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of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-First Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALLUM, James	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
BINDLE, Kelly	Thompson	PC
CLARKE, Eileen, Hon.	Agassiz	PC
COX, Cathy, Hon.	River East	PC
CULLEN, Cliff, Hon.	Spruce Woods	PC
CURRY, Nic	Kildonan	PC
DRIEDGER, Myrna, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EICHLER, Ralph, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FIELDING, Scott, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
FLETCHER, Steven, Hon.	Assiniboia	Man.
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	Ind.
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
LAMONT, Dougald	St. Boniface	Lib.
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, Hon.	St. Vital	PC
MICHALESKI, Brad	Dauphin	PC
MICKLEFIELD, Andrew	Rossmere	PC
MORLEY-LECOMTE, Janice	Seine River	PC
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine, Hon.	Midland	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Arthur-Virden	PC
REYES, Jon	St. Norbert	PC
SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	Ind.
SCHULER, Ron, Hon.	St. Paul	PC
SMITH, Andrew	Southdale	PC
SMITH, Bernadette	Point Douglas	NDP
SMOOK, Dennis	La Verendrye	PC
SQUIRES, Rochelle, Hon.	Riel	PC
STEFANSON, Heather, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
SWAN, Andrew	Minto	NDP
TEITSMA, James	Radisson	PC
WHARTON, Jeff, Hon.	Gimli	PC
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WISHART, Ian	Portage la Prairie	PC
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
YAKIMOSKI, Blair	Transcona	PC

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, May 14, 2019

The House met at 10 a.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.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Hon. Colleen Mayer (Acting Government House Leader): Good morning.

I'd like to resume debate on Bill 226, The Presumption of Death and Declaration of Absence Act and Amendments to The Insurance Act.

Madam Speaker: It has been announced that the House will resume debate on second reading of Bill 226 this morning.

**DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS—
PUBLIC BILLS**

**Bill 226—The Presumption of Death
and Declaration of Absence Act
and Amendments to The Insurance Act**

Madam Speaker: Resuming debate on Bill 226, The Presumption of Death and Declaration of Absence Act and Amendments to The Insurance Act, standing in the name of the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), who has nine minutes remaining.

Is there leave for the bill to stand in the name of the honourable member for Elmwood?

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

An Honourable Member: No.

Madam Speaker: Leave has not been given for the matter to stand.

Are there further speakers?

Ms. Flor Marcelino (Logan): Delighted to put in a few words regarding Bill 226, Presumption of Death

and Declaration of Absence Act and Amendments to The Insurance Act, and I thank my colleague, the member from Rossmere, for bringing this bill forward.

We were made aware that this bill replaces The Presumption of Death Act with The Presumption of Death and Declaration of Absence Act.

Likewise, we were made aware if certain conditions are met, the court may order that a person is presumed to be dead or declare that a person is absent. Likewise, an affected person, an insurance company or the public guardian and trustee may apply for an order. The court may appoint a personal representative or committee to deal with the property of a person who is presumed dead or declared absent. The distribution of a person's property to others is final even if the person is later found to be alive or no longer absent. The court may, if just to do so, order the property be returned or the person be compensated.

Also, a presumption of death order from another jurisdiction may be recognized in Manitoba.

This bill also amends The Insurance Act. A presumption of death order is sufficient proof for the purpose of a life insurance contract.

For some families, this would be a rather difficult one to take because no family or loved one of the person missing or presumed dead would like to believe that the loved one is forever gone. However, if we were to be realistic and practical, and for everyone—especially the family and friends—to move on, I believe this bill would help make things a little faster for them to move on. This bill would kind of expedite if there are insurance claims to be processed; the recipients or beneficiary of those claims can get the funds and start life anew.

We all know families of missing people face a range of financial and legal issues that hugely impact their lives. Presumption of death legislation enables an applicant to obtain a court order in regards to a person who's been missing for a long time, in order for the estate of the person to be taken care of, for insurance proceeds to be paid or for a spouse to remarry.

I—at this particular moment, I think of this person, although I don't personally know him but

there are people from our community who knew this person, who went missing for I think about a year now. There was a widespread search involving many resources provided by not just the police department but even by community organizations, family and friends of the missing person. There were searches done, even though the process was so arduous because it was still wintertime. Yet, to this day, no concrete evidence or no word whatsoever was received and even the police officers were so perplexed. They haven't had a clue on this particular situation of that missing person.

*(10:10)

And, with this bill, I believe the families of—I couldn't remember the name of that person now but it used to be in the papers and radio for a very long time—the family, the spouse and children of this male person, hopefully, can move on with their lives and face tomorrow grateful that somehow there will be some resolution to this very sad case.

We on this side of the House support this bill as it will help to ease the burden on the families of missing people. We all know that after a long period of time, it becomes necessary to deal with and distribute the property of a person who has disappeared without explanation.

In this case of this missing person, a month or two after he went missing—oh, by the way, their family was already planning for a big wedding happening for one of the children of the missing person, and so that wedding proceeded without the father present and it was heartbreaking.

Oftentimes there is confusion both for the families and the agencies they are dealing with around a length of time for which a person must remain missing before their belongings should be passed to their next of kin. The lack of clarity means that families have to seek and pay for expert legal advice or remain in a state of confusion and continue to deal with the financial and legal impacts of the disappearance alone.

It's important to put procedures concerning the estates of missing people into law so that people aren't confused about what action to take in the event a loved one disappears. Being able to legally deal with the practical affairs of a missing loved one relieves some of the stress family members feel.

Having a missing family member can also be extremely costly. There are many costs involved with searching for a missing person, including the

costs associated with putting together search parties, canvassing the area and distributing flyers and materials about the missing person. And all this was done by the family and friends and the community for that missing person that I referenced here.

And so, again, I thank my colleague, the member from Rossmere, for bringing this bill forward and we are supporting this bill.

Thank you.

Introduction of Guests

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

We have Karl Werner Laufenberg visiting from Germany; we have Mark Turton from the United States; and Randi Gage from Manitoba, the founder of the Aboriginal Veterans Day.

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

And I should indicate that they are the guests of the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Reyes).

* * *

Madam Speaker: Continuing debate.

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): I just want to put a few words out there on Bill 226, The Presumption of Death and Declaration of Absence Act, and I believe that we will support this particular act going forward.

It does shine a light on some issues that certainly a lot of families have had to navigate through, and certainly it's bad enough when you know your loved one is dead to try and navigate through, whether it's insurance or division of property, things of that nature. But so many families, loved ones are left in limbo, the way the present law is structured; that what do they do, how do they carry on in so many cases, how do they have the financial wherewithal to pay the bills. Never mind the emotional trauma that they're going through, wondering where their loved one is and what if and all of that.

So it makes some sense to have a process that is somewhat kinder to people, that recognizes some of those issues and attempts to address them. Now there's never going to be a perfect solution to issues when people go missing. There's always going to be, well, what if they're not really missing, what if they're—show up at some later point. And there, of course, needs to be measures in place to deal with

that but what if they actually are missing and never get seen again? How long does a family get left in limbo? How long does a spouse have to sit and wait before they can access, for example, insurance money—to know that they can pay the mortgage, that they can perhaps feed the kids.

Certainly, in the days of what we call the gig economy, where less people are working full-time, more people are one paycheque away from bankruptcy because part-time work and low-wage jobs don't supply sufficient income for families to actually have joint savings accounts stashed away in case of eventualities. But, you know, many people do try and plan for their future, so they have small insurance policies that they've taken out or, if they're fortunate enough, Madam Speaker, to be in a unionized workplace. Many of them have contracts that have negotiated insurance policies and death benefit plans that allow a family to financially continue to function.

So this bill makes some sense in that it will allow at least some people the ability to have less hardship, reduce the stress level on at least some people whose family members go missing. I mean, there can never be any law that says, after X number of days you'll quit grieving and wondering. Of course, it doesn't make sense. So, if there's something that can be done to lessen the burden of stress on people whose loved one has gone missing, then good on all of us for supporting that and undertaking to make sure that those type of difficulties are lessened as much as possible.

So, you know, we've seen recent cases where a wife has gone missing and the husband, after two years, had to go to court to try and establish that she wasn't coming back, that—trying to establish the presumption of death. Now, unfortunately or fortunately—I guess it depends on your point of view—her body was found years later so the answers to the question, at least, of was she actually dead got answered. But I can't imagine the additional pain and suffering that somebody would have to go through. Bad enough wondering where your loved one is but now you're trying to navigate through insurance agencies, who are famous—or perhaps infamous is a better word—for not wanting to pay if they don't have to.

* (10:20)

So, with this change in the act, it will make it easier for families, for loved ones, to navigate through insurance agents and insurance papers and

the official nightmare, if you will, that people have to deal with any time a loved one passes on.

So, you know, I was just reading a thing in the paper the other day that most people have never had a talk amongst their family and friends as to what the end-of-life plan would look like. You know, wasn't that many years ago that wives got given X number of dollars for grocery money, but had no idea what the family finances were. Now, imagine someone all of a sudden trying to navigate through that because they haven't had that kind of conversation within their family setting. So this bill does, hopefully, help address some of that.

We know that there has been studies into issues like this. We know that the United Kingdom charity, Missing People, conducted a 2008 report, and the outcome of that was that families of long-term missing people often end up facing financial ruin. They—people that were interviewed for the report asserted that they'd experienced many barriers when trying to deal with their loved one's estate, particularly when it came to dealing with insurance companies and banks. And, certainly, we know any number of people that really struggle to have the full financial understanding that some people think we all should have. We're not all blessed with that knowledge and ability.

So we really, on this side of the House, are about making life better for people. So we support things that will make life better. So, I mean, this bill will hopefully do that. So it will get our support when we see so many other bills and things that this government's done that actually has made life harder for families, harder for Manitobans. So anything we can do to help make life better, I think, it really is important for all of us to get behind that and get on board with making life easier.

Certainly, there's so many stresses that people go through in their everyday lives just trying to make ends meet and trying to get ahead in the world. So, certainly, this particular act won't do away with the issue altogether of the stress that's caused when someone goes missing, but at least it will help ease the burden and allow people—while they're still grieving and while they're still missing and while they're still wondering—will at least allow them to get one facet of their life under control sooner and really be able to get that part of 'normalcy' back in their lives so that some semblance of a life can resume while they continue to grieve and mourn and miss and wonder.

So I thank you for the time that I've had to speak on this.

Madam Speaker: Are there any further speakers on this debate?

Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Madam Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 226, The Presumption of Death and Declaration of Absence Act and Amendments to The Insurance Act.

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

Hon. Colleen Mayer (Acting Government House Leader): I ask to canvass the House to see if we can go into debate on resolution. *[interjection]* Oh, to see it 11 o'clock—to go.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to call it 11 o'clock? *[Agreed]*

RESOLUTIONS

Res. 10—Recognizing the Importance of Mining in Manitoba

Madam Speaker: The hour is now 11 a.m. and time for private members' resolution.

The resolution before us this morning is the resolution Recognizing the Importance of Mining in Manitoba, brought forward by the honourable member for Thompson.

Mr. Kelly Bindle (Thompson): I move, seconded by the member for Selkirk (Mr. Lagimodiere),

WHEREAS mining is a key part of the global economy and provides valuable materials for Manitoba's manufacturing, agriculture and electronics sectors; and

WHEREAS the previous NDP Provincial Government raised the PST which pushed away investment in the mining sector; and

WHEREAS Members of the Official Opposition have shown complete disdain for responsible natural resource development by committing to end incentives for oil and gas exploration within Manitoba in their alternative to the Throne Speech; and

WHEREAS Manitoba produces \$1.4 billion worth of minerals every year; and

WHEREAS Manitoba's most promising mineral deposits are located in areas in need of economic development; and

WHEREAS mining is a labour intensive industry that has significant spinoffs in the accommodations, logistics and construction sectors; and

WHEREAS the Provincial Government is establishing a new mineral development protocol that will promote exploration and development investment and ensure that Indigenous communities can benefit from mineral development while still protecting their Treaty rights; and

WHEREAS the Leader of the Official Opposition is a signatory to the Leap Manifesto, which calls for an end to the development of the province's natural resources.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba recognize the importance of the mining industry to all Manitobans and commend the provincial government's efforts to promote increased mining development throughout the province.

Motion presented.

Mr. Bindle: Manitoba's rich natural resources provide economic opportunities and good jobs to help grow remote communities.

I'm from the North. I was born and raised in Thompson, and I grew up in a mining community. I've worked in the industry and many of my fellow northerners depend on the mining industry either directly or indirectly for their livelihood.

We recognize the importance of mining in Manitoba, and the resolution is intended to let other communities and other Manitobans know we depend on it and want to see mining thrive in Manitoba. And, most importantly, we want the world's mining industry to know Manitoba is a great place to invest. Our government wants to see responsible mineral exploration and development that includes indigenous people, that respects the environment and that is sustainable and long-lasting.

We're removing red tape and barriers to investing in the province, to make Manitoba more attractive to investors in all sectors, including mining.

We are keeping our promise by reducing the PST from 8 per cent to 7 per cent, to attract investment: investments that make a more—that make

us more competitive with other jurisdictions because that is who our province competes with. We are part of a global economy, and this resolution states our government is establishing a new mineral development protocol that will promote exploration and development investment and ensure indigenous communities can benefit from mineral development, while protecting their treaty rights.

The protocol will clearly state the roles and responsibilities of the exploration development companies and the communities that could be affected by their work.

Mining is hugely dependent on commodity prices, as it is traded on the open market and prices are dictated by supply and demand. This is very difficult to influence, and price and value of resources are at the mercy of the markets. Our economies in mining communities are highly influenced by market prices, and you can certainly see how large upswings and downturns can affect the people in mining communities—their spending behaviours, the housing markets—more so than other communities that are diversified.

We can have very little impact on the market price of minerals, but we can influence costs and reduce the PST, and we can resist the federal carbon tax, for example, to help the cost of mining go down.

Mining companies spend money to find, develop and extract, crush and ship their products to market. They sell the product and use the money to pay their costs incurred. There's huge capital investment required over a long period of development time before they will see a return—if they see a return on investment. That is a risk that they take to get a perceived reward. Before taking that risk, they will calculate their costs and compare it to their believed returns before making a decision. They will also compare different jurisdictions around the world and invest where they have the least risk with the best opportunities for the best returns. Manitoba is competing globally to attract that investment.

Companies will also look at the government policies in place when deciding on where to invest because mining development takes a long time. They know governments can change, which could add risk and uncertainty when they're deciding where to invest.

* (10:30)

This resolution today is intended to recognize the importance of mining in Manitoba and educate

members opposite about the importance of mining and bring them on board with our government to help alleviate any reservations the investors may have regarding their decision to invest in Manitoba.

Because \$1.4 billion is a considerable portion of Manitoba's economic engine, Manitoba mining needs to be supported and promoted to investors so the industry can grow and Manitobans can benefit. Our province can't afford to let these investments go elsewhere. To be competitive, we cannot afford to have mining companies basing their long-term investment decisions on NDP policies and rhetoric that could drive their decisions to invest elsewhere.

The reason I'm bringing this resolution forward is because the NDP members of this House don't care about mining and they would rather see minerals left in the ground.

The NDP leader for Fort Rouge signed Leap Manifesto which calls for the end of natural resource development. The NDP don't want to help mining communities and they increased the PST, driving away investment in the mining sector and making life less affordable for people in mining companies and throughout the province—in mining communities and throughout the province.

The NDP committed in their alternative Throne Speech to end incentives for oil and gas exploration in Manitoba. And no matter how much the subject of mining comes up or when they're interviewed on in the House, including today, you'll never hear the members for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey) or Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew) or any of the NDP caucus come out and say clearly or unequivocally that they support mining development in Manitoba. That is what I want to change with this resolution.

Our PC caucus supports mineral exploration and mining development in Manitoba. I'm asking the NDP to recognize the importance of mining in Manitoba by saying clearly today we support mineral exploration and mine development in Manitoba, and they could do that by allowing this resolution to go to a vote and by voting for it. Even if they don't want to disappoint their leader, they can also allow it to go to a vote and not vote for it, but by blocking it, not allowing it to go to a vote, they are clearly not in support of mining in Manitoba.

Our government believes resource development in Manitoba provides the opportunity to show the world what responsible resource development looks like. Manitoba resources have a significant part to

play in the global economy. Some of the best mineral deposits are accessible and near towns like Thompson, Snow Lake, Lynn Lake, Flin Flon and Bissett that are already set up to support the industry.

Mining is a cyclical industry. The challenges we face today are a direct result of the fact the NDP did absolutely nothing when they were in government to prepare for the impacts northern Manitoba is now experiencing. Barriers have been put in place by the previous NDP government and we're removing these barriers, such as the PST which they increased after promising Manitobans that they would not.

Many indigenous communities are in need of an economic stimulus and have promising resource development opportunities. Good mining jobs feed into considerable spin-off industries which allow for job diversification in remote areas. Through cooperative efforts our government is establishing mineral development protocols that promote exploration and development while safeguarding indigenous land and treaty rights.

We have been engaging with First Nations leadership, industry representatives and stakeholders to develop a Manitoba First Nations Mineral Development Protocol which defines how consultations would occur during all phases of mineral development from initial exploration to mine development and reclamation. The goal is to create certainty in order to advance mineral development projects in a timely way and help ensure First Nations can be actively involved in all phases of mineral development to create and share in the benefits of growth in the sector.

We are complementing this work by seeking ongoing dialogue with the mining industry through a liaison committee on mining and exploration. The committee will offer advice on land use planning and regulatory regime, orphaned and abandoned mines, relationship building with communities and exploration challenges and solutions.

We're creating a business-friendly environment in Manitoba to encourage investment and growth. We're doing this by reducing the PST to 7 per cent. We're doing this by demanding clarity and improvements from Ottawa on the federal government's Bill C-69 which would put mining projects at risk of being delayed, becoming more expensive to realize, or being stopped altogether. The bill is misguided and does not strike an appropriate balance between environmental protection and

economic growth. It puts jobs and the future prosperity of Manitoba communities at risk.

Mr. Dennis Smook, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

We have launched a legal challenge to the federal government's decision to impose its carbon tax on the province, which threatens jobs and economic growth throughout Manitoba. We're reducing red tape and regulatory accountability to promote mining, empowering northern Manitoba Look North strategy, which notes mining is a long-time net contributor to the economic prosperity of our province and potentially the single greatest source of economic growth for the North in years to come.

Our government will continue to implement the mineral development protocol framework with willing First Nation communities to achieve clarity for both communities and industry with respect to the consultations preceding exploration and development projects.

Where the NPD failed, Madam Speaker, we will succeed. We are keeping our word and we will make life more affordable for Manitobans.

So I encourage all members of the House, after making some comments on this resolution today, to vote in support of the resolution, help us promote mining in Manitoba, help us make our province more attractive as we compete with other provinces, especially our neighbour, Saskatchewan, and help us succeed in mining in this province.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook): Just as a reminder, given that the House agreed to call it 11 o'clock at 10:25, the debate will last for one hour and the noon recess will take place at 11:25. To avoid confusion, it might be good to announce this in the House, which is what I am doing.

Questions

The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook): A question period of up to 10 minutes will be held and the question may be addressed in the following sequence: the first question may be asked by a member from another party. Any subsequent questions must follow a rotation between parties. Each independent member may ask one question and no questions or answers shall exceed 45 seconds.

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): Yes, I want to ask a few questions about the member's resolution.

So could the member from Thompson explain to us how many mines have opened under his government's tenure?

Mr. Kelly Bindle (Thompson): Well, like I said, mining is a cyclical industry. It takes long-term investment and you have to have a climate where people want to invest, and we want to change the climate that drives people away so that with this resolution, will help inform the mining industry that we're open for business and we want to have investments so we can open mines.

Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition): Could the member explain, given that this government has been in power for years, how is it that, as the Northern Prospector magazine said, that it—at the current rate of exploration, it'll take 250 years to develop a sustainable mining industry in Manitoba under this government?

Mr. Bindle: Well, mineral development in mining takes a long time. There is exploration series and they don't always find minerals. There's money invested. Now investors have to decide that they're going to take that risk and look. Now, if the province isn't competitive and it has a high PST and high cost to do business, they're going to look elsewhere to spend their money to get a better investment. So we want to create an atmosphere where mineral exploration is easier to do in the province by working with and developing a protocol with First Nations and also making it clear to industry.

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I'd like to thank the member from Thompson—the brand-new MLA for Thompson—the great MLA for Thompson, for bringing forward this resolution.

I would like to ask the member from Thompson: Why exactly does he feel that mining is important to the economy of Manitoba?

Mr. Bindle: Mining is important to smaller communities that are isolated and mining is their primary industry. In other communities where they're diversified and they have agriculture and other industries, it's not as pronounced, but in Thompson and Lynn Lake especially and other communities like Bissett, where it is the only industry and there are a lot of spin-off industries depending on it, when there is an economic downturn or a lack of investment in mining, people feel it. House prices—it's shown in their local economies—house prices are down and people curb their spending. It makes it

more difficult and more pronounced in smaller communities.

* (10:40)

Mr. Lindsey: So, you know, the member from Thompson, when he introduces this, talks about how important mining is and all of that, so perhaps he could expound a little bit on some of the investments that his government has made into mining. I know we've seen them make investments into pea-processing plants. We've seen them make investments into Maple Leaf Foods.

So perhaps the member could just tell us a little bit about the investments that his government has made into mining or perhaps even he could touch on what investments his government has made in the North.

Mr. Bindle: Thanks for that question.

Well, actually, industry investing in Manitoba, we want to see is private sector investment, which is what we are seeing in many areas. It's—the government isn't in business. The government isn't getting into the mining business. What we are doing is reducing barriers so that investors that are in that industry find Manitoba attractive so they can create jobs in the province, and it benefits all Manitobans when they do that.

How we're helping people in the North—and second part of his question—we've set up the Northern Workforce Development Centre to help train people to match industry needs.

Mr. Lamont: Yes, the—this government has given \$200 million to bail out the Bomber stadium. They've given \$20 million for horse racing, and yet one of the things that's happened is that it can take two years to even get a permit for exploration.

Can the member explain why this government cancelled exploration assistance for junior miners?

Mr. Bindle: Thank you for the question.

The—well, in terms of investing in the stadium, that was done by the NDP, and it was a convoluted deal which took taxpayers' money and gave it to the stadium.

Now, we're realistic, you know. They can't pay it back, so we had to write it off. But in terms of the second part of his question—*[interjection]*

The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook): Order.

Mr. Bindle: I'm not sure what the second part of his—I can't remember the second part of his question, but we do support promoting mining in Manitoba.

Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson): I'd just like to ask the member for Thompson (Mr. Bindle): What caused this sudden decline in the mining industry in the province, not just around Thompson, but throughout the province?

Thank you.

Mr. Bindle: Well, there's a number of factors. Like I said, the mining industry depends on world trade markets, and demand is down for what—in Thompson, particularly in nickel, but other minerals, but also there was a cost—there was cost incurred in the province that drive investment away and create barriers and that's—one of them is the PST hike that the NDP brought in. But also, there's also fear of the federal carbon tax creating, you know, undue costs on project development.

Mr. Lindsey: You know, we've heard the member talk and we've heard his leader talk about the Golden Boy looking north and everything they've done for the North, and, of course, everybody in the North knows that that, quite frankly, is just talk and nothing else. So, you know, in—this government promised to have a duty-to-consult framework agreement or framework in place by 2017, and the last time I looked at my calendar it's now 2019.

So can the member explain to us when they will actually have this duty-to-consult framework completed so that mining people actually know what the duty-to-consult will look like so that indigenous people will know what that duty to—looks like.

So, you know—

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

Mr. Bindle: Like I said in my preamble that our government is engaging with First Nations to develop this protocol. Now, this protocol is intended to make it very clear how mining investments, the responsibilities for each party are, the community, the indigenous community and the investor and what's expected of them. It's a—it helps to alleviate risk for the investor and the community that's allowing them to come in and it also helps to benefit the community. The purpose of the protocol is to promote mining and make it clear to everyone and to—and it has to be negotiated to the point where it's

perfectly clear for everyone so that there are no 'discrepance' and you don't want to rush it.

Mr. Doyle Pivniuk (Arthur-Virden): Can the member from Thompson please explain what the Leap Manifesto means?

Mr. Bindle: Well, the Leap Manifesto was developed in September of 2015 during the general election. It was put together with the NDP party along with union activists. And I might add it's public sector union activists that help put it together, not private sector because private sector unions like the steelworkers in Thompson would not support a manifesto that says leave resources in the ground, because their livelihoods depend on it.

Mr. Lindsey: It's unfortunate that it's quite clear that the member from Thompson has never actually read the Leap Manifesto and I encourage him to perhaps sometime sit down and read it. And so he talks a lot about encouraging investment in mining and really they haven't done any of that, so can the member then tell us that recognizing the importance of mining in northern Manitoba—what exactly do they plan to do to attract investment if they're not going to increase any investment in exploration or anything that leads to a mine, can the minister—

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

Mr. Bindle: That's easy to answer. We're lowering the PST from 8 per cent to 7 per cent, the PST that the NDP rose after they promised Manitobans they wouldn't.

The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook): The time for questions has expired.

Debate

The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook): The debate is open.

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): I want to stand up and today make it perfectly clear for all the members opposite, I want to make it perfectly clear for their Premier (Mr. Pallister) that the member from Flin Flon and the NDP support mining in the North.

So, contrary to all the baffle gab and doublespeak that the Premier and member from Thompson may put out to the contrary, we opened mines when we were in the government, and I can talk personally about my involvement in getting a mine up and running in northern Manitoba because I was involved in that process.

But you know what? We opened the mine and I give credit where credit is due; I give credit to HudBay Minerals and a lot of people will say that doesn't happen often. I give credit to them for opening a mine that was a different mine, that was an environmentally friendly mine, as environmentally friendly as a mine can be, the actual discharge water coming out of the mine was cleaner than the water coming in.

So, while the member from Thompson stands up and talks a lot, he's done absolutely nothing nor has his government done absolutely anything to actually encourage mining in the province.

And I talked a little earlier in one of my questions about investments that this government has made in other industries and all of those industries are southern-based industries. They've invested in Roquette pea-processing plant. And don't get me wrong, Mr. Deputy Speaker, sometimes governments have to invest in private sector businesses in order to encourage them to invest.

* (10:50)

They've invested in Maple Leaf Foods, Mr. Deputy Speaker—which, you know, it's good that they keep their well-heeled corporate friends happy in the south—but not once, not once has this government ever even suggested that they would invest in anything in the North. The rail line at Churchill goes down. Oh, it's not their responsibility. It's a private enterprise. It's got nothing to do with this government. The fact that people live in Churchill and all along the rail line are Manitobans was immaterial to them.

The plant in The Pas was in danger of shutting down, and this government said, oh, geez, nothing to do with us. We don't make investments in private enterprise. Well, not north of the 53rd parallel anyway. So the workers took a hit. The town of The Pas took a hit and the government sat on its hands.

We look at what this very member, when his home community of Thompson was facing massive job losses, the kind which has never been seen in recent memory and certainly if there were that kind of losses happening in southern communities, the government would be doing something. So there is a fund that was established, paid for completely by mining companies with no investment from the government. So when the City of Thompson tried to access that fund, not only did the government refuse to allow them access to that fund, but the very

member that stands up here and claims to have a love affair with Thompson and wants to see it grow and flourish, that very member from Thompson refused to stand up with the people from Thompson and push his Premier (Mr. Pallister) to do something for the people of Thompson—for industry in Thompson.

Now the member from Thompson may not like facts and reality, but a number of years ago when Thompson was actually talking about shutting their smelter and refinery down the first time, both federal NDP party and, at that time, the governing NDP party stepped in and helped keep those jobs—help keep that industry running. They did things that made sure that the mining company was there, paying taxes, contributing to the overall economy of the province—*[interjection]* And I hear members beaking off about bailouts. I didn't hear them beaking off about bailouts to Maple Leaf Foods, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So, you know, they really—by their very comments—are against any kind of investment in the North and that's very clear because there has been no investment in the North, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I sit on the NDP's environment committee because we recognize the importance of mining in a brave new world that takes into account the fact that minerals are required to lead the green economy. If we're going to have electrical vehicles, lithium is a very important part of that new economy. Northern Manitoba has some very promising lithium finds that could lead to mines, but this government's zeal for free trade agreements is ensuring that that investment goes to Third World countries because that's where a company can make the most profit. It's also the place where they will do the most environmental damage.

So I say, if we're going to have mining, let's do it here in Manitoba. Let's do it here in Manitoba, where we can have proper environmental regulations, where we can have proper workplace health and safety regulations, where mining companies have traditionally made money and where they continue today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to make money that they now invest in other countries. So I fully support the mining industry, as does my party, but we support a mining industry with mines done differently. We cannot just go in and clear-cut the land, spoil the water and leave abandoned mines sitting there for years and years that cause ongoing environmental issues. I know I deal with one so often up in Sherridon that the environmental cleanup has taken 20-some years and has just caused so many problems.

So for the member from Thompson to stand up and say we don't support mining is clearly not right; it's not correct. So he should, I hope at some point in time, correct his misstatements that he's made because when we were the government, we did support mining. There was new mines opened.

We look at Snow Lake, a town that was in its death throes as the mine closed, but we worked with companies and mines opened, a mine that's going to be there for years to come. *[interjection]*

And the member from Thompson now wants to talk about something—I don't know what. But, clearly, he doesn't want to talk about actually wise investments that will lead to more investment from the private sector.

The member from Thompson doesn't want to talk about actually having a protocol in place so that First Nations communities, northern communities, miners will know exactly what that protocol is—supposed to be in place by 2017.

So I'm sure he's gone to his Premier (Mr. Pallister) and said, hey, boss, we got to have this in place; we promised it—ah, maybe not, because he doesn't stand up and support people in the North. And I'm really guessing that he brought forward this resolution today because he realizes that there's an election coming, and chances are he's not winning simply because people in Thompson see through the fact that he does not support them.

He had so many opportunities to come out and support the people of Thompson, to support the people of the North, to make sure that they could access funds from the Community Reserve Fund. But what did he do? He made up excuses as to why they couldn't.

Now, none of those excuses were actually factually correct but he persisted that no, no, no, we can't use government money. Well, wait a minute. The Community Reserve Fund is not government money; it's money that has been invested by mining companies to help communities at the end of their lives. *[interjection]*

And now the member from Thompson is saying that, well, you guys spent it all. Well, it wasn't that long ago—I believe last year during the Estimates process—there was in excess of \$10 million in that fund. So if somebody spent it all, it was these guys, not us. And who knows what they spent it on. So it—

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

House Business

Hon. Colleen Mayer (Acting Government House Leader): On House business.

The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook): On House business.

Mrs. Mayer: Pursuant to rule 33(11), I'm announcing that the private member's resolution to be considered on the next Tuesday of private members' business will be one put forward by the honourable member for Emerson (Mr. Graydon). The title of the resolution is Removing Educational Land Tax on Farm and Agricultural Land.

The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook): It has been announced that the private member's resolution to be considered on the next Tuesday of private members' business will be one put forward by the honourable member for Emerson. The title of the resolution is removing educational tax on farm and agricultural land.

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): It gives me great pleasure today to stand up and put a few words on the record. *[interjection]*

I know that the member from St. Boniface is wanting to put a few words on the record as well, and from what I'm understanding, some of my friends on the opposition side want to stand up and put a few words.

I know that due to the passing of a great bill brought forward by the member from Rossmere this morning, I know that the times has—the clock times have changed a little bit this morning so we've got just a few minutes to debate this resolution. And I'm hoping that members on all opposite sides, everybody within this great Chamber, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will support this resolution, will see the light and see that—how important the mining industry is to this great province of ours.

I know that we just heard a little bit of a diatribe from the member from Flin Flon. And it's interesting, Mr. Deputy Speaker—I don't want to get into specifically talking about the member from Flin Flon, but he put a few words on the record that is going to be used against him sometime in the future, not only by the government's side but no doubt by some of his own people on his own team, the NDP

team, because, as we know, the member from Flin Flon, as he speaks about things that he doesn't really know and that would go towards the past record of the NDP in regards to the mining industry.

* (11:00)

He speaks of the mining reserve fund and I know that in my constituency I've got a couple of mining communities, as well, and it was, in fact—and you know what, I will agree with one thing that the member from Flin Flon brought up. The member from Flin Flon brought the fact up is that the mining reserve fund is not the government's money. The mining reserve fund was set aside from the various mining companies to help with restoration, with helping those communities that had those mines in their communities.

What does the member from Flin Flon stand up and say today? He echoes that of what I just said, but it was, in fact, his government that absolutely drained the mining reserve fund. His government treated those dollars and cents just like it was if it was general revenue, and what did they do? They increased the deficit and they increased the debt, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So we will take no lessons from the member from Flin Flon on anything in regards to financial—any type of financial prudence, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And then the member from Flin Flon also talks about process and policies and various things. It's interesting the he absolutely was involved in a process and the process was to—how to get rid of the sitting NDP member, Mr. Clarence Pettersen, in the Flin Flon constituency. In fact, the member from Flin Flon—and it's interesting because the member from Flin Flon sits right next to the member from Minto and the member from Minto was one of the members who decided to be a rebel and make a coup against the then-Premier Greg Selinger, the member from St. Boniface, and he basically stabbed—was stabbing the member from Flin Flon in the back, and that was Clarence Pettersen at the time.

So the member from Minto definitely has to watch out who he's exactly sitting beside because the member from Flin Flon is—seems to be a little bit of an opportunist and unfortunately he's in that seat only because the previous NDP government stabbed Clarence Pettersen in the back. God rest his soul, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Getting back to the wonderful resolution by the member from Thompson, we know that Manitoba is

rich in natural resources and it provides economic opportunities and great jobs to help grow the Manitoba economy, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We know that we've got 1.4 billion—is a considerable portion of Manitoba's economic engine. This needs to be supported.

I know that the members from—members opposite, the NDP side, are bringing up different comments whilst the member from Thompson was either speaking or during his question period about what is the PST reduction actually going to do for mining. That's what they say. I know that the member from Point Douglas, you know—and I know at times, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we on our side of the House make comments about that they don't get outside the Perimeter. Well, I know that the member from Point Douglas does get outside the Perimeter because I'm sure she was out there just recently opening up the cottage which is situated in my constituency.

But just to educate the NDP on why the reduction in PST is so important to not only mining but also to every piece of—any kind of business that is going to be operated in this great province of ours. It encourages growth. When they raised the PST and expanded the PST in 2012-2013, they actually drove—*[interjection]*—economic areas outside the province. They started those companies because—the member from Point Douglas, I know that she's going to probably want to get up and speak to this, which will be a very interesting topic, considering I'm not sure how much background she has on it, but she will want to get up and speak. She's talking about how she doesn't totally understand that PST concept, but you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? The people in her constituency that she represents, not where she lives but where she represents, will definitely benefit from the PST reduction.

Other things that people will be benefiting from the PST reduction and various different things that we're doing inside this government, we've been hard at work over the—just over three years now, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We are—we have developed a Look North Steering Committee and we're looking at their recommendations to establish a lead entity to support economic growth and development in northern Manitoba. In response to the recommendations from the Look North Steering Committee, our government will establish and will continue to work with our people in the North, our mining communities, our northern communities, our First Nations communities.

I know that the member from—[interjection] Oh, and the member from Point Douglas is still talking, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and shortly in just over two minutes she will have the opportunity to get up and speak on how she is strongly encouraging her leader who signed a Leap Manifesto to—[interjection] Well, the member from Point Douglas, she brings up an interesting point. She had just asked me if I've read the Leap Manifesto and, in fact, I have read the Leap Manifesto. And the Leap Manifesto is exactly five pages and a portion in the Leap Manifesto and I quote—and this is the Leap Manifesto that the member from Fort Rouge, I guess, Fort Rouge—as the member from Fort Garry-Riverview and I, we often—we know who's sitting in the Chamber and we know what constituencies they represent. The member from Point Douglas, I can't necessarily she—say she knows that.

Anyways, the member from Fort Rouge—we're back on the Leap Manifesto. So the Leap Manifesto says, and I quote: Like an end to fossil fuel subsidies, financial transaction taxes, increased resource royalties, higher income taxes on corporations and wealthy people, a progressive carbon tax, cuts to military spending, all of these are based on a simple, polluter-pays principle and hold enormous promise. End quote.

The leader of the opposition party, the member from Fort Rouge, has signed that. He agrees to that. The member from Flin Flon obviously does not have enough pull within his party to have a conversation with the leader from Fort Rouge because this is exactly what they stand for.

The NDP stand for higher taxes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, which will be an inhibitor to increased mining operations in this great province of ours. They are also—and they've been on the record with stating the fact that they want to have a higher carbon tax. Carbon tax is hurting absolutely everybody. The member from Point Douglas continues to say that she professes to be the stand—the person who's standing up for the poor and the underprivileged which I absolutely—[interjection]—and I appreciate all the members in the House clapping for my statement, you know, commenting on how the member from Point Douglas does not necessarily stand up for those people.

The carbon tax will definitely hurt low-income individuals, the PST—or, it already is—the PST decrease will help absolutely everybody in this great province of ours, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition): This is a—frankly, this is a pretty sad resolution. There are all sorts of ways in which we all—it would be—we'd like to support, we absolutely do support mining, but it's important to say just what a colossal failure this government's policies have been for the resource sector.

There are few more tragic examples of the way this government is choking off growth in this province than what they have done to mining. Ironically, and I know that the government members who have spoken to this bill have talked about the carbon tax.

One of the most important things that is needed in mining is affordable hydroelectricity, to which the carbon tax does not apply. The member for Thompson (Mr. Bindle) and the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko) both voted for our carbon tax last year; they didn't seem to think it was a problem when it was their own Premier (Mr. Pallister) who was putting it in.

But it's entirely this—the discussion that we've had up to this point on this resolution are entirely typical of this government, and it blames everyone else for their own failures. This government was elected three years ago. They still have no plan for growth. Now I'll read—this is from the Deloitte report about economic development—this government's economic development plans. It said when they talked to stakeholders, they said there was a perceived lack of vision from Manitoba's economic future by the government.

* (11:10)

And now, of course, we are hearing that there's a steering committee for Look North. We don't actually have a plan; we don't have any resources being put forward to it. There's a steering committee for Look North, and ultimately, with this—what Deloitte found—in summary, the Province is unable to articulate a forward-looking vision for the Manitoba economy. As a result, industry, academia and peer governments are uncertain about how best to engage with the government of Manitoba, limiting the scope for true collaboration and policy innovation.

And one of the things that I heard when I traveled around the North is that—and elsewhere—is that it is this government that has been failing to do the basic work of providing permits for exploration.

This government was elected three years ago but in the prospecting magazine from this February, it said it'll take 250 years at the current rate of exploration to build a sustainable mining industry in Manitoba. Not only that, there are companies that are leaving Manitoba because they cannot get permits in time. It takes 18 to 24 months to get a permit. This was a problem under the last government and it's a problem under this government.

The Business Council of Manitoba wrote a budget recommendation to the Finance Minister and they said, last year—quote, last year we recommended the government improve its internal operations with respect to mining and mineral resource development. For several years, exploration and development in Manitoba has languished. Manitoba's share of national expenditures for prospecting and exploration continues to decrease. Unfortunately, we must repeat that recommendation this year. End quote.

And I know the members of the government have been complaining about increased costs and uncertainty but the fact is they're the ones who've been—have completely hobbled the Department of Growth, Enterprise and Trade and have laid off or failed to fill positions of people leaving, with the result that it appears that we—this government doesn't actually have the capacity to get mining permits out the door.

So—and there are complaints. There are various waiting with people, I think, very unfairly blame First Nations or blame indigenous people for not agreeing to resource development on their land, but we have cases where mining companies are working together with First Nations; they are in partnership and they cannot get a permit for exploration.

And again, there's no clear example, no clear example of the damage that this government has done to the economy of Manitoba in failing to invest, in failing to just do the basic investments that are required to ensure that we have a better future and a better economy. When people cannot get the permit for exploration—and there need to be hundreds of them to find a new mine—when they shut down offices in Thompson, where people want to start a new business and they cannot get a business permit because this government has decided to shut that down, when, I've heard, it's not just the North but also happens in areas where people are trying to do oil and gas exploration. There are huge delays in this government's ability to do the basic work of government, which is to get a—[interjection]—which

is to get a permit out. And I know, I can hear the member for Brandon West (Mr. Helwer) piping up about, again, what's happening. People are complaining about some other level of government and refusing to accept the responsibility for their own failures.

And I will—the fact that the NDP allegedly depleted the mining fund is no reason now to not support Flin Flon or Thompson. We—I talked to people in Flin Flon. I talked to people in Thompson. I talked to municipal leaders in both areas and they made it absolutely clear that they need support now but they also are optimistic about the future of their communities. Flin Flon faces some very serious challenges, but in Thompson, they wanted to make it absolutely clear that there are huge new opportunities to be had and it's cleared; we have world class minerals but basically this government has been denying access to them. This is a government that has left \$1.5 billion in federal funding on the table and \$100 million of that was funds for rural and northern infrastructure. That could be building new roads to promising mine sites.

This is an absolutely incredible—I would say incredibly mendacious resolution on the part of the government and, again, the fact that they've been—again, the MLA for Thompson, I understand that there were people who are extremely upset. People suggested that he has been absent from his community to the extent that the only place they'd ever see him would be on the back of a milk carton because they didn't know where he was.

We have—it's incredibly frustrating, again, because one of the other major reasons that Manitoba is headed for huge challenges in growth is because we're going to see an end of the construction of Keeyask—Keeyask will be finished and it will come online; Bipole will come online—but the other is that a complete and utter failure of this government to do the basic, fundamental investments to actually make sure that mining and exploration happens in this province.

It has been a complete dereliction of duty on the part of the member from Thompson, the Premier (Mr. Pallister) and every other member of this government. They should all be ashamed of themselves.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Doyle Pivniuk (Arthur-Virden): Just want to be—put some words on the record for the resolution

that was brought forward by my friend on—the honourable member from Thompson about mining, how important it is to Manitoba.

Much like the oil industry, mining represents about \$1.4 billion when it comes to economic activity in this province, and many of the people in the North are employed by mining. I know my brother was a—is a miner. He actually lives in Dropmore, Manitoba, but he actually commutes to Esterhazy, Saskatchewan, to work in the Esterhazy potash mine, which is a company called Mosaic.

And they employ actually a lot of people and so does the Saskatchewan potash corporation, too. They actually employ many people in the Arthur-Virden constituency. Many of our constituents actually drive from Virden or Moosomin to Rocanville, Saskatchewan, where there's a potash mine. So mining is important to the whole southwestern region too, if you can believe it.

We do have a mine in Arthur-Virden, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It was actually created by Albchem; it's a company that actually had a plant, a sodium chloride plant. What they do is they pump water into the salt formation by the Saskatchewan-Manitoba border and—Alberta-Saskatchewan border, there was a salt formation that actually goes from Edmonton all the way to Virden, Manitoba.

And, because of our hydroelectricity, it was so inexpensive years ago, they were able to have an advantage of actually creating this mine, and, actually, they shut the mine that they had in—Albchem had in Alberta because there was—it was more efficiently—efficient to actually mine the saltwater from the Virden location.

And what they do is they put the saltwater through hydroelectricity which creates sodium chloride and then they ship the sodium chloride all over the world. And now the company that has bought that from Albchem is called ERCO Worldwide.

I had an opportunity to talk to ERCO. I met with one of the vice-presidents of ERCO Worldwide. He actually came to Winnipeg. He wanted to meet with me and one of the things that he said—and this is thanks to the NDP government—is that now we're not as advantaged now to have sodium chloride, to do an expansion to the plant because of our higher hydro costs. And we can thank the NDP government for the overbuilding of the Keeyask dam, the extra costs of

doing the Bipole III around the Saskatchewan-Manitoba border.

And so, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is why they're saying now that the future, there's actually more advantage of going to Quebec now because of this NDP government. So that did impact our area.

We could have seen an expansion but because of this NDP government—what they interfered in Manitoba Hydro and that's what created this—our problem of expansion here in Virden, Manitoba.

Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): I know the member for Thompson (Mr. Bindle) is listening carefully to what's being said, so I can confirm for him that I support responsible and sustainable mining development in Manitoba and that's why I don't support the resolution brought forward by the member for Thompson.

You know, one of the bills I was proudest about bringing forward when I was in Cabinet was The Missing Persons Act. I've had a lot of questions from folks in Thompson wondering if maybe we can use that act to try and find their MLA who has been completely missing in action and has failed—even though he's had every opportunity over the weeks and months and years since being elected—to stand up for mining jobs in Thompson, to stand up for mining jobs in the surrounding communities and to stand up for mining jobs in the North. And every time he's had that opportunity, he has remained silent.

* (11:20)

And that, actually, is a tremendous shame. It's a tremendous missed opportunity, and we are looking forward to the opportunity for Thompson to once again have an MLA who's actually going to fight for the North, to fight for Thompson, to fight for the surrounding communities and make sure that the needs of the North are being addressed in this House and in the community.

The New Democrats believe in mining, but they believe there is a role for government, a role for government where co-operatively with industries and communities and First Nations to ensure that both the rights of miners and the rights of indigenous communities and other communities surrounding development are respected. And we have seen nothing from this government on that.

And it was interesting when the question was asked about the framework—the consultation framework. Well, the member for Thompson (Mr. Bindle) said, well, we're not going to rush it. Well, tell you what, there's nobody on this side of the House that is accusing this Progressive Conservative government of moving too quickly to deal with these issues because this is not a priority for the government, and it is one of the reasons why the mining industry in Manitoba is suffering. And I know it may not be something the member for Thompson wants to talk about, but that's our opportunity, as we debate this bill, to talk about some of those issues.

Now it is not that often, of course, that as New Democrats, we stand up in the House and put rankings from the Fraser Institute on the record. And it was often one of those strange backhanded moments when Manitoba, year-after-year was actually ranked by the Fraser Institute as the best jurisdiction in the world in which to do business as a mining company. We know those days are long gone, and we now know that Manitoba went from ranking second best not that long ago down to 18th, according to the Fraser Institute in 2017, and what was the main reason for that? The uncertainty that's been provided by this Progressive Conservative government that really can barely find the North on the map, let alone put aside the time and the effort and the passion needed to deal with challenging issues, to make sure that there is a stable platform for mining companies to be able to operate.

Now I know the first—the very first question that my colleague, the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey), asked the member for Thompson was: How many new mines have opened since the Progressive Conservative government has come into power?

And the member for Thompson either didn't know the answer or didn't want to give the answer and so talked around it. So I'll put on the record the answer. The answer is zero. There have been no new mines that have opened in Manitoba and the way this government is going, it's going to be a long time that there's ever going to be a new mine opened in Manitoba, unless and until this government's defeated and there's a better government that's more

interested in economic development, that's more interested in the North, that's more interested in working with indigenous people—is in control of this province once again.

And, under this government, we've watched businesses and jobs decline in northern Manitoba, in the member for Thompson's community and his surrounding communities but other northern communities, as well.

And, you know, Hudson Bay announced just back in November—November 28th, 2018, that HudBay 777 mine Flin Flon, which has operated for 90 years, will close by 2021, leaving 800 people out of work. Eight hundred people in a community of some 6,000 people. *[interjection]* Well, and that's great. The member for Southdale (Mr. Smith) wants to heckle an opposition member talking about 800 jobs being lost in a community of 6,000 people. Maybe the member for Southdale thinks that's hilarious. People in Flin Flon don't think that's hilarious. People in Flin Flon are facing losing their homes. Businesses in Flin Flon are going out of business because members like the member for Southdale sit around the caucus table and don't care about the North and don't raise issues that are important to people whose lives depend on mining in this province.

So maybe the member for Southdale and his colleagues over there should do a little thinking before they open up their mouths and start heckling people in this House.

And, you know, what did the minister ostensibly responsible for mining say when he learned of 800 jobs being lost in Flin Flon? He said, and I quote: It's business as usual. End quote. Well, I guess that's business as usual for a Progressive Conservative government that couldn't care less about what happens north of the Trans-Canada Highway. It's not good enough—

The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook): When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Minto (Mr. Swan) will have four minutes remaining.

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, May 14, 2019

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