

**Third Session - Fortieth Legislature**  
of the  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**  
**DEBATES**  
and  
**PROCEEDINGS**

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

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

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
ALLAN, Nancy	St. Vital	NDP
ALLUM, James, Hon.	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	NDP
BJORNSON, Peter, Hon.	Gimli	NDP
BLADY, Sharon, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	NDP
BRAUN, Erna, Hon.	Rossmere	NDP
BRIESE, Stuart	Agassiz	PC
CALDWELL, Drew	Brandon East	NDP
CHIEF, Kevin, Hon.	Point Douglas	NDP
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	NDP
CROTHERS, Deanne	St. James	NDP
CULLEN, Cliff	Spruce Woods	PC
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	NDP
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	PC
EICHLER, Ralph	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FRIESEN, Cameron	Morden-Winkler	PC
GAUDREAU, Dave	St. Norbert	NDP
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Liberal
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	PC
GRAYDON, Cliff	Emerson	PC
HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
HOWARD, Jennifer, Hon.	Fort Rouge	NDP
IRVIN-ROSS, Kerri, Hon.	Fort Richmond	NDP
JHA, Bidhu	Radisson	NDP
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Swan River	NDP
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	Dawson Trail	NDP
MACKINTOSH, Gord, Hon.	St. Johns	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Flor, Hon.	Logan	NDP
MARCELINO, Ted	Tyndall Park	NDP
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MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	PC
NEVAKSHONOFF, Tom	Interlake	NDP
OSWALD, Theresa, Hon.	Seine River	NDP
PALLISTER, Brian	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine	Midland	PC
PETTERSEN, Clarence	Flin Flon	NDP
REID, Daryl, Hon.	Transcona	NDP
ROBINSON, Eric, Hon.	Kewatinook	NDP
RONDEAU, Jim	Assiniboia	NDP
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WIGHT, Melanie	Burrows	NDP
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<i>Vacant</i>	Arthur-Virten	
<i>Vacant</i>	Morris	

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, December 3, 2013

*The House met at 10 a.m.*

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

Good morning, colleagues. Please be seated.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader):** Good morning, Mr. Speaker. Could you seek leave to move directly to Bill 200, the Legislative Assembly amendment—sorry, the—Bill 210, The Centennial of Manitoba Women's Right to Vote Act, sponsored by the honourable member for Charleswood?

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there leave of the House to proceed directly to Bill 210? [*Agreed*]

#### SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

##### Bill 210—The Centennial of Manitoba Women's Right to Vote Act

**Mr. Speaker:** We'll now call Bill 210, The Centennial of Manitoba Women's Right to Vote Act.

**Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Midland, that Bill 210, The Centennial of Manitoba Women's Right to Vote Act, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

*Motion presented.*

**Mrs. Driedger:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I feel very, very privileged to stand here today and bring forward this legislation. I try to think of what this Chamber would have been like a hundred years ago and I think it would have looked very, very different. In fact, I've seen a picture where it certainly was much sparser than it is now. And trying to imagine back in those days when there were no women in here and it was

all men and wondered what that environment must have been like.

But standing here, thinking back a hundred years, it does bring history back alive and I'm a big history buff so I'm finding this whole journey of looking at what's happened in the last hundred years to be a very, very inspiring and thought-provoking journey.

So I stand here in awe that we are almost a hundred years after Manitoba became the first province in Canada to give women the vote. And I think that's very, very significant that Manitoba was the first one that made that move. And soon after that, a lot of other provinces and Canada also followed in making that happen. So here we are looking at the 100th anniversary of that change. And this bill proposes to make January 28th, 2016, the centennial anniversary day to celebrate women getting to vote in Manitoba.

And as I was preparing this private member's bill, I also—and I'd like to thank Leg. Counsel at this time, too, who sent me a copy of the original bill of a hundred years ago that actually shows women being given the vote. And seeing legislation that is that old and having an opportunity to look at it really makes me much more aware of the value of the work we do here. And I wonder if a hundred years from now, somebody is going to be looking at maybe this private member's bill and looking at the debate around it and looking at, you know, what we're all putting on the record about how we need to celebrate women getting the vote. And I have to wonder, in a hundred years from now, whether women will be at a point where we will see at least 30 per cent, maybe 50 per cent, of members that are sitting in this Chamber as being women and being representative of the population that is out there.

So because of Nellie McClung—and I go back to thinking about what that must have been like a hundred years ago, for her and the other women that were working very hard to get the vote and trying to influence change. I do have to really admire the work that she does, because I certainly see, you know, the continuing struggles we have nowadays in many different areas. And, you know, I can't imagine how Nellie and those around in those days, who probably—and probably they did work against greater

odds—they didn't have cars, they didn't have phones, they didn't have BlackBerrys. They were, you know, living in a time where it was horse and buggy and, you know, long dresses and women stayed at home and raised children. And so I do admire the tenacity of all of the women that worked so hard to try to ensure that they had a bigger voice in what was happening around them.

And it reminds me, too, that we are all here for the greater good, as legislators. We're here to be in touch with the views and opinions and ideas and dreams of others. And we are not here for anything else but to be good public servants of the people.

So a hundred years ago women were having those feelings and they worked hard and passionately to get the vote for women, so that women could have a say in making those decisions and making ideas come to fruition and making dreams come to fruition.

Men in those days, Mr. Speaker, believe it or not, weren't very supportive of having women as legislators, and that was a common theme of those days: that women should be at home looking after the kids and bringing their slippers to the man when he came home from work, and the women, at that time, were thinking that wasn't really all they wanted to do anymore. They were wives and they were mothers and they were community people, and they wanted to be able to take a lot of this further, and to be able to also be legislators. But men didn't have those same views as women, so the women rallied and planned.

And, in the last number of years, I've learned about pink teas. And what the women did in those days, because they weren't really allowed to have all of these discussions that men felt were in their realm, so what the women did was had a pink tea, and they would come together under the auspices of this pink tea, and as long as there were no men around, the women actually sat there and discussed some of these worldly things and looked at how they could achieve more. And if a man were to come into the conversation accidentally or into the hall or into the home where a pink tea was being held, they could easily change the discussion and act like they were just having tea.

\*(10:10)

And so now, through the Nellie McClung Foundation, I'm happy to say that we have resurrected the idea of pink teas, but we do it a little

bit differently now, and we certainly don't hide behind the fact that we're celebrating the struggles that women fought for in order to get women allowed to be part of making the key decisions around a Legislature. And Nellie was a key figure in all of this. I would like to, you know, again, thank everybody for the unanimous support we had 10 years ago. In fact, it's 10 years ago on December 4th that we passed a bill in this House that created the Nellie McClung Foundation, which later saw this foundation raise the money and erect a monument of Nellie and four other women that she worked with in those days, and that monument is on the grounds in a very prominent position of this Legislature.

And there was unanimous support in the House at the time for that legislation, and that monument has become a centerpiece for a lot of people when they come to the Legislature or when they walk by, or even people that are looking over from Great-West Life get to see this spectacular monument, this dynamic monument of women working together. And women did work together in those days. That was how work was done. It wasn't a single person that moved things forward. Pioneer women worked as a group, always, to effect change.

And so the Nellie McClung Foundation not only created the monument but also put together a website where Nellie could be acknowledged as one of the greatest Manitobans of our time. And it was interesting, when we started on this journey, not everybody—in fact, not a lot of people knew who Nellie was. But I think as we are working harder, and now with the Nellie McClung Foundation, we are certainly working harder to ensure that people know what her contributions were to this province.

And so here we are, you know, along this journey and reaching the point where we are on the eve of a hundred years since women in Manitoba were given the vote. So that is what this private member's bill is about, to set aside that day to acknowledge what was happening, to acknowledge the fact that women were granted the right to vote, and certainly I hope that everybody in this House will unanimously support this. And I think it is a wonderful time for us to have an opportunity, no matter which party we are affiliated with, to have this chance to pass this bill and to celebrate, then, in January 28th, 2016, a special occasion that happened, where women in Manitoba were granted the vote. And I look forward to everybody in the House supporting this and moving it to a committee

and then passing it so that, indeed, we can have this day set aside for us to recognize what an important, important day and time this is.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Andrew Swan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to stand and speak with Bill 210, and I want to commend the member for Charleswood for bringing this bill forward. I think any day in this Legislature that we can stand and we can talk about progress on human rights, it's a good day. And the progress for human rights in this province, in this country, has not always been swift. It's not always been easy, and I think the success of the suffragette movement and the achievement of women's right to vote is certainly part of that progress.

I guess, as MLAs, we all have the opportunity to talk about human rights in our own communities in our own way, and it was just a couple of years ago a school in my area, John M. King School, located at Ellice and Agnes, had a hundredth anniversary celebration, and I was honoured to go in and bring greetings and celebrate the hundredth anniversary. So I decided to take a little different tack with the students, and I asked the students assembled in the gym how many of them had ever—had any grown-up talk to them about the good old days. And, of course, just about every student had; I know that was certainly part of my upbringing, where we've been taught to believe that the good old days where things were so much better. And I decided with this particular group to try something a little different.

So I asked the children to put up their hands if they're—if they were from an Aboriginal family, and about a quarter of the kids in the gym put up their hands. And I said, okay, well, did you know that a hundred years ago, if you were an Aboriginal person in Canada, you didn't have the right to vote? You didn't have the right to be elected to the Legislature, to Parliament. You didn't even have the right to practice a profession, to become an architect or a lawyer or a teacher.

And I got them to put their hands down, and then I asked the students, how many of you are from families who at one point immigrated from Asia? And about 70 per cent of the kids in the gym put up their hands. And I said, well, did you know that a hundred years ago, if you were an Asian immigrant, you didn't have the right to vote? You didn't have the right to citizenship. You didn't have the right to practice a profession or to be elected.

I got them to put down their hands and I said, how many of you are girls? And, of course, 51 or 52 per cent of the kids in the gym put up their hands. And I said, you know, a hundred years ago you didn't have the right to vote. You didn't have the right to do whatever you wanted to do with your lives. In fact, there were people who didn't even think that you were persons.

I got them to put down their hands, and I said, all right, how many of us in this room haven't put our hands up at least once? And it was me and it was a couple of teachers and it was four boys out of about a student population of 400.

And I thought I'd made my point, and I thought that was fine until I went up to the library for cake and coffee, and I had a man who wanted to come up and argue with me. And he said, I don't know what you're telling these kids, what do you mean women weren't persons? And I said, well, as a matter of fact, there was a very famous court case that happened in 1931 that declared that indeed women were persons and they could sit, ironically enough, in the Senate. And he wanted to know more about that, so I gave him a little constitutional background and I was also able to remind him that, until Manitoba became the first province in Canada to allow this, women could not vote, and I'm not sure how you say someone has anything approaching full citizenship when you don't even have the right to vote.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased the member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger) has introduced this bill because I think the centennial of women having the right to vote in Manitoba is a major date in Manitoba's history and something that should be recognized and should be celebrated. And in Manitoba, of course, it wasn't easy, as it wasn't easy anywhere in Canada, and in Manitoba the suffragist movement was led by strong, politically minded women. I find that if you hang around strong, politically minded women, you're going to have a good life, and that's certainly the case in Manitoba.

And it was women like Cora Hind, a journalist, Lillian Beynon Thomas and Frances Beynon, Dr. Amelia Yeomans, activists like Margret Benedictsson and Gertrude Richardson, and, of course, novelist and journalist Nellie McClung. And in 1912, many of these women founded the Political Equality League and adopted a policy of what they called peaceable persuasion. And these women, and also some like-minded men that they allowed to speak with them, sent representatives to address

labour groups and farm organizations all across Manitoba, and they collected signatures for petitions and they inundated media outlets and politicians with suffrage materials. They spoke anywhere they could get an audience, at country fairs, at concerts, at union meetings and demonstrations. They used passion, they used logic and they used humour to make their case.

And in 1914, there was a mock parliament staged. It was actually staged at the Walker Theatre, which still stands—as a matter of fact, on Friday night a large number of us will be attending a benefit concert there for the Philippine community—but the Walker Theatre was the staging of a mock parliament. The Political Equality League ran this with a reversal of roles, and that mock parliament depicted a society in which it was women who ruled, and it was men who had been decided by the women to be incapable of making decisions in being able to vote, and Nellie McClung, of course, famously played the role of the premier of Manitoba. And this strategy of a combination of peaceful activism and cutting political satire was recreated throughout western Canada, and, of course, it led to Manitoba leading the way in 1916. And, as Lillian Beynon Thomas declared at the time, the women of Manitoba are now citizens, persons and human beings.

\* (10:20)

We know that in some provinces, it took a bit longer. We know that the Supreme Court on the persons reference still was reluctant, and it took, at that point, a decision of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London to give more national direction on that, but again Manitoba was ahead of the stage.

So here we are in, of course, 2013, and human rights continues to be something which advances. I know all of us are very excited that the Canadian human rights museum will be opening in the city of Winnipeg next fall. And I'm hoping, I actually don't know for sure, but I'm hoping that the story of women's rights will be a key part of the information that people from around the world will see at the museum.

Now, of course, the struggle—you don't have to go back a hundred years to see cases where the struggle for human rights continues. In 2012, we celebrated the 25th anniversary of Manitoba's Human Rights Code. And in preparation for a number of events that happened at that time I went back and read Hansard from only 25 years ago, and

Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that it—well, frankly, it made my skin crawl.

In 1987, the Manitoba Human Rights Code was brought in; it included protections against discrimination for people based on sexual orientation. And, Mr. Speaker, I know the member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger) has quite rightly said there were some surprising things said by men, legislators, 100 years ago. I can tell you, there were some pretty outrageous things said by a number of legislatures—legislators only 25 years ago when we went ahead and did something that one would expect would have been an easier struggle.

And, of course, it was only in the last decade that there's been major human rights debates in this Chamber dealing with the right of same-sex couples to be able to adopt children, the right of same-sex couples to be able to marry and to enjoy all of the benefits that others have enjoyed for a long time. So I don't know we'll have to wait for a hundred years for someone to look back at fairly contemporary debates happen in this Legislature; as a matter of fact, I think people may be looking back at the Bill 18 debates and some of the comments made by members of this Legislature to see that the fight for human rights is not simply something in a history book. The fight for human rights is continuing this very day, Mr. Speaker, and I know we're going to continue to move forward.

There's a great song by a folksinger named James Keelaghan who made his home in Wolseley for a number of years—I think he's moved on to Ontario. It's a great song called Never Gonna Stop This Train and it references the Winnipeg General Strike in 1919, all the way up to Tiananmen Square and other more contemporary events. His point is that the fight for human rights, it never ceases, it never stops.

As legislators, we can never rest on our laurels, and for the people of this province we can never be satisfied, as long as there are individuals who don't enjoy the full citizenship of others.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the member for Charleswood for bringing forward Bill 210. I know I've got a number of colleagues who are very interested to also put their words on the record. And I believe that January of 2016 will indeed be a time to celebrate in the province of Manitoba.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Midland):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And speaking to this bill, the centennial of women's rights—women's right to vote act, and I certainly want to congratulate the member from Charleswood, I know she's very passionate about this and rightly so. And this—she's put a lot of work and effort into this—into the Nellie McClung Foundation. I know she has spoken at many parliamentary conferences on this subject of women in politics; currently, she is the president of the Canadian women's parliamentary association. So I'd certainly—congratulations to her on her dedication and her outstanding work on this.

And, of course, Nellie McClung is what we're talking about today and Manitou, in the heart of Midland constituency, is also very proud of their roots to Nellie McClung. Nellie came there to teach school and then subsequently married Wes McClung and they lived on a farm outside of Manitou for a short while before moving into town. And then obviously Nellie moved on in her career as a journalist and a writer but Manitou is very proud of their roots with Nellie McClung. The high school has been named the Nellie McClung Collegiate and they—very proud of that. The opera house, which is still operational in Manitou, is dedicated to Nellie McClung. They put on a number of wonderful plays and musicals in the opera house throughout the year. So Manitou is—claims a certain dedication to Nellie McClung and to her work. And so we're all very proud of that and Manitou is very right to be proud of their roots with Nellie McClung.

Mr. Speaker, while I'm—while I'm here I just want to tell the House about last week. Thursday and Friday I sponsored—job shadowed—a high school student job shadowed my office, a young gal by the name of Janelle Gobin out of St. Claude. She was in my constituency office on Thursday and worked with my CA and then on Friday we did some work in the office in the morning and then we came into the Legislature here and I toured her around in the Legislature. The staff, the Clerk's office, was very good in helping me with that. And it's interesting. Here's a young person, a young woman, who is interested in politics. She's going to go on to university next year after she—when she graduates this coming June. But here's a young woman that's certainly interested in politics and in the political happenings. She was somewhat—was somewhat overwhelmed her at times with the acronyms and the jobs and the work that goes on but she was very pleased with her job shadowing, and I

certainly want to thank Janelle for her for coming, for phoning my office and asking to have the opportunity, because it certainly is something that we as MLAs need to get out there.

We need to get this message out that politics is available to all Manitobans and it's not gender specific and it's certainly not age specific. It's—young and old can become involved in it. And so I look forward to Janelle seeing how she—what she does with her life in university and in future years, and we certainly will keep in touch with her.

So, with that, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to, again, lend my support to this bill, to the member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger). This is a very worthwhile proclamation that we want to do for January 28th, 2016. It's a date that we'll all look forward to, and I know that in the community of Manitou, I'm sure that when they hear about this that they will also be looking forward to doing something special on that day in—come 2016. So, with that, thank you.

**Hon. Kerri Irvin-Ross (Minister responsible for the Status of Women):** I want to take this opportunity to put a few words on the record for Bill 210, The Centennial of Manitoba Women's Right to Vote Act, and to congratulate the member for Charleswood for her work in bringing this forward.

As I stand here in 2013, I find it almost impossible to think that there was a time that women didn't have the right to vote and that there was a woman in 1916 that took an approach, probably that surprised many men and many women in our province and across Canada, when she stood up and said that women deserved the right to vote. That was 50 years prior to my birth, and today I still find it very inspirational to know that that happened on January 28th, 1916.

As we move forward and as we have moved forward since 1916, there was many people that have come before me that have been the pioneers and I want to—there's been a lot of wonderful things put on the record and—with regards to Nellie McClung and the work that she had done, but there was work that's happened since then and that's because of what Nellie was able to accomplish after 1916 when women began to vote. Women then decided that they had a role to play within politics and that they had an opportunity, and so in June 1920, Edith Rogers became the first woman elected to the Manitoba Legislature. She served for 12 years.

\* (10:30)

Following that, there had been some time where Aboriginal people were not allowed to vote. And that happened, and I'm grateful that that happened. It took way too long for Aboriginal men and women to have the eligibility to vote or to hold provincial office, but I'm grateful that that opportunity was provided, and because of that many Aboriginal people—not enough—have served in this Chamber and have represented their communities very strong and had added another perspective to what it is to be a Legislature.

In February 1963, Thelma Forbes was the first woman to be appointed Speaker of the Manitoba Legislature. April 1963, Margaret Konantz was the first Manitoba woman to be elected to the House of Commons. She was the daughter of Edith Rogers, the first woman elected to the Manitoba Legislature in 1920. In July 1966, Thelma Forbes became the first female Cabinet minister in Manitoba. She held the positions of minister of Urban Development, minister of Municipal Affairs and minister of Public Works. November 1970, a dear friend, Muriel Smith, became the first woman in Manitoba to run for the leadership of a provincial party. November 1981, Muriel Smith became the first female deputy premier of Manitoba. March 1988, Sharon Carstairs became the first female leader of the official opposition in Manitoba. January 2006, Tina Keeper became the first Aboriginal woman in Manitoba to be elected to the House of Commons. June 2007, a record number of 18 women, 32 per cent, were elected to the Manitoba Legislature. That included 13 NDP members and five PC members. In June 2007, the Minister of Multiculturalism and Literacy (Ms. Marcelino) became the first visible minority woman elected to the Legislature. A record number of six women were appointed to Cabinet. Today, a new record for number of women appointed to Cabinet in Manitoba has been set. Seven women now serve in Cabinet. So we have taken that history, that determination and that commitment to ensure that women had rights to a different level.

I can tell you, when I was growing up in Saskatchewan, while I was in 4-H, that there were—I didn't have dreams. I didn't realize that there were opportunities like this that would lay in front of me. I guess, when I reflect back that, you know, the debates that happened around our kitchen table about politics, my father always being on the other side, that probably was sort of the beginning. But because of what the women did prior to me, that

provided me the opportunity to take the risk. As I worked in the community of St. Vital with a number of families, primarily led by women, and saw the struggles that they were facing and the frustrations that they were facing regarding policies and programs that government had put in front of them in the 1990s, I took that opportunity in a conversation in which I had with the MLA for St. Vital at that time, as I watched her work in her community in the work that she did, and I found it extremely inspiring. And I thought, boy, maybe there's a role for me too. Maybe there's something that I can use, that I can contribute to Manitoba. And when I approached the member for St. Vital and asked her, you think this farm girl from Viceroy, Saskatchewan, could contribute? She didn't hesitate. She took me in her arms and said, you know what? We need to talk, and she brought me here to this magnificent building, and we sat in the dining room and we had a long conversation. And she told me every horror story possible and really tried to—well, not discourage me, but to realize that there was a reality that was in this building that existed nowhere else in—that I had worked. She wanted to make sure that my boys would be taken care of, that I couldn't forget the importance of my own family as I went on this journey. So I think the meeting lasted for about an hour and a half, and I kept smiling and pinching myself, couldn't believe that I was in this building and that I had the opportunity to sit across the table from somebody that I respect, and gave me the facts and the reality.

And I didn't waver on my decision about, you know what? I think I can do this. I'd like to take a chance. And I was very fortunate because that support has continued over the decade in which I've served here. And with that support and that mentorship that I've received, I have learnt a lot. And that's how I can reflect on the work that the pioneers have done before me.

Every day that I walk in this building, I am grateful for the women that have come before me, but I am most excited about the women that will come after me. They will bring a different perspective, and I hope that every woman that decides that this is something that they want to do can have an MLA from St. Vital in their corner that can support them and inspire them.

We have made a lot of accomplishments, but we have a lot more work to do. We need to continue to support all Manitobans, and I liked it when I heard the Minister of Justice (Mr. Swan) talking about it as



a human rights issue, that it was and is about the women having the right to vote. But it—when you reflect upon it broadly, it's about human rights for everyone.

So we have a number of women who continue to struggle within our province, and the one item that I think of every day, when I sit in this building and have the privilege to be involved in the conversations I do, are the missing and murdered Aboriginal women. And we need to continue to fight and to work together to develop solutions, solutions that inspire them like I was inspired, solutions that provide them with hope and a belief that they deserve better.

So I will make a commitment today that I will continue to fight the fight for human rights and that I will do my best to mentor women along and to support them, as the MLA for St. Vital has done with so many of us. So as I proceed—and I hope 50 years from now that there is a group of women, and maybe more women than what we have today, that will sit and look at the transcripts at Hansard and reflect on our comments and celebrate the accomplishments that we have made, but take them to the next level.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Official Opposition House Leader, on House business?

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader):** On a House matter, Mr. Speaker. I know there's certainly a willingness on our side of the House and, I believe, from the Liberal caucus to see this bill come to a vote at this stage today.

I wonder if we could canvass the House to see if there's leave not to see the clock at 11 o'clock to allow this matter to come to a vote this morning.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there leave of the House to not see the clock at 11 a.m. to allow this matter to come to a conclusion?

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

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

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to this important bill. I think it's very significant that we should be considering recognizing, in a major way, the centennial date of when women received the right to vote here in Manitoba. It was the first province in Canada where women received the right to vote. The fight here in order to get the right to vote was a very substantial

fight, and it led to changes, not only in the right to vote but a lot of other social changes, as well, occurred as a result of the change in government and the change in approach that was taken.

A lot of credit must go to Nellie McClung. Nellie moved with her family when she was 6 to Wawanesa in western Manitoba. She grew up walking in the furrows behind her dad as he broke the sod, and by the age of 12 she was trapping mink and doing all sorts of ambitious things. Early on, she questioned many of the things that were going on around her and asked why young women were not able to compete in races against boys. It wasn't fair, and she wanted to change it then, and she may not have changed everything, but she was a major force in getting the right to vote.

\* (10:40)

And it's also important to acknowledge the role that Toby Norris, who was the Liberal leader, played at that time. He was an auctioneer who'd grown up in western Manitoba near Griswold and was a very eloquent speaker and managed to build the team which worked so closely with Nellie McClung as part of the effort to get the vote for women.

Mr. Speaker, after the election of 1915, on January 10th, 1916, at the very beginning of the legislative session, the bill was introduced to provide the right for women to vote in provincial elections in Manitoba. Second reading was on January the 14th of that year and the vote carried. And then on January 27th, the bill passed third reading and, I think, was proclaimed the following day. It was a momentous day in the history of Manitoba and a big day in the advancement of opportunities for women.

It signalled a major shift, Mr. Speaker, and, as has been talked about already earlier in this debate, there have been a series of changes with much greater representation of women in the Legislature today with the participation of women at various levels. And, of course, in the Liberal Party, we're particularly proud of the role that Sharon Carstairs played as leader of the Liberal Party and as first woman to head up the official opposition in Manitoba, and also very proud of our current and newly elected or recently elected leader, Rana Bokhari, who carries the torch forward, emphasizing the important role that women play in our province and will continue to have an increasing role.

It is important, not just that we have women representation, but that many of the issues which are,

I think—you know, particularly have the attention of women—you know, women are now concerned very broadly with fiscal matters and with the economy, but I think that there is a particular sensitivity to the needs for increased access to child care and early childhood education and matters like this. And I think we should be thankful for that attention as we move forward in the days and months and years ahead.

So I want to say, Mr. Speaker, to members here that it is important that we recognize this major event, that we recognize that the centenary is coming up and that we are ready to celebrate the centennial of Manitoba women's right to vote by passing this act and preparing well for the celebration which should come. Thank you.

**Ms. Melanie Wight (Burrows):** Mr. Speaker, it is, as always, an honour to be in the House to speak. I'd like to thank the member from Charleswood for bringing this forward. I think it's certainly a very non-partisan one that everybody will be wanting to speak to. It's something that so many people here are absolutely passionate about.

And I know when I first—the very first speech I made here, I spoke of the pictures that are in our walls and halls of the Leg.—largely men—and the desire that I think many of the women have to see those pictures shifting over the next hundred years so that there's some beautiful female faces on there as well. So I really hope that that is where we're going to go.

And as the member from Minto was speaking, it is, of course, a human rights issue, and we're so far from being there. I mean, we've come a long way here, and I feel so grateful that I live in Canada, that I live in a country where we do have these rights.

I know when I grew up, I didn't know that women were, kind of, second class; I really had no idea. And my mom and dad were very equal. There was no suggestion to me that men were more powerful. And as a kid you don't kind of notice outside of that family, you know, what's going on, right. So I can remember Mom telling me about her wedding ceremony and how, you know, obey was still the in the ceremony then, and how she said, you know, I can't say that. I can't say that in my wedding vows. I can't say that I'm going to obey you. That's not what our relationship's about. And Dad said, well, that's good, because that's not what the relationship's about for me either. You know, it's not

about one of us obeying the other; it's about, you know, love and sharing and commitment.

And so that's what I was always taught. So it wasn't until I came to Winnipeg, Mr. Speaker, you know, at 18, that I found out that, my goodness, women were not equal in any way, shape or form, yet.

And I'm so grateful to these women who first got, you know, white women the vote. I wrote an article recently for *Our Times* and I was speaking about, you know, that anniversary, and that women had the vote. And I should have said in that article, some women got the vote. And actually a First Nations woman wrote to me after I—after the publication of the article, reminding me that they didn't get that vote when we did. And, you know, I apologized to her and that—and let her know that I should have been mentioning that. So, I really want to make sure that I also do get that into this speech. Because it was many years later before, you know, First Nations folks got to vote, and other women as well. So, however, that was, obviously, a huge step forward.

I remember in my first job, Mr. Speaker, when I got a promotion. It was in the corporate world and I got a promotion. The man was fired who had the job ahead of me. He was the property manager of a large office building and they gave me the job after they fired him. And then they wanted to pay me \$5,000 less a year, which, at that time, was a lot less; now it doesn't seem that much. And I said, but you fired him, and you want to pay me \$5,000 a year less. That's not working for me, right. So even then, you know, we started the fight.

And, I remember a woman, at the time, saying to me that old quote: for woman to have—you know, women have to work twice as hard, and be twice as smart as men, to get half as far; fortunately, it's not that hard. I believe it was a mayor—a female mayor—in our country. And I can remember people, you know, sharing that at the time, between the women.

But, I guess, as we look as this and we're grateful here, we know that so such much of the world, Mr. Speaker, this isn't the case. Women are still treated and—with a—as—I don't know, below second class.

You know, it was in this job where I first went to a meeting where I really came to understand what was happening, I guess, more than I had realized. In other countries, you know, where rape was being

used as a tool of war, where hundreds of thousands of women were being raped, and then shamed because of that. And, I guess, we'd want to see—I know everyone here is passionate about seeing the whole world change, Mr. Speaker, not only here.

And, I know the member from Charleswood is involved, right, in a group where she went last year, I believe, right, to Africa? It was Africa? I still want to hear about that more. But—and I know that she's passionate about wanting to see this change for women everywhere, not only here. And so, I really do appreciate what you're doing in that field. And I was very impressed when I spoke to her about her non-partisanship in that arena, so.

But, I think having a daughter, Mr. Speaker, really also brought things into my view that I hadn't realized before. Because when you're—I don't know—you're growing up, and you don't kind of notice that everywhere you go, it's men. You know, like, you're just used of it. Every time you used to watch the Academy Awards and they used to show the people who got the awards for director, and writers, and all of those things, they were all men. And when you look at the United Nations, you know, I don't know how many women are there right now, but there was a room full of men—largely men. And my daughter noticed that. And she would look at these things, and go, I don't get it, Mom; like, where are the women? I don't understand.

\* (10:50)

And it's still true now of our boards. I know the boards in Manitoba, they had stats out on that recently, and I think it was something like, I don't know, crazy, 10 per cent—10 per cent women in the boards of Manitoba corporate—corporations. Same thing, CEOs are largely men not just here, but across, you know, across Canada and sure across the United States, and we're the places that are doing the best.

So there is a tremendous distance still to go in that—in this field, and I really want to see us working for that whenever we possibly can, and I want my daughter to understand, because she sometimes just doesn't understand. She thinks that it's done, and why are you still going on about this, Mom? We're good, right? No, honey, we're not good. The world isn't good yet. Like, many women are suffering around the world, and even here it is still a fight for women to move up past a certain point.

So I'm hoping that, you know, we will all—there will be a time where it's not unusual, where nobody

is surprised when the leaders are women, when the leaders of our governments are all women where the, you know, the prime ministers and all of those people are women, where it's just not even noticed anymore because we're so used to that being the case where it really has become a 50-50 kind of environment everywhere and I know that that's what everyone in this House, I believe, wants to see.

I know back in June 2007 there was a record number of women, 18 elected to the Manitoba Legislature, 13 NDP and five PC back then. But I think we've got less now, and so I am hoping that, you know, all of us, as we're looking for those replacements, we'll be out looking for women, fabulous women that are going to run in those spots so that we can again have a great representation here.

When it comes to human rights overall, we know that that's a fight, and I am proud to be part of a government that is always trying to move that forward, Mr. Speaker, for everyone, whether it's, you know, whatever group it might be of people, that we see everyone equally in this province. So I'm hoping that we can all stand together on that.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Ms. Nancy Allan (St. Vital):** It is an honour today to put a few comments on the record in regards to Bill 20, the proposed legislation that the MLA for Charleswood has brought forward.

It's unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that more members from the opposition didn't choose to speak this morning, and unfortunate that the MLA for Steinbach wanted to move this piece of legislation to a vote before we had an opportunity to debate this very important piece of legislation. I commend the MLA for Charleswood for bringing it forward. We believe it's of very important significance that Manitoba was the first province in Canada to give women, white women, full voting rights.

I also commend the MLA for Charleswood in regards to the work that she did 10 years ago around a piece of legislation that was voted unanimously on in this House, the Nellie McClung Foundation, which has done excellent work in this province recognizing women's full participation in democracy. And also, the beautiful statue that is on the Legislature grounds, and I recall the day that that statue was unveiled, and it's not just a statue of Nellie. It is a statue of Nellie and her comrades that fought for women's right to vote here in the province of Manitoba. And I believe it is dutifully recognizing

the incredible work that some very brave women did many, many years ago in the suffragette movement.

And, you know, I think as my colleague from Burrows just said, I think we have to remember that we need to continue that fight. We need to continue to work together to remember that women need to be full participants in democracy, that we are—we represent one half of our—one half of the population here in the province of Manitoba, and we must continue that work. We cannot afford to backslide and have women not represented and be full participants in this Legislature and in policy-making, because it is so important that we recognize that if we aren't participants in policy-making that we can sometimes be forgotten.

I would like to also thank the MLA for Charleswood for the work that she has done on the Canadian women's parliamentary association. This is a young association, relatively speaking, in regards to some of the associations that don't represent women, and I think it's very important work as we move forward in regards to having women's representation in democracy, and I know that she will continue that good work.

My colleague, the member—the Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Ms. Irvin-Ross), put on the record this morning some comments about the history of women that have been elected in this province and have held office, and I appreciate those comments. And I also was reminded of the day in 2003 when we got together to discuss whether or not she wouldn't want to become an MLA and be represented here in this Chamber, and I'm so glad that she did make that decision to run for political office. And she has made a contribution to her—our province in the roles that she has played as a minister and as an MLA and that is what this is really all about.

And I think we all want to believe that at the end of the day, we have made a contribution, and there have been many, many women that have made that kind of contribution before us. And she did talk about some of the women in the early days, but I'd like to talk about some of the women that paved the way for women in our party—and, of course, I will talk about Hazel, my mother, at some point, but I would like to talk about—I would like to talk first of all about Muriel Smith and Myrna Phillips and, of course, Mary Beth Dolin. And they were a group of women that really played a big role in our party and held some—held for the first time ever positions in

government that women had never held before. And, of course, of—and Maureen Hemphill, as well, a minister of Education. Mary Beth Dolin was the minister of Labour, first woman minister of Labour, I believe, in the history of our province, who unfortunately is no longer with us but is highly regarded in regards to the laws that she changed and certainly the laws that she changed for women around equity for women in labour laws here in the province of Manitoba.

Myrna was one of the first—I believe the first Speaker of the House, if not second. Myrna was the spiciest—second, yes. Myrna was the spiciest of them all. And there are some stories that I could tell that were quite spicy, but I think one of the ones that was the spiciest was the offence that she took to the statues in the front hallway of the bison, and she had a lighter in her hand—and I know that the MLA for Charleswood knows this story well—and she was quite offended that those male bison were out in the hallway, but that was Myrna; she was spicy.

\* (11:00)

But what she did do in her tenure as an MLA was she worked with Len Evans, who was the MLA from Brandon, and they did meetings all around the province. And she did meetings on early child care, and she did these meetings all across the province. And it laid the framework for a child-care system and a—that we have in place today, and I want to recognize Myrna Phillips for the work that she did.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for St. Vital (Ms. Allan) will have three minutes remaining.

## RESOLUTIONS

**Mr. Speaker:** The hour being 11 a.m., it's time for private member's resolution.

### **Res. 3—Support for Jobs and Skills Training**

**Mr. Speaker:** And the resolution we have under consideration this morning is sponsored by the honourable member for Flin Flon, and the title is Support for Jobs and Skills Training.

**Mr. Clarence Pettersen (Flin Flon):** This private member resolution is seconded by the member from St. Norbert:

WHEREAS good jobs for families are key to developing Manitoba economy; and

WHEREAS the provincial government is committed to adding 75,000 new workers to the labour force by the year 2010; and

WHEREAS education and training initiatives such as the federal-provincial labour market agreement are critical to achieving this goal; and

WHEREAS Manitoba has successfully developed and delivered training under the current framework, with especially effective partnerships between government and industry to meet the labour market needs of northern communities; and

WHEREAS the federal government has announced that it will be displacing funding from the labour market agreement to implement the new Canada Job Grant program; and

WHEREAS the Canada Job Grant lacks the flexibility that is available under the current labour market agreement to develop jobs in northern Manitoba and does not address concerns for our vulnerable workers, including social assistance participants and Aboriginal peoples; and

WHEREAS requirements under the new Canada Job Grant will hurt job creation in Manitoba by limiting funding to one grant per individual per lifetime thereby not addressing the need for essential and foundational skills training.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba recognize the importance of skills training that meets the individual needs of workers as well as requirements of employers and the Manitoba economy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the federal government to work with the Province of Manitoba to deliver meaningful skills training program tailored to meet the needs of Manitobans and the needs of the Manitoba economy.

**Mr. Speaker:** It's been moved by the honourable member from Flin Flon, seconded by the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Gaudreau),

WHEREAS good—

**Some Honourable Members:** Dispense.

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

Is it the pleasure of the House to consider the resolution as printed in today's Order Paper? *[Agreed]*

*WHEREAS good jobs for families are key to developing Manitoba's economy; and*

*WHEREAS the Provincial Government is committed to adding 75,000 new workers to the labour force by the year 2020; and*

*WHEREAS education and training initiatives such as the Federal-Provincial Labour Market Agreement are critical to achieving this goal; and*

*WHEREAS Manitoba has successfully developed and delivered training under the current framework, with especially effective partnerships between government and industry to meet the labour market needs of northern communities; and*

*WHEREAS the Federal Government has announced that it will be displacing funding from the Labour Market Agreement to implement the new Canada Jobs Grant program; and*

*WHEREAS the Canada Jobs Grant lacks the flexibility that is available under the current Labour Market Agreement to develop jobs in northern Manitoba and does not address concerns for vulnerable workers, including social assistance participants and Aboriginal peoples; and*

*WHEREAS requirements under the new Canada Jobs Grant will hurt job creation in Manitoba by limiting funding to one grant per individual per lifetime thereby not addressing the need for essential and foundational skills training.*

*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba recognize the importance of skills training that meets the individual needs of workers as well as the requirements of employers and the Manitoba economy; and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Federal Government to work with the Province of Manitoba to deliver meaningful skills training programming tailored to the needs of Manitobans and the needs of Manitoba's economy.*

**Mr. Petterson:** Mr. Speaker, it gives me great honour to speak on this jobs and skills training. It's very important to Manitoba.

But before I even begin, I just want to say there's good news out there. There's good news. I was driving my car here, and a guy came on the radio—and I notice my member from Burrows wearing a burgundy sweater, shirt, whatever—and his name was Ron Burgundy, and he says, you know what,

Winnipeg is the Paris of the North. And I thought, you know what? That is another plug, you know, for that. Driving further on, I could hear—my radio was cracking, but I don't know, tell me if I'm right or not, did I hear Lady Gaga is going to the Morris Stampede? Did I hear that? No? Lady Gaga's coming to Winnipeg. But let's forget about that. Let's be serious, Mr. Speaker.

This is a serious bill for jobs and training, but it's also about getting on the bandwagon, getting on the train. And this jobs love train is not just going to the south, it's not just going to the east, it's not just going to the north, it's going to the—it's going all over Manitoba. We want to create jobs for all Manitobans. We want opportunities for all Manitobans to be able to take advantage of our hydro, which is like our oil and gas. We want all Manitobans to take advantage of jobs in the mining industry, in the manufacturing industry. We have many opportunities, and I think it's very important that we work with the federal government, work with the federal government in partnership, because we have a lot to give.

We've been in, of course, in uncertainty in the global economy. Manitoba has remained strong and stable. And I guess we thank our Premier (Mr. Selinger) for, you know, keeping us afloat there. Businesses are growing. Unemployment is low. So we're building on the success. We're announcing 75,000 new workers in Manitoba by the year 2020. The—I—it's quiet in here. Did I hear me say 75,000 new workers? That's what we're doing: 75,000 new workers. Is there a thunder over here? I don't hear anything over there. I don't know. Record investment in building Manitoba's infrastructure will create thousands of good jobs. Again, we want to work in partnership with the federal government.

Existing labour market: we, in Manitoba, have been working in partnerships with the federal government in many different programs. We just think we have to fine-tune this so Manitobans can take better advantage of the jobs and skills training.

I have to say, I flew up to the great town of Flin Flon, some call it the banana capital of the North. I flew up to Flin Flon with the Premier yesterday. We announced a \$1-million investment in my high school towards the upgrade of the lab facilities in the science room, but also a jobs training facility that can be used for training for many different skills, from whether it's plumbing, automotive or electrical, and I think that's the key to Manitobans. It's just not about education, it's about training. It's about training for

the jobs that are going to be out there, and I'm so proud that our government is looking at the opportunities for training throughout Manitoba. So when that announcement—I was so proud to announce that announcement in my old high school. It was great to see former students that I taught and see that the opportunities in my town are being, obviously, welcomed.

We also went to Cranberry. Cranberry, as you know, is a hub for education for many of the First Nations schools up North that send their students to Cranberry, close to 300. I'm amazed at the education facilities in Cranberry. We opened, last year, a northern—a technical school where they're building houses within a hangar and taking advantage of teaching of students skills in carpentry.

Dan Reagan's doing a great job at Egg Lake, taking students—and this is key—taking students that are over 18, some are even younger, but 18 to 25 that haven't really gone through—I'm sorry can you hear me there? Can you hear me? I don't know, should I talk like—*[interjection]* You can hear me good. I didn't know that. I'm sorry. I know it's an important message. I thank you for that because we want this out.

What is really important is that the training that Dan Reagan is doing at Egg Lake is for students that have quit school, that—given up on education. Some of them have given up on life, haven't had a chance to go back to high school because they're too old. They go to Egg Lake and they get—their skills are built up and then some of them transfer over to Cranberry. So when I go to Cranberry I see many students that are in their second and third chances, and we do not want to stop that. We want to make sure we never give up—never give up. Did I hear that again? We never give up on the students of Manitoba. We make sure that they're going to have training for the jobs. We make sure that they have the education for those jobs. So it was a great trip, flying up there with the Premier and, like I say, a lot of people are now calling Flin Flon the Camp David of the North, I don't know.

Mr. Speaker, let's look at some of the statistics here. Manitoba is a low-unemployment province. Hello, yes. Our unemployment rate is averaging 5.3 per cent, one of the lowest in the country and well below the national rate of 7.1 per cent. In the last three months rural unemployment was well below the national average of 6.9 per cent. Let's look at some communities in the south. South central,

that's Winkler, Morden, Altona and many other fine communities in that area are at 3.1 per cent—3.1 per cent.

**An Honourable Member:** And they're complaining.

**Mr. Pettersen:** They're complaining. North central, Portage la Prairie and other fine communities in that area are at 3.1 per cent; southwest, including Brandon and area, 3.7 per cent; southeast, Steinbach and Beausejour at 4.5 per cent.

\* (11:10)

We're a long way from when the PCs were in power and the average unemployment was 7.6 per cent, skyrocketing to 10.3 per cent in 1993. That is scary, Mr. Speaker. Those are scary statistics because we do not—I repeat—we do not want to go back to what the—our opposition here says the good old '90s.

Well, you know what? The good old '90s was Filmon Fridays; it was, you know—it was cutting back nurses, cutting back doctors—*[interjection]* Yes, it was the cut-back shuffle back then. I don't know if you're familiar with many dances, but there was a cut-back shuffle back then that was—*[interjection]* Yes, yes.

But let's talk about training and northern development. I mentioned Flin Flon, and I know some of the people are saying, hey, what about other areas? Well, I want to talk about Thompson. I want to talk about the great work—the great work in the partnership with our mining advisory committee that the minister of mines has headed and worked towards. I want to really thank him for taking the bull by the horns and steering us in the direction, especially the positive announcement that we had at the mining conference which was great, and we're working to make mining No. 1, and we will do that through the hard work of the Mining Advisory Council.

But, in Vale, okay, the company that basically is the main—well, is the main company in Thompson, was looking for employment. They were looking all over the place. They finally find—found out that, you know what? We can look right here locally, work out agreement with Chief Primrose, okay, a man who wants to take advantage of opportunities in the North for his people. And not only did he get jobs for his people, but 73 people are gone through our training and have been employed since February, 2012. That, ladies and gentlemen, is a statistic that we're proud

of. We're training people for the North for jobs in the North.

Mr. Speaker, we also have to realize that opportunities are all across Manitoba and, like I said, it's time to get on the—not just the love train of Manitoba; it's the labour love train of Manitoba, and we're going around from town to town, making sure unemployment's low, making sure we have the training, make sure we have the jobs, the education, at—for the skills throughout Manitoba. We're spending money on training. We're making sure, through our Throne Speech, that investing in building roads, bridges, water—creates steady economic growth. I'm proud of our government because it's a government who stands up for the people.

We are the party of we; they are the party of me. We want to make darn sure that we are working for the people of Manitoba.

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable member's time has expired.

**Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson):** And I have to thank the member for bringing this forward. It's certainly an indication that—of what they're lacking. It's a very, very good indication, if you analyze this resolution, they have finally admitted that they have an issue, after 14 years, they're trying to prepare a way to address it. However, the rant that we just heard today didn't address it. What it did is it undressed the situation to the point where they have been negligible. They haven't been able to manage. They've had no foresight and no vision. So let's just analyze what they've put forward.

WHEREAS good jobs for families and key—are key to the development of Manitoba's economy—Mr. Speaker, it's the determination and the work ethic of Manitobans is what makes this province such a special place—all Manitobans. The NDP are wrong to believe that they are the creators of jobs. It's the industry that's the creator of the jobs. Manitobans are the ones who have created our jobs and work in our communities, and they're the key to Manitoba's economic success, certainly not the NDP government with their tax and spend—tax-and-spend regime that they have been putting forward.

Let's look at the next resolution: WHEREAS the provincial government is committing to adding 75,000 new jobs—hear, hear, hear.

Let's take a look at what they—what we do know and what has been predicted for some time, is

that the provincial government isn't going to be providing those jobs. They're not going to be creating them. These jobs were predicted long before this announcement came out, the 60,000 new jobs by 2020, 80 per cent of the proposed additional workforce. This is nothing new but an example of the NDP's deception. It's an example of your deception. That's what I would submit to the member from Kildonan, Mr. Speaker.

And WHEREAS the education and training initiatives, such as the federal-provincial labour market agreements are critical to achieving the goal. Well, Mr. Speaker, the NDP had only recently started to host round table discussions—only recently. This labour agreement has been here for some time and has never been maximized. I have to point out that they're now just having round table discussions only after we have lost 4,300 jobs in one month, 600 year over year, October to October. Why was this consultation and due diligent not done before the PST was implemented? Why didn't the NDP listen to their own Finance Department employees that said you're breaking the law, this is not the way to go. No, they had to try and cover—they had to try and cover the mistakes that they have made in the 14 years. It's just mismanagement of the money of the province of Manitoba and has hurt the economy of Manitoba that's going to last for a long time. There will be a hangover from this for some time to come.

Let's look at the next one: WHEREAS the—Manitoba should successfully develop and deliver training under the current framework and—with especially effective partnerships. That's what that resolution should say; that's not what's written there, but that's what it should say, Mr. Speaker. And the private sector has indicated that one of the major concerns was finding skilled labour for their industries, and it's clear—it's been very, very clear even in the last couple days when we have an industry leaving Manitoba to go to Tennessee. That's because of the neglect by this particular Province and it's from—because of the people like the individual from the Interlake who has said you have developed in the wrong place. Well, these people have found a new place to develop, and I say to you today, that's Tennessee; they announced it yesterday. That's because of the neglect of this particular government and the disrespect shown by that member for the Interlake.

Mr. Speaker, let's go to the next resolution where the federal government has announced it is displacing funding from the labour market

agreement. No, what's actually happened is that bringing the labour market agreement into today's real world, and you have to—you have to continue to upgrade to meet the conditions that we have to look at in today's world. And so what I would say to the members opposite and to you—to them through you—that part of the program which includes feedback and participation from the private enterprise and industry leaders in skill development is a good thing. It will help ensure that employers can use Manitoba's labour market to help Manitobans connect with job vacancies and integrate with the required synergy of business. That's what you need to do as a government. You need to provide the environment for businesses to grow and employment will stay here, but they have not. They have failed to do that as a government. They have failed miserably for 14 years.

And so we'll go to the next WHEREAS, and it should've read whereas the NDP have not the expertise in negotiating with the federal government. The rest of that resolution could be left the same, but that's what the real thing is. They do not have the expertise to negotiate for the betterment of the Aboriginal people or all of Manitobans. That is their—that's their fault. That's their inability, Mr. Speaker, to manage the affairs of this province to keep our labour force here today, and it's clear after that announcement yesterday.

Let's look at the next WHEREAS: requirements under the new Canada jobs—will hurt job creation. No, Mr. Speaker, it's in negotiations. You have the opportunity to negotiate for the best interests of this province. They don't have the expertise in negotiations because they don't listen—they don't listen to the expertise that they have, and that's clear. When they were bringing in the PST, their experts said to them you're breaking the law and this isn't required, don't do it. What did they do? They broke the law. They brought this forward and collected over a hundred million dollars illegally, and they've continued to do these types of things. They believe that they're above the law. We've seen that happen with the—let's just take the Assiniboine downs, for example, where the ministers had to be instructed by a judge: you will write the cheque, Mr. Minister. You can change the law, but you can't break the law.

Let's just take a look at the next: therefore be it resolved that the NDP government should—in Manitoba—should recognize the importance of skill training. That's what that resolution should say. It should say that they should recognize that we need



that. They should be out there negotiating for that and to meet the individual needs that are out there to address what the employers of Manitoba wanted.

\* (11:20)

Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons that we have such a low unemployment rate in Manitoba is because people have left the province. They have gone somewhere else to work because there is no work here, and then, when there is work, we don't have the people here. We haven't trained the people for the jobs that are here.

When we listen to the member from Flin Flon talk about mining being No. 1, yes, let's make mining No. 1. It was when you took over; it should be there now, but you ran it into the ground. You left it in the ground. Mining should be brought out and you should be able to value-add to everything that comes out of there. But, no, the NDP ran that into the ground year after year after year.

Why is it, Mr. Speaker, that they want to keep Manitoba at the bottom of the barrel? It's not just that they put them there; they want to keep them there for ever and ever. They want to keep them as a have-not province with their hands out to the federal government looking for huge hands out.

One third of their budget comes from the federal government and that's where they want to keep the bar. They want to keep the bar so low that, if they can make one little improvement, they look great. Well, the fact is, Mr. Speaker, they look terrible to the rest of Canada. They make Manitobans feel inferior when we go outside our borders anyplace, and they are driving us—they are driving us outside of our borders to shop with this PST increase, which kills jobs in Manitoba.

So, Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, what I would say is that the last resolution should read: Be it resolved that Manitoba legislator Assembly work co-operatively with the federal government to deliver meaningful skilled trainings to all Manitobans for the benefit of all Manitobans and the Manitoba economy.

If Manitoba had worked co-operatively in the past and used the monies from the labour market agreement in a positive way rather than frittering away the resources, had they used the vision and foresight to look into the future, address the concerns and the needs of the industry, then we would not be in the situation that we are today. We wouldn't lack the skilled labour that is causing Manitoba to

be losing jobs to other communities and other provinces, Mr. Speaker.

So, in conclusion, I would say they need to revamp this resolution that we could support it, and the way it is right now is written as someone that's flailing. They—what they've done is they blame the federal ministers or the federal government and when they start doing—blaming somebody for their inability to run the affairs of the Province, you know that they lack any credible leadership, Mr. Speaker, and all Manitobans now agree that—with that.

Thank you very much.

**Mr. Dave Gaudreau (St. Norbert):** Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm so tired of hearing all the negative stuff from Mr. Eeyore over there about how terrible our province is. Our province is doing so well it's unbelievable. We've got the third lowest unemployment rate in Canada, but you wouldn't know it from them on that side of the House. They're negative, negative, negative about everything. He wants to talk about leadership; he might want to read the newspaper the last couple of days about leadership. Let's talk about leadership.

Mr. Speaker, the member for Emerson (Mr. Graydon) is saying that we're not listening. They're not listening. Every single province is against what the federal government is doing, every single province. Conservative provinces, Liberal provinces, and New Democratic provinces are against what the federal government is doing, downloading \$20 million of costs to educate people to provinces. So who's not listening? We're listening. We're hearing it loud and clear. We're on board with the other provinces. We're saying that it's a bad idea along with all of the other provinces.

You know, he wants to talk about jobs and all that stuff and how there's been a net gain—86—sorry, 8,300 net gain jobs in the private sector. He wanted to talk about how, you know, oh, it's got to be done by the private enterprise. Well, it's being done by the private enterprise. We've seen 8,300 new jobs from the—in the last year created by the private enterprise. He likes to mislead and put facts on the record that aren't true, Mr. Speaker.

You know, the federal government changed the immigration policy and that is why that company is leaving Manitoba because they can't get welders because they're not allowed to get people from other countries. That's the fact, Mr. Speaker. If he would read the article, he would understand that, but instead

he likes to point fingers and blame us. He's blaming something that is his own party policy. It's the federal government who's changed immigration policy, that's why that company is leaving. He likes to put false information on the record.

You know, we've got this lowest business tax—actually, the only tax-free zone for small business in the country. We're creating—we're helping create jobs with the private sector and small businesses. What more would they like, Mr. Speaker? When they were in power it was 8 per cent. Well, we put it down to zero. I would argue that zero is better than 8 per cent. The titans of industry over there don't seem to understand that.

You know, he's talking about how—that the people are leaving the province. Are you kidding me? What about my area, Mr. Speaker? I'll talk about St. Norbert, the fantastic area of St. Norbert. I've got South Pointe where houses are popping up like Lego. There are so many houses being built there it's unbelievable; 50,000 new homes will be there in the next few years, and since the election over 800 have popped up. So where are all those people coming from if everybody's leaving the province and it's so terrible here? You know, the facts are that over 125,000 more people have called Manitoba home now since when they were in power. The facts are when they were in power we were losing 3,300 people a year; 33,000 people left the province when they were in power. Left, gone, housing was low, you couldn't sell your house because nobody was here to buy it. Housing prices now are high because it's—there's a demand for it.

So they want to talk about being the titans of industry. Well, look at that, Mr. Speaker, I mean, they like to put false information on the record. How are all those houses being built? And in their leader's area, I know he doesn't live there and he doesn't go there very often, but in their leader's area in Bridgwater Forest there's new homes popping up like crazy there too. Where are all those people coming from? If there's no people in this province and people are leaving like crazy, who's buying those homes? Who's building those homes?

You know, they like to complain about everything. Well, in Calgary property taxes are going up 5.1 per cent. In Edmonton they're going up 5 per cent, Toronto's proposing 3 per cent. BC Hydro, 28 per cent increase, Mr. Speaker. Manitoba Hydro, oh, we got 4 per cent, and they would like to say it's the end of the world. They talk like this is the

worst thing that's ever happened in the history of the province. But you know what? The rates are still lower than in 1993 when they were in power. The rates are still lower. So, you know, they want to talk about that. We're 60 per cent lower than our neighbouring provinces. Oh, and guess what? Ontario is raising their rates 33 per cent over the next three years, 11 per cent a year. So you know what? We're going to be way lower giving Manitoba companies the advantage to be here. That's why we're experiencing a shortage of workers and skilled workers, because people are moving here. Businesses are moving here, and the whole country is experiencing this. They talk so negative about everything.

I was in Newfoundland on a conference for the Legislative Assembly, and you know what, Mr. Speaker? Everybody there, all of the parties, concluding people from Alberta with Conservative and Wildrose, including Liberals from in BC, every single party was coming up to me and saying, wow, Manitoba has really weathered the storm during the economic recession and how well Manitoba is doing.

And you know what the big discussion was around the table? The titans of industry like to say that we're the only province with a shortage of workers; every single province has a shortage of workers right now. But you know what? We're addressing it. We're the province who are saying we need to train 75,000 new people.

We're not ignoring it like they would. We're not cutting education like they would. That was how they deal with their problem, they cut. Oh, we've got a problem, let's cut it. So how would their \$550 million worth of cuts help train more welders—that the member for Emerson (Mr. Graydon) is complaining there is leaving because of the federal governments cuts. How would we train more people if we didn't—if we cut education? How would we train more students at school? How would we lower class sizes? How would we fund our universities and colleges if we had massive cuts? How would we do that, Mr. Speaker? Well, we wouldn't, because we would see everything do exactly what it did in the '90s where everything was—people were moving away, enrolment was declining. That was how they handled it. It's unbelievable.

You know, you look back and they—you know, I know they hate talking about their past record, and I mean if it was my record, I'd hate talking about it too. But back when they were—had their hands at

the wheel of the ship, which, you know, they were sailing it through open seas and they—we couldn't hit a fact if—in their—in any of their speeches with that ship, by the way. But, you know, 7.6 per cent unemployment rate, and it actually hit 10.3 per cent in June of 1993. So the titans of industry over there were saying that, you know, oh, they can handle the economy better; the facts are that they can't. The facts say that they can't. They try to pretend that they can, but they can't. It's unbelievable, Mr. Speaker. I mean, the denial that goes on over there is longer than the denial of—the Nile River. I mean, it's unbelievable.

\* (11:30)

You know, and it's not just us, Mr. Speaker. Every single one of the provinces is not on board with this new federal training program. I mean, it's something that is going to download \$20 million to the provinces. But, you know, underneath their plan, I guess they'd just cut \$20 million more from somewhere else—maybe it'd be health care, maybe it'd be education. Where would you cut? How many nurses would you fire to make up for that \$20 million that's going to be downloaded on the province?

We're not doing that. We're taking action and we're making sure that we fund those programs fully because we know the value of skilled workforce. Unlike the opposition—who doesn't care about a skilled workforce; they just want to have a 10 per cent unemployment rate so they can have a cheap labour pool, Mr. Speaker—we want to create good jobs for people, and we work with the private sector to do so. And the numbers prove it because we have 86–8,300 new jobs created last year alone in the private sector.

You know, the Leader of the Opposition likes to talk about his past performance. He said, you know, past performance is—dictates the future performance. Well, let's talk about his past performance. He sold MTS. So, if we're going to do that—if we're going to go down that road and he sells Hydro, how would we then have an advantage for companies? Well, we wouldn't, Mr. Speaker. We'd be in the same position as Ontario, if they had their hands at the helm. Our rates would be 60 per cent higher right off the bat, because they talk about market rate all the time, and we'd be facing 33 per cent increases over the next three years or 11 per cent a year. And I wonder how they would feel about that. Because it's their plan, maybe they'd be okay with it. But under our plan, we

had to see a 4 per cent increase, and it was the worst thing ever, according to them.

Well, you know, they talk about other provinces, Mr. Speaker, all the time. They talk about Saskatchewan. They want to talk about the province that they love. They're the Rider fans over there and they always talk about Saskatchewan. Well, today, the Potash Corporation announced that there's going to be an 18 per cent cut to their corporation, which means 440 people are going to be losing their jobs in Saskatchewan. And I don't like that. I think it's terrible. I wish that those people would keep their jobs. That's not where I'm going with this.

What I'm saying is, the member for Emerson (Mr. Graydon) wants to talk about jobs being outsourced to other parts of the country. We're not alone in that, Mr. Speaker. BC's facing it. Their concrete plants—I know that they've been facing it with—they're shipping in concrete now from China. We've got, unfortunately, a company here that's going to have to move because they can't get federal government support for immigration, and they're going to move to get welders down in the US, and that's unfortunate. But 440 jobs in Saskatchewan being cut, that's unfortunate too.

So, if they want to talk about how great Saskatchewan is, they have to put everything on the record: the fact that they pay 60 per cent more for hydro, the fact that their unemployment rate is—and their—that their unemployment rate is much like ours—we're right neck and neck with them—and they have to talk about how they pay more for daycare, Mr. Speaker. I mean, you can't cherry-pick across the country.

Manitoba has a plan. We're going to train 75,000 more workers, and we're hoping that we can change the federal government's mind and make sure that we get those people trained, Mr. Speaker. We're not going to ignore the problem.

Thank you.

**Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo):** It is always just such a pleasure to follow the member from St. Norbert. It means that it's finally time, Mr. Speaker, that we put some facts on the record. So I will endeavour to do just that, to remind members opposite about what it is that they have done to our province over the last 14 years since they came to power.

But first of all, I want to start off, Mr. Speaker, today, and talk about all the wonderful

business owners and leaders in our province, the small-business, medium-size-business owners and managers, and those that run these companies in our province. Because, unlike members opposite, we know who the real job creators are in this province, and it's that of the private sector. It's those hard-working men and women in the small- and medium-sized businesses in our province that create the jobs that we need in this province to educate our workforce. Unlike members opposite, who like to take credit for creating all the jobs in our province, and they need to understand that and learn that it's not government that creates jobs; it's the private sector that creates jobs in our province. So I remind members opposite that that's the case.

And I know, Mr. Speaker, that members opposite like to talk about the 1990s. Well, let's look at what mining was in the 1990s. We were No. 1 in Canada. And where are we at now? I think we're at the bottom of the barrel now; we're last in Canada—dead last. And that's what members opposite have done to our province.

And I'll remind members opposite that the 1990s were tough times, Mr. Speaker, and it was a time that was spent cleaning up the mess of the NDP—the previous NDP government—in the 1980s. And that's just the fact. And so I know members opposite don't like to, you know, don't like to listen to the facts, but those are the facts.

And, you know, Mr. Speaker, members opposite talk about the low unemployment in our province. And the fact of the matter is that there's low unemployment because people are leaving this province. If you look at the net—and, again, it's the government's own numbers. It's called the net interprovincial out-migration numbers. The members opposite may want to look at some of their own numbers. But right now, we are losing more people than we are gaining from every other province in this country. And that means that people are leaving, and they're leaving because this government is not creating the environment in this province that is conducive to keeping those skilled people here in our province. And I'm very concerned about the future for my children, for my grandchildren in this province if we continue—if this NDP government continues to run things into the ground the way they have been.

Mr. Speaker, since the government created the new Department of Jobs and the Economy, we have lost 4,300 jobs, 4,300 full-time jobs. Those are the

facts, and I know members opposite seem to think that Stats Canada is the new right-wing think tank, but the fact of the matter is these are Stats Canada numbers. The numbers speak for themselves. And I know members opposite don't like those numbers. And if I were them I wouldn't like them. As a matter of fact, I'm not them, and I still don't like them. I don't like those numbers. They're going in the wrong direction.

But those are the numbers lost since this new Minister of Jobs and the Economy (Ms. Oswald) came into her position just a month or so ago. And I think it's rising day by day. I think it's up to some 6,000 jobs lost now. As of October, 6,000 jobs lost in—over—yes, October over October, Mr. Speaker. And those are facts. Again, I know members opposite like to look at Stats Canada as a right-wing think tank, but it's not. Those numbers speak for themselves. And I know that members opposite have used those numbers when it's convenient for them in the past; they've used Stats Canada numbers in the past. But these numbers speak for themselves, and it shows that they're running our economy into the ground in this province. They are driving people out of our province. They are not creating the kind of environment that is conducive towards increasing job opportunities here for our young people right here in Manitoba.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, in the last budget, I know that members of Saskatchewan—I think that the happiest person on earth that day was Brad Wall, because that budget was actually Saskatchewan's economic action plan. That budget has created more economic opportunities for Saskatchewan than it ever did for Manitoba. And that's unfortunate. This Premier (Mr. Selinger) and this government should be looking at Manitoba and looking at how we create jobs here in Manitoba, not how we educate the workforce of Saskatchewan, of Alberta and of every other province in our country. And, again, it goes back to those net interprovincial out-migration numbers where we're losing more people to every other province in this country at a faster rate than any other province in this country. And those numbers speak for themselves.

Mr. Speaker, by raising the PST in this province, they have—the members opposite, they say they're going to spend more on infrastructure, that they're going to do all these things with the PST increase, but we know in the past that infrastructure hasn't been a priority for this government. And now all of a sudden it's going to be a big priority for this

government. Well, I will say that every other province across this country also is spending money in infrastructure, and not one of them had to raise the PST in order to take advantage of some of the opportunities that the federal government has offered the provinces when it comes to infrastructure.

So it's unnecessary. This PST was not only illegal, this PST hike, Mr. Speaker, and I know that members opposite are going to ram this through on Thursday because that's what they're here for, but it's unfortunate. And they do still have an opportunity to change their minds. I know members opposite have been out in their communities. I know that they're hearing from Manitobans because I'm hearing from Manitobans about this—the negative impact of this PST increase, in particular, in some of the areas of poverty in our province. That's what this PST increase is creating.

\* (11:40)

It's making those who are already struggling struggle even further to make ends meet. Seniors in our province who live on fixed income, who live by their fixed income, all of a sudden the NDP is taking more money away from those seniors now to spend it on their pet projects, and I think that's unfortunate because seniors have contributed a lot to our province, and they believe strongly in the right to vote and the right to live in a free and democratic society. And I think what's unfortunate is that when this Bill 20 passes on Thursday—which, again, I encourage members opposite to change their mind, it's not too late, and vote against that bill. But what they're doing is they're stripping Manitobans of their right to vote, and I'll tell you that I've spoken to seniors across this province who are disgusted by the NDP's ripping away their right to vote in our province. And I know that there's many families, young families who are struggling to make ends meets anyways, Mr. Speaker, and now, all of a sudden, they're going to raise the PST and take more money off of their kitchen table and put it onto their Cabinet table so the NDP government can spend their money, because they think they know better how to spend the money of hard-working Manitobans than Manitobans know themselves.

And I guess that's the real difference between the NDP and ourselves, is that we believe that Manitobans know best how to spend their money and the NDP believes that they know what's best for Manitobans, and that's a fundamental difference between them and us. And I think it's—I think

Manitobans across this country are—or across this province are very concerned. When they hear from a Premier of our province just prior to an election in a desperate attempt to get re-elected in our province making a promise not to raise taxes, each and every one of the NDP candidates and members opposite went door to door and they lied to Manitobans. They—the NDP lied to Manitobans. They broke their promise to Manitobans the first available opportunity that they had. They got into office and they raised the taxes. They raised the PST, they expanded the PST, and now we're in a situation that we're in. And the fact of the matter is Manitobans don't trust this NDP government because this NDP government has given them every reason not to trust them.

So I encourage members opposite to vote against this resolution, because this is not the answer for our province, Mr. Speaker. You've got an NDP government that is driving our—driving people out of our province, and I think it's unfortunate.

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Mineral Resources):** Mr. Speaker, I have a number of things I want to speak about. There's so much that's going on positively in the Manitoba economy that I could probably speak for the balance of the day.

But let me, first of all, correct the member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson) who made some glaring errors. I just looked at the Manitoba Bureau of Statistics for net migration into Manitoba for the month of October. Since the Minister of Jobs and the Economy (Ms. Oswald) has been in, has been a net increase of 2,147 people into the province. For the past quarter the net increase is 3,867 more people in Manitoba in the last quarter than last year, and the second biggest population increase since 1972 occurred between this year and last year. So the members are so wrong and so negative, you could hard—they—as soon as they open their mouth it's like the whole room turns black. It's extraordinary.

I—you know, in opposition you do have a role to oppose and you do have a role to give alternatives. But you don't have a role to deny and to be incorrect on everything. It's deny, deny, deny, just like the Colin Thatcher book Deny, Deny, Deny—and I knew Colin Thatcher, gosh knows. You know, Mr. Speaker, to deal with the economy, those tiny titans of commerce over there, you'd think they'd have a vision or a plan. You know, there's no vision, there's no plan from members opposite. One only needs to look back, they criticized our training

initiatives. You know, I was thinking back to the Tory training initiatives. Did we see any increase in apprenticeships when the Tories were in office? Do you know what they did with lab technicians? When the lab tech—they cancelled the courses. They said lab technicians aren't going to be needed in the future; it's going to be all machines. They cancelled the courses. What other courses did they cut? X-ray technicians, nursing programs, doctor programs, rehab programs, they literally cut every professional program available. That's how they dealt with skills, Mr. Speaker—eliminating them. And it is—it's a Tory reaction. Soon as times get tough, Tories cut. That's what they do, they just cut, they cut recklessly and it's nothing new. It's been historical—that was—you remember Sterling Lyon, acute protracted restraint. Remember what Don—what—Fotheringham said about him, that he would tax and cut the tips of crutches if he could.

The—then we got into the Filmon years where we saw nurses laid off and fired. The reason as the member—[*interjection*]-teachers laid off and fired. Now, Mr. Speaker, now that our population's growing, now that Manitoba has the largest population in its history, the largest population growth in its history, now that people are coming to Manitoba because of opportunities, we're now having difficulties with the federal government that wants to change the immigration programs and the work-related programs. And as my colleague very eloquently pointed out, all of the provinces are in disagreement with what the federal government is doing and what the impact will be, if we allow those changes to go through and how uncomfortable it is.

Now, we talked about today, 500 jobs alone in Saskatchewan lost in the potash industry, 500 jobs. Now, we take no comfort in that. There's absolutely no comfort in that and we've seen, literally, in the last few weeks and months, thousands of jobs leaving Ontario. And we take no comfort in that. The problem I have is any time anything goes slightly awry in Manitoba, the members opposite stand up and they attack. They don't look at the underlying circumstances, they don't look at the positives. You know, they say mining is a problem in Manitoba when right now the largest mine in Manitoba history has been built at Lalor, the largest in Manitoba history, and where the mining companies tell me they're looking, not just for tens, not just for hundreds, but for thousands of workers.

Now, let me think about this for a second. Members opposite say we don't have a plan, but we

say we're going to qualify and train 75,000 workers, and members opposite say, well, that's not good enough. Okay, what are you going to do? Deafening silence. No plan. The plan is to cut.

Now, I want to take a bit of a different angle, Mr. Speaker. We started something called the First Peoples Economic Growth Fund and we put money into an economic development fund for entrepreneurs and businesses. Now, members opposite would say, oh, that's bad, bad government. That's bad government; private enterprise should do these things.

But what it's done, it's actually levered about \$60 million, about \$60 million in investment and in jobs. And those staunch New Democrats on that board, people like Bob Silver and Bob Brennan, who are very proud of what it's done, has established First Nation jobs, First Nation companies. You know, Tim Hortons—Tim Hortons is opening up on First Nation reserves, providing jobs and economic opportunity, Mr. Speaker. That's the kind of jobs we're talking about, not just the high-end skilled jobs but entrepreneurs and businesses and the ability of people who are in the poorest conditions in Manitoba to have a chance to participate in the economy. You just don't do it in the Manitoba Club, sitting in the Manitoba Club and saying how great you are doesn't create jobs. It's true. Businesses do create jobs and some of the best business people are providing us advice.

They provided us advise on job training. It wasn't us that set up the skills training strategy; it was businesses coming together with workers coming together with government, Mr. Speaker, talking about what we needed in this province. Where there's a world-wide skills shortage, what can we do?

Well, for one thing, we can lower tuition rates. Done. Oh, another thing, we could say, hey, once you're trained and you stay in this province and work, we'll pay back your tuition up to 60 per cent. Done. One thing we'll say is we'll provide training to leapfrog you from institution to institution, so your credentials can be worked everywhere—working on and done in some cases.

\* (11:50)

One is taking people who never had a chance to participate, say First Nations, and give them a chance to finish high school and move into apprenticeships—done; one is to provide more apprenticeships across

the province—done; one is to provide more doctors in training—done; one is to provide more nurses in training—done; one is to bring back lab technician training—done; one is to bring back X-ray technician training—done; one is to bring more training for stenographers—done; one is to expand the medical rehab—done; one is to have the largest population of students ever in our universities—done; one is to expand our Red River Community College—done; one is to bring in courses like digital media—done.

You know, Mr. Speaker, there's a thousand people in this city working on digital media. You know, there's a company in Winnipeg that does the ads for the Chinese McDonald's commercials. Where's that done? In Winnipeg. Would members ever talk about it? No. StandardAero's expansion—would they talk about it? No. Would they talk about the fact that GE's doing its jet engine testing in Winnipeg? No. Would they talk about the fact that Red River Community College had its whole class of IT class hired—the entire class last year. Would they talk about that? No, because they do not understand.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, they have a one-trick pony, and that one-trick pony is to cut, cut, cut. And, yes, you have to be prudent how you spend your money, but cutting isn't everything. Amputation isn't everything. Talk to a doctor; once you cut everything off, there's nothing left. And that's what happened in the '90s, and that's why we had to build back.

Of course, the private sector creates jobs. That's why we're the only jurisdiction in the country to have no taxes for small business. Try to match that. You had a decade to do that. What did you do? Nothing. In fact, you increased taxes. You cut back the tax credits going back to seniors and to average citizens; you cut that back. You started charging sales tax on baby supplies and, you know, that's a Tory time. You know, Tory times are tough times, Mr. Speaker.

Now, let me talk about what I really wanted to talk about, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to talk about the fact that hydro is the lowest rates in the country. Hydro is our oil, and you can tell because members opposite attack it every single day. You know, they complain about Hydro cutting offices in rural Manitoba. MTS, who they privatized, covered way more—cut way more offices in rural Manitoba, plus laid off hundreds of workers—whereas Manitoba Hydro's not—plus doubled and tripled their rates. Look at the example of a Crown corporation. Yes, they closed offices, but everyone's keeping their jobs

and the rates are equalized between rural and urban Manitoba, and they're the lowest in the country, and they're the same level—in fact, they're cheaper—the rates are cheaper today than they were when members were in office.

You can see, Mr. Speaker, where they're going on this. They want to go to market rates; they want to sell Manitoba Hydro, use it to pay off their debt, and then we're in the same hole we are in with MTS, where you can't get—members opposite want service in rural communities. In Saskatchewan they have it because there's a Crown corporation that provides it. In Manitoba, you have the cheapest hydro rates because it's a Crown corporation that provides it. Compare that experience to that in Saskatchewan.

And I'm just getting going, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable minister's time has expired.

**Mr. Dennis Smook (La Verendrye):** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to put some words on record for the member from Flin Flon's private member resolution, Support for Jobs and Skills Training.

The member from Flin Flon had a very optimistic speech this morning. It sounded like they want to take credit for everything in Manitoba: the Roar of the Rings, Lady Gaga coming to Winnipeg. I really don't think that the NDP government really can take credit for this. It's the people of Manitoba that'll take credit for this. I mean, this government is very good for taking credit. Anything good that happens in Manitoba, the NDP got—wants credit for it; but anything else that may happen, they always want to blame somebody else—blame somebody else for anything that's not going right. They're famous for blaming the federal government. Every time things aren't quite looking rosy for them, they gave—they blame the federal government, even though the federal government is providing Manitoba with some of the highest transfer payments that we've ever seen. But no, this NDP government wants to beat up on the federal government.

But one thing I will say that this NDP government is good at: they are not able to balance the budget and they run up some of the highest debt that Manitoba has ever seen. So, yes, they are really good at that, so I will give them credit for those few things that they have done.

Mr. Speaker, I do agree with the member from Flin Flon when he says good jobs are key to

developing Manitoba's economy. This provincial government has committed to add 75,000 jobs to Manitoba's economy by the year 2020, but, unfortunately, this is probably going to come from the economy itself, not from this NDP government, because they are not going to create those jobs. Eighty per cent of those jobs have already been forecast to be created by the economy, not by the government.

The NDP government likes to credit—take credit for creating jobs, but it is the hard-working Manitobans that create jobs. It's the people of Manitoba who take chances and start businesses and meet payroll. Those are the ones who are creating the jobs in this province.

Mr. Speaker, small business is one of the largest employers in Manitoba. Small business is key to Manitoba's success, not this NDP government. Small business creates jobs, even though they're only maybe one or two jobs here and there, but they are stable jobs. They are jobs that will stay in this economy. But this NDP government does not see that. Instead, they raise taxes; they raise fees—highest inflation in the country. This is hurting business. Business optimism is down. Full-time employment is down. Manufacturing sales are stagnant. Does this sound like an economy that supports economic growth?

Private sector has indicated that one of their major concerns was finding skilled labour for their industries, whether they be northern or southern. Shortage of labour is a key thing to make Manitoba grow. But why are we short of skilled labour? Is it because we're exporting a good part of our skilled labour to Manitoba—or from Manitoba to Saskatchewan and Alberta? Are families and people moving there for better jobs? Are they moving there because this NDP government's policies of high tax and high spending are hurting this province?

Mr. Speaker, the Premier (Mr. Selinger) is on record saying the PST hike is stimulating the

economy and putting thousands of Manitobans to work. How can this be possible when the Minister for Jobs and the Economy (Ms. Oswald) lost 4,300 jobs in her first month on the job? Statistics Canada indicates approximately 6,000 full-time jobs were lost in October compared to a year ago. Just today there was an announcement from a company from Arborg: 25 jobs are moving to Tennessee—25 rural jobs. You know what 25 jobs do to a small town? Why are they moving? Is this government doing all that they can to keep jobs in Manitoba? Are they meeting the constant change in what employers are looking for? Do they sit down and do they consult with employers to see where they have to go, or are they just too busy spending money and not really caring about what's happening in the jobs?

This government has had 14 years in power, 14 years to solve these problems. But the problems are not getting better; they're getting worse. Fourteen years of high-tax and high-spend policy are not helping this province.

The member from Flin Flon mentioned mining in northern Manitoba. Yes, I agree, mining is key for northern Manitoba. I spent over five years working in northern Manitoba and I know how important mining is, what mining can create to the economy over there. But I would ask the member, why is it, then, in 1999, when this government took over, mining was No. 1—Manitoba was No. 1 for mining—now, 14 years later, mining is rated as No. 10? They've driven it to the bottom of the barrel. How can they do this? I mean, this took place under this government's watch. Botswana is above Manitoba—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for La Verendrye (Mr. Smook) will have two minutes remaining.

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



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Tuesday, December 3, 2013**

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