating stakeholder buy-in and assessing organizational assets.

Now, the next workshop I attended was probably the most interesting one where I learned a lot about using ergonomics to prevent workplace injuries. The number and severity of sprain and strain injuries are significant in many workplaces, and only turn around in the use of ergonomics to prevent workplace injuries become a deliberate and high priority. The workshop 'healt'-help-health and safety activists make ergonomic issue a priority by learning the ins and outs of current legislation regarding injuries. Participants developed skills and strategies to identify, assess and control ergonomic hazards in the context of regulations and other governmental statutes, both provincial and federal.

The most interesting thing I learned about that when we were discussing, like, there was a diagram of a body and the most common workplace injuries, and the most ignored part of the body that's not really considered is feet. So, that was pretty interesting.

And—so with that, by attending these workshops and hearing all these important resources, tools to provided—to be provided for workplace, for workers and whatnot, it just reminded me as to why union movements are so important and that gathering for two days clearly demonstrated the importance of unions. And that's why I believe in unions because union movements means fair wages, safe working conditions and compensation for injury and equitable labour relations.

And, with that, I'm honoured to be standing here—

Point of Order

The Acting Speaker (Colleen Mayer): Order. The Government House Leader, on a point of order.

Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader): I understand that workplace safety is a important issue, but I'm struggling to see its relevance to the amendment before the House this afternoon.

* (15:20)

The Acting Speaker (Colleen Mayer): I want to thank the Government House Leader (Mr. Micklefield) for the point of order. I'm not sure if it is a specific point of order, but I am going to remind the member to keep her comments relevant to the amendment that we are discussing today.

* * *

Ms. Lathlin: As I was going to continue, I was just going to say, in closing, I'd like to repeat myself again as to—in regards to the Bill 7, Labour Relations Amendment Act, and the importance of unions is that, again, I believe in unions because union movements means fair wages, safe working conditions and compensation for injury and equitable labour relations.

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): It's a pleasure to speak to this amendment brought forward by the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey).

It is a very important amendment because it would reinstate certain provisions protecting against the intimidation of workers. And it came directly out of what we heard from so many tremendous presentations at three evenings of committee on this bill. And, really, these provisions are central to the entire debate about Bill 7.

The debate on Bill 7, I guess, most bluntly, is that this government refuses to accept the premise that a worker who signs a union card is validly expressing their democratic and their constitutional rights to be represented by a union.

And why do government members refuse to accept this? Well, when it's all been boiled down and when it's all been pared away, it comes down to this: the Progressive Conservative members do not believe that any person would want to join a union and be represented by a union and therefore if they

sign a card they must have been intimidated or coerced into having done so. And it is quite clear from the three nights of committee hearings that led to this amendment that that is simply not the case in the province of Manitoba.

We heard 51 presenters, 48 of whom were opposed to the bill, three of whom supported the bill. But of those 51, how many actually spoke about any personal experience they'd had or even knowledge of intimidation by union organizers or by workers trying to organize others in their workplace? The answer, of course, is zero—zero—not a single presenter provided any evidence of intimidation by unions or anyone acting on unions' behalf.

Even the representative from the Chamber of Commerce who came down and made his presentation, well, he gave an example, which actually has nothing to do with Bill 7, and he told us that when he started his job in a workplace represented by a union, the job he chose to apply for and work for because of the wages and the benefits of the protection because of the collective agreement, he was then told that he had to sign a union card. This is absolutely right. If you are working in a workplace which is represented by a union, if it is a clothes shop, it is your obligation to join that union. That was the high-water mark of all the 51 people who came down to committee, and it has nothing to do with Bill 7.

We heard from the lawyer, a respected labour lawyer here in the city, the Labour Management Review Committee, very knowledgeable about the Manitoba Labour Board, very knowledgeable about labour law here in Manitoba, and he had charts and graphs that he introduced at the committee meeting.

Well, how many cases of employee intimidation by unions or by anyone acting on behalf of a union, could he refer to in the province of Manitoba?

Well, the answer, again, was absolutely zero. And why did this labour lawyer who knows the law so well not have any cases he could talk about? It's very simple, Madam Speaker—Deputy Speaker, because there's not a single Manitoba Labour Board case in the 25 years that automatic certification has been enforced in this province where automatic certification has been denied because of intimidation by a union or anyone on the union's behalf.

It is a—I suppose, a solution in search of a problem, and that was laid very, very bare, which is why this amendment, even though the bill is flawed

and even though this bill should not go ahead, why this bill is so important.

Now, again, we know the Manitoba Labour Board has not had one opportunity—not one opportunity in 25 years to make a finding that a union or anybody on behalf of a union intimidated a worker in the context of an organizing drive, and I know this because the Manitoba Labour Board puts all of their decisions, probably digests them online, and you can look through others' digests. It's 297 pages—297 pages of digests; not a single one that refers to the apparent problem which this government is allegedly trying to fix by Bill 7.

What did we hear at committee, and what did give rise to these amendments? Well, we heard 48 positive presentations, some from people we've considered to be union leaders, some who were rank-and-file union members, some not members of unions at all who simply came down to present because of their belief in social justice and fairness and the benefit to a society, a civil society, when there are strong labour unions there to speak out not just for their members, but to speak for all workers and even people who are outside of the workforce to make sure that our society operates in a fair way to everybody.

We even heard from students. Students came down in support of doing away with this bill and preserving the balance here in Manitoba. And how many questions did the minister of labour, or whatever he's called, or any other member of the government, ask a question of any of those 48 presenters about whether they had ever been intimidated by a union or whether they, as a union person, had ever intimidated somebody? Not a single question.

They had no evidence going into the committee hearings, and they didn't lift a finger to try and gather any evidence in the course of the hearings because they knew what the answer would be.

So the minister of labour chose not to ask any questions of those 48 presenters, and not a single Progressive Conservative member chose to ask a single question of any one of those 48 presentations.

On the other hand, many of those people, many of those 48 spoke about intimidation coming the other way; intimidation that they had experienced, or their co-workers had experienced, or that others that they knew had experienced in the course of an organizing drive waiting for a vote, if a vote was

necessary, or even in the course of a drive when it was hoped that there would be automatic certification.

And of those 48 presenters, they told some very, very personal stories, sometimes some hurtful stories about what that intimidation meant to them and to their co-workers, to the workplace, and to all the affected families. And as I think the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey) said very clearly, we're not saying that every employer in Manitoba would intimidate workers. We know that there are some that do. Sometimes it may be by inadvertence, of not knowing what the law says, of not contacting a lawyer or contacting the Manitoba Labour Board to make it clear what is and what is not intimidation, but it's a spectrum, and for every employer who may inadvertently do something that violates the Manitoba Labour Relations Act, we know the other side of the spectrum is employers who not only will oppose any effort to organize their workplaces, they will hire people—they'll hire people that are strike-breakers to come in and intimidate employees to try to scare them into signing—away from signing union cards, or if they do sign union cards, to recant, and if there is a vote, to vote against the unionization.

*(15:30)

They will hire lawyers. They will pull everything they can to try to prevent employees from simply being able to rely on the clear democratic choice they made to sign a union card.

And, of course, if there had been employees that ever came forward to complain about interference from the union or union representatives, if that employee came to their employer and said, you know, I signed a card but I really didn't want to, or I didn't sign a card and I was intimidated, it is beyond belief that there would not be a single case taken on probably by an employer paying for a lawyer for that employee to go before the Labour Board. And the government can't come up—even after months since this bill was introduced, three nights of committee hearings, 51 presenters—they can't find a single case in Manitoba that would justify Bill 7. And that's why not only is Bill 7 heavily flawed and should be withdrawn, but this amendment is absolutely critical to continue to do whatever we can to protect employees from being intimidated when there's an organizing drive in place.

You know, I don't have to go too far; I can walk down my back lane and I can visit living proof of

why Bill 7 is wrong because my local Tim Hortons is the Tim Hortons which was organized, where there was employer intimidation and where it was actually necessary for the Manitoba Labour Board to enforce bargaining on the employer. And people who work in that Tim Hortons, I know well. They're a friendly crew. They are largely new Canadians. They are not people we'd consider to be so empowered.

I know the member for Thompson (Mr. Bindle), hopefully, will get up and put his comments on the record. They're not empowered like the member for or myself would be. They're new Canadians who felt that they weren't being treated properly by their employer, and they sought union protection. The employer intimidated them, and the Manitoba Labour Board stepped in. We don't want more of those situations. We want fewer of those situations. And that's why this amendment is the right thing to do. That's why I'll be voting for this amendment. And that's why I'd hope every single member of this House supports the brilliant amendment put forward by the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey).

Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Mohinder Saran (The Maples): I would like to put a few words on the amendment put forward by the member of Flin Flon:

THAT Bill 7 be amended in Clause 3, in the part before clause (a) of the—parts on—subsection 40(1), by adding "the employees were not subject to intimidation, fraud, coercion or threat and that" after "is satisfied that".

On this amendment, I would like to first draw attention from my personal experience. And when I came, in Vancouver, and we used to go to work on the farm in Abbotsford. And the contractor will pick us up, and he promised us he will pay us 90 cents—pay us 6 cents for a bucket. And in one floor, there used to be 16 buckets. So that should be 96 cents. And at the end, he paid us 90 cents instead of 96 cents. Because he was coming from the same area I come from, and I asked, brother, you told us you will pay us 1 cent extra, and now, because of I come from the same area, that's why you are paying 1 cent less, 6 cents less, total. And he said, you are talking too much; get out of the farm. And at the same time, other workers, although we were not unionized, they said, no; he won't go alone out. We will go alone—out, too. And that showed the strength of the people getting together and having a kind of group or union. And at that time, he had to admit, okay, you can work. And after that, I'd—we have negotiated with the

farmer that you can pay him his commission, but we want our money directly. So that's what happened.

So I think of those kind of situations. If there a union, I think everybody ahead of the game and newcomers won't be intimidated in that way. But over here, I'm seeing the Premier (Mr. Pallister) bring his ideology in the way of the workers.

This bill undermines the process of union certification, which will lead to a more vulnerable workforce and disturbs close to 20 years of labour peace in Manitoba. The government wants to undermine Manitobans' constitutional right to join a union, and Bill 7 is a disingenuous tactic to rob them of their right to organize.

And also, I would point out when they talk about a secret vote—and we don't have a secret vote over here; we always stand up and be notified—and why the union people, workers, are not allowed to do the same thing. And I think we can argue both ways, but I think to eliminate intimidation, that's very important. People sign their card, be counted, and if there's no problem, then if there is 65 per cent members who signed to be in the union, they should be certified, unless there is some kind of a problem there. I think there is no reason to make it harder for Manitoba's vulnerable workers to unionize. It is a resolution in search of a problem.

Union jobs are stable, good-paying jobs that fuel Manitoba's economy. If this bill were to pass, the only path to unionization in Manitoba would be the drawn-out process of a formal vote, leaving workers exposed to potential harassment and threats from their bosses in a lead-up to a vote.

The Premier's approach is out of step with the rest of the provinces and is more in line with Stephen Harper's backwards approach to labour relations. Other provinces are increasingly seeing the economic benefit to an inclusive approach to labour, and Canadians are rejecting anti-labour platforms across the board, like Tim Hudak's Conservative platform in Ontario in 2014.

This government's changes to the union certification rules are fixing a problem that just does not exist and only makes it harder for Manitobans to join a union. The Premier is claiming that this bill would advance democracy, but in reality it is provoking an already imbalanced relationship of power that favours employers over workers. Rather than increase workers' freedom, Bill 7 makes it harder for workers to be represented in their

workplace. This government clearly does not listen to Manitoba workers and does not value the protection and support that they get from unions the workers themselves have chosen to join.

The government bill presently makes several changes to The Labour Relations Act. First, it eliminates the possibility of interim certification when there is no dispute about the likelihood of certification but only regarding the composition of the bargaining unit. Second, it eliminates the possibility of automatic certification, the 65 per cent. Third, it eliminates the following quotation: is satisfied that the employees were not subject to intimidation, fraud, coercion or threat and that their wishes to union representation were expressed freely as required by section 45. End of the quotation.

Our position is that the current legislation is fair and balanced. It is highly respected and seen as a crucial part of the strong and stable labour relations in Manitoba.

* (15:40)

A study by the federal government shows that in the absence of majority card sign-ups, rates of unionization lower. That's by the Employment and Social Development Canada, 2013, according to that. We are extremely disappointed that the government is attacking workers' rights to organize and to be protected from intimidation.

The Premier (Mr. Pallister) has removed protection against intimidation, which we cannot accept. He has shown Manitobans that he is in the pocket of big business and will not stand up for working families' rights to safe workplaces, fair wages and a voice at the table.

Refusing to raise minimum wage is another example of his unwillingness to stand up for workers. This will cost the poorest workers over \$400 this year in lost wages. Refusing to define front-line workers is another example of his unwillingness to stand up for workers. Firing hundreds of civil servants is another example of his unwillingness to stand up for workers.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I remember when I was working in the Government Services, how, at that time, this Premier was minister of Government Services, how he brought Filmon Fridays, and under those Filmon Fridays, every worker was losing Friday wages and they were forced to take time off.

So, by this Premier, I don't think he respected workers ever and he's respecting now—it's very important for all the people, working people in Manitoba, stand up to him, tell him, we are not going to—yes, we are not going to give in; we will keep fighting and it's our right to have unions because that will promote our economy and that gives a good income in the families, and, therefore, it's better for everybody for the Manitoba economy.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): I'm very pleased to speak today to the proposed amendment from the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey), and certainly against Bill 7 and the intent of Bill 7.

At the outset I wanted to mention that the member for Flin Flon actually strikes me as a teenager full of energy; I've never seen so much energy coming from a member in this House. He sat through three nights of hearings on this matter; certainly did a spectacular performance, certainly, pointing out all of the problems with this legislation that this government is attempting to pass.

You know, during the election itself, I don't recall this subject ever coming up. There was not a single person in my constituency who said their priority was, you know, the government has to bring in Bill 7. It just never, never came up. So it's really a wonder to me as to why this government is upsetting, essentially, well, 16, 17 years now, of labour peace in this province by picking a partisan fight with organized labour. You know, governments, normally, if things are working well, tend to want to leave sleeping dogs lie and not create problems for themselves. This government, you know, basically just gets elected, and the next thing you know, it's looking to pick a fight when it's absolutely not necessary for them to do that.

And, you know, of course, there's the observation made by many here that they're copying the Harper Conservatives. And the Harper Conservatives, when I was MP, they—that's when they did the same thing in Ottawa; now the Liberals are undoing it. So it makes you wonder why they go to all this effort, when, in fact, when the government changes again, which it will, we'll be undoing what they're doing right now, you know. So, at the end of the day, it doesn't really seem that they, to me, a very wise use of their political capital.

Madam Speaker in the Chair

So, with that, Madam Speaker, I do want to say that the amendment itself is basically, the idea is to have the employees who are not subject to intimidation, fraud, coercion or threat, and that to be—that is part of this amendment. So, we do support this amendment and we hope it will pass.

We have only another 15 minutes on this amendment before we will come to a vote on this report stage amendment, so I wonder, on—Madam Speaker, while I'm on my feet, on House business, whether we could have leave once we're finished the vote, once we're actually finished the vote on this report stage amendment, would there be leave of the House not to see the clock so that we can begin debate on concurrence and third reading on Bill 7?

Madam Speaker: It has been asked by the Official Opposition House Leader (Mr. Maloway)—he has asked for leave that after the vote, he's asked for leave to not see the clock after the vote and to begin debate on concurrence and third reading of Bill 7. Is there leave? *[interjection]*

I'm going—yes. I'm going to call for a two-minute recess so that some deliberations can occur.

The House recessed at 3:47 p.m.

The House resumed at 3:53 p.m.

Madam Speaker: I'll call the House back to order.

The request that had just been put forward was a request for leave to not see the clock after the vote and begin debate on concurrence and third reading of Bill 7.

Is there leave of the House to—for that? The honourable Government House Leader.

Mr. Micklefield: Leave is denied.

Madam Speaker: Leave has been denied.

The member for Elmwood still has time remaining in his debate—*[interjection]* Okay, the honourable member for Fort Garry-Riverview.

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): I'm assuming I get the member from Elmwood's additional five minutes. Is that—oh, it doesn't work that way, okay. Well, that's good to note tonight, and I thought you would just say dispense, you know, and—but I'm sorry that leave wasn't granted on that very practical and generous suggestion from our House leader.

Of course, we on—as the official opposition really want to debate in depth the key and important issues facing the people of Manitoba, especially on issues that are absolutely essential to working men and women in this province and to their families. That's why my friend from Flin Flon has proposed this very important amendment to a bill that we don't support. And you can appreciate, Madam Speaker, how this puts us in a bit of a dilemma. On the one hand, my friend from Flin Flon as well as other members of our caucus have asked the government, we have pleaded with the government, we have—we had begged the government, to withdraw a bill that has no place in the Legislature of the province of Manitoba. We have said repeatedly, over and over, that this bill, Bill 7, is a direct and complete attack on union membership in this province. We understand that it doesn't really reflect on those currently in a union, but what it does is it puts a monumental chill on union membership going forward, and that's our great objection to the bill, is that it discourages and will discourage, if this bill happens to be passed, will discourage participation in the union movement, will discourage workplaces that are currently not organized from being organized. It will encourage the worst of those employers to engage in activities to intimidate and otherwise frighten those working to organize from actually being able to organize.

And for the unfortunate front-line worker who's simply looking for the very kind of protections that union membership provides in terms of wages, in terms of benefits, in terms of health and safety regulations and in terms of pensions, it will simply leave those poor folks in a dramatically different context, in a different place.

And we're—we regret very much that the government seems determined to proceed with Bill 7, and I want to really state, as my friend from Flin Flon, my sisters from St. Johns and The Pas, my friend from Minto, all put on the table what happened at committee when 48 of 51 presentations made it absolutely clear that Bill 7 is an affront to union membership participation and certification in this province and ought to be withdrawn.

For a government who has pranced around, posing as though they're the kings of consultation, it seems more than a little ironic that at a committee meeting, where the vast, vast, vast majority of presenters put it on the table in crystal-clear language that the only ones doing any kind of coercion, the only ones doing any kind of intimidation, the only ones threatening employees, were those worst

employers out there who only care about the dollar and don't care about the quality of people's lives, the quality of their workplaces, the quality of their lives.

And so we find ourselves in this very difficult position of wanting desperately, begging, asking, pleading the government to have a proper, sober second thought on a very egregious bill. And we see that, frankly, our appeal, the appeal of 48 of 51 presentations at committee, are being ignored, that they're falling on deaf ears. And so, my friend from Flin Flon has been put in a very difficult position of having to propose an amendment to a bill that we are deeply, deeply opposed to.

And so what we're asking is for the restoration of one simple clause in the bill to ensure that the language—that we reinstate language in the bill that employees be protected from intimidation, fraud, coercion and threat. It exists in the current bill that's being amended. There's no reason for this not to be included if you genuine—if members of the governing side genuinely are concerned about front-line workers, about the quality of their workplaces, about the quality of the life that—

* (16:00)

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

The time being 4 p.m., in accordance with item 7(c) of the sessional order adopted on June 21st, 2016, the Speaker must interrupt debate at 4 p.m. today and put the question on the remaining applicable report stage amendments for bills introduced in the House on or before June 15th with no further debate or amendment to be permitted.

The one remaining bill in this category is Bill 7, The Labour Relations Amendment Act.

The debate is therefore terminated on the report stage amendment to Bill 7, moved by the honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey).

The question before the House is, shall the report stage amendment pass?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Recorded Vote

Mr. Jim Maloway (Official Opposition House Leader): Madam Speaker, I'd like to request a recorded vote.

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

Order, please.

The question before the House is the report stage amendment to Bill 7, proposed by the honourable member for Flin Flon.

Division

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

Yeas

Allum, Altemeyer, Bindle, Chief, Clarke, Cox, Curry, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Fletcher, Fontaine, Friesen, Gerrard, Goertzen, Graydon, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Kinew, Klassen, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Marcelino (Tyndall Park), Martin, Mayer, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pallister, Pedersen, Reyes, Saran, Schuler, Selinger, Smith, Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Swan, Teitsma, Wharton, Wiebe, Wishart, Wowchuk, Yakimoski.

Nays

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 54, Nays 0.

Madam Speaker: I declare the report stage amendment passed.

The hour being after 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow morning.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, November 9, 2016

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