

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

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-First Legislature

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, May 24, 2016

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

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

Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

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

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Paramedic Services Week

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): Good afternoon, Madam Speaker. I'm honoured to stand in the House this afternoon to recognize the vital role that emergency medical service providers play in our health-care system and to recognize that this week is Paramedic Services Week.

Each and every day, Manitobans benefit from the knowledge and skills of these highly trained health-care providers. From dispatch centres to ambulances on the ground and in the air, every community in our province is served by these dedicated front-line health-care professionals.

Members of our emergency medical services teams are devoted to providing life-saving care. We know that access to this care dramatically improves the survival and recovery rates of those who experience sudden illness or injury.

The theme of this year's Paramedic Services Week is Paramedics: Enhancing Care, Changing Lives. This theme recognizes that in addition to emergency services, paramedics provide valuable care in the areas of prevention, safety awareness and emergency preparedness.

We would like to sincerely thank all emergency medical service providers for their dedication and service to Manitobans.

Please join us in recognizing them today, this week and throughout the year.

Thank you.

Madam Speaker: I would just like to note for the record that the required 90 minutes' notice prior to routine proceedings was provided in accordance with rule 26(2).

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Madam Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the official opposition to recognize the national Emergency Medical Services week and the important role EMS has in our province and to further recognize May 22nd to 28th as Paramedic Services Week here in Manitoba.

We know the value of those on our front lines, and we want to ensure that we get the best care possible when facing some of our most challenging situations, and EMS are an important part of that care.

Over 116,000 paramedic patient transports took place in Manitoba during 2014-15. It takes a whole team of front-line workers to make this happen, including first responders, emergency medical technicians, paramedics and emergency medical dispatchers. And this week is our opportunity to celebrate them all.

There will be many activities taking place this week to celebrate the work of EMS in our province, including a contest hosted by Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service for the students of Lord Selkirk School called What Does a Paramedic Mean to You?

It's crucial that we continuously reflect on the good work of those who are on our front lines. And I would encourage all members of this House to take a minute, like the students of Lord Selkirk have, to reflect on the importance of EMS for all of us.

Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity to stand in the House and recognize the hard work of our EMS and celebrate national emergency services week. I look forward in the coming session to

continue fighting for the rights of our front-line workers to make Manitoba a stronger province.

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

Madam Speaker: Is there leave for the member to speak to the ministerial statement? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Gerrard: I thank the minister for his statement.

It is fitting that this week we recognize the extraordinary contributions of Manitoba's emergency medical responders. Each day their efforts contribute heroic actions which address health emergencies, and their response and their presence have contributed to the saving of countless Manitoba lives.

Our Liberal caucus joins all MLAs in saying thank you to our emergency medical responders. But our thank you to our emergency medical responders should extend beyond words. They need actions from us as legislators.

The Paramedic Association of Manitoba has been fighting for self-regulation for years but have been stalled in their efforts. There was an excellent review conducted by Reg Toews of Manitoba's EMS services with a report released three years ago in 2013. Very few of the recommendations have been fully implemented to date. Urgent action is needed.

As Liberals, we will be watching the new government carefully and we'll be pressing for action. Paramedics of Manitoba deserve no less.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Bell Cell Service Expansion

Mr. Shannon Martin (Morris): Madam Speaker, we all know what a vital transportation link Highway 75 is for our province. That is why we on this side of this House are excited to see Bell Canada and MTS work to ensure broadband cell strength is strengthened for all those who use this important link.

These investments from the two companies will strengthen the cell connection in three areas: between Ste. Agathe and Morris, Morris and Highway 14 and Highway 201 and the US border, where important communication infrastructure often hits dead zones.

This is vital to ensure that residents and travellers through the constituencies of Morris, Emerson and La Verendrye are able to use their cellphones in the case of emergency and that

commercial travellers are able to connect their businesses with the rest of the world.

With Bell and MTS investing over \$1 billion over the next five years and 6,900 employees calling Manitoba home, our economy is growing. Businesses finally have some confidence in the Manitoba economy thanks to our better plan for a better Manitoba.

Expanded broadband coverage will help ensure rural Manitoba thrives and grows and will allow more communities to be better connected with the rest of the province. Economic development and safety are top of mind in small communities, and, thanks to the work of these two companies, minds can be put at ease with these investments.

These investments help Manitoba compete on a national, international scale. With Bell and MTS teaming up, we are now seeing increased service and increased competition in the Manitoba economy.

I am proud that our government was on hand for the announcement, and I'm proud to be part of a government that will work with companies like Bell and MTS to put Manitoba back on track with the right plan for a better tomorrow.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

* (13:40)

Wolseley Fire—Community Response

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): How a community responds when faced with adversity says a lot about the strength and character of its citizens. Just last month a terrible fire ripped through a construction site and two neighbouring homes in the heart of Wolseley. Two families were left temporarily homeless, and it's a miracle no lives were lost.

Helen Procner and her sister Neda's house on Maryland Street stood right next to where the fire started. When Helen awoke, both exits were blocked and she couldn't reach her wheelchair. It was only the bravery and quick thinking of the firefighters that got both Helen and Neda out safe and sound.

The fire also quickly spread to a second house, this one on Westminster Avenue, known in the neighbourhood as Raspberry Manor for its red colouring. Mark Pomrenke, his wife and their two children were sleeping when their neighbour, Adam Hannah, began pounding on their door. Thanks to Adam's warning, everyone

escaped unharmed. Moments later a fireball exploded just a few feet from the bedroom of Mark's eight-month-old son.

Madam Speaker, the incredible community response to this near-tragedy was immediate and inspiring. Helen's wheelchair was lost in the fire, but she quickly got a replacement from the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities. What's more, the Westminster United Church across the street and the Bell Tower Community Café held a barbecue to help gather donations for the families who suffered loss in the fire. Roughly 200 people attended and Helen discovered that GoFundMe campaigns have also been launched in her name.

Adam lent Mark clothes and shoes the same night as the fire while another neighbour, Amanda, who Mark calls Saint Amanda, came by to deliver diapers and children's clothes in the middle of the night. Mark's plan is to rebuild on his lot and call the new house Phoenix Place, to signify renewal.

My heart goes out to everyone affected by this dangerous and very scary fire. I want to salute the bravery of the first responders who risked their own lives to save the lives of others. I commend the selfless actions, as well, of local neighbours and agencies to help others in their time of need. In the face of adversity, Madam Speaker, Wolseley responded with love, care and compassion. I am honoured today to share this story with all members of the House.

Thank you.

RV and Camping Week

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): Madam Speaker, I rise in the House today to bring attention to Canadian RVing and Camping Week, which starts today and runs until May 29th. The week is being hosted by the Canadian Camping and RV Council to celebrate the Canadian camping tradition and launch the 2016 camping season. If the rest of the camping season is anything like the May long weekend, Manitobans are in for a summer full of great camping experiences.

I encourage members to get outside this weekend and take advantage of Canadian RVing and Camping Week. There are a number of campgrounds in Manitoba offering special discounted rates for May 28th and 29th to help showcase the best of what Manitoba's camping has to offer.

Representing the constituency of Lac du Bonnet, I live in one of the most beautiful areas of our province. I can assure all members Manitoba has some spectacular sights to see. I can't think of a better way to experience our province than through camping with friends and family.

Madam Speaker, camping is an affordable family activity that also allows for families to work together as a team. Pitching a tent, setting up a camper, gathering firewood, all these activities are made easier when people work together. In addition to developing teamwork skills, families can create lifelong memories while discovering Manitoba's rich landscape. The average family campground rate for a seasonal site in Manitoba is \$9 a day, which is doable for many Manitoba families.

With \$4.7 billion in GDP and 60,000 jobs created across the country, Canadian camping and RVing industries play an important role in our national and provincial economy.

Madam Speaker, Manitoba's outdoors have a lot to offer us. I hope members in this House are able to take advantage of Canadian RVing and Camping Week.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Members' statements?

Lisa Michaluk

Mr. Jeff Wharton (Gimli): Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise in the House today and recognize a fellow Manitoban whose dedication to education has seen her receive a minister's award of excellence in teaching.

Madam Speaker, on May 13th, 2016, Mrs. Lisa Michaluk of Sigurbjorg Stefansson Early School in the Evergreen School Division was recognized for her achievements at the 10th annual minister's awards reception.

Ms. Michaluk is highly respected by her peers and adored by both parents and students. She works very hard to help students find their voice as their interests, ideas and research are included in activities to further encourage learning. She has worked diligently to service initiatives such as implementing iPads in every classroom to enhance learning and prepare students for the work demands of the 21st century while also creating a school blog for shared learning amongst the community.

Ms. Michaluk currently teaches kindergarten to grade 4 students as a literacy teacher and ICT facilitator. The community of Gimli is very lucky to have such a caring educator, mentor and leader for their young students. Mrs. Michaluk is also teaching her students to open their hearts and demonstrate compassion. After viewing a ribbon-like structure, a discussion into cancer started. These young students were eager to help. Under her leadership, her students decided to host a bake sale to raise money. The event was successful, and they donated all the proceeds to cancer research.

Congratulations again to Mrs. Michaluk and her minister's award of excellence in teaching. Her innovation, leadership and work ethic in the classroom will leave her students well prepared in the years ahead. I invite all members of this House to join me in thanking Mrs. Michaluk for all of her hard work and dedication. We are all extremely proud of her and very fortunate to have her educating our young Manitobans.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Asian Heritage Month

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows): Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize that the month of May is Asian Heritage Month here in Canada. This is the 14th year that it is being actively celebrated in Manitoba. The month of May emphasizes how our Asian heritage contributes to the well-being of our great province and how essential this community is to our multicultural society.

Madam Speaker, over the years, I have had many opportunities to celebrate Asian heritage. I have done this through my friends, family and events such as Folklorama, the Manitoba Filipino Street Festival, Vaisakhi and visiting various countries in Asia. These opportunities exhibit the importance of Asian heritage and how proud and grateful we should be of our long and rich ethnic history.

This past weekend I had the pleasure of attending an annual Aaja Nachle event. This was organized by the Manitoba Indian Cultural Organization. It was a night full of performances, laughter, good food and dancing. This event raised \$17,000 for CancerCare and over \$1,500 for a charity back in Punjab. People came together to celebrate heritage and contribute to the broader community.

We are a rich, multicultural mosaic, and I'm so proud of how our Asian community has contributed to who we are as a province. With a week to go, I would encourage all members of the Legislature to participate in some way in promoting Asian Heritage Month. And if you are looking for an activity, let me recommend the Asian Canadian Festival happening at The Forks from 1 to 5 this Saturday and Sunday.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: Prior to oral questions, I'd like to direct your attention to the gallery where we have seated in the public gallery from École Selkirk Junior High 65 grade 9 students under the direction of Ms. Joan Cooney. And this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Selkirk (Mr. Lagimodiere).

And seated in my loge to my left is Kevin Lamoureux, who's the MP for Winnipeg North and former MLA for Inkster.

On behalf of all honour 'members'—on all honourable members, I welcome all of you here today.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Sale of MTS to Bell Cellphone Rate Increase

Ms. Flor Marcelino (Leader of the Official Opposition): Madam Speaker, last week we were treated to the bizarre spectacle of the Premier putting aside his official responsibilities to become a public relations representative for Bell Canada at a press conference to promote their proposed takeover of MTS.

Can the Premier confirm that he stated that cellphone rates will go up in Manitoba if the proposed sale of MTS to Bell Canada goes ahead?

*(13:50)

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): If I may, Madam Speaker, I wanted to point out to the young people from Selkirk that they have an excellent teacher in Ms. Cooney, who I taught 35 years ago, and she was a fabulous student at that time, I must say.

We're, of course, on this side of the House, very, very supportive of the idea of better services for Manitobans, and included in that would be better cellphone reception and reliability. I think that that is an important goal we should all pursue and support,

and, of course, we do. It's, I think, a positive thing for growing our economy. I think it's a positive thing, as well, for the safety of residents who travel in areas around the province, such as Highway 75, a major and well-travelled route that's integral to our economic growth.

And so positive news in respect of these important services, I think, is good for the whole province, good for the citizens of the province, good for the future of the province as well.

Ms. Marcelino: Madam Speaker, the Premier did, in fact, state that cellphone rates will go up.

Can he also confirm that he stated that you get what you pay for and that Manitobans will no longer have amongst the lowest cellphone rates in Canada?

Mr. Pallister: Madam Speaker, well, just—I recall just a few short weeks ago the members of the then-New Democratic government decrying the very presence of a private phone utility in our province and claiming the rates were high. Today they claim they're low.

What we are interested in, of course, is better services for the people of Manitoba. What the other side has been associated with and continues to be, among Manitoba observers, is the fact that they promoted the idea of paying more and getting less. We like the idea of Manitobans getting more.

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

Ms. Marcelino: Madam Speaker, I am once again only quoting the Premier.

Why did the Premier also state that this is what happens when private sector businesses compete with one another when, in fact, the merger will result in one less provider of cellphone services, something that will lead to a major cellphone rate increase because of the lack of competition?

Mr. Pallister: Competition was, until, I think, two years ago, something that that party opposite opposed in its own constitution, as they opposed profit. They stand on a regular basis and promote the continuation of monopoly delivery of all services and, today, talk about competition. It's a bit of a contradiction. More than that, I think it's a total contradiction.

I wanted to, if I might, Madam Speaker, though, mention, because it's my first opportunity to do it, that a special aspect, I think, for many of us

during the election night coverage, was when Kevin Lamoureux was told that his daughter had won a seat in the House in the Legislature. It was a special thing for a father and a special thing for, I think, all Manitobans who respect the commitment that families—that family, in particular, had made to public life in this province, and I thank them for that commitment.

Sale of MTS to Bell Opposition to Sale

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Madam Speaker, my question is to the Premier.

The PCs privatized MTS, then key PC insiders profited significantly from the privatized company. Former Premier Gary Filmon received well over \$1 million over the 12-year period he sat on the privatized MTS board. He was vice-chair of the board of Wellington West, the company that sold off MTS and made tens of millions of dollars on the sale. There are significant close ties between MTS and the PCs.

Is this why the Premier and his government won't stand up for Manitobans and oppose the sale?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, again, this member has not recognized for some time that the simple repetition of falsehoods does not make them close to the truth. He continues to put false information on the record, as he has done for some time.

That being said, if the member is interested in us going the way of Cuba in terms of re-publicizing the MTS and taking hundreds of millions, if not billions, of dollars away from health care and education in Manitoba, he should come clean and advocate for that publicly. I encourage him to do so.

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

Mr. Maloway: The consumers of this province want this government to oppose this sale.

Madam Speaker, Manitobans are looking to this government to speak for them on this important issue, not just for their PC insider friends. This government can support Manitoba consumers and make it clear to the Competition Bureau, the CRTC and directly with the federal minister that it does not support the sale.

Why won't he oppose this particular sale that will lead to a dramatic increase in cellphone rates

and, by the way, an end to unlimited data in this province?

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade): I do thank the member for the question. It certainly is a very important question for consumers around Manitoba, and I can tell you that the people in my particular area of the province are looking forward to enhanced cell service in our area of the province.

I think my community, in fact, probably has the most cellphone booster towers per capita of anywhere in the province, so we are looking forward to the \$1-billion investment in technology here in Manitoba.

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

Mr. Maloway: The MTS was currently spending \$200 million a year, and over five years it would equal the \$1 billion that they are talking about right now.

The—this government doesn't care about the Manitoba consumers.

Will this Premier (Mr. Pallister) and this government confirm that they worked with Bell Canada to ensure that this issue did not come up during the recent provincial election and that after the election they would support the PC insider friends in shafting Manitoba consumers?

Mr. Cullen: I do appreciate the question and certainly the continuing fear mongering coming from the opposite side.

You know, we're happy to work with any company that wants to bring \$1 billion to our province. We welcome them with open arms. We on this side of the House will work with the business community, we will work with labour, and we will get the job done here in Manitoba. And we are really looking forward to enhanced services here in Manitoba.

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

MTS Capital Investment Bell's Proposed Investment

Ms. Flor Marcelino (Leader of the Official Opposition): Perhaps I could remind the minister and the Premier that over the five-year period of—from 2011 to 2015, MTS has invested over \$1 billion

in capital investments and Bell Canada is proposing to invest a similar amount.

So the question is, then: Why is the Premier acting as a PR agent for Bell Canada? Why is he asking Manitobans to pay more, pay higher cellphone rates, and at the same time get more of the same?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Thank you very much to my honourable colleague for raising the issue of support for Manitobans in respect of better services. At this point, it's refreshing to hear her raise these issues in this context given that this was, as a government, a group that saw virtually no reason to do anything but jack up taxes and fees on Manitobans in every respect, whether it was hydro bills, an ongoing increase in the hydro bills that Manitobans pay; or it was increases in taxes on workers and their families, on their benefits, for example, of 8 per cent; whether it was increases in their home insurance taxes of 8 per cent; whether it was increases in hundreds and hundreds of other items with the PST, which they actually had so little respect for Manitobans for that they went to court to take away the right of Manitobans to actually vote on whether those taxes should be raised.

Zero concern for Manitobans for a long time in terms of what value—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

The honourable interim Official Opposition Leader, on a supplementary question.

Ms. Marcelino: Looks like the Premier simply doesn't care for ordinary Manitobans, regardless of how much the—this—the increase would be for cellphone rates.

* (14:00)

Anyway, Madam Speaker, the Premier didn't stop at saying cellphone rates will go up; he's also quoted as saying that he would consider putting taxpayers' money into subsidizing Bell Canada.

How can the Premier justify that saying Manitoba cellphone customers should pay more and, on top of that, Manitoba taxpayers should be subsidizing Bell Canada, one of the largest corporations in the country?

Mr. Pallister: Well, for over 17 years, that member or her colleagues had nothing positive whatsoever to say about the great people who work at the Manitoba Telecom Services. Now there's an amalgamation

occurring and suddenly they're the defenders of Manitoba's best interests. But 17-year record of nothing but harsh criticism and sarcasm in respect of the work that Manitoba's largest private sector employer and its people have done tells me there's a sudden flip-flop occurring on the other side.

Madam Speaker, in terms of the differential impact that that government's decisions has had on Manitoba families, the average Manitoba family now, as a result of the inattentiveness and mismanagement of the previous administration, pays over \$4,000 more per year in taxes than if you lived in Regina. That's the sad legacy of the total mismanagement and the misplaced priorities and selfish priorities of the previous administration.

So in terms of credibility on this front, I don't believe that the member opposite and her colleagues have any at all.

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

Ms. Marcelino: If the Premier really is concerned about ordinary Manitobans, he would not have privatized MTS. After all, he was part of the Filmon government.

But will he perhaps indicate how much MTS has invested in cellular phone service over the past five years and how much Bell Canada is proposing to invest?

Mr. Pallister: Well, Madam Speaker, again, only the doom-and-gloom, black-cloud NDP could make a bad-news story out of better cell service for the people of Manitoba. Unbelievable.

And when one looks at the makeup of their caucus, one understands why they have total disregard for the people of northern and rural Manitoba, quite frankly, because this is where the improved services will—[interjection] This is where the commitments are being made and this is where the improved services are going to occur.

But, Madam Speaker, if the government—if the former government members opposite are advocating that we follow the way of Cuba and other jurisdictions in terms of a publicly owned utility, then they must also be advocating that we take money from Manitobans that could have gone to health care, education or better roads, and we take those hundreds of millions if not billions of dollars that the private sector is willing to invest, and we take away from health care and we put it into trying

to compete with international and very effective private sector deliverers of phone and Internet service.

If that's what they're advocating, they should come clean and say so. Tell Manitobans.

Sale of MTS to Bell Employment Loss Concern

Mr. Kevin Chief (Point Douglas): Madam Speaker, facts are clear. When the Premier (Mr. Pallister) sat around the Cabinet table, he sold off MTS, his friends got richer, the rest of Manitobans paid more. This also resulted in the loss of hundreds and hundreds if not thousands of good jobs all across Manitoba.

On Friday, the Premier fully endorsed the sale of MTS at an event in Morris.

Can the Minister for Growth, Enterprise and Trade indicate today what assurances he has received that there will be no job losses in this sale?

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the comments from the member opposite, certainly as it relates to the labour field. And I do want to offer our congratulations, too, to his re-election in Point Douglas and recognize that, speaking of labour, he was involved in a labour situation during the campaign. So we want to offer our congratulations to his—the birth of his third son.

Madam Speaker, you'll know that I have three sons as well, so I don't think I can offer advice, but I certainly encourage a discussion about what you might expect having three sons under your watch. And I will look forward to the labour part of the question.

Mr. Chief: Madam Speaker, you know, I've got to say, any time that we talk about baby Dax in the House, I'm always going to be incredibly proud.

But Manitobans want me to ask about jobs here today, Madam Speaker, so we've got to—we want to stay focused. There's been a lot of concerns about—for Manitobans about their rates going up, including when the Premier announced, very proudly, he said rates are going up at his PR event. They continue to be worried about the hundreds and hundreds of job losses. In fact, according to the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce, they say jobs staying here in Manitoba is critical to this sale.

Again, I ask the Minister for Growth, Enterprise and Trade: Will he commit today that there will be no job losses in Manitoba in this deal?

Mr. Cullen: Madam Speaker, again, I appreciate the member's question.

Certainly, we've got 17 years of NDP government to catch up on. We recognize that job creation and good jobs are important for Manitobans. Madam Speaker, we're very encouraged by it.

In fact, I'm going to reference an article that just appeared in *The Globe and Mail*, and there was a survey done by innovation research on an online survey of over twenty—almost 2,400 Canadians, found that jobs and economic growth were the highest priority for Canadians at 23 per cent, followed by health care. We agree with Canadians and Manitobans: Job growth is No. 1.

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

Mr. Chief: Madam Speaker, the question is clear.

I ask again: The Minister for Growth, Enterprise and Trade, will he commit today that there'll be no job losses for Manitoba in this deal?

You know, I travelled to all the members opposite ridings and you talk to young people. They are still devastated by the sale of MTS. When the Premier (Mr. Pallister) sat around the Cabinet table, his friends got richer, the rest of Manitobans paid more.

I ask this minister again: Will he commit today that he got assurances in this sale that there'll be no job losses in this sale, Madam Speaker?

Mr. Cullen: Madam Speaker, again, I appreciate the question.

Clearly, if BCE is going to invest \$1 billion in our province over the next five years, there is going to be job creation here in Manitoba. We look forward to the expansion of service. We look forward to the reliability of service, and that's something that Manitobans have been asking us for years. We think BCE can deliver.

And, Madam Speaker, it's not about the past, it's about the future here in Manitoba, and that's what we're looking at, is the future.

MTS Capital Investment Bell's Proposed Investment

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): Madam Speaker, we now know that the unprecedented \$1 billion in capital investment that Bell has announced in their takeover bid of MTS is not unprecedented at all, considering that MTS has invested the same amount over the past five years.

Since the Premier admitted that Manitobans' cellular rates will rise because of the loss of a fourth cellular option in Manitoba, how can he continue to promote this takeover considering that this supposed investment is an illusion?

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the members opposite interest in this file.

We, too, are interested in this file, and, obviously, when a company comes to Manitoba, and it's nice to see a company actually come to Manitoba and bring \$1 billion to the table, we will work closely with that company to make sure that Manitoba's interests are looked after.

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

Sale of MTS to Bell Employment Loss Concerns

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): Madam Speaker, in times of economic uncertainty, Manitobans need to know that their jobs are secure. Corporate takeovers like the Bell takeover of MTS, which the Premier is promoting, always result in job losses.

Can this Premier assure MTS employees that their jobs are secure?

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade): Madam Speaker, again, appreciate the member's concern.

* (14:10)

We will be working with the business community. We will be working with the labour community as well to make sure that things are moving forward here positively in Manitoba.

And, Madam Speaker, I'll reflect back and ask—tell the member what the president of MTS said about this investment—historic investment in Manitoba: I see the changing is the level of technology that our customers are going to have

access to. By virtue of being part of the larger Bell organization, they will enjoy access to better technologies, better Internet access and better data.

That sounds like a good-news story to me.

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

Cellphone Rate Increase

Mr. Marcelino: I take that as a no.

Madam Speaker, this bad deal is not done. It can be stopped. The regulators still have their say on this proposed deal. The Competition Bureau is keen on hearing from Manitobans, and the CRTC will also be conducting hearings.

Will this Premier (Mr. Pallister) change his mind and speak out against this takeover that will see Manitobans' cellular rates rise needlessly?

Mr. Cullen: Madam Speaker, appreciate the comments from the member opposite.

Madam Speaker, what Manitobans said no to was the tax-and-spend policies of the previous government. That's what Manitobans said no to.

Members opposite know there's a federal process under way. They have full right to make their comments known to the federal government, and we certainly appreciate where they're coming from. If they're opposed to a \$1-billion investment in Manitoba, let us know.

Provincial Nominee Program Government Intention

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows): Madam Speaker, it is well known that immigration is one of Manitoba's principal engines of growth. Knowing how important the nominee program is to our province, in particular to so many families and the economy of Manitoba, I was disappointed to find that the mandate letter given to the Minister of Education and Training contains no reference to this critical program.

With this in mind, I would like to invite the Minister of Education and Training to make a clear statement that he is committed to fixing the Provincial Nominee Program, and will he tell us why there seems to be no reference to it in the Throne Speech or his mandate letter?

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Ian Wishart (Minister of Education and Training): I thank the member for her question.

And I certainly appreciate every Manitoban should be interested in immigration issues because it is one of the principal economic drivers of our community. We have benefited greatly from the PNP program in the past, in fact, a program that was originally put in place by a Conservative government. And we are committed to consult with immigration beneficiaries and those that wish to immigrate and their families to make sure that program works well into the future.

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

Processing Wait Times

Ms. Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, in 1996, former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and former Premier Gary Filmon achieved an agreement to give Manitoba input into Ottawa's immigration policy.

As I indicated in my response to the Throne Speech last week, there are many people telling me that there are serious flaws with the program. People are being rejected because of minor application oversights. Imagine waiting a year and a half to be told that someone's birth certificate was not included and therefore they have to wait another six months before they can begin the process all over again.

Our processing times are unacceptable, and the decisions being made are often unfair.

Will the minister fix the program and speed up the processing times?

Thank you.

Mr. Wishart: Well, and I appreciate the question from the honourable member.

Certainly, we're interested in trying to make the PNP program work as well as possible, and we are committed to examining outstanding issues. I know that to some degree the PNP program is actually a victim of its own success. It has way more applications than it can possibly handle, and certainly anyone who makes even a—the smallest error in terms of application often finds it very frustrating because they do have to go around again. But it's partly due, at least, because of the great demand for people wanting to come to Manitoba.

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

Restoration of Phone Line

Ms. Lamoureux: I appreciate that you recognize there are problems within the program.

Madam Speaker, the current administration of the program creates real barriers and heartache for those seeking to reunite with loved ones.

While there are many more questions I would like to ask the minister regarding the Provincial Nominee Program, I will close with a specific request.

At one point, there was a direct phone line that applicants could call to check in on the status of their applications.

Madam Speaker, I ask the minister: Will he commit to restoring the direct phone line for applicants to check in on the status of their files in a timely manner?

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Wishart: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the member's question.

As I had indicated before, we are certainly looking for ways to make the program work better, and we are prepared to consider any and all options that are designed to make a program that has worked so well for Manitoba in the past, a program that we had a hand in helping develop, work as well as possible to benefit all Manitobans.

Trans-Pacific Partnership Impact on Agriculture Industry

Mr. Brad Michaleski (Dauphin): Madam Speaker, agriculture is a diverse industry throughout Manitoba and is very important to all communities in our province.

Can the Minister of Agriculture tell us today what will be the impact of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and how will it affect all Manitobans and the Manitoba economy?

Hon. Ralph Eichler (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, I welcome the question from the member from Dauphin. I know he's going to do just a great job representing that very nice area. And, of course, his other 28 new colleagues, I welcome them to the Chamber as well.

Madam Speaker, this afternoon, we're going to have an opportunity on a government motion to talk about the Trans-Pacific Partnership. I encourage all

members to take part in that debate this afternoon. It's going to be an important time.

We represent \$9.3 billion a year in funding that comes through the Trans-Pacific Partnership. Just in that agreement alone, we're seeing new markets open up to the Asian market which includes barley, pork, canola oil, canola seeds and a whole host of others.

So I welcome all members to take part in that debate, and we'll see it pass this afternoon.

Madam Speaker: I would just like to put forward a reminder about putting questions and answers through the Chair and not using the word, you, as you're directing your statement to another member. Thank you.

PR 280 Upgrades Continuation of Project

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): We previously recognized the condition of PR 280 that services Split Lake, York Landing and Gillam and other communities. This road has left people stranded and with broken vehicles.

We had committed to a five-year plan with phase 2 now under way.

Last week, the Minister of Infrastructure refused to commit to upgrades to northern highways.

Will this minister assure members of these affected communities, some of whom are in the gallery today as we speak, will he commit that his department will proceed with phase 2 of this project?

Hon. Blaine Pedersen (Minister of Infrastructure): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question as infrastructure is important to all Manitobans, no matter where you live in this province.

And this government, Progressive Conservative government, believes in infrastructure that is strategic, predictable, a return on investment, and that's the type of spending that we need on infrastructure.

PR 280, Provincial Road 280, is part of that investment. The safety and accessibility for all residents is paramount for the communities that access this road and so many others across Manitoba. So that's why we'll continue to work with the communities on the upgrades to PR 280.

Mr. Lindsey: [*interjection*] No.

There is a need for immediate work because of the situation that was highlighted in the last week.

Why has the minister not responded to the immediate need to provide a safe means of travel for people who use this highway? Will he now commit to phase 2 of improving Highway 280 and to speed up the process given the urgency of this matter?

* (14:20)

Mr. Pedersen: Madam Speaker, again, I'd like to thank the member for the question.

In regards to Provincial Road 280, as infrastructure is so important all across Manitoba, there is an advisory committee that meets regularly about PR 280. That advisory committee includes local government, First Nations, Manitoba Hydro, and various government departments, and we look forward to the ongoing discussion and consulting with this committee.

This is a working partnership that this government has with this committee, and we work with all Manitobans.

Thank you.

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

Northern Highways Improvement of Commitment

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): Madam Speaker, we ask: Will this government also deliver on commitments to upgrade other northern roads such as the highway to Moose Lake, Nelson House, Highway No. 6, 10, 39, 391, 373, 374 and all northern Manitoba highways?

Why won't this PC government commit to the immediate and future investment in northern highways that northerners deserve?

Hon. Blaine Pedersen (Minister of Infrastructure): Again, I thank the member for the question.

And we have committed \$1 billion in infrastructure, which will be strategic. It will be a return on investment. It'll be predictable, not like the former government who did a raid, raid, raid and then paraded infrastructure the year before the election.

What we need is predictable infrastructure that will grow all of Manitoba no matter where you live

in Manitoba. It will be a commitment on our—by this government for consistent, predictable infrastructure spending.

Premier Staff Appointment Case Before the Court

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): Madam Speaker, Manitobans were surprised and disappointed that the mandate letter issued by the Premier (Mr. Pallister) to the Attorney General contained not a single word about this minister's role in providing Manitobans with confidence in our justice system. Maybe the Premier has a reason why that is so.

Is the Attorney General aware that a recently appointed member of the Premier's staff has a matter before Manitoba's highest court, the Court of Appeal, related to his past criminal conviction?

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

And, of course, mandate letters were never tabled or made public by members opposite. They had every opportunity to do that for 17 years and they didn't do it. And they were afraid, I guess, that Manitobans would figure out that they don't—that they didn't have the opportunity to follow through on many of the broken promises that they made. So it's unfortunate that the member opposite stands before Manitobans and criticizes the fact that we're being open and transparent with Manitobans.

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

Mr. Swan: Yes, Madam Speaker, Deveryn Ross has been appointed as the Premier's speech writer. Mr. Ross was found guilty of fraud at a trial. He was sentenced to 18 months in jail. He was disbarred by the Law Society of Manitoba and pled guilty to charges under The Securities Act.

Mr. Ross has asserted his innocence, and on May 14, 2014, federal Justice Minister Peter MacKay issued a reference to the Manitoba Court of Appeal which has not yet been heard.

Does the Attorney General (Mrs. Stefanson) believe that the Premier's wish to appoint staff with an outstanding case before the courts is more important than her own duty to give Manitobans confidence that their interests will be protected in this case?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): Well, you know, I'm surprised, Madam Speaker, that the former Attorney General wouldn't know better than to raise a specific case that still has legal consequences before the court, that still has status. I'm surprised that the Attorney General himself wouldn't know better than that and to raise this issue here.

And I'm surprised that he wouldn't remember that it wasn't that long ago that the former premier hired somebody into their office that was later fired as a result of an allegation of misappropriation of funds. Maybe he should have remembered that before he raised the question.

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

Mr. Swan: And the fact the House leader chose to get up and answer the question makes my point.

The member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) would often, in this House, anywhere else in this province he could find a camera or microphone, well, he'd call on the Attorney General to get personally involved in decisions in criminal cases before the courts. And his past makes it clear that this government doesn't understand the role of Attorney General nor believe in the independence of Crown attorneys.

And I ask the Attorney General (Mrs. Stefanson) if she failed to advise the Premier (Mr. Pallister) simply to await the result in this matter before he appointed Mr. Ross, or did the Premier simply ignore her advice?

Mr. Goertzen: Well, Madam Speaker, and I wonder if the former Attorney General, the member for Minto (Mr. Swan), stormed into the former premier's office when he decided to hire somebody directly into his office who had previously had issues regarding misappropriation of funds, who subsequently had issues regarding misappropriation of funds. I wonder if the member for Minto ran downstairs, ran to the premier's office, knocked on the door and demanded that action be taken.

I doubt it, because he says one thing in this House and he does another when he had his reins on the power, Madam Speaker.

Front-Line Workers Employment Protection

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Madam Speaker, on Thursday I asked the Premier very clearly, and the Minister of Health, for their definition of what they thought a front-line service was and asked them to just simply table that list here in the House to let all Manitobans know what they see as a front-line service. In a scrum later, the Premier went on to say that that list would be difficult to provide and it would be superfluous to provide that to the House.

What does the Premier have to say to front-line workers who are just waiting to see if their job is on the chopping block?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): Madam Speaker, we would say clearly to those front-line workers, as we did prior to the campaign, as we did during the campaign, as we have after the campaign, being consistent, not to believe the constant, the consistent, the negative fear mongering of the NDP. It never stops. They should stop doing it and stop trying to scare front-line workers and civil servants.

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

Mr. Wiebe: Madam Speaker, I'm asking a very simple question but I'm not hearing the answer here today. Front-line workers are simply waiting to hear if they'll actually be considered a front-line worker. They want to know if they're going to be on the chopping block.

For the sake of all Manitobans and those providing those valuable services on the front lines, I ask again for the Premier to just simply table this list; if they're consulting with front-line workers, if they're so concerned about protecting those jobs, simply table that list so that we can give some assurances to those workers who are doing that work.

Mr. Goertzen: Well, we have the repeat, Madam Speaker, of the failed election strategy of the NDP: Try to go out there and scare everyone, try to go out there and tell everybody that everything is going to be lost. That election strategy failed.

And it failed because Manitobans understood that if they wanted to look for optimism, if they wanted to look for a future, if they wanted to look for sustainability, if they wanted to look for things to go on the right path, they had to look to the Progressive Conservative Party. That's why they elected us into

government, and that's what we're going to deliver, Madam Speaker.

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

Mr. Wiebe: Madam Speaker, this minister and this Premier (Mr. Pallister) in their Throne Speech have talked a lot about efficiencies. They've used a lot of code words when it comes to health care.

Madam Speaker, we simply want to know if those front-line-service workers can be assured that their jobs are protected, that the services that Manitobans have come to count on will be protected in this province. I'm not hearing a lot of answers from the minister opposite. I just want to get to the final—to the bottom line here.

Will those jobs be protected? Who does he consider a front-line worker? And can we get that list tabled for the House?

Mr. Goertzen: Well, Madam Speaker, I'm waiting for the member, my friend, to table the list of who it is that he won't try to frighten. They've tried to frighten doctors. They've tried to frighten nurses. They've tried to frighten teachers. They've tried to frighten hydro workers. The list goes on and on and on and on.

And I'm glad that there was actually consultation done on this issue. It was called the election.

Stop trying to fight the election, sir.

Madam Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

Petitions?

* (14:30)

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, pursuant to rule 47(2), I rise to interrupt Throne Speech debate to deal with the government motion on the Order Paper, standing in the name of the minister of growth, trade and development, titled Trans-Pacific Partnership.

Madam Speaker: It has been moved—pursuant to rule 47(2), the Throne Speech is being interrupted to deal with the government motion on the Order Paper, standing in the name of the Minister of growth, trade and development, called Trans-Pacific Partnership.

GOVERNMENT RESOLUTION

Trans-Pacific Partnership

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade): I move, seconded by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Eichler),

WHEREAS Manitoba's exports to Trans-Pacific Partnership countries averaged more than \$9 billion annually from 2012 to 2014; and

WHEREAS the Trans-Pacific Partnership will support economic growth and job creation by eliminating tariffs on almost all of Manitoba's key exports while providing access to new opportunities in the Asia-Pacific region; and

WHEREAS exclusion from the Trans-Pacific Partnership could—would close access to critical trade markets and put Manitoba jobs at risk.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba confirm its support for the Trans-Pacific Partnership and call on the federal government to take the necessary actions to ratify the agreement.

Madam Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Minister for Growth, Enterprise and Trade, seconded by the Minister for Agriculture,

WHEREAS Manitoba's exports to Trans-Pacific Partnership countries averaged more than—

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense? Dispense, and so ordered.

Mr. Cullen: I certainly look forward to having a discussion on this, I think, a very important topic today in the Chamber.

Clearly, our government is focused on the economy. We are focused on growing the economy and we are focused on creating new jobs for all Manitobans. We believe that trade is one of the key elements that will help grow our economy here in Manitoba.

Clearly, Manitoba is a clearly substantial economic developer and promoter here in the province. We think there is more opportunity with our trading partners around the world, and the Trans-Pacific Partnership is one agreement where we think Manitobans can benefit greatly.

And we look forward to support on this motion from all parties in the House, and I trust this would

send a very significant message to Ottawa and to the federal government that this should be a priority for our government.

Clearly, trade is very important. We on this side of the House, as a new government, are actively involved in negotiations on a number of fronts. Within 15 days of forming government, we signalled that we will be having serious negotiations with our neighbouring partners to the west under the New West Partnership. We were excited to make the announcement last week that our counterparts in British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan looking forward to having Manitoba join that New West Partnership.

I know for—the old government, the opposition, for some reason, was reluctant to join our neighbours to the west in forging a partnership with them, certainly enhancing the trade aspect within Manitoba, within our neighbours to the west. And we share a lot of the same issues and a lot of the same trade economic activities, and it's something that we should have done in the past—we haven't.

This new government has taken the leadership role in that, and I will tell you—inform the House, that the day after we made the announcement with our counterparts in British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan that our chief negotiators, the day after we made the announcement, actually met to discuss how the aspects of that particular agreement will work out.

So the train has left the station, if you will, and we are working towards that particular agreement. We hope that can be resolved in the very near future and we look forward to all parties agreeing to that New West Partnership and signing that document in due course. It certainly is a priority for this government and we look forward to working with our counterparts to the west.

And I've also informed the House I did have a discussion with my colleagues, the ministers in British Columbia and Saskatchewan just last week in Toronto and very favourable comments to moving that New West Partnership forward.

You know, at the same time we were involved in discussions with the agreement on internal trade, a very significant trade document, very significant for Manitoba in terms of moving trade interprovincially, and there's a lot of things we can do as—interprovincially to enhance that trade and

we're working diligently to foster that development on all fronts.

This particular Trans-Pacific Partnership is very important. I know we've signalled it in our Throne Speech and we're looking forward to support from all parties on this. This partnership will enable us as Manitobans to protect jobs today and growing our economy into the future. This is paramount.

We are seeking the support of all parties in the House for this. We feel that this partnership is a free-trade agreement which will open and expand trade opportunities to the Asia-Pacific region, and we know how fast that area of the world is growing, and there's tremendous opportunities there. We cannot miss those opportunities. If we continue to fail to develop these trade agreements, we will miss opportunities, and that is what it's about. We cannot afford to miss opportunities. We cannot afford to have Manitoba miss any further opportunities.

The Trans-Pacific Partnership represents a market of 800 million people with a combined gross domestic product of \$28 trillion, which is about 40 per cent of the world economy. Clearly, this is a significant agreement for Canada and a significant agreement for Manitoba, and we think Manitoba has as much to gain in this agreement as any other province in Canada.

Manitoba exported an average of \$9.3 billion annually from 2012 to 2014 to the Trans-Pacific Partnership countries. Our ratification of the agreement is critical, not just for expanding opportunities to trade, but also for protecting thousands of Manitoba jobs that would be put at risk if we are shut out.

For Manitoba exporters, inclusion into the Trans-Pacific Partnership would mean an approximately \$250-million-a-year expansion in sales—\$250-million-a-year expansion in sales. Now, the NDP, if they chose to disagree with this, so I will look forward to their comments on this. Clearly, exclusion from the Trans-Pacific Partnership would close access to critical trade markets and put Manitoba jobs at risk. Manitoba's largest exporters estimate a drop in sales of almost \$400 million a year.

So, if we decide not to get into this agreement, Madam Speaker, we chance to lose \$400 million a year. Now, this is substantial for the economy of Manitoba, and we certainly hope the members opposite will support this agreement.

* (14:40)

Clearly, this agreement will mean a lot for our agriculture sector, and I certainly look forward to the Minister of Agriculture's (Mr. Eichler) comments on that, but, obviously, there's other sectors of our economy that stand to gain in this as well, and certainly, as we know, one in five jobs in Canada relies on trade. More trade means a stronger economy for all Manitobans. Our manufacturers rely on the global supply chains, and we want to be a part of that and we want to be at the table to reduce barriers to trade and make sure that our business community and our labour force can be engaged in trade across the world.

We have so many—and a diverse sector here in Manitoba; it's more than just agriculture. We have the aerospace industry which stands to gain quite a bit from proper trade. We have the mining sector, which obviously is facing challenges right now, but they do have a lot to gain in terms of enhanced trade negotiations. And from a small-business perspective, Madam Speaker, I just want to say the Trans-Pacific Partnership, for the first time in any Canadian Free Trade Agreement, includes a dedicated chapter with specific measures to assist small enterprises in make-taking full advantage of the opportunities that this agreement will create. This will enable Manitoba small businesses to expand access and exports into these emerging markets. We have so many industrial and resource sectors that rely on trade, and we cannot afford to be left out in terms of this agreement going forward.

So what we are doing by this resolution, we—the call to action here is to indicate that the federal government, which is now consulting with Canadians before taking a firm position, that they should understand where we as a province are coming from in terms of this particular trade agreement. We are hoping to send a message to the federal government of Canada that we and all parties in Manitoba embrace trade and recognize trade as being very important to Manitoba and to Canada. And we're looking forward to support for this resolution.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Wab Kinew (Fort Rouge): I would like to thank the Minister for Growth, Enterprise and Trade for his remarks today.

I do believe that the Trans-Pacific Partnership is an important issue confronting our country, but I

would encourage the minister and all the members in the gallery to think through more carefully the possible implications that entering the TPP would have on both our province and our country.

The simple fact of the matter is that it's not at all clear that ratifying the TPP would actually help to preserve jobs in our country. In fact, the best research on the subject shows that Canada would actually bear disproportionate job losses in a scenario where we enter the TPP.

So I'd like to expand on these comments more fully, Madam Speaker. Essentially, it's our position that trade is absolutely good. Trade does benefit Manitobans. It benefits Manitoba companies, Manitoba entrepreneurs, and in cases where trade agreements are entered into after careful deliberation, taking into account the advice of experts in the field can also benefit Manitoba workers, and that is the approach to trade that the Manitoba NDP are standing up for, and that is the approach to trade that we advocate.

The Trans-Pacific Partnership will not help to meet the stated objective of making Manitoba a most improved province; rather, the TPP itself needs improvement. It needs improvement to protect wages here in Manitoba, it needs improvement to protect space for Manitoba innovators to create the economic drivers of tomorrow and it needs improvement to protect our sovereignty. We need to preserve space for us to exercise sovereignty in areas like the freedom to set priorities on intellectual property rights. We need the freedom to exercise our sovereignty to preserve national priorities such as reconciliation with indigenous peoples. And we also need to preserve the Canadian prerogative and our sovereignty to be able to regulate things like future expansions of Pharmacare programs right here in Manitoba.

So, again, we're not against trade, but it's important to understand that the Trans-Pacific Partnership is not a trade deal like others that we have encountered in the past. And to that point in particular, I would like to draw a sharp distinction between the conversation that has happened to date around the New West Partnership and the conversation that we are now having about the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

The simple fact of the matter is that these are two radically different agreements. And, in particular, the TPP could potentially represent us giving up the future economy that the rest of the

globe is pursuing, which is essentially a knowledge economy, which is essentially an economy based on the commercialization of intellectual property.

Now, of course, it's not just us who say that we cannot accept the Trans-Pacific Partnership as is. Numerous luminaries from across Canada have spoken out against the TPP to date.

Madam, Speaker, perhaps most prominent among them is Jim Balsillie, the former co-chief executive officer for BlackBerry. And his opinion should be taken very seriously on a matter like this, because he is, in fact, probably this country's most prominent example of somebody who has succeeded in the knowledge economy, the globalized marketplace of ideas, and somebody who has taken Canadian-developed intellectual property, Canadian-developed innovation, from the idea stage right out into the market, at one point his company being valued at over \$20 billion.

In addition to Jim Balsillie, current innovators such as Tobi Lütke, who is the chief executive officer for Shopify, has spoken out against the TPP and the intellectual property provisions contained therein. Many members in the gallery today will be familiar with Shopify because they provide the back-end software which drives numerous e-commerce sites that many of us visit on a daily or at least regular basis.

The CEO, the chief executive officer, of Ford Canada, Dianne Craig, has said that she cannot accept the Trans-Pacific Partnership deal as is. In particular, her concerns have to do with the way currencies are dealt with under the Trans-Pacific Partnership and also to do with the tariffs levied against the automotive sector.

Legal scholar Michael Geist has published over 50 blog posts detailing his reasons for opposing. Again, his expertise is in the area of intellectual property rights. And so to have somebody with his insight to say that this deal is bad for Canadian intellectual property rights holders is a warning sign that people in this House should take into account very seriously, Madam Speaker.

And the final person I'd like to mention as raising the alarm bells over the Trans-Pacific Partnership is former deputy chief economist for the federal foreign affairs department, Dan Ciuriak, who has also conducted a very thorough economic analysis of the Trans-Pacific Partnership. And he's found that while on the one hand it could—it will very

definitely lead to infringement on the intellectual property freedom for Canadian innovators, it will also very likely add little to the economic growth of our country over the decades to come.

Now, in order to understand more fully where the concerns of each of these people intervening against the TPP are coming from, it's important to understand some of the transition that has happened in the globalized economy over the past several decades.

The reality of both the global economy and the Manitoba and Canadian economies is that we are ever-increasingly in a world where the greatest creators of value are those who innovate. The idea people of our world are those who are the ones who create the greatest value.

We see evidence of this in the transition of the makeup of the S&P 500 over the past four decades. Now, of course, the S&P 500 is a relatively conservative basket of stocks designed to give some insight into the overall performance of, you know, the financial markets.

Well, Madam Speaker, in 1976, 83 per cent of the value in the S&P 500 was comprised of tangible assets—essentially, you know, manufacturers, people who make real physical goods. From 83 per cent in 1976, in 2015, only 16 per cent of the S&P 500 was composed of companies dealing with tangible goods.

* (14:50)

We saw the reverse scenario over the same period in intangible goods. In 1976 only one sixth of the S&P 500 was made up of these companies, and in 2015 it was fully five sixths. And so we see here that the importance of technology, the importance of innovation, the importance of financial innovators is increasingly the determinant of economic growth in our current globalized economy.

Now, it's important to note here that while this has been the trend globally, that Manitoba and Canada have not fared as well when it comes to fostering this type of innovation. But we need to get with the program, as it were; we really need to understand these global macroeconomic trends, because every industry—including agricultural industries, including manufacturing industries—are increasingly becoming technology industries.

As an example, in agriculture, those companies that will have the long-run technological advantage are those who will be able to achieve massive scale

as a result of intellectual properties such as the genetic material that determines seeds or those that are able to create significant value added, again, probably as a result of innovations.

So this is the overall trend, but it's also one that we see here in Manitoba. We see local innovators such as SkipTheDishes and, you know, other companies that have been able to succeed here, but with the TPP we see a scenario under which innovators like that may actually be crowded out. And that concerns me very much, you know, not least of, you know, which the fact being that I'm an app developer myself, having developed apps for android and iOS which offer methods to translate indigenous languages.

So, in this era of globalization, we see that many trade barriers already have been reduced, many tariffs already have been removed through instruments like NAFTA. We already have trade deals with the United States, with Mexico, with Chile. However, as the global flow of goods and services increases, the real opportunity for economic potential to be realized comes in that innovation space.

Those who lock themselves into the production of tangible goods and tangible assets in entering a large-scale deal like the TPP will be forced to compete on one of two methods, either (1) by lowering wages, or (2) by devaluing their currency. And we've seen evidence of this happening in Canada over the past few decades as well, with a cyclical response to the value of the loonie resulting in a corresponding increase or decrease in the output of manufacturers.

Now, again, globalization itself is not the enemy; as somebody who's worked in the United States of America, you know, who has participated in the globalized workforce, I know full well that being able to travel and cross international borders can lead to increased prosperity for both individuals and for companies. However, once again, the terms have to be set out in a very judicious and a very careful manner. We do have to consider all the possible implications.

So we've heard today the honourable minister trumpet, you know, some figures, but I'd like to put a few other figures that relate to the economic impact of the Trans-Pacific Partnership onto the record. So Dan Ciuriak, who I mentioned earlier, is the former deputy chief economist at foreign affairs, says the TPP will add 0.1 per cent to the country's GDP by

2035. So we're seeing a rather small impact on GDP over the next 20 years according to his estimation.

The best case scenario, the most charitable analysis, you know, vis-à-vis growth under the TPP, says that GDP would increase by 0.5 per cent over the next 10 years, however that study is very flawed. It is very flawed for two reasons: (1) it assumes full employment in all economies entering into the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and (2) it also assumes that there would be no change in income distribution after entering the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

And I don't need to remind you, Madam Speaker, that we do not live in a world of full employment. And I would also add that we know now because of the research of economists like Thomas Piketty that income inequality is almost always increasing over time, and so the assumption that there would be no redistribution in income after entering into the Trans-Pacific Partnership is a faulty assumption which should lead us to question the validity of those economic growth projections.

A more credible examination of the potential scenario under the TPP is one conducted by Tufts University researchers. Now, their model does take into account less than full employment. It does take into account rising rates of income inequality over time. And what they found is perhaps an increase in GDP for Canada of 0.28 per cent over the next 10 years, which, again, is, you know, relatively smaller than we may have been led to believe.

Importantly, I should add that none of these projections, even the more credible ones, those that use a more accurate financial modelling, more accurate economic modelling, none of them take into account the impact of the intellectual property regime changes proposed under the Trans-Pacific Partnership, nor do they take into account the role of investor-state dispute settlements and the potential impact that decisions made in those processes might have on our economy.

So I'd like to dive deeper, discussing the tangible side of our economy, which is the side that is, you know, while growing in nominal value, is actually a smaller overall share of our country and our global economy's output.

So the first point I'd like to make is that, you know, this deal will very likely have a negative impact on wages. Specifically, it will lead to a reduction in the share of gross domestic product that is a result—that is taken up by employment. So this

means that wages, as a share of our economy, will shrink after the TPP is executed, were that in fact to happen. Now, the reason it'll—this scenario is likely to take place is threefold. First, you know, there is a result of downward pressure on wages due to competition. Now, we know that as we enter into a trade bloc with other countries around the world that if they have lower wages than ours, all other things being equal, wages in our backyard will have to decrease in order for Canadian companies to remain competitive. So this means that income from employment as share of gross domestic product will fall at an accelerated rate.

With no change in our trade regime, meaning we do not enter the Trans-Pacific Partnership, income as a share of overall GDP is projected to flatline, meaning, like, the share of take-home wages as reflecting—reflected as part of the overall economy, is expected to flatline going into the future.

However, it will decline at an accelerated rate if we do enter this trade bloc. Now, when trade barriers come down, the lowest wage, most productive worker is the most competitive. However, we've also seen in economic history that increasing productivity does not always lead to a commensurate increase in wages, and this should cause concern to Manitoba workers, that, you know, anecdotally, if they look back at the fact that they have increased in productivity over the past three decades as a result of technology like email and, you know, databases and things like that, that their wages likely have not increased by the same rate that their increased output has gone up by. And so this is likely to be exacerbated under a scenario where we enter the TPP.

Second cause of the impact on wages is that there'll be a downward pressure on real wages due to currency devaluation. Again, we can see evidence of this in the cyclical impact on manufacturers in Canada. As the Canadian dollar rises, we typically see manufacturing output fall. When the Canadian dollar falls, we typically see manufacturing output go up, rather the inverse scenario there. So 'alrejt'—already we're seeing the makings of an increasingly unequal world. We're seeing a recipe for more income inequality in a situation where we pursue the TPP. And this is problematic because if we look around the world in recent history, most of the great disturbances in peace or, you know, social order around the world have been presaged by a marked increase in income inequality in those jurisdictions.

So, potentially, we could be sowing the seeds for dysfunction here at home by entering into the TPP.

* (15:00)

Now, again, Thomas Piketty, the French economist, has found that the root cause of ever-increasing income inequality in the world is the fact that the return on capital is almost always greater than the return on labour. Now, carried out over time that gap can be very small, but once compounded over decades or perhaps even centuries, that this does mean that those who earn their living off of holding capital rather than—which is essentially, you know, people who own companies, people who own machinery, things like that, they have an ever-increasing share of the economic pie, while those who earn their income from charging a wage, essentially workers, the average, you know, person going to a nine to five job, gets an ever-increasing share of the pie.

Now, this is baked into almost every modern industrialized economy in the world. However, we can make interventions as a government as, you know, people engaged in the public's fear to mitigate those effects to minimize the gap between the returns on capital and the returns on labour. And so I would encourage people to proceed very cautiously when there is a ton of evidence the Trans-Pacific Partnership would, in fact, increase the spread between the return on capital and the return on labour.

And, finally, the share of GDP that goes to employment will decline, relatively speaking, because there will be job losses under the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and I would ask, you know, where the figures are to back up the claim that the TPP will actually be good for jobs when the evidence presented by experts is that there will actually be job losses from the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

To wit, the Tufts University researchers have projected that there would be 58,000 job losses in Canada as a result of the Trans-Pacific Partnership. Now, they have carried out this sort of projection, this sort of analysis across all the 12 nations that are part of the TPP and this 58,000 job-loss figure is actually the third highest of any country that is thinking about ratifying the deal right now, but it is the highest per capita, which allows us to make the statement that Canada is likely to disproportionately bear the highest relative number of job losses after

ratifying the TPP of any potential member nation, and that should alarm us.

Now, UNIFOR, the union, has also estimated that 20,000 job losses could come in the auto industry alone, and, again, this is probably one of the reasons why the CEO of Ford Canada has urged caution and said that she cannot support the Trans-Pacific Partnership as is, but, again, it should give caution to all of us when there is the potential for so many job losses right here in our own backyard. So we see on the tangible side of the economy the recipe for disaster.

On the intangible side of the economy, which I'd remind you that the economic record shows, is where all the growth is projected to happen, Madam Speaker. Well, on this side, we see that people such as former co-CEO of BlackBerry, Jim Balsillie, have called the intellectual property provisions in the TPP colonial. The reason that he calls the intellectual property provisions colonial is because they have been adopted wholesale from the United States of America's intellectual property framework.

So things like the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, that framework has been adopted wholesale by the negotiators from the TPP, and so were we to enter the Trans-Pacific Partnership, in essence we would be saying: No, we don't want to develop intellectual property standards here at home in Canada anymore. We are willing to accept wholesale those ones that are developed in the United States of America and all the attendant implications that would be carried therein.

So, for instance, all the influence that large corporations in the United States of America has in a post-citizens united world, where they are allowed to spend unlimited amounts of money to influence the political system down there, we would be adopting those same impacts on our ability to regulate intellectual property rights right here at home. Again, this should cause alarm.

Now, Mr. Balsillie, in his remarks before the House of Commons, asserted that Canada does not have the arsenal of valuable intellectual property to benefit financially from such provisions, and he offers two figures which, I think, illustrate the terms in stark contrast to what's going on in the reality of large intellectual property developing countries such as United States of America.

On the list of the top 300 US patent-holding firms, there is only one Canadian entry, and it is

BlackBerry. On the top 100 US patent-holding universities, there is only one Canadian entry: the University of British Columbia. So this should give us some cause to concern—for concern, rather, that we are perhaps not well situated to succeed in a reality where US patent law is very much determinating—determining, rather, who is, you know, able to enforce their rights to copyright, trademark and other attendant intellectual property provisions.

So, again, there will be a higher cost to intellectual property rights under the TPP. I'll run through a few of those scenarios so that—to share as evidence here for the members in the gallery who I'm sure are riveted by my in-depth economic analyses.

An Honourable Member: Here, here.

Mr. Kinew: That's right. Thanks for sticking with me here, guys.

So the copyright terms—the life of a copyright term would actually be extended under the TPP. So right now, it's currently 50 years after the life of a creator. That would now be extended 20 years to 70 years. This would have an impact of higher costs for Canadians.

And, now, you probably think, well, I can't sing Happy Birthday when I take my kid to Montana's; I'll have to wait another 20 years—big deal. But there is actually a very real cost born here at home, particularly publicly funded universities and libraries. They would have to pay significantly higher licensing costs for all the intellectual property that I—that they access. And I've asked librarians at universities, and they tell me that the increasing intellectual property licensing costs that they have are their single greatest financial concern going into the future.

Now, this should alarm us as a province that wants to situate itself to succeed in the knowledge economy with an innovation agenda, because every dollar that a Canadian publicly funded university, a Manitoba publicly funded university is spending on licensing intellectual property is another dollar that they can't spend on research, is another dollar that they can't spend to teach future business people, is not—another dollar that they can't spend to assist, you know, a young person from low socio-economic standing who wants to change their life. And so this should concern us very much. And, of course, most of these licensing payments flow directly to the United States of America.

There's another provision that would make dismantling digital locks criminal, which, you know, big deal, some might say, if I can't screenshot a protected website or something like that. But there is a very real effect that this would have on stifling innovation in our companies. We only need to look at the current lawsuit between Google and Oracle, right, where Oracle is suing Google for using its APIs, its application programming interfaces. Now, a lawsuit like that is no problem if you're Google and you can bankroll a never-ending legal defence, if you can hire thousands of lawyers. But, if you are a small start-up right here in Manitoba that has a brilliant idea, but all of a sudden some Silicon Valley company wants to hit you with a suit, that could drive you out of business. And that would, you know, seriously hamper our ability to innovate going into the future.

Again, there's a two-year patent extension for pharmaceuticals. That could add \$1 billion a year to the cost of delivering Pharmacare in this country. There are actual provisions within the TPP that could restrict the ability of this House or another order of government to institute Pharmacare programs going into the future. And so that should give us pause, especially given the aging population here in Canada. Do we really want to give up the right to be able to provide a strong quality of life for our elders, for the people in our country who need a strong health-care system?

It's provisions like that have—that have led Médecins Sans Frontières, Doctors Without Borders, to speak out against the TPP. And when a non-governmental organization, unbiased, like MSF speaks out, we should definitely listen.

* (15:10)

I'd also argue that entering the TPP is inconsistent with the goals of reconciliation in this country. There are actually provisions within the intellectual property regime that say traditional knowledge is under the purview of the TPP, but that that traditional knowledge must be documented. This is, of course, inconsistent with the idea of an oral tradition or a non-documented tradition. And I would say that they—that this edict runs counter to both Call to Action 43 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which says that every level of government in this country should use the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a framework for reconciliation. That it runs counter to Call to

Action 92, which issues a similar edict to use the UN declaration for the corporate sector in this country. And that, of course, it runs counter to United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Article 31, which says that indigenous people have the right to maintain, control and protect traditional knowledge, including genetic information, but also oral tradition, sports, literature, arts, design. The UNDRIP also says that states must institute policies to protect those rights.

So, in closing, what we're seeing, in a situation where we enter into the TPP, would be a locking in of Manitoba companies, workers and entrepreneurs into the ever-smaller share of the tangible pie while we are virtually guaranteeing that we're frozen out of the larger, bigger innovation pie that the rest of the country is cashing in on.

The reason is because intellectual property becomes an asset in investor state dispute settlement courts under the TPP and that we ought to remember that no Canadian company has ever won an ISDS case under NAFTA.

The World Economic Forum says within 30 years intellectual property will be the only competitive advantage for business and nations. That means that going out forward into the future the only way to create value for companies, for workers, is to have ideas. The only alternative in that future scenario is to slash wages to levels of the other countries in this trading bloc, countries like Vietnam or Mexico.

The other alternative would, of course, be to devalue our currency.

So, again, trade with TPP nations like US, Japan and the other nine, is a good thing. We're not opposed to that. But that trade cannot happen at any cost.

And I would say that accepting the TPP as is runs counter to the smart shopping ideology that we heard about in the recent provincial election campaign. That's why I will be saying that the TPP cannot be accepted as is, and, consequently, we cannot support the government resolution as is.

Hon. Ralph Eichler (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, I do want to speak a bit about this motion brought forward by the member from Spruce Woods. I'm proud to second this motion this afternoon. And I'd like to talk about the impact it's going to have on agriculture.

Just before I start, I do want to thank the member from Fort Rouge, and I do want to assure him that the Trans-Pacific Partnership creates strong and enforceable rules that will help Canadians conduct business in the Trans-Pacific Partnership countries with provisions that will reduce regulatory barriers and increase transparency and reinforce intellectual property rights. So that's important, and I know he talked about, the large portion of his 30 minutes, in regards to that. And I think that the rules are very clear in making sure that those intellectual rights will, in fact, be protected.

We also know that this has a huge impact on all Manitobans, an opportunity to see agriculture grow jobs to be created right here in the province of Manitoba. And that's very important to us.

We ran on a mandate to increase Manitoba's jobs and economy. With that, we're going to be able to access larger markets. In regards to canola oil alone, canola oil and meal exports could increase by \$165 million per year—per year; Japan, canola oils, up 3.2 yen million within five years—within five years; Vietnam, canola oils, all tariffs, 5 per cent, will have eliminated within five years; canola seed, canola seed tariffs of 5 per cent will be eliminated with up the entry once they come into force.

Mr. Doyle Pivniuk, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

Pork, which we know that creates a number of jobs within this province and right here in not only the city of Winnipeg, and also in Brandon, Neepawa. We have a number of companies where we see exports to Japan could increase by \$75 million on the Trans-Pacific Partnership. With Japan, tariffs of 20 per cent on pork products, including sausages, not currently subject to gate-price systems, will be eliminated within 10 years. Japan with referential imports of most pork products will be covered by a 10-year transition volume-based safeguard. With Vietnam, tariffs of 27 per cent on fresh chilled and frozen pork will be eliminated within nine years.

On the beef sector, the beef sector estimates that Canadian beef exports and Trans-Pacific partners companies could increase 100 to 200 per cent, and Manitoba will be benefiting as our slaughter capacity is very limited but will still, in fact, create job opportunities right here in Manitoba, thus enabling us to ensure we'll have more value added for our beef sector.

Tariffs in Japan of 38.5 per cent on fresh and chilled frozen beef as well as tariffs of 50 per cent

on certain offal will be reduced to 9 per cent within 15 years subject to transition volume-based safeguards. Tariffs on Japan will be up to 50 per cent on processed beef, and offal will be eliminated within 15 years. In regards to Vietnam up to 31 per cent of fresh chilled and frozen beef will be eliminated within two years, thus a significant impact on Manitobans in creating more good jobs right here in Manitoba.

With regards to barley, and this is really important here in Manitoba it's a large part of our growth, they estimate between six and eight million for Manitoba barley alone, and I had the opportunity to meet with them just recently and we know how they're struggling to increase that market share right across the world, and a large portion of that will be going into the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

Wheat, as we've seen that product grow and prosper, and that will become a free quota upon entry into force, markups allowed to food wheat in Japan will reduce by 45 per cent within eight years. Canada will have—also have access to Canada-Pacific quota for a food wheat in Japan starting at 40,000 tonnes, increasing to 53,000 tonnes within six years. Tariffs on all wheat in Vietnam will be eliminated upon entry into force.

Honey, which is a hidden jewel within the province of Manitoba, Manitoba honey will see a reduction of \$600,000 in duty exports to Japan alone. Tariffs on honey to Japan of 25 per cent will be eliminated within seven years. Significant again, tariffs on honey in Vietnam will be 10 per cent—will be eliminated within two years.

Dried beans, which we've seen a large portion of that being sown just over this past weekend not only in my area but right across Manitoba, what we'll see is Japan-quoted tariffs of 10 per cent on dried peas will be eliminated once entry into force. Over-quoted tariffs of 254 kilograms on dried peas in Japan will be eliminated in 10 years. Tariffs of 10 per cent on dried peas in Vietnam will be eliminated within two years.

Frozen french fries, a good product that's manufactured right in Portage that we're so proud to have and we know that there's talks about more of those being open right here in Manitoba, and that will be—duties on french fries will be reduced by \$100,000 on export to Japan, Australia and New Zealand. Japan tariffs of 8.5 per cent will be eliminated within three years; Vietnam, tariffs of 24 per cent will be eliminated within four years;

Australia, tariffs of 5 per cent eliminated into entry upon force; New Zealand, tariffs of 5 per cent eliminated upon entry of force.

I just want to talk about what some of this will mean for Manitobans, and I think that Manitobans need to pay attention to—about the opportunities that we have to see our economy grow right here in Manitoba. As we look to more value-added opportunities for our province to grow and prosper, we can turn some of these agribusinesses back into opportunities for finished products that we see going forward in regards to seeing the return on investment, and that's something we've been talking about time and time again. And part of that mandate that we were given upon forming government was that we'd be open at market excess.

* (15:20)

We haven't talked about farm equipment. And I wanted to just quote Ron Koslowsky, vice-president of the Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters association. He says the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement, over time, those tariffs will come down and they'll be hungry for equipment because they're growing like China.

And we know that on this side of the House that agriculture is the backbone of this province: 25 per cent of our economy is made up because of agriculture. One in five jobs—we can stand proud about the facts that it creates those jobs right here in Manitoba. It's going to help those small businesses. We see them grow and prosper. In fact, I had the opportunity to talk to a fellow about some starch products on the port side that has now opened up markets overseas, and, you know, there's other countries that we see his business grow and prosper.

Exports is a good thing for the province of Manitoba. We have abundance of land, we have abundance of product and we have the safest, as-most economical food priced right here in Manitoba. And we should be taking that very proudly as we go and look for those export markets.

So I see this as an opportunity for Manitoba to shine; I see this as an opportunity for Manitoba to grow and prosper. I encourage all members of this House to support this motion this afternoon.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Kevin Chief (Point Douglas): Glad to put some words on the record for today's motion on the Trans-Pacific Partnership. I want to thank both

members who've already—or all three members who've already talked to the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do want to be clear, you know, we do believe an increased trade and can—can open up new opportunities for Manitoba businesses and create good jobs for hard-working families. We want to stay committed to promoting and gaining market access for all Manitoba businesses all around the world. We're going to continue to work very closely with our entrepreneurs to grow their businesses both here and, of course, abroad, and as well as going to continue to advocate for good jobs and strong innovation. As you know, innovation is one of the key pillars in which—how we can grow our economy.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we also want to make sure that we recognize one of the ways in which we can have one of the strongest economies, which Manitoba does—it's been said not just by me but by many private sector validators. In fact, some of those validators would say Manitoba has one of the strongest economies, and that was with a government that stands with small businesses. That's a government that stands with our labour leaders, that stands with our business leaders, that stands with our training and education institutions. That's how you grow the economy.

In fact, here's some of the private sector validators who talk about the strength of Manitoba's economy: CIBC World Markets, Scotiabank, BMO Capital Markets, TD Bank, Royal Bank, CMHC, the IHS Global Insight, Laurentian Bank. That—private sector validator after private sector validator continue to talk about the strength of Manitoba's economy, having one of the strongest job growths, one of the lowest unemployment rates.

And I think it's important that we take into account what the member for—particularly the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew) had to say. When it comes to good jobs for Manitobans, the evidence isn't clear. It's just not there. And that's not the member for Fort Rouge saying that, that's experts. Those are research, those are people who've studied this. These are people who have—like Jim Balsillie, who have an incredible reach, success all throughout the world when it comes to working throughout the world.

And, you know, one of the things that we continue to see, and what the member for Fort Rouge has to say, is that there needs to be more analysis.

We have to make sure that we're looking at this, the TPP, carefully, that we're negotiating and making sure that it's going to benefit both long term and have short-term benefits for Manitobans.

And, you know, I would suggest that, you know, the members opposite—I've got to travel up north, I've travelled to many of the members opposite ridings, and one of the advantages that Manitoba has, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that we have one of the youngest and fastest growing demographics here than anywhere else in the country. We have one of the youngest and fastest growing demographics when it comes to young indigenous people, and taking into account how important reconciliation is becoming both in our urban area as well as throughout the province but well as—all throughout the country, and how this impacts indigenous rights is a critical ingredient if we want to make sure that we are maximizing the talent and benefits of having a young indigenous population; including one of the other demographics, of course, is our new Canadian—our young and new Canadians, our immigrant or refugee populations, and we have to make sure that we're engaging young people when we're talking about anything that's going to affect them.

And travelling to member of the—many of the members opposite ridings, it's important that we recognize that when we talk about a young demographic, there is absolutely no question, when it comes to young people, that the world has become a very small place. Young people know that they can have a global reach; they can have an international impact. And they know and they want to make sure that their biggest impact is always going to be in their hometowns, in their own communities.

And one of the reasons in which they can have a global reach, an international impact, is the idea of innovation, is the idea of—and how important that is. And the TPP, there is a lot of unanswered questions when it comes to innovation, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I do want to say that, you know, when you have an economy that's strong, when you have more Manitobans working here than ever before, when you have more people making more money here than they ever have before, around wages, you can't take that for granted. And what you have to do is you have to go make sure that you work and talk with people that help create that strong economy, that help create those jobs, that you're talking to our business leaders, that—and you're listening to what our business leaders have to say around things

like the TPP; that you're listening to our labour leaders and seeing how this can impact, you know, workers' rights, human rights; that we're engaging in making sure that they understand and getting the facts and the details from the government and bringing that forward to let them know how that impacts them; that we're taking the time to engage our educational leaders, our post-secondary institutions, our institutions that help train this young demographic and making sure that they are getting the facts and they're getting the details and their voices are heard. The only way in which you can create a strong economy as a government is by standing with the people in which help create that economy.

And I don't know if members opposite, since being elected, have had the time to go and consult with the very people who've elected them and talk about the details of the TPP and the things that come with it, both the good and the challenging things that come with it, but experts around the world have been clear that there are, of course, challenges with the TPP. And, if we want to continue to have one of the strongest economies, we've got to make sure that we're engaging the people in which—that help grow it.

You know, in the last year, Manitoba led job growth, over the last year; twenty thousand jobs, three out of four of them came from the private sector, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We want to make sure that we're talking to members of the business community. We want to—we know that four out of five of those jobs came were full-time jobs. We also know that we had one of the second best employment in the country. You know, we hear headlines—locally, Manitoba is an economic elite.

And we have nine, 10, 11 key private sector forecasters saying the strength of Manitoba's economy—there is strength in diversity, both in how in terms of how rich the diversity is, but the diversity in which, you know, we know we need to have a strong North to have a strong Manitoba economy. There is construction businesses booming, and construction has a global reach as well that affects our economy.

The Manitoba manufacturings end on a high note. The Canadian manufacturers and exporters have a huge role to play, and we need to make sure that we're hearing from them on the impact of the TPP and working hard to improve that for Manitobans.

You know, I was down—I got the chance to go down to Steinbach, Manitoba. As they say, it's always worth the trip to Steinbach. And there's a company there—one company is Valeant. They shut down shop out in Ontario and decided to move to Manitoba and expand their business. Of course, it's a company that has a global reach. They—I believe one of the products they sell is COLD-FX. Mr. Deputy Speaker.

* (15:30)

And I asked members of the executive there why did they show—'close' up shop in Ontario and decide to come all the way down to Manitoba. And if you talk to people who have businesses that have worldwide reach where they continue to give back biggest here in Manitoba, they'll tell you the reason that they continue to thrive in Manitoba is because we are one of the most affordable provinces to do business, and that's why we're seeing these headlines.

They're talking about—this is a good place to invest because we have one of the youngest and fastest growing demographics here in Manitoba than anywhere else in the nation, which means when they invest in a young person and they train that young person, that young person stays with those businesses longer here than anywhere else in the country.

And, of course, they're always proud that they had a government—and we're still—this still remains to be seen—but they had a government that would stand with them when it came to training, that they were willing to invest and they had a government that would train that young person, and then those jobs and those skills would stay right here in Manitoba.

You know, we hear from people like Rosemary Sparks, the executive director of BuildForce Canada. She says there's never been a better time to get involved in the trades in Manitoba, you know, and that's really important because when we're talking about jobs, what kinds of jobs is Rosemary Sparks talking about?

You know, when it comes to the construction field alone, in the next 10 years there's going to be demand for 12,000 jobs in the construction field alone. Some of those jobs in demand—those are high-skilled jobs. Some of those jobs are going to be boiler makers and bricklayers, carpenters, concrete finishers, construction estimators, construction managers, millwrights, contractor supervisors, crane operators, electricians, floor covering, glaziers,

heavy-equipment operators, heavy-duty equipment mechanics, home building and renovation managers. The list goes on and on of the high-skilled jobs that are in demand for Manitobans. Particularly, these are great jobs for young people.

And I had the chance to go down to Steinbach again, visit the good folks at Loewen Windows, been providing jobs to people in Steinbach for over 100 years, people who've been here a long time and, of course, providing jobs to newcomers who've just recently come to Canada, investing in them. You know, Loewen Windows is a company that has not only been giving back at home, but they have a national—they have an international reach. It's important that we listen to the good folks at Loewen Windows on the kind of impact the TPP could have on our economy, on jobs, on those local jobs right here in Manitoba. I don't know if the government has taken the time to talk to those local businesses. I don't know if they've taken the time to talk to some of the labour leaders. I don't know if they've taken the time to talk to our indigenous leaders, our young people, in their small towns, in the communities all across Manitoba.

You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the things that the member from Fort Rouge talked a lot about was around innovation. Now, we've got something that we should be incredibly proud of here in Winnipeg. We have Innovation Alley. You know, you talk to people like Michael Legary from Startup Winnipeg. There's no better way to get your new idea, your new approach, or your product to market than to come on down to Innovation Alley. You know, at one time it wasn't always called Innovation Alley. At one time it was called Adelaide Street. That's when the members opposite were in government. People saw Adelaide Street as a place of hardship and struggle and challenge. Now it's become one of the most exciting places in our city because of the idea around innovation, so we've called it Innovation Alley. We got leaders from Innovate Manitoba, from Futurpreneur, from Eureka, from Startup Winnipeg—young, local people. The member from Fort Rouge took the time to highlight SkipTheDishes. A couple years ago SkipTheDishes had one employee; now SkipTheDishes has a couple hundred employees and they continue to be one of the fastest growing start-ups, not only here, but in all of the country.

Now, I think it's important that we go and take time to talk to the folks at SkipTheDishes and we ask them, what do you think of the TPP, and give them

some facts, give them some of the information, some of those details of how that can impact them around innovation. There were clearly concerns, not just from us, but there were clearly concerns from people like Jim Balsillie, who has had an incredible amount of success when it comes to that.

You know, when you have a place in Winnipeg that you can go to, and the message is clear that if you have a new product, a new approach or a new idea, and someone says come on down to Innovation Alley, and you can get the success of something like Startup Winnipeg, those are things that need to be protected. Those are things in which those young people need to know that there's going to be a government that's going to stand with them, and that's what we're saying. We're saying we want to make sure that we're going to continue to build on this idea that we can build on this momentum.

You don't have to look further than our downtown to look at the success and strength of not only our economy, but the strength of Winnipeg. We have more people working in our downtown than ever before. And you get more people working in our downtown ever before because the message is clear: You can have a global reach, and you can still have your biggest impact right here in Winnipeg.

We have more businesses, both small, medium, large businesses, opening up right in our downtown. We have more young people attending school in our inner city than we have before in the history of our city. We have more young people going to school in the inner city than ever before. There's a real opportunity for us, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to continue to build on that momentum. We have now—because there's so much great action, we have more people wanting to live in our downtown than ever before.

So, you know, the—one of the quotes that we heard was that the Winnipeg is in—Winnipeg's downtown is in a period of unprecedented growth. Now, we shouldn't take that for granted. We should take the time to make sure that we 'continue'—continue to work with the very people who helped build a very exciting downtown. I don't know if members opposite have taken the time to talk to some of those local leaders. I don't know if they've taken the time to talk to some of those students when it comes to the TPP and the impacts innovation can have. I don't know if they've talked to those leaders that helped expand our downtown. I think when Prince Charles took the time to come to Winnipeg, he went into the Exchange District, and he got to

hear first-hand from young people when it came to innovation.

You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in one weekend alone, we had Queen, Heart, Cher and Bruno Mars in our downtown in one weekend alone, and then we topped that all off when Luke Bryan decided to come to the MTS Centre. And he proudly stood up, and he said, I'm so proud to stand and sing in the loudest barn in the National Hockey League.

People around the world are taking notice what's going on here. That is happening because they've had a government that stands with them, those businesses, those local labour leaders, those training institutions. We have to make sure that we do that. In fact, it wasn't long ago that the National Geographic came out and said one of the best places to visit is Winnipeg. This is where you got to be, National Geographic saying.

We can't take these things for granted. In fact, you don't have to look very far to see the kinds of things that are happening here in our city. We are seeing things like IKEA, that's here now. We're very proud of that. Marshalls, H&M, Bed Bath & Beyond, outlet collections all over the—all over happening. We're very proud to stand with the good folks and announce True North Square.

We have to make sure that we continue to work with people in our communities and make sure that they're getting the information that they need so they can continue to compete both locally, nationally, but also internationally. It's the only way that you can continue to have unprecedented growth and continue to have a strong economy is by taking the time to talk to people and giving them the information and then working together to do that; people have that expectation. And we've proven, the years that we're in government, that is how you build momentum. That is how you make sure there's an opportunity for everyone, both businesses and local young people.

You know, the member from Fort Rouge talked about the concerns around wages and what that can mean, both short term and long term. Well, you know, when it came to wages, when we were in government, we led the country in wage growth over the last year, with the average Manitoban worker making \$40 per week more than they did before. One of the things that we did, and we always want to take into account opportunities for young people, was we increased minimum wage every year to make sure that young people could, and all Manitobans could, make a good living for themselves and their families.

* (15:40)

And we've found that when you give those kinds of opportunities and Manitobans make a good living for themselves and their families, they give back. They give back to their neighbourhoods, they give back to their hometowns, they give back to the province. And we want to continue to make sure that we keep investing in those things and making sure that we keep, you know, asking young people what their advice and the impacts that this could have.

Once a game—again, the members opposite, you know, there's a strong economy, but that's got to be make sure that we continue to work with the private sector and our local leaders. You know, BMO Capital Markets' senior economist Robert Kavcic said, in a note to investors, first, we must praise the often overlooked but now rising star on the regional labour force map: Manitoba. You know, we're seeing more and more people like Robert Kavcic notice the economic success of Manitoba and how resilient our economy has been. It's important to continue to work and not take advantage of that.

You know, we've made major investments, and we've heard major investments in trade infrastructure. In fact, there was a luncheon last year where we heard from John Law, who's a president of Lawmark International—he's the coauthor of building advantage: improving Canada's trade infrastructure—and how important that is becoming here in Manitoba, which is why we made those strategic investments into trade routes such as Highway 75. We wanted to make sure—we know that's a key trade route for us. We wanted to make sure that that trade route had flood proofing. Highway 1 to the west: we increased safety. And we actually increased the speed limit there as well. Highway 1 to the east: major upgrades. And we still—there's, you know, we still have others. All around the city of Winnipeg: southwest Perimeter, Headingley bypass, you know.

One of the things that we recognize is the impacts and the incredible potential that CentrePort Canada Way has. You know, these are people that need to be engaged. One of the things that they said, that John Law said, why Manitoba had a great trade infrastructure plan, of course, which leads to a strong economy, is that it was a long-term plan, that we were working—our government, at the time, were working incredibly close with the private sector. In fact, often said, the private sector were leading the way and the government was standing with them. And so the only way you do that is by continuing to

engage and give the information and pass on information that's going to affect the economy. But the best ideas come from people in the community, and we were proud to stand with them. And he just said: Simply put; Manitoba is doing it right. And, if you want to have Manitoba doing it right, you always got to make sure that you're taking the time to make sure that you're listening to what people have to say.

Now, I do want to highlight a couple other things that the member from Fort Rouge had to say. You know, figures in the study show that there could be a small impact on GDP. These are people who are experts when it comes to the TPP, that the impacts on the GDP in the country could be relatively small. These are things that we have to take the time to look at. I know members opposite are talking about the potential for jobs. But there's experts, there's research, there's people who've looked at this that have said there could actually be potential job losses of 58,000, which could be the third highest here in our country than anywhere else. And one of the advantages that we continue to have is our demographic advantage, that we have one of the youngest and fastest growing demographics here than anywhere else in the nation. And we want to make sure that we continue to engage that demographic.

We know that businesses continue to look to us. We know that businesses continue to look to Manitobans because of that, because we have an affordable province to do work in, to create jobs in, that we have this demographic and companies want to invest in it. In fact, in the home riding of the Premier (Mr. Pallister) himself, you know, Shaw Communications decided to close up shop in other parts of the country, and they decided to move 500 jobs here in Winnipeg in the Premier's own backyard.

And, when asked—when I was asking why Shaw Communications wanted to move all these jobs here, it wasn't—it just wasn't, it wasn't only about innovation and affordability here. They talked about when you invest in a young person here and you give them a job here in Manitoba, that they stay with the company longer here than anywhere else. And they also said that it was important that they knew there was a government that was going to stand with them.

We want to make sure that people are getting the information they need so we can continue to have a strong economy.

Down in Winnipeg's North End, Canada Goose, you see Canada Goose products now on reporters, sports broadcasters, wearing Canada Goose products, doing NFL games. You know, it's a proud product of—and they expanded here. In fact, Canada Goose is expanding. They're expecting to have over 1,000 jobs here in the next three years—over 1,000 jobs in the next three years. That is the kind of environment and the kind of environment in which we've been able to build. So Canada Goose, in Winnipeg's North End, would always see this as a place.

You know, you look at someone like Loewen Windows, 668 jobs over the next five years—Loewen Windows is a company that has a global reach but continue for over 100 years—have been able to give back right here in Manitoba, good local jobs, so people make good living for themselves and their families.

Now, I do want to say some words for the record here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, about northern Manitoba and how important it is that people in northern Manitoba—I know there's some new members from Swan River, some new members from Thompson. Have they taken the time to talk to those local businesses? Have they taken the time to talk to local young people, young people who are excited? World's a small place. Because it's—because of innovation, they—if you look at the biggest changes that we've had in the world, you don't got to look further than young people.

I don't know how old Bill Gates was when he started Microsoft. I think he was a pretty young guy. You look at the people, the young people who started Facebook, look at the people who started Twitter and Instagram; these are all young people, shaping the way in which we do business.

You know, the question has to ask: How would a TPP program affect all of these different people? And in northern Manitoba, where we have a young, fast, incredibly fast-growing demographic, I don't know, has the members talked to their young indigenous constituents about how the impacts of TPP could affect them? Because, if we want young people to stay in northern Manitoba, we want to make sure that they have the same advantages in northern Manitoba as they do in a place like Winnipeg. And, if we want to make sure we do that, we have to look at how the TPP affects indigenous rights. That's why the member from Fort Rouge made sure to talk about what it meant around reconciliation.

Now, I don't know if the members, the new members, have taken the time to talk to their young constituents about how this could, how it can impact them, how it could impact the training institutions up there, like University College of the North. I know that when I travelled in northern Manitoba and I looked at the history, when northerners succeed, Manitoba economy succeeds. And so we have to make sure that if you want to have a strong economy, that we are taking the time to talk to young people and businesses up in northern Manitoba and the impacts an international agreement can have with young people up there.

I got to meet this young guy who's training to be an electrician. His name was Patrick [*phonetic*]. And I was talking to Patrick [*phonetic*], and he—I asked him what he, why he decided to be an electrician. And he said, well, it was because his aunt was electrician and he was proud of his aunt, and he thought one day that it would be a good profession for him. He knows it was a profession that he could make a good living for himself.

But this is, Patrick [*phonetic*] is somebody who, when you talk to young people in places like northern Manitoba, they're proud of, they'll tell you, they're proud of who they are, they're proud of where they live, they're proud of their hometowns, they're proud of their home province, and they want to have the opportunity to be able to give back. And there's a lot of ways in which we can, as a government, make sure that young people like Patrick [*phonetic*] can continue to give back.

*(15:50)

And so we want to make sure that when there's international agreements that could affect young people, that could affect jobs, that we want to make sure that we're engaging these young people.

You know, I do want to say in closing, when it comes to the TPP, it's critically important that we recognize that the members opposite have inherited a very strong economy with more people working in Manitoba than ever before, that the people who are getting those jobs are getting great wages and if they want to continue to build that momentum when it comes to international agreements like the TPP, they need to take the time to work with the people in which helped build that economy. Our small businesses that help build the identity of our neighbourhoods and they hire people in their hometowns, they've got to make sure they're talking and giving details to those small businesses. They've

got to talk to local labour leaders who work so incredibly hard to work for workers' rights and human rights, and make sure that they're getting the information that they need. They've got to make sure that they're talking to young people who are changing the way in which we do work every day, and it continues to be our strongest asset.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sustainable Development): I'm pleased to be up in the House speaking today about—to support this—our motion, support Trans-Pacific Partnership. We know that it will support economic growth and job creation by eliminating tariffs on almost all of Manitoba's key exports while providing access to new opportunities in the Asia-Pacific region.

Exclusion from this TPP would close access to critical trade markets and put Manitoba jobs at risk, something we're not willing to do. I'm proud to support the partnership. It's the right partnership for Manitoba and Canada, and it will help us achieve our goal of being the most improved province in Canada.

As you know, in our Throne Speech last week we talked about supporting the Trans-Pacific Partnership in order to send a strong and united signal that Manitobans are ready, willing and able to trade with the world. The Trans-Pacific Partnership is a free trade agreement to open and expand trade opportunities to the Asia-Pacific region which represents a market of 800 million people with a combined GDP of \$28 trillion, about 40 per cent of the world economy. It's important that we support this. We want to make sure that we keep jobs in Manitoba, that we ensure that our industry and trade remains strong, and this is a crucial part of that. It's a critical agreement for expanding opportunities for trade but also for protecting thousands of Manitoba jobs that we've put—that would be put at risk if we were shut out.

And the member opposite talked about the importance of jobs. And we know first-hand the importance of good jobs here in Manitoba. We want to make sure that our young people have jobs here so that when they leave the education system they're able to remain here in Manitoba and not have to leave other provinces for better jobs. That's what we're all about in this province. And by being a partner in this project, we'll ensure that our kids, our future, have opportunities here in this province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, for Manitoba exporters, exclusion into the Trans-Pacific Partnership would mean an approximately \$250-million-a-year expansion in sales. Exclusion from the Trans-Pacific Partnership would close access to critical trade markets and put Manitoba jobs at risk. Manitoba's largest exporters estimate a drop in sales of almost \$400 million a year.

This is critical for our agriculture which includes canola oil production, canola seed, pork. We have some of the largest pork production in all of Canada. And this benefits our colleague from Lac du Bonnet, Wayne Ewasko, our colleague from—*[interjection]* Oh, sorry. I apologize, Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: *[inaudible]* from the constituency, not their name.

Mrs. Cox: Okay. The MLA for Lac du Bonnet, who has businesses in that area in pork production. And pork production exports to Japan are expected to increase by \$75 million under the Trans-Pacific Partnership. That's a significant amount of income that we'll be seeing coming here into our province.

An Honourable Member: In Brandon East.

Mrs. Cox: Yes, also in Brandon East, that's correct, and Gladstone, Neepawa, all of those areas as well.

With Japan, tariffs of up to 20 per cent on pork products including sausages not currently subject to the gate-price system will be eliminated within 10 years. With Vietnam, tariffs of up to 27 per cent on fresh chilled and frozen pork will be eliminated in nine years, all tariffs that will benefit us here in Manitoba.

Also agriculture industries such as barley, wheat, honey production, dried beans and, of course, frozen french fries. Who doesn't love french fries here in Manitoba?

Duties on Manitoba french fries will be reduced by \$100 million on exports to Japan, Australia and New Zealand. In Japan, tariffs of 8.5 per cent will be eliminated within three years. The Vietnam tariffs of 24 per cent will be eliminated within four years, and in New Zealand, tariffs of 5 per cent will be eliminated upon entry into the force. Lots of benefits included in joining the TPP, lots of opportunities for employment. One in five jobs in Canada relies on trade. More trade needs a stronger economy for Manitoba, and our industry relies on global supply chains.

It's also a great opportunity for our aerospace industry. Manitoba's world-class aerospace sector is the third largest in Canada and two thirds of the aerospace industry exports go to Trans-Pacific countries. Jim Quick, the president of the Aerospace Industries Association of Canada, had said of the TPP agreement that lowering trade barriers and creating equal or preferential access to key markets is essential to our industry's ability to grow, innovate and *[inaudible]*

Our mineral, metals and mine sector sees over \$2 billion of metals and minerals to TPP countries each year through exports. Tariffs of almost 12 per cent on nickel exports to Japan will be eliminated under the TPP partnership. Manitoba mining companies will be able to better leverage their expertise in markets such as Chile and New Zealand under the TPP. Of course, our wood and forestry sectors will benefit. Over 6,000 Manitoba jobs work in the wood and forestry sector in Manitoba. Under the TPP those tariffs will gradually be eliminated ensuring that those jobs remain here in Manitoba.

Environmentally, there will be a positive impact on environmental protection. The TPP includes a chapter on the environment and the agreement provides ambitious environmental obligations including commitments to pursue high levels in environmental protection, something that is so important to what this province—and something that is so precious to all of us on this side of the House, preserving our environment.

The federal government is consulting with Canadians before taking a firm position on the TPP, and, as you know, the Prime Minister is in Japan today, expected to discuss trade and investment opportunities including the TPP. Canada's ratification of the agreement is critical not just for expanding opportunities to trade but also for protecting thousands of Manitoba jobs that would be put at risk if we were shut out.

It's important for every member of the Legislature to stand up today and vote to protect Manitoba jobs. We have an opportunity to send a clear message to our federal partners and our trade partners in the Asia-Pacific region that Manitoba is back and open for business. This is a wonderful opportunity for Manitoba and Manitobans, and I—it's one that I hope each and every one of you in the House will support today.

Thank you.

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows): Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is a bit surprising that the TPP is considered to be the most urgent issue after the Throne Speech. There were many portfolios discussed that should have been made particularly a higher priority at this point.

Until the United States elects a president, debating whether or not to join this deal is not necessarily relevant. This is a huge factor for us; we should wait and see what happens. Perhaps we should use this time to talk to our federal politicians because they will be having an open vote on the TPP. We should be talking to everyone. This will impact everyone in some way.

* (16:00)

We, as Liberals, want to emphasize that we are a party that believes in trade. We believe that there are potential benefits in various agricultural sectors, such as pork and canola. We believe that there are potential benefits in fisheries, in aerospace, and in pharmaceutical products.

In that context we are in support, in principle, of the Trans-Pacific Partnership. We do this all while embracing the potential of the Trans-Pacific Partnership to build trade between Manitoba companies and the 13 countries who will be partners in the TPP.

We also note that concerns have been raised with regards to the potential for negative impacts on Canadian technology companies. These concerns need to be taken seriously.

A second area of concern relates to the consideration of indigenous rights. This is a second area where, with the current situation in the United States there may be a renegotiation of the TPP agreement. This is an area where we would also hope the government is at the forefront of understanding, should there be a renegotiation of the TPP agreement, it would be important for the government in Manitoba to be aware of and to be a strong advocate for.

These problems have been highlighted in a number of articles and warrant attention. There are many factors and implications to consider, for example, the possibility of Hillary Clinton becoming president. She may want to renegotiate the TPP. We hope that the government of Manitoba has done their homework in this area to best represent the interests of Manitobans.

Thank you.

Hon. Ron Schuler (Minister of Crown Services): Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, great to see you in the Chair, and it is a great moment to stand up and talk about trade partnerships and trade deals. This morning I had the opportunity to drive out to the great community of Oakbank, as I commonly like to refer to it as God's country, but as I was driving through my community and getting ready to present all kinds of awards to my constituents for volunteerism, I noticed that across the fields there was a little bit of a green hue coming on the fields. Crops are starting to poke through the ground and get ready to start growing, and I'm always mindful of the fact that we, as a province and as a nation, do more than our share of heavy lifting in supporting and feeding the world, and we are a province and a nation that ensures that individuals, families, children, people across the world have the opportunity to wake up and have some food on the table. We know that many don't eat as well as we do, but at least, because of the kind of crops that we grow and the way that we grow our crops, that we help to support individuals around the world when their crops aren't as successful as ours.

We are a trading province; we are a trading nation. And it's not just in agriculture, but also in our manufacturing. A lot of what we produce, we produce to send to other parts of the country and, in particular, a lot of what we produce is sent internationally, whether it's to the United States or into other countries.

So I would say, first of all, that the Trans-Pacific Partnership will enable us to protect Manitoba jobs today while growing our economy into the future. And there's another side to this coin. It's not just about what we gain by signing the agreement. What's very important is what could we lose by not signing this agreement.

In fact, one of my colleagues across the way was talking about all kinds of different job creation and how important it is for young people to have an occupation. But what's also important is that we grow these various businesses, that they don't just stay at hiring a youth or two youth or three youth, but that they continue to grow and continue to employ more and more Manitobans.

What I think we should be doing is paying very close heed to what it is that we would lose if we don't sign the agreement. It is an important step. I listened to my Liberal member opposite who suggested that

maybe this is a little bit early because we should be consulting. Well, actually, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, that's actually what we're doing, is we're starting the debate, and isn't there—is there a better place to be starting that debate than here in this Chamber? Isn't this where we should be having that debate and going from here and consulting? We should be bringing this issue forward. We believe it's an important issue for Manitobans, and we should be putting it on the agenda of this Legislature.

It's important to indicate to all Manitobans that, as a trading province, we have a lot to gain. In fact, I would like to cite for the House a couple of points.

Agriculture: Manitoba's agriculture exports to Trans-Pacific Partnership countries averaged—this is just the average—3.3 billion annually from 2012 to 2014. That is a massive number when you think of it. And we could be putting into jeopardy, not all of it, I mean, there are still countries who are going to need what we produce, but it could put into jeopardy perhaps 10 per cent of that. We haven't seen the final numbers come out. Maybe it's 25 per cent of that number. That would hurt the very men and women—that would hurt the young people, as my colleague across the way was speaking about, that are looking for jobs. We would hurt those individuals that are looking for a career in Manitoba. Even a 10 per cent decline of that 3.3 billion would be almost catastrophic on our economy.

Let's continue. Manitoba's annual exports of canola oil to Trans-Pacific Partnership was worth an average of 364 million and an additional 353 million for canola seed. Can you imagine what impact that would have if we lost access to some of the markets? And we have to remember that we can stand still—there are some in this Chamber who might argue that we should be the luddites when it comes to trade, and that would be dangerous. We cannot stand still. The world is going to continue on negotiating trade deals, and the best thing we can do is to be at the table, to be there, helping to negotiate, looking out for the best interests of Manitoba. And, in this case, Manitoba will benefit, not just in what we gain, and we've had other speakers talk about what we gain, but we also have to be mindful of what we might lose.

Madam Speaker in the Chair

I would also like to point out, and this is particularly timely because our Prime Minister happens to be in Japan, Canada's hog exports to Japan approached 1 billion in 2014. We could

actually see an incredible boom take place in agriculture and manufacturing with this trade deal. And we should be aware of what exactly it is that we are talking about, that we not just can build our industries, not just can we employ more Manitobans, and we will benefit in all these sectors, but, more importantly, that we could hurt those industries by not signing the deal.

So back to what we're doing here today. We have decided, as a Legislature, that we feel that this is important, and rightfully so. We are starting the debate. By no means does today end the debate on this topic and on this trade deal.

In fact, our government has made it very clear that we intend on joining the New West Partnership, another trade deal, another deal that's going to help us as a province, that's going to look out for what's best for this province. And we've heard it over and over again that, as a trading province, we have to stay active. To have stayed out of the New West Partnership has been a disaster in the making. Our government should have been there at the initial stages.

Now we have to negotiate our way into the New West Partnership; it's not necessarily a given. Though, from all indications, the other western premiers have indicated they would like us to join. But it's never a given. Once the trade negotiations are over with, you are actually playing from a disadvantage. You should always be part of the process right up front. You should be at the table.

I was always told, and, when I started my political career, it was at the school board, and one time had a little disagreement with other trustees and a few of us walked out, and an advisor of mine said to me, don't ever walk out on a meeting as an elected official, because you immediately disenfranchise all of those who voted for you and all of those that you represent.

And how true it is when you get to these kinds of negotiations. Not being at the table disenfranchises all of those individuals who rely on you to be there and to argue and negotiate for what's best for them. Not being there is an absolute avowal of failure. We must be there. We must be at the table. We should have been at the New West Partnership. We should have been at the table negotiating and getting ourselves in.

* (16:10)

And I would say thank you to the other premiers. And there's a Liberal, a conservative and a New Democrat that we'll be negotiating with, and I'm so thankful that they're prepared to negotiate with us to get us in there, but we should have been there right to start with. And that's why this new trade deal, it's good that we're at the table. It's important that Manitoba's at the table. It's important that we are, I believe, the first Legislature in Manitoba to start the debate. Not that we're going to finish it here, but at least we're starting the debate.

It's important to be part of it. It's important to gauge our elected officials. It's important to engage Manitobans so they know what it's about, they know what the benefits are going to be, they know what the drawbacks are going to be if we're not part of it. It's important that we be there right at the start. And that's where I think this agreement is particularly important. I think it's very good for us to have. I think it's good for Manitoba. Certainly, we've put in a lot of protection for a lot of our corporations. I know that—look, our Crown corporations, there's been discussions, and they are protected for what we do. And I am pleased in the negotiations.

I'd like to say in particular, thank you to the member for Spruce Woods (Mr. Cullen), who took some time out of his busy schedule and happened to be at some of the negotiations and some of the discussions. I'd like to thank the member for Spruce Woods and the member for Lakeside (Mr. Eichler) for having brought this motion forward. We appreciate the opportunity to get up and speak.

And I would suggest to this Chamber that as we go down this path, let's be very careful that we're responsible in the way we cite statistics. Let's be very responsible in the way we have this discussion. Because a lot of individuals, a lot of Manitobans, actually all Manitobans, are depending on us to do what's right and to protect them and what it is that they want to see, their hopes and their wishes and their dreams. And they want to have a good job. They want to have a good income. They want to have a good life. They want to pay for the things that they feel are what's necessary for their families. Let's begin this debate. Let's be responsible. And I would suggest to all members of this House that they pass this resolution, vote for it, and let's continue this debate from here and move out to the general public.

Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity.

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): I'm pleased to get up and speak this afternoon.

Like other members of our NDP caucus, and like the member for Burrows (Ms. Lamoureux), I guess I just have some questions about the priorities of this new provincial government. Here we're in the middle of a Throne Speech debate. There was a 15-minute Throne Speech that I guess they couldn't even see through to pass before they had their attention put elsewhere and wanted to set aside that debate so we could talk about this today. No bills have yet been introduced by this new government. In fact, there's not even any bills on the Order Paper. We've seen—we've had a lot of talk about mandate letters which, frankly, you could drive a truck through. Yet here we are today. The government has the ability to determine its own choices, so here we are talking about the TPP.

The Trans-Pacific Partnership is an agreement which runs to some 5,000 pages. I'm going to be very honest, Madam Deputy Speaker: I have not read the 5,000 pages of the Trans-Pacific Partnership. I'm probably safe in saying there's not a single member of this Legislature that has read the 5,000 pages of the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

It is interesting the member for St. Paul (Mr. Schuler), as he always speaks passionately, talked about trying to start debate on this agreement. This agreement has already been negotiated. There is a 5,000-page document which is now presented to various national governments as a *fait accompli*. So I don't know if the member for St. Paul believes that his comments on the record are suddenly going to encourage the other countries to change their approach on this or anything we do in this Legislature this afternoon is going to change the approach on this. I want him to know that that is not the case.

You know, I learned more from the speech from the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew) this afternoon than, I think, many of us knew about the Trans-Pacific Partnership not that long ago. It's an agreement which currently includes 12 countries. Just as I bet there's not a single member that's read all 5,000 pages, I'm willing to bet there's not a single member in this House who can actually even tell us the 12 countries in the TPP without quickly googling it and looking it up. Who are the other members besides Canada? Well, the United States, and I am pretty certain that we already have a free trade agreement with the United States of America. Another country is Mexico. I'm also pretty certain we already have a free trade agreement with Mexico. Chile, I'm quite certain we have free trade with

Chile as well. And then went on to some of the other countries: Australia and New Zealand, Japan, Singapore, Peru, Vietnam, New Zealand and, of course, for the bonus points, the Sultan of Brunei. I don't know much about the Sultan of Brunei except that I do know the Sultan of Brunei owns the largest single private residence in the entire world.

Number 2, of course, is a prominent Manitoban—*[interjection]*—by the name of Peter Nygård, and, yes, I know where my friend was going. It is quite certain the Sultan of Brunei has a larger house than the leader—or than the Premier (Mr. Pallister) does on Wellington Crescent.

But, you know, I heard the member for St. Paul tell us, yes, you know, we need to look very carefully at statistics. You know, don't let anybody try to pull the wool over your eyes, and yet I look at the very text of the government resolution, which is very short, there's only three reasons given for joining this Trans-Pacific Partnership, and No. 1 is that trade with the TPP countries averaged more than \$9 billion annually from 2012 to 2014. That's a lot of money. But then we look where does that trade actually go with? And as a matter of fact, as I look at the Manitoba trade statistics for 2014, Manitoba's total exports to the United States in 2014 were \$9.115 billion. Yes, we do a lot of trade with Trans-Pacific Partnership countries; we do the vast majority, 90 per cent or more, with the United States of America.

And, of course, what is our No. 2 trading partner or the largest customer of our exports? It's actually China, and China is actually the object of a lot of the work of the Trans-Pacific Partnership. It's an attempt by certain countries to block China from playing a larger role, and, you know, we can all have our own views on China, pro or con, the fact is it is the second largest customer for Manitoba products, and this is not going to help expand those areas at all.

Now, of course, there's all kinds of debate about different trade deals, and often you get people breaking down along ideological lines. You will have people saying that this new deal is the greatest thing that will ever happen. It'll create thousands of jobs and create millions of dollars in exports. You have others that are completely opposed, saying that any trade deal is bad and it's a bad thing for everybody and should not be followed. Well, the truth, I believe, Madam Speaker, lies somewhere in the middle. There's a lot of trade deals in the past which have played upon Manitoba's competitive

advantages. And I agree, frankly, with the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Eichler) that here in Manitoba we have some of the best farmers in the entire world. We have a competitive advantage in that they have access to a large amount of relatively cheap land. It's relatively arable and good land for growing crops, for raising livestock and, also, thanks to partnerships with the federal government, with the provincial government and the ingenuity of Manitoba farmers, they've been able to really stake out a comparative advantage with many places in the world.

But, you know, the Trans-Pacific Partnership really isn't much of a trade deal at all. In fact, of the 5,000 pages in this deal, very few pages actually deal with improving trade. Really, this deal is about protecting large corporations that are investors, that are lenders, to the exclusion of all others. And as I've mentioned, Madam Speaker, one of the main purposes is to block China from being involved in trade.

Now, there's many strong people who've spoken and, again, the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew) gave a very good description of some of the very, very bright and well-known people who raised concerns about the purposes of the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

I want to put out in some comments on the record from a gentleman names Robert Reich. Robert Reich is an American political commentator, economist, professor and author. He served in the administrations both of President Gerald Ford and also President Jimmy Carter, and he served as Secretary of Labor under President Bill Clinton from 1993 to 1997. He actually became involved on Bill Clinton's campaign, and many of his ideas were incorporated into the platform. He hasn't always had a great relationship with the Clinton administration or the Obama administration and has actually been a very, very outspoken opponent of things that he believes are not in the best interests of working people.

*(16:20)

Mr. Reich is on the faculty of University of California at Berkeley's Goldman School of Public Policy, teaches a course called wealth and poverty. He's a member of the board of trustees for the Blum Center for Developing Economies at the University of California, Berkeley, which is devoted to finding solutions to address the crisis of extreme poverty and disease in the developing world. He's written a number of books which have been well received and

he wrote a very, very concise article which I think would be very helpful for every member who is going to eventually have the opportunity to vote on this resolution to consider. And his article does not pull any punches in the title. It's called Here's Why the Trans-Pacific Partnership is Just Plain Wrong.

And here's what Mr. Reich has to say: "Republicans who now run Congress say they want to co-operate with President Obama and point to the administration's Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP, as the model. The only problem is the TPP would be a disaster.

"If you haven't heard much about the TPP, that's part of the problem right there. It would be the largest trade deal in history, involving countries stretching from Chile to Japan, representing 792 million people and accounting for 40 per cent of the world economy, yet it's been devised in secret.

"Lobbyists from America's biggest corporations and Wall Street's biggest banks have been involved but not the American public. That's a recipe for fatter profits and bigger paychecks at the top, but not a good deal for most of us, or even for most of the rest of the world.

"First, some background. We used to think about trade policy as a choice between 'free trade' and 'protectionism.' Free trade meant opening up our borders to products made elsewhere. Protectionism meant putting up tariffs and quotas to keep them out.

"In the decades after World War II, America chose free trade. The idea was that each country would specialize in goods it produced best and at least cost. That way living standards would rise here and abroad. New jobs would be created to take the place of jobs that were lost. And Communism would be contained.

"For three decades, free trade worked. It was a win-win-win.

"But in more recent decades the choice has become far more complicated and the payoff from trade agreements more skewed for those at the top.

"Tariffs are already low. Negotiations now involve such things as intellectual property, financial regulations, labour laws, and rules for health, safety and the environment.

"It's no longer free trade versus protectionism. Big corporations and Wall Street want some of both.

"They want more international protection when it comes to their intellectual property and other assets. So they've been seeking trade rules that secure and extend their patents, trademarks, and copyrights abroad and protect their global franchise agreements, securities and loans.

"But they want less protection of consumers, workers, small investors, and the environment, because these interfere with their profits. So they've been seeking trade rules that allow them to override these protections.

"Not surprisingly, for a deal that's been drafted mostly by corporate and Wall Street lobbyists, the TPP provides exactly this mix.

"What's been leaked about it so far reveals, for example, that the pharmaceutical industry gets stronger patent protections, delaying cheaper generic versions of drugs. That will be a good deal for Big Pharma, but not necessarily for the inhabitants of developing nations who won't get certain life-saving drugs at a cost they can afford.

"The TPP also gives global corporations an international tribunal of private attorneys outside any nation's legal system, who can order compensation for any 'unjust expropriation' of foreign assets.

"Even better for global companies, the tribunal can order compensation for any lost profits found to result from a nation's regulations. Phillip Morris is using a similar provision against Uruguay (the provision appears in a bilateral trade treaty between Uruguay and Switzerland), claiming that Uruguay's strong anti-smoking regulations unfairly diminish the company's profits.

"Anyone believing the TPP is good for Americans take note: The foreign subsidiaries of US-based corporations could just as easily challenge any US government regulation they claim unfairly diminishes their profits, say, a regulation protecting American consumers from unsafe products or unhealthy foods, investors from fraudulent securities or predatory lending, workers from unsafe working conditions, taxpayers from another bailout of Wall Street or the environment from toxic emissions.

"The administration says the trade deal will boost US exports in the fast-growing Pacific basin, where the United States faces growing economic competition from China. The TPP is part of Obama's strategy to contain China's economic and strategic prowess.

"Fine. But the deal will also allow American corporations to outsource even more jobs abroad.

"In other words, the TPP is a Trojan horse in a global race to the bottom, giving big corporations and Wall Street banks a way to eliminate any and all laws and regulations that get in the way of their profits.

"At a time when corporate profits are at record highs and the real median wage is lower than it's been in four decades, most Americans need protection, not from international trade, but from the political power of large corporations and Wall Street.

"The Trans Pacific Partnership is the wrong remedy to the wrong problem. Any way you look at it, it's just plain wrong."

Well, Mr. Reich wrote this article from the American perspective, but it's actually quite clear that it's equally applicable to Canada's perspective.

There's another individual who wrote an article, an individual actually quite knowledgeable about aerospace, and his name is Stan Sorscher. He's with the Society for Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace, and he asked the question: How do you tell if the 12-country Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP, is a good deal or a bad one? And what Mr. Sorscher does is he actually compares and contrasts the negotiation of the TPP with the recent climate summit agreement in Paris.

Now in Paris there were more than 200 countries that came together to negotiate the deal, and it was a lengthy process and it was more or less out in the public for people to see. They weren't negotiations that took place secretly behind closed doors without citizens being able to be aware. And, as Mr. Sorscher says, the climate change deal in Paris is not airtight; he described it as a significant political, social and moral commitment by leaders of most countries in the world to do better. On the other hand, Madam Speaker, TPP defines bad rules of globalization; it sets up skewed power relationships for dealing with climate change, inequality, and many other important public policies.

You know, I've heard the government try to tell us how concerned they are about labour standards, but what labour standards are contained in the TPP? Not a word, not a word, Madam Speaker, no labour protection, no protections against child labour, no protections against forced labour, no protections for workers who want to form unions in the various countries that are going to be part of the TPP, and no

protection against discrimination for religion, race or country of birth.

By modern standards, Madam Speaker, we take these rights for granted. We thought we'd won these fights generations ago, and it is unhappy to have the government of the day simply say that we should get on board and simply accept the deal, negotiated in secret that don't actually advance any of these rights whether in the more developed countries or in some of the less developed countries that are part of the TPP.

Now there are some real concerns about human rights and the lack of any words on human rights, and again the TPP does not contain a single word about advancing human rights in any of the countries who would be part of the TPP.

The TPP would actually grant Malaysia, which is one of the world's worst human trafficking offenders, privileged access to markets like the United States and Canada. The Americans, of course, were very keen to have Malaysia in, and they concluded the negotiations with Malaysia in October 2015 despite the recent discovery of mass graves for human trafficking victims in the country of Malaysia.

The TPP also includes Vietnam, and that's the case even though Vietnam's government continues to jail political dissidents. It systematically represses those who are involved in the labour movement and also allows the widespread use of child labour.

The deal will also forge closer ties between Canada and the United States and Brunei. Brunei, in case members don't know, has enacted a new Sharia-based penal code that criminalizes homosexuality and threatens to punish single mothers by stoning them to death, and this is a country that the TPP would have us forge closer economic ties with without there being any obligation on a country like Brunei to modernize their standards to improve human rights and make a better global condition for all. And the TPP's inclusion of such human rights abusers has shocked and angered many politicians in this country and the United States and elsewhere as well as leaders in human rights, labour, LGBTTQ, women's and religious organizations; and, unfortunately, instead of addressing these and raising it, various governments have simply forged ahead with the TPP without any consideration for citizens of these countries.

And indeed I was able to find quite quickly a letter from 19 senators of the United States Senate directed to the Honourable Michael Froman, who is the United States trade representative, and I would like to read into the record what these 19 senators, including Senator Elizabeth Warren, Senator Al Franken from Minnesota, and, I do believe as well, another senator named Bernard Sanders. And here's what these senators have to say.

Dear Ambassador Froman, in accordance with chapter 19 of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, TPP, three bilateral consistency plans with Malaysia, Vietnam and Brunei require the countries to enact and implement numerous legal reforms before the trade agreement enters into force. The required actions reflect concerns noted in our congressional consideration of the trade promotion authority granted to the administration to provide expedited legislative consideration for a trade agreement.

*(16:30)

We request the administration withhold the submission of implementing legislation for the TPP unless and until Malaysia, Vietnam and Brunei implement the legal reforms stipulated in the respective consistency plans and demonstrate a consistent track record of enforcing these new laws.

Our concern is based on the current poor condition of labour standards in these countries, the uncertainties surrounding the capacity and willingness of these governments to implement the required reforms and questions about how the administration will assess these countries' achievement of their commitments.

A good reason for this uncertainty has been the record of Malaysia, where recent history has shown how ephemeral progress on human trafficking in the country can be. The 2015 Trafficking In Persons or TIP Report released on July 27, 2015, cited a pilot program adopted by the Malaysian government to allow four trafficking victims to work outside government facilities as evidence of significant efforts by the Malaysian government to comply with the minimum standards of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act.

On September 11, 2015, a mere 46 days after the release of the TIP Report, the state department confirmed in a response to questions for the record submitted to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the Malaysian government was unable to successfully implement the pilot program.

As evidence at congressional hearings on the subject, many observers, including members of Congress, still have serious concerns as to whether Malaysia merited an upgrade from Tier 3 to Tier 2 Watch List. The potential manipulation of the 2015 TIP Report has caused us to question whether we should accept the administration's assurances that these countries are meeting their commitments.

Given the time it would take for some of these countries to meet their obligations, it would be premature for Congress to take action on TPP before Malaysia, Vietnam and Brunei have taken the first steps towards fulfilling their commitments. In order to incentivize compliance, improve labour conditions, ensure that American workers and business are not subjected to unfair competition and to fully inform our vote on TPP, implementing legislation for the TPP should not be submitted to Congress until Malaysia, Vietnam and Brunei have met the obligations stipulated in the consistency plans.

So there are serious questions about human rights abuses in some of these countries. And there is nothing in the TPP that is going to move in any way a push towards greater human rights. And, in fact, what's going to happen is it's going to be a lowering of the floor. And indeed there will be jobs, there will be manufacturing, there will be capacity flowing into more countries where the cost of business may be lower, not because of any reasonable comparative advantage, but because of abuses that are tolerated by their workers, many of whom do not have the ability to unionize and, in many cases, do not even have the ability to leave their job and seek other work. So those are certainly some serious problems with the Trans-Pacific Partnership as it now stands.

And what are some of the other concerns that have been raised by commentators? Well, as my friend, the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew), expanded in some detail, there are some real concerns about digital policies; they'd benefit big corporations at the expense of the public.

As I understand it, the intellectual property chapter contained in TPP would have extensive negative ramifications for users' freedom of expression, right to privacy and due process, as well as hinder people's abilities to innovate. And that's what the member for Fort Rouge was talking about, that's what the member for Point Douglas (Mr. Chief) were talking about. As we look at Manitoba rising up, becoming a centre of innovation,

but it's certainly a risk under TPP that those things will not be possible because of the tremendous wealth and power exercised by a few companies around the world that are using this agreement or would use this agreement to stifle competition.

There's certainly a lack of transparency, and one of the biggest concerns is rewriting global rules on intellectual property enforcement. Every country that signs on to the TPP will be required to conform their domestic laws and policies comply to the provisions of this agreement. In most cases, when it comes to labour standards, the lowest common denominator, but when it comes to the standards sought by many of the multinational corporations that enforce this, it will actually be some of the highest protections for those companies to the exclusion of all others.

In the United States, this would entrench controversial aspects of US copyright law, such as the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. Similar provisions exist in Canada which would restrict the ability of legislators in both countries to engage in domestic law reform to meet the evolving need of citizens and the innovative technology sector.

In short, Madam Speaker, the TPP's provisions that recognize the rights of the public are largely non-binding, whereas almost everything that benefits rights' holders, the biggest corporations, are binding.

The final intellectual property chapter includes many detailed requirements that are more restrictive than current international standards and would require significant changes to Canada's and other companies' copyright laws. For example, you'd now be required to expand copyright terms well beyond the internationally agreed period in the 1994 agreement on trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights. The TPP could extend copyright term protections from the life of the author plus 50 years to life plus 70 years for works created by individuals and 70 years after publication or after creation for corporate-owned works.

The member for Fort Rouge spoke briefly about digital locks. Well, what does that mean? Well, there are many ways that companies try to make their technology proprietary. That's why if you buy a current coffee maker, they will do everything they can do to prevent you from buying any other competitors' coffee discs that you can put in. Many of us, of course, with printers—perhaps each of us in our own constituency office have a printer. More and more, the manufacturers of these devices are trying

to find ways to lock out competitors, meaning, of course, that a competitor's cartridge or an aftermarket or generic cartridge will simply not work. And, of course, there are many ways that multinational corporations want to preserve those kinds of protections: for region coding on movies, on DVDs, on video games and players and to embed software in devices that restrict access to goods and services for the device. It's great for Apple, but it's not very good for consumers.

Business competitors across the United States have done different things to block printer cartridge refill services, competing garage door openers, and have even taken steps to lock mobile phones to particular network providers, meaning once you have a phone with a provider, even though your contract is now up, this TPP would actually assist manufacturers and large providers of networks to block you from using that phone on any other network.

This TPP would also create new threats for journalists and whistleblowers. There's vague text on the misuse of trade secrets, which could be used to enact harsh criminal punishments against anybody who reveals or even accesses information through a computer system that's allegedly confidential. It would certainly place greater liability on Internet intermediaries. So, of course, Chile and Canada, for example, have got exceptions to allow our governments to better safeguard user rights to stay in place. But the TPP would tear down those protections and actually use the lowest common denominator as an international standard.

The TPP would have countries adopt heavy criminal sanctions, adopting criminal sanctions for copyright infringement done without commercial motivation. So users, citizens, could be jailed or hit with very, very steep fines over file sharing and may even have their computers or their domains seized or destroyed, even without a formal complaint from the copyright holder.

So, in short, on intellectual property, countries would have to abandon all the efforts they've made over the past two decades to try to improve the way that we manage the power imbalance between some of the largest manufacturers of electronics, the providers of service and individual consumers. And it's disappointing that no member opposite, I expect, is even aware of these things. Maybe we'll hear some things in debate where they'll either explain or perhaps they'll realize that this is an improper

resolution and they'll put it off for another day. I don't know what they're going to do.

So, certainly, there's more concerns about how individual governments are truly impacted by the ability to pass regulations and laws that protect citizens. The TPP would require all signatories to limit food labelling and to prevent stopping the importing of meat and poultry that don't meet national food standards. TPP would require countries, including Canada, to allow food imports if the exporting country's safety regime is deemed equivalent to our own, even if it violates our own food safety laws. And these rules would effectively outsource domestic food production to other countries.

The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Eichler) did put some examples on the record. There are likely to be some winners in Manitoba under the TPP. There's also a very high expectation, even within the agriculture sector, of some pretty significant losers, and we'll be powerless to do anything about it.

Under the TPP, any Canadian food safety rule we have about the use of pesticides, about labelling or additives, anything that's higher than international standards, would be subject to challenge by manufacturers as illegal trade barriers, and Canada could be required to eliminate these rules and allow in unsafe food under threat of trade sanction.

*(16:40)

Now, the US Food and Drug Administration probably has the most complete system of investigation. They already inspect less than 1 per cent of all seafood imports brought into the United States. Both Malaysia and Vietnam have major issues with their seafood, and the TPP would increase these seafood imports and further overall inspectors' limited ability to ensure the safety of food. Some TPP countries have serious shrimp and fish safety issues, and even with the minimal inspections, high levels of contaminants have been found in Vietnam's sea food.

And, of course, under the TPP, food labels could be challenged as trade barriers. The TPP would impose limits on labels providing information on where a food product even comes from. The TPP would endanger labels identifying genetically modified foods and labels identifying how food was produced. The TPP would under-would expand the limits on consumer labels already included in

the existing trade agreement, like the World Trade Organization, but we know that some of these labels have already been challenged, and, under the TPP, a foreign meat processing or food corporation operating within Canada, could directly challenge our policies they claim undermine their expectation, which could mean a number of lawsuits against the government and new demands for taxpayer compensation for our government simply trying to protect our citizens.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, my time is running short. I have more to say, but I won't ask for leave. There are certainly some questions that we have to answer, and it's not coming forward in the very, very short resolution that's come forward. I know that the members opposite have said that not immediately signing on to Trans-Pacific Partnership would close access to critical trade markets and put Manitoba jobs at risk. There hasn't been a single word as to how exactly this would happen. Again, the United States is our largest trading partner in the world. Manitoba's exports to the US were over \$9 billion in 2014, which, of course, is the exact number contained in the minister's resolution about the amount of exports to all Trans-Pacific Partnership countries.

Last I checked, we have free trade with the United States of America, we have free trade with Mexico, we have free trade with Chile, and I'm just wondering why it is so urgent for this government to set aside all business of this House, to set aside their expression of their own philosophy and their own interest in the Throne Speech, to have us stand up and debate a resolution on a trade deal which has already been negotiated, a trade deal in which Manitobans have very little to say. I simply don't understand the government's priorities, and, therefore, I will not be supporting this government resolution.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): It's always a pleasure to stand up in this House and make of record some of our observations as to the way that the Legislative Assembly has been operating. I take great pleasure in being a member of this Assembly, and it is amazing that sometimes there are issues that are brought before this House that seem to not really be that important because of the other more important priorities that our—well, province is facing.

The approach that I have regarding the TPP is this. Let us learn what it really is. We cannot pretend

that it is something that we ought to get into just because, well, it's a trade deal. We have to know how it will affect the ordinary John and Joseph and Mary, and Ann, and No. 1 along those that need to be—we need to be informed about, are the names of the TPP countries. They are: Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, US and Vietnam.

Now, considering that the signatures of those 12 nations have been affixed on February 4th, 2016, in Auckland, New Zealand, within the seven-year period of negotiations it was eventually signed, it does not mean that it is perfect. It does not mean that we have to just agree to what's in there.

My question, really, is it boggles the mind that we have an agreement that we don't even have a copy of. Is there a hard copy of this agreement available to members of the Legislative Assembly at all? Do we have any of the agreements that are within those—or those appendices that are in these agreements? Do we even have copies of those?

And, even if they were online, I know they were some—*[interjection]* There were some of the more important details that maybe the member from Morris does not know. The member from Morris keeps on chirping in, and I challenge him to answer the following question: What are the projected job losses of this TPP? Do you even know, Madam Speaker?—I don't. But it says there, by the year 2025, it's projected that in the US, there will be 450,000 jobs that will be lost. In Canada, it's 58,000 jobs. That means 58,000 families will be affected. And 58,000 families is part of who we serve in Canada. And, in Japan, there's 75,000. I don't even know if the members opposite care. In New Zealand, there will be 5,000 job losses.

And the TPP, as we are asked to accept, will only allow certain types of dispute mechanisms, which is the ISDS. For those who don't know what that acronym means, it's investor-state dispute mechanism, and it is an instrument of public international law that will grant an investor to sue a sovereign state. It will grant the investor the right to sue a sovereign state for dispute settlement. It will be before the courts. And it could run up into hundreds of millions of dollars in damages if we do not change any of the basic laws that we have now to protect our own health care, our labour laws. We need to change some of those in order to comply with the TPP. And maybe we do not understand that yet, but then, if the member from Morris can answer that question or

cannot, let me provide some of those actions or choices in action that could be impacted.

* (16:50)

The basic protection from foreign government actions that investors can have are: freedom from discrimination, freedom—or protection against uncompensated expropriation of property, protection against denial of justice, and the right to transfer capital.

These choices in action, meaning courses of action against a state or a sovereign government, is something that needs to be resolved first, or at least understood by those who are supposed to pass a resolution saying this is good.

There is a certain Jim Balsillie who made a presentation before the House of Commons International Trade Committee, and he said and I quote: I am a self-made capitalist and I believe in free trade and open markets. I have commercialized Canadian intellectual property in 135 countries to a level that was not done before or since. My global business experience is unique in Canada.

I would like to echo the words of Jared Bernstein, former chief economist to Vice-President Biden, who called for a third category of trade critics, people who believe in free trade and globalization, but don't like what TPP wants to do to our countries, our work in process, and our government.

TPP is not a traditional free trade agreement. It is deliberately called a partnership because it describes an economic framework for 21st century prosperity. TPP is not principally about reducing tariffs at our borders, but rather about rules that govern how we run our currently sovereign country or economy and how these new partnership rules get enforced.

In the 21st century making and exporting valuable goods have given way to a global economy where the wealth is made by making and exporting intangible goods or intellectual property. The economy of intangible goods and, like traditional trade, is governed by rules and restrictions that govern ownership of intellectual property. The intangible economy is the opposite of free trade. It is about rules and restrictions that grant temporary monopolies to those that own valuable intellectual property.

When a country ratifies a bilateral or multilateral agreement that governs intellectual property, it makes a commitment to enact those rules inside our domestic marketplace. These are very different kinds of commitments than traditional trade agreements because they're about how we commit to other countries, how Canada will operate its economy internally.

Canada is not a large exporter of intellectual property, so we import a disproportionately large amount. Canada owns and exports very little intellectual property because we have never had a national innovation strategy.

The other chart—and he goes on—that you see here illustrates that we have had zero growth in innovation outputs over the last 30 years. Canada never developed capacity for the 21st century global economy where wealth is generated by commercializing intellectual property.

And he goes on by saying not calculating economic effects of IP, which is intellectual property, and ISDS, that's investor-state dispute settlement, is like doing a budget for the family and not taking rent or mortgage payments and cost of food into account, which, I will editorialize, would be stupid.

As Nobel Prize economist and trade expert Paul Krugman has noted, most of the tangible goods already move tariff free. The same is true in intangible goods, where 97 per cent of world trade in information technology products already move tariff free under the WTO's Information Technology Agreement.

So what is TPP if not about free trade? TPP is about expanding, freedom to operate for the winners in the innovation economy and restricting it for the rest. Freedom to operate is a core strategic and risk management factor for businesses in the ideas economy. Sophisticated ideas businesses use freedom to operate strategies from the onset of their R & D, that's research and development, all the way to the commercializing and distribution cycles.

I could go on and on and quote from Mr. Balsillie, but, then, I will just try to be as short as possible. I still have 16 minutes. And—

An Honourable Member: Keep going.

Mr. Marcelino: Okay.

The beauty of our system today is that we are allowed to speak against or for something that we

believe in. Despite all the heckling from my friends from across, I believe that it is a very healthy exercise of at least our brains or parts thereof. It's amazing how in this small brain that's coming from me I have been allowed to speak about a trade agreement that will impact my kids and my grandkids.

This is something serious. This is something that strikes fear in my heart, because it could affect all of us 100 years from now, because once we are in, we are in all the way. There is no escape clause to that agreement. There is no way out of that agreement. There is no opting out in that agreement. It is not fair to Canada. It is not fair to the working class. It is not fair because it is not fair.

We are for trade. We are for trade but not at the expense of our sovereignty, not at the expense of our

labour laws, not at the expense of our working class, not at the expense of the poor.

We will vote in favour of freer trade, but we will not accede to any changes that will affect the future of our province as a whole. There's no agreement in the TPP that even suggests that all of our rules will be sacrosanct. There are other areas of negotiations that we need to do. We cannot just do it headlong and pretend that we know everything that's in there—

Madam Speaker: Order.

When this matter is again before the House, the member for Tyndall Park (Mr. Marcelino), will have 13 minutes remaining.

The hour being 5 p.m., the House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, May 24, 2016

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