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

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALLUM, James	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
BINDLE, Kelly	Thompson	PC
CLARKE, Eileen, Hon.	Agassiz	PC
COX, Cathy, Hon.	River East	PC
CULLEN, Cliff, Hon.	Spruce Woods	PC
CURRY, Nic	Kildonan	PC
DRIEDGER, Myrna, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EICHLER, Ralph, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FIELDING, Scott, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
FLETCHER, Steven, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni	St. Johns	NDP
FRIESEN, Cameron, Hon.	Morden-Winkler	PC
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
GRAYDON, Clifford	Emerson	PC
GUILLEMARD, Sarah	Fort Richmond	PC
HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
ISLEIFSON, Len	Brandon East	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake	PC
JOHNSTON, Scott	St. James	PC
KINEW, Wab	Fort Rouge	NDP
KLASSEN, Judy	Kewatinook	Lib.
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAGIMODIERE, Alan	Selkirk	PC
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Burrows	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom	Flin Flon	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Flor	Logan	NDP
MARCELINO, Ted	Tyndall Park	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	Morris	PC
MAYER, Colleen	St. Vital	PC
MICHALESKI, Brad	Dauphin	PC
MICKLEFIELD, Andrew, Hon.	Rossmere	PC
MORLEY-LECOMTE, Janice	Seine River	PC
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine, Hon.	Midland	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Arthur-Virden	PC
REYES, Jon	St. Norbert	PC
SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	Ind.
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
<i>Vacant</i>	Point Douglas	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, May 18, 2017

The House met at 10 a.m.

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

Please be seated.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Jim Maloway (Official Opposition House Leader): Madam Speaker, I would have to ask the House if there's leave to move directly to Bill 219.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to resume debate on Bill 219?

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed. Leave has been granted.

An Honourable Member: No.

Madam Speaker: Did I hear a no? I have heard a no.

We'll take a one-minute recess. *[interjection]*

Okay. Okay. Remove the recess. We'll just let the House leaders confer for a moment.

Mr. Maloway: Madam Speaker, on further House business, I would once again like to ask leave to move directly to Bill 219, The Surface Water Management Act, and I would ask for additional time to be added to the clock so that we have a full hour to debate this.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to resume debate on Bill 219?

Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader): We do grant leave for Bill 219 to come forward.

Madam Speaker: Okay, and then the next question is: Is there leave to add the time that has been lost,

now, on to the—which is nine minutes—to add it on to the debate?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: Leave has been denied.

**DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS—
PUBLIC BILLS**

**Bill 219—The Surface Water Management Act
(Amendments to Various Acts
to Protect Lakes and Wetlands)**

Madam Speaker: Resuming debate on Bill 219, The Surface Water Management Act (Amendments to Various Acts to Protect Lakes and Wetlands), standing in the name of the honourable member of Radisson, who has six minutes remaining.

Mr. James Teitsma (Radisson): Well, this wasn't what I expected to speak about today, and I'm certainly prepared to stand up at this House at any time and share some of my thoughts and some words with the members here about any bill that comes before this House.

* (10:10)

And so, today, the bill that has come before us is brought to us by the member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer), who—apparently—I'm very interested to note that the bill is called The Surface Water Management Act and, you know, as an urban MLA, something that I'm not necessarily that familiar with. I know in my own backyard I've had to deal with managing my own surface water as it runs down the back of the property into the little lake in the—in my backyard, and the water levels go up and down and I'm not quite understanding all that's going on there, but there's—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

I would just indicate that there is a member speaking in debate and I would urge that all members please give him the attention that you would all like, as well, when you are speaking in debate.

Mr. Teitsma: I thank you very much, Madam Speaker, for restoring order to this House. It's something that, sadly, is missing far too often. And I believe that we've heard from the Speaker on

numerous occasions about how maintaining order in this House is essential to being able to have good and healthy debates and to promote an attitude of respect, and also to provide a good example to anyone who may, from time to time, come and visit us in the gallery.

I think especially of the children who do come to visit, and so that's why I do want to thank the Speaker for bringing order once again to this House. And I encourage all the members, including the member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe), to maintain order not just during this discussion that we're having about private member's bill, the surface water management amendment act, but also to do so throughout the day as we get into question period, as we go through what the—this afternoon may come. We may have Estimates. We may have bills.

I—you know, there's always something new happening today in this House and you never quite know what to expect. Today, to my surprise, I'm speaking about The Surface Water Management Act, and what's very interesting is, as the member for Minto has pointed out, that good debate in this House relies on good communication between House leaders, and certainly that was sorely lacking, I think, in this example. And I've heard from our House leader specifically how that was very much not the case.

In any case, I hope that won't too badly distract from the quality of the words that I'm putting on the record this morning because, as the members opposite know and I think as our own government knows, is that you get the best effect when you have the opportunity to prepare. And so, regrettably, I did not have much of an opportunity to prepare and to plan for how to speak on The Surface Water Management Act put forward by the member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer), but it is something that I believe does require our attention due to the rules of this House and I'm happy to take the few minutes remaining to me to talk about it.

Now, I believe earlier in the conversation—or earlier, rather, in my speech, I was referencing what was happening in my own backyard, of all things. And those of you who don't know, I've built a family home for ourselves in a suburban area of Crocus Meadows, and it's a beautiful, beautiful neighbourhood, right, of course, in the riding of—constituency of Radisson. And I thank, as always, the people from the constituency of Radisson for electing me, giving me the opportunity to serve.

But, as my wife and I constructed the home, we were pleased to see that we had a lot that backed onto a lake. And now that's a new experience for me and I'm not sure how common that is around the members of this House, but for me it does introduce, you know, a new dynamic in terms of understanding the way water's going to flow on my property. And so I had to learn a few things and speak with my landscaper and, apparently, I still have to talk to him because what we had happen in our backyard was that we had a beautiful beach that we managed to put right up against the lake and we, from time to time, will go kayaking on the lake there and enjoy the retention pond that exists in our backyard. But sometimes, you know, the water runs down my yard, carves out a piece of my beach and, unfortunately, creates a bit of a mess.

So, in any case, I now—I would like to turn my attention more directly just to a few of the items specifically in the bill that we have before us today, The Surface Water Management Act (Amendments to Various Acts to Protect Lakes and Wetlands). And I'll note that we have always, and I believe our Minister responsible for Sustainable Development has made it very clear to this House, that we believe in preserving and maintaining and managing properly the tremendous natural resources that we have in this province.

I think it's such a blessing to be living in a province as beautiful, as rugged and as well-endowed—if you'll permit me that expression—as the province of Manitoba when it comes to the provision of natural resources, the seemingly limitless miles and miles of beautiful scenery we find in the Whiteshell and everywhere else. And I just want to leave that with the House, and I'll enjoy the rest of this debate.

Thank you.

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): What a remarkable addition to the debate on Bill 19 that's been put forward by my friend for Radisson (Mr. Teitsma).

I'm not going to put on the record any discussions that did or didn't happen between House leaders. I'm shocked to discover that the member for Radisson felt he was unprepared to speak on this bill, given that he spoke on it last time this bill was before the House, and, actually, the debate was adjourned in his name and he had a further six minutes to go. He tells us he was unprepared, and I think as we read the Hansard transcript, I think that will be very, very clear. It might, actually, Madam Speaker, be

something I want to mail out to my constituents so they can see exactly what this Progressive Conservative government's commitment is to the environment.

I was surprised to hear the member for Radisson (Mr. Teitsma) dismiss the fact that urban MLAs in this House would be concerned about the goal of keeping our lakes and our rivers and our waterways safe and healthy for generations to come.

I live nearby the Assiniboine River. I live nearby Omand's Creek. I cross the Red River frequently. I'm a user of Lake Winnipeg. I enjoy travelling around Manitoba, whether it's the Whiteshell or whether it's Spruce Woods or whether it's our incredible North. As an urban MLA, I believe in the need to protect our water. The people that I represent in this Legislature believe that there is an obligation on government to protect our water. And they expect government to do better.

And I listened carefully to the comments put on the record by the member for Radisson—*[interjection]*—yes, water does run hill, as do many other things—I didn't hear a single word that would suggest why we wouldn't want to send Bill 219 off to committee. And, in fact, the debate which happened last time this bill was brought forward had a lot of invective at the former governments and invective at the member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer), but really nothing that would suggest why this bill shouldn't go off to committee and have the opportunity for concerned Manitobans to come and put their views on the record and, hopefully, pass this bill.

This bill amends five acts to protect our wetlands, to reduce nutrient loading and to improve water quality and water management in Manitoba. And it follows work that had been done previously with stakeholders on surface water management, including municipalities, including conservation districts, organizations like Ducks Unlimited as well as our producers—farmers on the land—to come together to collaborate and find ways to preserve our wetlands, which is a win for everybody involved.

And I appreciate that this new government wants to put its new stamp on things, and I accept, Madam Speaker, that that is the way the political process works and it's—they can choose to criticize the previous government as much as they want but, at the same time, they ought not to be dismissing out of hand—without any reasons—good ideas which are out there.

And Bill 219 is a good idea. This bill doesn't just suddenly drop into this House. This bill is the culmination of a lot of work that was done, a lot of consultation that was done and a lot of good ideas not supplied solely by the member for Wolseley, but good ideas supplied by other elected officials in the province of Manitoba, other people who have expertise in this area. And we should move ahead.

Now, Scott Stephens of Ducks Unlimited Canada, when a bill similar to this was first introduced, said that the announcement of this kind of protection for water in Manitoba was a landmark announcement. And he described it as insightful leadership toward a healthier environment in our province. And this follows on the work the previous government did to maintain a healthy Lake Winnipeg through the release of a province-wide surface water management strategy.

* (10:20)

If there are particular problems with that strategy, then we should hear those concerns. If there's particular issues with what's contained in Bill 219, I would expect we can hear those things today. I haven't heard that so far. We didn't hear it last time this bill was coming forward, and I expect we won't hear anything productive today, which is why this bill should go off to committee.

This bill will help to reduce the amount of nutrients that are making our lakes sick and stop flooding. And I hear the members chattering away, talking about history. You know, protecting water has been an ongoing process. I commend the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), who suggested legislation dealing with phosphorus. That was a step that became important because of the science that became available in past years. We took other steps to insist on higher standards for water protection, higher standards for what nutrients can and can't go into the lakes, stronger protection to make sure the intensive livestock operations don't put the water and the health and safety of Manitobans at risk.

Environmental protection is not a one-stop shop; it is a continuum, and Bill 219 represents what we believe is the very best practices as we now know them. And if members actually want to stand up in this House and debate the validity of certain measures in Bill 219, then let's do that, but it is—it would be disappointing if members stood up for the rest of this hour, well, what's left of the hour after some confusion first thing, and chose to be partisan

and chose to ignore a good bill because they don't like where it came from. That shouldn't be the way that things operate in this Legislature. We would expect more from this government and we hope that things can go forward.

So we know that successful and effective surface water management requires everyone working together on a local scale and we know that everybody has a part to play in surface water management, whether those are producers, municipal governments, whether it's individuals who make their own choices of draining land, of—as the member for Radisson (Mr. Teitsma) seems to talk about on his own estate, what he does with his water and how it runs off his property—those are things that we need to talk about.

Effective water management includes protecting wetlands to create healthier wetlands and upstream water storage. We know that upstream water storage can be a benefit to producers. That wasn't always seen as the best practice. It was seen, once upon a time, Madam Speaker, the best practice for any producer was to make sure that they did away with all wetlands, get water off the property as quickly as possible to allow for the earliest seeding and the earliest cultivation.

But, as we deal with climate change, as we deal with more severe events happening in the course of a summer, large downfalls of rain that happen in a short period of time, the science has developed and people's understanding has developed. And wise producers, of which there are many, many, many in the province of Manitoba, know that being able to retain surface water on their land in a way they're able to control is actually a good way to manage those severe weather events but also protect their livestock, protect their crops if there's a drought or another period of extended lack of water.

So we think that producers in the province are ready for this and we know that because they told us that. We know that organizations like Ducks Unlimited, which favours healthy wetlands which provide a safe habitat for waterfowl, we know they're on side. And we know that people, whether they live inside the city of Winnipeg or outside of the city of Winnipeg, whether they live in an urban area or they live in a rural area, people in Manitoba do care about water. They care deeply about water. They're concerned by things this government is doing to lighten restrictions, to make it easier for those individuals who don't have the same kind of interest to put our water and our safety at risk.

So I'm looking forward to hearing what other members have to say. We can hear from a number of additional members today. Let's send this bill off to committee. Let's hear what other Manitobans have to say, and let's work together on protecting water for the benefit for all of us, Madam Speaker.

Thank you.

Mr. Reg Helwer (Brandon West): It's very pleased to stand in Legislature today to discuss Bill 219, The Surface Water Management Act (Amendments to Various Acts to Protect Lakes and Wetlands).

You know, Madam Speaker, it's pretty rich for the opposition members to stand in the House and present this legislation, the last vestiges of a failed government that had the worst environmental record of any provincial government in Canada. That was the provincial NDP. We saw their record. The devastation that it created to Manitoba not just to the wetlands, but also to the rivers and the forests, it was devastating to watch and we watched it, yes, for 17 years where they ignored the environment. They pretended that they were friends in the environment, but their actions showed their true intent. In fact, it was not there.

They ignored flooding. They ignored the warnings of trading water management structures, Madam Speaker, and then we saw the most devastating floods that we've had in recent memory. They did not speak to our neighbours. They did not speak to Saskatchewan. It was the MLA for Arthur-Virden that was the first provincial official that actually had communications with the Province of Saskatchewan on water management.

The former government failed in this regard, Madam Speaker. I just cannot emphasize this enough. I know that this bill was introduced, a similar one in the previous session at the last gasp of the government and they—if it was important, where was it for 17 years? And, suddenly, it was important to them to present, but it was not important for them to bring it back for debate. And they constantly told people that were looking for it to happen—Ducks Unlimited and others, that, well, you know, the opposition was preventing it from coming forward.

They were the government. They can bring a bill forward and reintroduce it and bring it up for debate whenever they wish. But they failed in that regard and they tried to pretend that it was the opposition that was preventing it. We were ready and able to debate at any time on this particular legislation,

Madam Speaker, and they wouldn't bring it forward. So, what are you going to do?

You know, well over 15 years ago, I had interactions with the departments about water management structures, and we sat down with them and they showed us their plans for how we could have 'waterment' management structures throughout Manitoba not just for controlling floods, but for creating opportunities for agriculture, for irrigation, creating opportunities for recreation, but, overall, managing the flow of water that goes through Manitoba. Because we have a tremendous watershed, Madam Speaker, that drains a good part of Canada. We—but we touch very little of the water that flows through our province.

They showed me all the opportunities that we had in Manitoba. These weren't large water control structures. Some of them were very small, but they all would have an impact on managing water. And it was very telling, Madam Speaker, that 15 years ago that department said to me we will never, ever be able to build another dam or water management structure in Manitoba again. We are prevented from doing so from the current government. They don't want to hear about it; they don't want to talk about it; they just want to ignore everything.

And then what happened, Madam Speaker? We saw some of the most devastating floods because it was ignored by the previous government, and we're still dealing with the outcomes of those floods. We still have claims that we're trying to settle, claims against the previous government that now we have to deal with. People's lives were put at risk. Their properties were flooded. Their properties were damaged. Some of them had livelihoods destroyed all because they were ignored by the previous government, very sad to watch.

And, of course, what else did they ignore? Well, they ignore science, Madam Speaker. Talk to the soil scientists. Talk to the scientists, find out how water flows. Find out how nutrients are taken up. If you listen to the previous government, in their mind they would say that when you apply a nutrient to a crop they think it all flows off.

Well, Madam Speaker, I don't mean to educate you about agriculture; I know you're well educated in that regard. I tried to educate, at times, the previous speaker and we had a good interaction. But, you know, the strange thing is about crops is that they need food to grow and they use the food that we apply, the nutrients that are in the soil in order to

create a better crop, to enhance the crop, to produce a good outcome for our agricultural producers. That's basic, basic premise. But, you know, the opponents would have you believe that anything you apply to the land runs immediately off.

Well, one of the companies I'm involved in—in fact, two of them have soil records that go back over 60 years.

* (10:30)

An Honourable Member: Are they numbered companies?

Mr. Helwer: Well, no, they're not numbered companies. They are private companies, privately held companies. You can go and look them up and see what I disclose for them. *[interjection]* Pay attention to how this works. But those companies have records going back for soil samples for our customers well over 60 years for most of the land that we have applied nutrients on over the past 60 years. So we have the record of what's applied. We have the record of what's removed by the crop, and we know where the nutrients go and that it's taken up by the crop and they produce for those producers.

Now, when the water sat on the land for well over a month, the producers were concerned about what might happen to those nutrients. We were concerned, as well, and we made sure that we went out and we sampled all those fields. We had the records, Madam Speaker. And then what we found is that all of the phosphate that was applied stayed in the ground. It didn't move. Phosphate, once it's applied, it bonds with the soil. I don't want to talk about the science here, but it doesn't move with water, much like the former government would have you believe it moves and flows off into the rivers and streams. That's not how it works, Madam Speaker. Talk to the soil scientists.

So we sampled all those fields. We found that the phosphate was still there. In fact, it hadn't gone off the water—gone off the land with the water. It was still there available for the crops. The nitrogen was still there available for the crops. So I think that's a very important message there, Madam Speaker, that we know now, and we knew before, how science works with nutrients. The former government would have you believe, well, they use junk science. They don't understand how it works. They don't go and talk to the professionals. They don't go and talk to

the soil scientists. They really don't understand what it is.

And, you know, Madam Speaker, I look at the record on the environment and surface water management of the previous government, and I look at their reaction to things that we introduced in opposition. There was a particular area that was a concern, was called microbeads. You may recall this, that I introduced this into the House. And because what was happening is we have microbeads that are in shampoos and soaps that are used as an astringent. Well, the problem is those microbeads, they go into our water supply and they create problems with algae growth and other things. So we were talking with the federal government, trying to get the attention of the provincial government to talk to the federal government about removing microbeads from those products.

And I do recall when this was introduced in the House, when I introduced it, Madam Speaker, there was a former MLA, let me think now—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Helwer: —a former MLA from the Interlake, someone who told people with flooding there, well, it could've been worse. There was a former MLA that, when I introduced this, he leaned over to his colleague and he used a word that I can't use in here, Madam Speaker, but he said to his colleague—and he was the minister of Conservation at that time—and he said, what the bleep are microbeads. Isn't that startling that the minister of Conservation had no concept of an environmental issue?

And, again, the premier at that time, we do recall that the premier leaned over to his colleague, and he was a little less explicit but he also said, what are microbeads? So it's obvious, Madam Speaker, the previous government had no knowledge of any environmental issues. They just had a very poor record.

And, then, I do recall talking about zebra mussels with my colleague. Ah, yes, the zebra mussels. We tried to bring the attention to the government at that time about zebra mussels and the issues and the damage it could do to Manitoba water.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Helwer: And they ignored it. They did nothing. They actually polluted the waters of the lake trying to get rid of them, and, of course, we found out that that didn't have any effect at all. They had no concept of how zebra mussels spread, and they just continued to allow them to propagate in Manitoba and contaminate our water supply, contaminate our water sources and putting people at risk to the point where—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sustainable Development): Thank you for the opportunity to speak today with regard to Bill 219 introduced by the member opposite, The Surface Water Management Act. The member is recycling the former Bill 5 which was introduced by the members opposite and, unfortunately, the only thing that the members opposite are good at is recycling old legislation. So I would like to say that this is, in fact, legislation that is being recycled.

Unfortunately, for 17 years, the members opposite in the former government had an opportunity to introduce 'newa' legislation regarding surface water management. And it is a very important issue and it's one that is indicated in my mandate letter, and it's also something that this government is looking at as a very important issue as we move forward in government. It's been, you know, just a little over a year, but we're making, you know, huge strides and taking a lot of the information that we heard from Manitobans as I've been out talking to Manitobans over this past year, and developing a bill—a bill that is going to be based on watershed based planning and a bill that will include many opportunities for improving our watershed and our resource management plan.

So our plan will be based on the watershed, Madam Speaker, and that's important because we know that the watersheds are the way to plan for surface water management. We'll also include that we have in our legislation the ALUS program, which is the alternate land use surface management planning, and that will ensure that we have an incentive for farmers to keep water on the land. We know that by ensuring that we keep water on the land and having the opportunity to hold water back we will reduce flooding, improve water quality and reduce or prevent nutrient loading into our lakes and streams.

So that is something that's very important and it's that unfortunate that the members opposite didn't introduce that in their bill. It's something that, you

know, I've been out talking to Manitobans. I've been out at the Netley Creek talking with individuals from ISD, Gordon Goldsborough individuals from the Red River Basin Commission, ARBI, the City of Winnipeg, and we realize the importance of ensuring that we keep water on the land and have the opportunity to have those wetlands which will, in fact, you know, contain water and be a carbon sink for, you know, for the province of Manitoba.

And I know that, you know, our wetlands are the kidneys of the province and it's important that we ensure that we do keep that water on the land. It's a big part of what our next surface water management act or our watershed planning act will look like.

Just this spring, I, you know, had the opportunity to actually go out and meet with the RM of Deloraine, Boissevain, Waskada and hear from them directly their concerns regarding surface water management. And they told me that—in fact, again, I've heard that again that, you know, the former members, the ministers never went out there. They were actually never engaged in talking to Manitobans, talking to individuals who are most affected by flooding, and most affected by watershed base planning. So I know that they appreciated that opportunity and we had very good fulsome meetings listening to those municipalities, listening to the issues that they have and working together to address those issues.

Our new watershed-based legislation will ensure that we're listening to Manitobans, that we're going to work together to address the issues that they're facing and—but also in consultation and discussions with those individuals like conservation districts, ISD, individuals from ARBI again, Red River Basin Commission and all of those very important people were actually out on the land and have experience and have the knowledge to provide us with expertise in how we should move forward in developing this plan.

We have many good ideas, Madam Speaker, as I just indicated. And we know that by retaining water the farmers will have the opportunity to work their land and still have the opportunity to ensure that the environment is cared for and that the environment is—I guess the nutrient loading is reduced and ensure that our lakes and streams are going to be able to be better water quality, which is important to all of us.

* (10:40)

I know that the members opposite had 17 years. They talk about nutrients into the lake, especially Lake Winnipeg. They had 17 years to introduce legislation and they also had opportunity to address, you know, the combined sewer problems that we have and nutrient loading and things like that. But, you know, unfortunately, over all that 17 years, it didn't appear to be a priority for them.

And, you know, I just would like to indicate again that I know that this is a recycle of the legislation that, unfortunately, they didn't really think was a priority during their time as a government. So they failed to introduce that, they failed to debate it and they failed to give Manitobans the opportunity to be a part of these discussions in this legislation.

We are moving forward with our watershed-based planning and are having fulsome discussions and will be having more discussions with stakeholders, with Manitobans, and give them the opportunity to be part of this legislation that we're developing. We believe in inclusiveness, and I think that that is something that the members opposite often failed to do as we saw with the introduction—or the raising of the PST. No opportunity for Manitobans to be consulted on that decision. So, you know, we are different. We know it's important to consult. We know it's important to talk to Manitobans and let them be part of the legislation that we're developing, so that is what we plan to do with this.

With regard to, you know, surface water management, I know that we need to work together with, you know, other provinces. And we have actually achieved a very open dialogue with the government of Saskatchewan. I talk to Minister Moe on a regular basis and ensure that he is aware of the concerns that we have with regard to surface water. And we have an opportunity to talk together and, you know, ensure that we—that they understand the concerns that we have with regard to water and the watershed and how, you know, water does move into the province of Manitoba. So we are going to work together.

You know, just recently, I talked to him with regard to the zebra mussel issue, and as the member opposite—or the member on our side of the House indicated that, you know, there are concerns with zebra mussels. We, on this side of the House, are taking action and we are ensuring that—we just recently advertised a new communication plan that we have that will even include young children so that

we know that when our youth are engaged and they understand the concerns with regard to zebra mussels, they will continue to have that message as they grow up and pass it on to their children as well. It's so important that all Manitobans are part of the plan to prevent the spread.

I know the government opposite, they sat on their hands and, unfortunately, zebra mussels spread from the Red River into Lake Winnipeg; tried a plan of potash where I think they spent three quarters of a million dollars, you know, planning to try and do something or appear to do something with regard to stopping the spread of zebra mussels. Unfortunately, you know, that plan, you know, was failed from the start, Madam Speaker. And so that \$750,000 could have been better spent raising awareness for Manitobans, and that's what we're doing.

And we're also going to ensure that more Manitobans will be stopped and there is a requirement for them to stop at those stations where we are going to have inspections and we're going to increase those inspections. We're going to raise awareness. We're going to ensure that at the borders, at the Tourism Manitoba offices—this is something that just makes sense and very logical. I don't know why the members opposite never thought of it—you know, have signage, have information with regard to zebra mussels so that individuals who are travelling either from Ontario or travelling from Saskatchewan know what the rules are regarding cleaning their boat. Clean, drain, dry and dispose. And that's very important because we know by education, we can stop the movement of zebra mussels and we can prevent them from spreading into any of our other lakes and streams, Madam Speaker.

So we're taking a different approach with regard to our Surface Water Management Act, the watershed act. And we're also going to work together with Manitobans. We're going to give them an opportunity to actually be part of this process, to drive this process, to help develop the legislation in discussion with Manitoba, not a top-down approach but an approach where we actually work together with Manitobans to address this very important issue of surface water.

And, anyways, we will work together, Madam Speaker, and we will make sure that we pass this legislation, not like the members opposite who had 17 years and sat—

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Kewatinook.

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): I just want to put on record that I will hold the government to account. She's publicly stated that we need to work together, and this includes waters all over Manitoba.

The indigenous people have always been great stewards of our most precious resource, and I can personally tell you that it's wonderful to be able to go to any lake up north in my communities and simply drink right off the lakes. And that's something that I want my grandchildren and my—for those yet unborn to be able to do as well. And so I want to put that on the record that that's our end goal, and we must work together collaboratively to work towards that.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Ralph Eichler (Minister of Agriculture): It is a pleasure to stand today and talk about Bill 219, the recycled bill from the previous government.

And what did we hear about the previous bill? The government had 17 years of bringing this legislation forward, and they dragged their feet—they dragged their feet—they dragged their feet, and now it's a priority for them. They're feeling now that this is the time that they want to move forward in opposition in order to bring this legislation forward.

But what did they hear from producers? What did they hear from the Keystone Ag Producers when they were in government when they brought this legislation forward? They were trying to work with the government in regards to water management and nutritive management, and they couldn't get to the table with it.

And this is something that our government's focusing on, making sure that the Keystone Ag Producers, the environmentalists and the scientists all work off the same page in order to ensure that we do, in fact, get this legislation right. I am proud to stand with the Minister of Sustainable Development (Mrs. Cox) in order to ensure that we do our consultation process to work with the Keystone Ag Producers, and, of course, the Lake Winnipeg group, the Manitoba group and all the other watersheds.

And I know the Minister of Sustainable Development also talked about the Red River basin, and I would be remiss if I didn't go back to the flood of 2011. I know the former member from Interlake talked about the flood, and he said it could've been worse, and it sure could've. But they were promised, under that previous administration, that they would have multi-year funding on that flood of 2011. Well, they got one year out of it; it was unfortunate. People

and farmers, in particular, cattle producers, based some hope on what their government actually had promised them, and they went to the bank, borrowed money thinking they'd get multiple-year funding. In fact, they did not. They were misled by the previous government which was unfortunate. A number of those producers lost their farms, lost their operations on the assumption that they would be getting multiple-year funding.

That's something we will not do, Madam Speaker. When we make a commitment to our producers, we will deliver on that commitment. And we know that we have a number of years ahead of us before we're going to be able to sustain the livestock numbers back they were prior to 2011.

I know the minister of Agriculture at the time, the member from Dauphin, went public a number of times ensuring that Manitobans—that their farmers would be protected, and they would be there for them in a time of need. They had a number of years after 2011 to start actually delivering on their water policies.

They did implement one year a program we're committed to. That's the ALUS program. We are a government that's focused on ensuring that we do get those results out for our farm families and talk about the ALUS program. I know the former KAP president, the member from Portage la Prairie, was very instrumental in ensuring that the ALUS program was brought forward. He worked with the previous government. They said it was a great idea, a great initiative in order to really hold water back and get some of the nitrogen and nutrients out of the water before it hit the watersheds, and it was a great program.

I, along with the member from Sustainable Development, are committed to finding the right mixture for that—the right mix in order to ensure that we do have an ALUS-like program. We're not sure if we're going to call it ALUS program, but it's certainly water management.

And when we talk about managing water, whether it comes from our friends from the south through Minnesota, North Dakota and other watersheds, we have to be here to manage that water in a sustainable way, and that's really the critical part.

*(10:50)

In the flood of '97, that was quite the year for us here in Winnipeg and, of course, all of Manitoba and, in particular, southern Manitoba. We learned a

lot from water management in that—just that situation alone in order to ensure that we had the protections in place to protect our farmer communities, our cities and rural communities in order to ensure that, in fact, they were protected as well.

It turned out, Madam Speaker, that that was a bumper crop year for those farm families in southern Manitoba. Little did we know that we learned a lot from water management in that particular circumstance. Water is fine to be retained and released in a timely manner. Releasing some of those nutrients after they had a chance to settle in the basin was—actually, it worked out really quite good. And the member from Brandon West talked about nutrients that we put into the soil, actually, to help our crops grow.

We have a growing population. By 2040 we know that the population will double. We have to feed that world—we have to feed those families that are so important to us in order to ensure that we have enough food for them to survive. And farmers and producers—in particular, farm families—are very careful about what they put in the land. This is the land that they are the best stewards of. They understand it. They know what they need to—for inputs in order to get the yields that they need. The last thing they want to do is have a drop of that water or those nutrients get into the watershed because it's very expensive. It's very expensive to put on. It's very expensive to maintain. So any of those nutrients that are added to the soils to make that soil better to get better yields in order to ensure that we do have the right mixture, the rice—right base in order to make sure that we get the right yields and the increase in those yields as we go forward.

I know last year was a bit of a challenge in regards with all the rain we had. Even though the yield was up on our overall crop production, the protein was not there that—what we normally like to see. So it's—again, it's a part of our mixture management that we try to find that right balance. And that's the research that we talk about. That's the scientific research that we talk about. And I know that the previous government was trying to find a Band-Aid that fits one, fits all. That's not the way it works at all, Madam Speaker.

We know that different soil conditions are lacking in certain nutrients in the soil. The western part of Manitoba is very phosphorus-deficient, which is a very important product to ensure that we get the right balance for certain crops. The pulses are a very

important crop; they put a lot of natural nutrients right into the soil that make it great for rotation with wheat. I know members opposite probably don't understand that, but we've seen pulses grow from around 200,000 acres when it was first started, to this year is going to hit 2.2 million acres.

And I know the member from Elmwood, he—I remember when he was in opposition federally he was the most spoken MP of the day, and I know he would love to get up and talk about this. I know—I would encourage him to do so. But he's been very quiet lately and I don't know why. But I know there—he'll have a chance, and he's become a bit shy. I know he's busy with being the House leader and couldn't get his act together today. But I know he's working on trying to organize things a little bit better and maybe go back to politics 101. And I know when he was in opposition he would come in at 1:30 and said best job he ever had. He got out of here at 3:30, and not a bad deal. So now he's actually in opposition. He has—I've never seen so much of the guy since he's been here. But, we're certainly glad to have him here and I know he's serving his constituents well and he's holding us to account which he's obligated to do.

So, certainly, this legislation is one that we're not going to be passing. We know that our bill is going to be much better. *[interjection]* I know the member from Minto's a bit disappointed. He thought, when he spoke a minute ago, he was ready to move forward on it and call committee—and call committee—and they've already had the opportunity on this legislation. They didn't want to bring it forward when they had 17 years to do so. But now we will do it and we will get it right.

We know that, through the consultation process, through partnerships—the member from sustainable development—the minister of 'stainevelopment' talked about partnerships with our provinces to the west and the States to the south. We know that we have to work together with them in order to manage water, to make sure we do—makes sure that we are all protected, that we are all safe, in order to ensure that water management is done in a sustainable and way that's beneficial for all Manitobans, and of course, I know that those relationships—the Premier (Mr. Pallister) went out to Saskatchewan, met with Premier Wall at the time, even prior to forming government and being respectful, respectful of your neighbours. Water has to go somewhere and we have to make sure that we do it in a way that's not going to harm others.

So we know that the member from—the Minister of Sustainable Development's (Mrs. Cox) going to bring in legislation that's most improved in order to ensure that we do get it right through the consultation process and I know that other members of the Chamber will want to be able to share their views on this legislation and I encourage the member from Elmwood to actually put his views on the record. I know he has—there's a few minutes left in order to do that, so I'll give him that opportunity.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): Good morning, Madam Speaker.

It gives me great pleasure to rise in the House today to speak towards Bill 219, The Surface Water Management Act, brought forward originally by the member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer), which was a very interesting bill when he brought this forward because we had many, many years when he was in government to bring something like this forward and, of course, you know, the past Selinger government had many, many, many priorities, I believe it was in the hundreds of priorities, Madam Speaker. They couldn't focus on any priorities and so, as usual, you know, the member from Wolseley, I know that he was busy with the past member of St. Norbert, going around the province trying to get a solidarity pledge signed up to make sure that their team was part of team, but the reason why I stand up this morning is to put a few words on the record.

Now, this morning, as the member from Radisson had mentioned, we were going to be speaking on Bill 223, which the member from Fort Rouge introduced yesterday, and he actually had to ask for leave because he actually missed the opportunity to introduce that bill yesterday. So, us, we, on the government side, granted him leave to bring forward that bill. This morning—we arrive into the Chamber this morning to speak to Bill 223, The Orange Shirt Day Act, and, again, mixed priorities, Madam Speaker. There were mixed priorities when they were in government, they've got even worse mixed priorities in opposition now. They're all over the map. We were ready to speak to Bill 223 this morning. It gives me a great pleasure—they switched gears, as usual. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ewasko: They want to speak to Bill 219 this morning. I put a few words on the record. I know that the member from Wolseley is upset that his past

member that he actually went on a trip with over to Paris, the past minister for Conversation, the older past member for Interlake, I know he's upset that he's no longer in the House, but we have a fantastic member that's going to be representing that Interlake constituency absolutely fantastically.

With those few words, Madam Speaker, I know that we've got many people on our side of the House that would like to speak to Bill 219, so I'm going to allow that to happen.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Ian Wishart (Minister of Education and Training): It's a pleasure to rise to put a few words on the record regarding Bill 219, the surface water act.

Now, over the years, I've spent a lot of time on the issue of surface water management. As the member for Lakeside (Mr. Eichler) brought forward, I was involved in the development of the ALUS program that is one that our government is using as one of its principles in terms of water management. The ALUS program is actually—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Wishart: —in use in four other provinces in this country, including all of the—

* (11:00)

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable minister will have 9 minutes remaining.

RESOLUTIONS

Res. 15—Recognizing Indigenous Peoples as Founding Nations of Canada

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

The resolution before us this morning is the resolution, Recognizing Indigenous Peoples as Founding Nations of Canada, brought forward by the honourable member for The Pas.

The honourable member for The Pas—oh, prior to recognizing the honourable member for The Pas, the honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

House Business

Mr. Jim Maloway (Official Opposition House Leader): On House business, in accordance with rule 33(8), I would like to announce that the private

member's resolution to be considered on next Thursday of private members' business will be Mental Health Promotion Tools and Recovery-Oriented Framework for Mental Health, brought forward by the honourable member for Fort Garry-Riverview (Mr. Allum).

Madam Speaker: It has been announced by the honourable Official Opposition House Leader that the private member's resolution to be considered on the next Thursday of private members' business will be Mental Health Promotion Tools and Recovery-Oriented Framework for Mental Health, brought forward by the honourable member for Fort Garry-Riverview.

* * *

Madam Speaker: Now back to the resolution.

Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas): I move, and seconded by the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew), a private member's resolution, Recognizing Indigenous Peoples as Founding Nations of Canada,

WHEREAS Indigenous peoples of Canada were the first peoples to govern this land, were present for thousands of years prior to Confederation and were self-determining nations with distinct cultures, languages, laws, traditions and unique understanding of the land and environment; and

WHEREAS Indigenous peoples provided land, knowledge, military and other supports to sustain colonial life, were essential to the success of the fur trade which became the backbone of the early Canadian economy and negotiated treaties with the Crown transferring land that have produced immense riches making Canada one of the wealthiest nations in the world; and

WHEREAS the contribution of the British and the French peoples are widely accepted and recognized as foundational to the existence of Canada and the contributions of the Indigenous nations of peoples are not widely accepted or recognized as such; and

WHEREAS at Confederation in 1867 the British and French languages were constitutionally protected as well as their civil rights, customs, traditions, laws and forms of governance yet Indigenous peoples' languages, civil rights, customs, traditions, laws and forms of governance were not protected; and

WHEREAS non-recognition of Indigenous peoples and control over their lands, culture and languages have contributed to historic injustices including their colonization and dispossession from their lands, loss

of Indigenous languages, customs, cultures and civil rights and the loss of their inherent right to self-determination; and

WHEREAS the Federal Government has declared its full support for the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and its intention to fully implement all of the ninety-four Calls to Action in the Truth and Reconciliation Report and the protection of existing Aboriginal and treaty rights is an underlying principle in Canada's Constitution and Charter of Rights and Freedoms; and

WHEREAS recognizing the role of Indigenous nations and peoples as foundational to the existence of Canada is a step towards building a meaningful nation-to-nation relationship and an important step in reconciliation; and

WHEREAS in 2017 Canada will celebrate the 150th anniversary of Confederation for which recognition of the Indigenous peoples as founders of Canada is long overdue.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the federal government to give formal recognition of indigenous nations and peoples as founding peoples of Canada and to protect and promote their languages, cultures, history, traditions and laws in ways similar to the government's protection and promotion of the languages, cultures, history, traditions and laws of the British and French founding peoples.

Motion presented.

Ms. Lathlin: Before I begin, I would like to table a letter received by a very respectable Aboriginal leader in our country, Mr. Phil Fontaine. Mr. Phil Fontaine's letter absolutely supports this private member's resolution to urge the federal government to recognize that indigenous people as founding nations of Canada. Putting—to summarize his letter, the true origin story can only be told if Parliament formally, through legislation, recognizes that there are three founding peoples of Canada: the British, the French and the indigenous.

Mr. Doyle Piwniuk, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

Our NDP team is committed to repairing Canada's relationship with indigenous people. As Canada celebrates its 150th anniversary, we recognize that our indigenous peoples, the founding of Canada, did not commence in 1867. It was long before Europeans colonized Canada. Despite the integral contributions of indigenous people

throughout Canada's history, past policies, rooted in racism and ignorance, have led to forced assimilation of indigenous peoples and the loss of many indigenous traditions, cultures and languages as a result.

As an indigenous woman—I'm proud to say as the first indigenous woman to be elected into this Manitoba Legislative Assembly, it is very important to me that we receive unanimous support for this resolution presented today. It is an honour to put forward this historical proposed resolution on behalf of our indigenous people and, most importantly, on behalf of all Manitobans and Canadians.

In light of recent unanimous decisions in the Chamber to address issues facing indigenous people, like the MMIWG honouring awareness day act and a resolution calling upon the federal government to provide equal funding for services for First Nations people on reserve, this resolution aims to recognize indigenous peoples as a founding nation.

This resolution seeks the same cultural and linguistic protections for indigenous people that are already in place for British and French peoples of founding nations. Recognizing indigenous peoples as a founding nation is an important way to inform non-indigenous Canadians of Aboriginal peoples' invaluable contribution to this country's history, contributions and—that have been long dismissed or overlooked.

The Assembly of First Nations recently 'plassed'—passed a similar resolution, calling upon the federal government to recognize indigenous peoples as a founding nation and to promote and support the expressions of those cultures moving forward. On July 14, 2016, this resolution was passed, also called recognition indigenous peoples as founding peoples of Canada. This significant resolution's purpose is to support and promote legislation in the Parliament of Canada for the 150th anniversary of confederation, to direct the government to declare, recognize, and promote that—indigenous peoples as founding peoples of Canada. This is an opportunity to set that record straight.

As an indigenous person, I grew up accepting that racism and discrimination would be part of my life and that I would live with the shame because who I am: an Indian. I have to share that as early as grade 1, in the schoolyard I experienced racism. Racism such as—grade 1, Mr. Deputy Speaker, being called a squaw, brownny, dirty Indian, and chief. Because of that experience, that was the only

knowledge I received about being an indigenous person. So therefore, that stereotype was conditioned into my identity as an indigenous person. That stereotype that I'm referring to came from the non-existence of the real truth about our indigenous people.

In grade school, my education about our indigenous people only consisted of the fur trade, indigenous people siding with the British and French as allies, life on the prairies, buffalo, Louis Riel and the Metis Nation. My education about the Canadian history was very limited regarding the contributions of our indigenous people. I learned that Canada's origin as a nation, came into being—was July 1st, 1867.

There was 36 Fathers of Confederation representing both the British and French colonial powers who signed the British North America Act. And this act protected their languages, cultures, civil rights, but there was no mention of our indigenous contributions on our part in building this country. There was no signatures from our indigenous nations. It was colonization that buried our role. Our role and contribution was ignored. This is why it is crucial that our real story needs to be revealed and shared with our province, our country, and our world.

I will quote from Kathleen Mahoney's—professor of law, University of Calgary—Globe and Mail article. Quote: Here's the problem: our origin story is false. In 1996, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples observed, a country cannot be built living on—living—sorry—a country cannot be built on a living lie. After 150 years in denial, coming to terms with our true origin is long overdue.

I just wanted to share with you that, as part of my career, I was employed at Indian and Northern Affairs Canada in the special land claims unit as a research assistant. I was part of a team who verified sources on land claim proposals submitted by our First Nations, land claims such as under the Treaty Land Entitlement agreement, Northern Flood Agreement, and the Manitoba Metis land claim. I spent the majority of my days reviewing historical federal documents and correspondence regarding the Indian peoples of Canada.

By the end of the day—I ended my days depressed and frustrated because of the language used—in those government officials, in the day—was very paternalistic and degrading. Words such as—our people were described as emotionally retarded

in these documents—government documents—or described—to describe my people. These past relationships and those words are archived forever.

* (11:10)

I also want to just end with—what really emphasizes about protection of British and French, was exactly what happened here in this very Chamber—was the Meech Lake Accord. As a young woman, as I watched this play out in the Legislative Assembly here, the late Elijah Harper, Phil Fontaine and my dad was involved as well. Basically this agreement between the federal and provincial government was going to recognize Quebec as a distinct society, and to me, as a young woman, I thought what is wrong with that? That is absolutely wrong as a First Nations, and what happened with the downfall of the Meech Lake Accord was that it exactly emphasized why we're here today to—basically, to recognize that there are three founding nations and indigenous people were not looked upon as a distinct society in our own land.

So, with that, I just want to add that I support and want to go on in recognizing indigenous people as a founding nations of Canada because I want my daughters, my grandchildren to move forward knowing that we are important contributors to our own country and our own province.

Thank you.

Questions

Mr. Deputy Speaker: A question period up to 10 minutes will be held and questions may be addressed in the following sequence: first question may be asked by a member of another party; any subsequent questions must follow a rotation between parties; each independent member may ask one question and no questions or answers shall exceed 45 seconds.

Time for questions.

Mr. James Teitsma (Radisson): My question is when I was reading the text of the resolution that we have before us today, is there a reason that the role of the Metis people isn't specifically called out in the text of the resolution?

Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas): I believe under the Constitution act the words Aboriginal, indigenous does include our Metis nations as well.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): I just want to congratulate my sister colleague, Amanda Lathlin, that—for bringing forward—*[interjection]*

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I just want to remind the member that just to refer to persons through their constituency name.

Ms. Fontaine: I apologize for that. I just love her so much I forgot to—*[interjection]* So I just want to congratulate the member for The Pas (Ms. Lathlin) which—for bringing forward this private member's resolution which I think is absolutely fitting since she is the first First Nation woman ever elected to the Manitoba Legislature.

I would ask the member how would passing this piece of legislation serve to protect languages and cultures of First Nation peoples?

Ms. Lathlin: I would like to thank my colleague and sister member of St. Johns for that question.

Passing this piece of legislation to serve to protect the languages and cultures of First Nations people is because this legislation would situate First Nations languages and cultures as protected and also to uphold indigenous peoples as unique status in our country as well.

Mr. Len Isleifson (Brandon East): Just a really quick question. In reading the resolution I understand it's to put forward a motion for the provincial government to push onto the federal government to bring this resolution forward.

So my question is—and I'm assuming that the presenter here has been in touch with her federal cousins in Ottawa, and I'm just wondering what their thought is in them pressing the federal government and what they've relayed to her as the reason they want us to do it instead of at a federal level.

Ms. Lathlin: I'd like to thank the member for that question.

I believe there has been conversation, especially when this resolution has been forwarded by the Assembly of First Nations as well, and also it's Canada's 150th anniversary, what an opportune time to recognize indigenous people as founders of this country.

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): I just wanted to clarify that the umbrella term indigenous includes four distinct groups under that, and so that's our First Nation, non-status, our Metis and our Inuit. Does the member for The Pas agree?

Ms. Lathlin: I would like to thank my sister from Kewatinook, and, yes, I do agree.

Ms. Fontaine: I also just want to acknowledge my other colleagues here as we're having this—a really important discussion here—my colleague, my sister colleague from Kewatinook and my brother colleague, the future premier of this—or, this province, from Fort Rouge.

I think that it's really fitting that we're having this discussion here today, and so I just want to ask my sister colleague, how can this government take steps to protect indigenous language, cultures and traditions here in Manitoba?

Ms. Lathlin: I'd like thank the member for that question. This government can take steps to protect indigenous language here in Manitoba, because as we celebrate Canada's 150th, this government could entrench indigenous people as founding peoples, which is absolutely reflected in the truth and reconciliation 94 calls to—under the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and their 94 calls to action. It's there; all the answers are there.

Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain): The members for The Pas and St. Johns were both on a committee which approved the most recent Children's Advocate job advertisement, which called on candidates to have specifically worked effectively with First Nation, non-status, Metis and Inuit. Why would it be important to highlight these various groups in one case, but lump together, as the member has in this resolution, in another?

Ms. Lathlin: I guess I would have to thank for your—for that question

An Honourable Member: Bizarre question.

Ms. Lathlin: Yes. I would like to get back to this resolution, regarding Canada's 105th, to recognize indigenous people as founding nations of Canada. This is an opportune time to recognize that.

Ms. Fontaine: I just want to say I'm not sure what that question was about. One was for the—an employment, and one is about situating indigenous people, First Nation peoples, as the legitimate founders of this country and as the first peoples in this country, so I'm not sure how that fits with this resolution.

But I'm going to ask my sister colleague, why is it important to recognize indigenous peoples, First Nation peoples, as the founding nations of Canada?

Ms. Lathlin: I'd like to thank the member for that question. It's important to recognize indigenous people as founding nations of Canada because it's a fact. It was a fact that was hidden. It was a fact that wasn't educated until I went to university and started learning more about our contributions to this Canada. And right now, Canada and Manitoba—should include Manitoba—is in an era of reconciliation, so this is an opportune time to recognize that.

Mr. Teitsma: In her opening address, the member for The Pas talked about how concerned she was about an attitude of paternalism or paternalistic language and attitudes, and I share that concern; I deeply do. That's why when I was speaking with the minister for Municipal and Indigenous Relations, I was disturbed to hear her, and also the Minister for Infrastructure (Mr. Pedersen), talk about residents on the east side lake—of Lake Winnipeg saying that the former NDP showed them little 'restrict' and treated them like kids. I would like the member to react to that.

Ms. Lathlin: I would like to say that my late father was part of the former NDP government, and I can surely say that we lived and breathed the honourable, respectful relationships that was shared with our First Nations.

And also, too, I like to get back to the importance of this resolution, that it is Canada's 150th anniversary, and it's important that we share this resolution with Manitoba and encourage our federal counterparts to recognize that as a country.

* (11:20)

Ms. Fontaine: I just want to acknowledge, actually, the member for The Pas's (Ms. Lathlin) late father who stood day after day in this House with just dignity and respect and absolute love for his community, our indigenous peoples, but also for Manitobans. And so what the member for Radisson said is just clearly just so ridiculous.

So I do just want to—and I think that we can move forward with really positive discussions here. I'm going to ask, what else can be done in this House to recognize First Nation peoples?

Ms. Lathlin: That's an excellent question, something that the member of St. Johns had had few—had many discussions on. I think an important first step would be in the opening prayer to acknowledge that we are on Treaty 1 land and the nations of—for our Metis people as well and also, too, the member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine) had requested to bring in

her eagle feather—which still hasn't been responded to. So by move forward—by implementing in our opening prayer that we are on Treaty 1 land, I think that would be a good, important step to recognize indigenous culture here in the Leg.

Mr. Isleifson: I do find it interesting that the member from St. Johns stands up and says the questions we're asking are ridiculous. I mean, this is an opportunity for us to ask questions and get some feedback and some answers.

So one of the questions I want to ask pertains exactly to the resolution that's in front of us which talks about Confederation in 1867 and the British and French languages. I know right now if we look at the First Nations people, there are over 53 languages that are spoken, and I just want to give the member an opportunity to talk about how she intends to incorporate some, all, or whatever of those languages, and what the meaning of this resolution is when it comes to those languages.

Ms. Lathlin: I think the member of St. Johns has valid points in—regarding members' questions.

However, I just feel that this resolution has one voice and—which includes protecting—and our Aboriginal languages, just like how the French language is—and English is protected and is recognized as the official languages of our country and it doesn't make sense that Aboriginal language indigenous to the country is not protected as well and given the same equal rights as well.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The time for question period has expired.

Debate

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The debate is open. Any speakers?

Mr. James Teitsma (Radisson): It's a pleasure for me to rise once again this morning to speak about a topic for which I was given the opportunity to prepare, and for that I'm quite grateful.

I think the matter before us is something that is, obviously, very, very important. It's important to the member for The Pas. We can see each day as she brings her perspective to the House that this is very personal for her and I understand that.

Certainly, I think it's important to have an appropriate attitude towards all members of this country, not simply those of English, French or indigenous origin. But, you know, speaking frankly

for myself, I'm a child of immigrants—recent immigrants to this country and my parents are neither English, French or indigenous and yet I believe as a member of this country I can hold my head high. I can—as a citizen I can enjoy the same rights and freedoms as all Canadian citizens get to enjoy and, truly, it's a privileged position. I think we sometimes lose sight of that is—when you're immersed in a particular situation you can sometimes forget the tremendous opportunities that we have as citizens in this country and the opportunities that we're given and the respect, also, that we have for each other.

And that's, I think, when we want to work towards reconciliation there's—there are some key things that we need to keep in mind and I think one of them is—speaks to equality. I've already mentioned equality, but equal opportunity, and I believe strongly that all citizens in this country should be able to enjoy equal opportunity. That we should be able to, you know, buy land or set up or a business or own property and things like that, these are fundamental rights that we have as Canadians. And we can enjoy employment, we can be free from discrimination, we can use the courts, we can expect to be treated in a just and fair manner by those in authority.

And I do—once again, I want to say that I, too, find disgusting the language that the member for The Pas (Ms. Lathlin) was exposed to earlier in her career, and the attitudes that surrounded that and the prejudice, the racism that 'underlied' that. And there's certainly no toleration for that by me and my family, and I know within my caucus the same is the case. An attitude of respect and a commitment to working in a positive way with indigenous people is something that all members of this caucus have demonstrated to me and that I consistently model to my constituents and to my children, my spouse, and family.

Now I talk about equal opportunity. I think that's important, but also with that comes equal responsibility. I think one of the principles that we enjoy in our Canadian society is fair and democratic elections, and we must never lose sight of that either. We currently have a by-election going on, and we want to make sure that that election and that elections on bands for, you know, councillors and chiefs and—all these elections are done in a fair and democratic way, that they're done transparently, and that they're done in a way that's free from accusation of a impropriety or an improper approach.

And those are principles of good government: transparency and accountability, and I think that those extend to indigenous peoples, to descendants of English and French founding peoples and, in fact I think, to citizens who have come here as children of immigrants, and I would suspect that there were a great number of nations that were represented in Canada, even at its Confederation back in 1867, not just English and French. And Canada has become a multicultural country. We've become a country that takes—that has citizens from all over the world, indigenous ones who find their roots and history in this beautiful land, others who come to us from every continent in the world and—well, except for Antarctica, I suppose, but every continent that has people living in it has come here. And we welcome them here to Canada, and we welcome them here to Manitoba.

So I talked about equal opportunity being an important aspect. Equal responsibility is another important aspect. And the last thing we talked about, reconciliation, forgiveness. I've served as an elder—not perhaps meaning the same way it means in indigenous culture, but a lot of similarities—within my own church community, and dealing with reconciliation and forgiveness is something that is put upon me as an elder within the church and trying to ensure that true forgiveness and true reconciliation are more than just words.

So an expression of remorse is commendable and it's necessary, but it is not enough. What you need is a change in behaviour, and a change of behaviour is often accompanied by specific actions. I look at what our government has done in terms of our commitment to work positively with indigenous peoples, with indigenous communities, to build respectful and effective partnerships and to ensure a bright and inclusive future for everyone.

* (11:30)

The engagement process that I mentioned, you know, in our question period, that was undertaken by the Minister of Indigenous and Municipal Relations (Ms. Clarke); Minister for Infrastructure; Minister for Growth, Enterprise and Trade—the amount of contact that our Cabinet has had with people of the North, largely indigenous peoples with—people who live on reserve on the east side of Lake Winnipeg and so many others.

We've been greeted with a great deal of respect, and we're thankful for that. To be honest, I wasn't sure what to expect when our ministers set out, and I

was very pleased when I heard the reports back of how they were being received, how they were being treated as ministers, and how, as ministers, they showed respect to the leaders that were on reserve, to indigenous leaders in our own community, and I think that's—I shouldn't have been surprised.

I shouldn't have been surprised, because I think our own Premier (Mr. Pallister) has made it clear too. His own history, his own relationships that he's had with the indigenous people who lived right next door to his family farm growing up; he had good relationships. They had mutual respect, and that's what you want to see. And that mutual respect translated into action for him as well. This is going back—is it decades? I don't want to date my own Premier, but, in any case, many years ago when he brought forward action that recognized the matrimonial property rights of the indigenous women, because Canada is founded under certain principles.

And I appreciate the reference to the founding of Canada, but I think we also have to recognize the changes that we've seen in Canada. We talk about something like French language rights. French language rights have evolved. They weren't what they are now 150 years ago; they've substantially evolved.

I think about equal rights for men and women. We celebrate that here and we have celebrated it and we will celebrate again, I think, as the years go by. The work done by the women's suffrage movement, the Persons Case and the change in the status of women who were deemed not even to be persons. And indigenous people, too, not having the vote. These are things that have changed, and I think more change is needed.

We want to see the indigenous peoples who largely are seen as victims, and I think sometimes they see themselves as victims of colonialism. I believe the member mentioned that herself, and we need to acknowledge the truth of those statements, but we also need to move beyond and to say, it's time for our indigenous people to be victors. That's what I would like to see.

And I thank you for the opportunity to speak on this resolution.

Mr. Wab Kinew (Fort Rouge): So this resolution here today, which I have to thank my colleague from The Pas for bringing forward here, is really about Canada's 150th birthday. It's about how do we

celebrate our birthday in the most appropriate and also magnanimous and, you know, celebratory fashion. And, to me, the way that we do that is by having a very true and honest picture of our country today.

Our country has an indigenous name. The name Canada comes from the Huron and Haudenosaunee languages, right, and it means, you know, a town or a city. It means a village. So how is it that our country has an indigenous name and yet we don't always properly recognize that indigenous nations were founding nations of Canada. So I definitely agree with my colleague from Radisson that equality of opportunity is one of the great principles of our country.

However, this resolution really deals with how do we talk about our past, and how do we properly tell the story of how this country came to be. And the reality of the situation is that, legally speaking, our country is built on the merging of three distinct legal traditions. You have a common law, a civil law and the indigenous law. We very clearly understand how, you know, the, you know, the British and French legal traditions influenced our country. But we don't also always talk about how the Royal Proclamation of 1763, Canada's Magna Carta, the pre-Confederation treaties, the Treaty of Niagara of 1764, the post-Confederation treaties, how all of those also create the legal framework with which this great country has been created.

We also know that the history of this country is one where indigenous peoples, indigenous nations made many important contributions. Prior to Confederation, we were the military allies who prevented the United States of America from taking over what was then Upper Canada, you know. We were there during the Confederation process, immediately following Confederation with the negotiations which led to the numbered treaties.

First Nations, Metis, Inuit people served in great numbers in both world wars—very highly decorated. One of the most, you know, decorated snipers of World War 1 was Francis Pegahmagabow. One of the most celebrated veterans of World War II from this part of the world was Tommy Prince. Following the world wars, First Nations and indigenous veterans came home and they fought for our basic civil rights, the freedom of movement, freedom to be able to work. That helped to usher in the civil rights and civil liberties movement here in Canada.

We were here for the repatriation of the Canadian Constitution in 1982. That is evidenced by section 35 in the section 35 recognition of Aboriginal and treaty rights.

And we are still here today through all forums of society—through all floors of society, be they business, arts, sports, technology, politics.

And so we have many great heroes to celebrate. We could talk about Fred Sasakamoose, NHL player who learned to play in a residential school and, you know, became the first First Nations person with status to play in the NHL. You know, we could talk about Phil Fontaine, you know, another residential school survivor who rose to the heights of political achievement in this country. You know, we could talk about some of our home-grown heroes like Beatrice Culleton Masionier who, in an amazing work of fiction, *In Search of April Raintree*, cast a light onto the story of many of the vulnerable people in our society right here in this great province of Manitoba.

And so we have these—this proud legacy and this amazing—these amazing contributions which have been made, and they ought rightly be celebrated when we, in Canada's sesquicentennial year, look to celebrate all the great things that this country has achieved. Yes, we should do so and we should do so in a way which is appropriate and properly recognizes the contributions of indigenous nations.

And so that means that we ought to update and amend that founding story that we tell about our country—that there are two founding nations—and say there are, in fact, three founding groups, right.

And I take the member from Brandon East's point. You know, are we going to move from two founding nations to now 66 founding nations with 64 indigenous nations plus the French and the English? But the short answer is, yes, that would be great. But for today, we'll do three founding nations for the purposes of simplicity.

With respect to the question about languages, right now in Nunavut, Hansard there is published in three languages: French, English and Inuktitut, so perhaps this is, you know, the start of Canada's next 150 years, where in the future we could see also Hansard publications in Anishinaabemdaa here in Manitoba or perhaps could be Heiltsuk or the other languages in British Columbia for their legislature.

These are the types of conversations that we can have in our country's 150th birthday year. These are

the conversations that reconciliation makes possible that we can really engage in and make all of the people in this country proud of who we are, where we've been but also where we're heading together.

And I did want to talk a little bit about the, you know, the process which led to our colleague to bring this resolution forward here today.

Really, this is a part of a movement of which former national chief, Phil Fontaine—Phil Fontaine who's done such great service to this country—this is part of his legacy building work that he's doing around the country to create more goodness for the next generation to pick up. So we all recognize that Phil played a phenomenal role in bringing the story of residential schools to the forefront of national public attention. He was the one who negotiated the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. He is the one who negotiated with Stephen Harper so that the former Prime Minister would deliver an apology to the residential school survivors. He's done such great work, and now this is his latest project.

And so he sent the letter addressed to all the members of the Legislative Assembly, a letter tabled by my colleague from The Pas, in which he argues succinctly why it is time for us to do this—that this is about recognizing Canada's true history in an accurate way, but also using this 150th birthday celebration that we're having this year to look forward and to ask how can we build an even better country than the one we have today using elements of indigenous and newcomer and other cultures to forge something uniquely Canadian and uniquely awesome.

* (11:40)

This was brought forward to the Assembly of First Nations, the collective of more than 630 chiefs across the country. They passed a resolution saying that this is one of the things that they want to see the federal government do for Canada's 150th birthday.

And now, there's effort on the hill to lobby members of Parliament to support an act of recognition on the Hill. And I can update the House today and tell you that there are already supporters from every party on the Hill who are willing to move on this. You have Conservative members and New Democratic members; you have Liberal members who are willing to support this. You even have the lone Green Party member on Parliament Hill willing

to support this message. So to me, it really is a non-partisan issue; it's an all-party issue in fact, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker.

And so, for us here in the Manitoba Legislature, I think this is a great opportunity for us to send a powerful message that not only are we excited about Canada's 150th birthday, but also that we're very attenuated to the modern world and we're willing to work together and to send a powerful message about who we are as a collective nation and where we're headed together on this journey for Canada's next 150 years. And so to me, you know, when I think about this, I really do think it's a wonderful opportunity.

And how appropriate would it be if the first Legislature or Parliament that passed something official that would be right here in the centre of our country? How beautiful of a gesture would that be? How wonderful would it be if it was a House located in a place called Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada that was the first parliament or legislature to pass an official bit of business to support this? Because the name Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada just reinforces and reiterates how indigenous nations have played such a crucial founding role in this country.

Winnipeg is a Cree word or an Ojibwe word which means dirty water. Manito Ahbee is an Anishinaabemowin word, which means the spirit is here. And when I look around the room and I recognize the collegiality and power in this room, I say yes, the spirit is here. And there are, you know, good, hard-working people from all across the province who come to do this work together. And, finally, our country—kanata, as I stated earlier, is a Huron Haudenosaunee word that talks about a village or a meeting place for all peoples to come together.

So how is it that we can be a Winnipegger or a Manitoban or a Canadian, and yet not want to acknowledge the role that indigenous cultures have placed, played in shaping who we are? So I do respect everyone in this room and I do respect the walks of life that they come from, but I do think that we ought to acknowledge the simple truth by passing this resolution today that whether or not you have indigenous blood by the fact that you live here now, some part of your identity does have an indigenous component.

So, with that, I will say *miigwech gibizindaw [inaudible]*—thank you, guys, very much—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time is up.

Ms. Flor Marcelino (Leader of the Official Opposition): I'm privileged to put a few words in support of this private member's resolution by a respectful colleague and sister, the member from The Pas.

How appropriate that indigenous peoples and their rich history be duly acknowledged in this year, the 150th anniversary of Canada.

As a first-generation immigrant, I would like to speak on behalf of so many first-generation immigrants who share my view and gratitude to the Aboriginal peoples of this country for welcoming the first non-Aboriginal settlers of the—in this country several centuries ago, and they were welcomed with compassion and hospitality. If it were not for the kindness and welcoming attitude of the Aboriginal peoples, the European settlers would not have survived their first winter. Without the survival skills shared with the settlers, there will be no immigrants like me. And everyone except the Aboriginal peoples are immigrants whether you are a first generation or a fifth generation, you are an immigrant. We are all immigrants except the Aboriginal peoples.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Aboriginals; our existence in this country today will not have been possible without them. Thank you to the Chief Peguises and many like him all over Canada for welcoming all non-Aboriginal peoples.

Thank you, Madam—Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): I want to thank and congratulate the member for The Pas (Ms. Lathlin) for bringing this resolution forward. I'm quite honoured to be in the House at this time when such a resolution has—is being brought forward.

Our indigenous people have a long and proud history on this place we call Turtle Island. Since time immemorial, our people have lived on this land. We hunted, gathered, and cultivated resources while maintaining trade-based economies along our riverways and over the land.

Through our deep knowledge of the natural world around us, the indigenous peoples of North America—see how I blend, for that instance, I use the title imposed upon us as well—we could survive the deep, harsh winters of the northern arctic to the highest temperatures down in the Mojave and other deserts. The cultural variety of indigenous peoples is

truly beautiful, and I recommend everyone here explore the diversity of our people.

When the first Europeans started arriving in what would be later known as Canada, regularly they could not survive our winters and would be forced to leave before the winter freeze. With our help, our resources, and through mutually beneficial relationships, we taught the early settlers how to survive through our winters, and they began to settle year-round. Through these economic, and occasionally military relationships, the French and British could move forward and farther inland. This would lead to the advent of the fur trade that would define the early history of Canada and especially of our province.

The negotiated treaties that have been a backbone of the indigenous and European relationships occurred throughout our engagements and managed our unique partnerships. These would culminate in the creation of the numbered treaties that we know today, which would become one of the main backbones of Canadian law and the foundation of modern indigenous-Canadian relationships.

While many throughout Canada recognize the important roles of the—that the British and French played in establishing this beautiful country, it has not been until recently that our indigenous people have begun to get the recognition for our—the very important roles we played in the creation of Canada.

The non-recognition of indigenous rights to their land, culture, heritage and languages have serious—have led to serious conflicts and issues in our history, and it continues today. I can—as recently as a couple of days ago—I was in a community, due to the paternalism that has been long imposed, the leaders of the community didn't even know their—what rights they had. I told them, similar to any municipality, that they can create a bylaw that would help control the dog populations in their communities.

And so, you know, just by sharing that bit of knowledge, the leaders of the community are getting together to make sure that they have such systems in place and such bylaws in place, and we won't see again the—what—the terrible tragedy that occurred in that First Nation of Little Grand. And it's just a matter of not knowing what their rights are, where Province steps in, where federals step in, and—but they are the owners of that land, and they should have every full right to be able to determine the best course of action for their own people. And so that's

one of the things I could visually—I mean, I could share with the group here.

There are—been many indigenous people abused and murdered along this long history, as we approach the 150th anniversary since the Confederation of Canada. We must further recognize the roles that people have had in this country. This sends a strong message to our indigenous people that they are equal and give us—gives us another source of pride when we acknowledge our history.

* (11:50)

And it not only works in our favour. You know, I'm sure if I canvassed the House and the members, myself personally, I can go to any community across Manitoba and I would be welcomed, but is that the same for the non-indigenous members in this—can they equally come up to my reserve and be a welcomed person? My guess is that they wouldn't be, because there is no trust there. There is no trust that has been established for a lot of the communities. And it's because stuff like this has been—taken this long to get acknowledged.

We need to start acknowledging the great things that our people have done. It would bode well for this new government to support this resolution. I believe the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew), 66 is the end goal, but—and—but, for now, I concur with the three. And so our indigenous languages, in trying to determine the nation-to-nation relationship, trying to define it, this would be a great step in that direction because our indigenous languages, cultures, histories and traditions, they have been long practised in our country.

And many have felt the impact of colonization, but we need to move forward. We need to start coming together and protecting everyone in the province of Manitoba. And it would be wonderful if Manitoba takes the lead on this, as opposed to being reactive.

We need to protect and promote the indigenous people for the well-being of our youth. Our youth need to know that they should be proud to be born whatever they are born unto. And so I, myself, have always been proud that I've—I'm Native, from St. Theresa Point First Nation. You know, I never felt the discrimination in my early years, and it was because our community was a melting pot. We had—our principal was a wonderful African-American from Barbados. Our vice-principal, Arshad Khawaja was from India. And there was so many people. We

had people from Newfoundland, PEI, British Columbia. It was just a wonderful experience growing up in that community. And I only ever learned of racism when I had to leave for high school in Thompson, Manitoba—when I couldn't even walk into a store without being followed or kicked out right at the door despite having money to spend. And that has continued in every community that is not largely indigenous. You face that racism, and it's quite unfair, and it's—and it has to end.

You know, I wish I could tell my daughters, my sons that they can go anywhere in Manitoba and they're going to be readily accepted, but that is simply not the case. And I think, by us coming together today in this Year of Reconciliation—in this 150th year of celebrating the confederation of Canada, that we must come together and support the member for The Pas' (Ms. Lathlin) resolution.

Miigwech, Madam—Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Len Isleifson (Brandon East): Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's certainly always a pleasure to stand in the House and put a few words on the record and—in this particular case, in regards to the resolution proposed by the member from The Pas, I believe it's probably the first time I've been able to stand in the House and speak directly to the member from The Pas.

And I'm very privileged to—*[interjection]*—yes, through the Chair—I'm very privileged to talk about The Pas. I have a lot of family up there, and I certainly remember a lot of my growing-up days of being in The Pas. And my uncle's cab service, Four Twos, and his wife, my aunt Gerry made the best bannock in the world. And so I'm really attached to that, and I'm happy that she's brought this resolution forward.

There is definitely times in the Chamber here where we disagree on a lot of things, but there are times when we agree. And I'll definitely agree with the statement you made—the member made earlier, that we all agree that racism must be eliminated. There is no doubt in our minds—I think that's one thing we could all have a resolution on in this House and pass that in probably three minutes. You know, because it is very important.

And it reminds me of an opportunity that I had a couple of weeks ago—when we were on our break so that we could work in our constituencies—where the member from Brandon West and myself met at the Brandon Police Service, and we met with the

Community Mobilization Program. It's a group of like-minded individuals who work in the community to bring more services to people in need. One of the elders there, Frank take—Frank Tacan, he made a comment at the end of the closing that touched everybody in the room. And he stood up, and he was the last person to speak, and he simply said, we need to remove the colours brown and white when we talk about people. And it is so true and it is so fitting that that's exactly what we need to do.

So, again, I'm sure we can all, you know, stick behind that. It's very obvious that the member from The Pas is passionate for the indigenous people, and it's quite evident in her presentation in the House. Whether it's a private member's statement or a question during question period or even debates on bills and resolutions, she never loses the sight of the plight of the indigenous person, and I certainly applaud her for that.

I think it's important to understand that today we have a history in Canada of hosting a very diverse population, and I truly believe that we are the most multicultural country in the world. I can only speak for myself, but I would hazard to guess that Canada is the home of immigrants of every ethnic and religious group from around the world.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as we celebrate the 150 years of Confederation, we must remember that only a few hundred years ago, the only people living in Canada were the indigenous people. History books will tell us that a gentleman come over in his big boat in 1534 by the name of Jacques Cartier. He was a mariner that belonged to a small French seaport, supposedly discovering Canada, in his mind—puts it on record that they discovered Canada. However, I find it interesting that when they made inroads into some of the streams that their indigenous people—that they witnessed them in the treelines. So, obviously, it's well-documented that the indigenous people, our First Nations people, were here first, and I think we all acknowledge that.

I sometimes might get back on my laurels a little bit being an Icelander because the Vikings came over in the year 1000, and so we were here long before them. But you know what, we weren't the first people here either, you know—*[interjection]*

Yes, we left. Yes. We decided to go back where it was nice and warm up on Iceland. So, it's interesting though that over the past number of years, I have had a sincere desire to learn more about the indigenous peoples. I was quick to learn that the

word Aboriginal describes the original inhabitants of Canada, those that were here long before.

And it's interesting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we talk about the different cultural groups within our great country who, today, collectively refer to themselves as our First Nations or first peoples of Canada. Again, we have a lot to learn still, even as we go through these resolutions. We can stand up here and talk for, you know, a number of hours, and I know a lot of my colleagues want to weigh in on this as well because it is near and dear to a lot of us.

So, again, I mentioned earlier that I have learned in my teaching—or my learnings that there are over—or at least 53 different languages and that each culture group refers to themselves by a specific name in their language. And I understand that part of the culture is speaking their mother tongue first prior to speaking English when they're addressing. I think it's important to know that—I would love to do the same too, but I don't know a word of Icelandic except for what my father taught me that I forgot many, many years ago.

But, again, we go out there and we do—at least when I'm making presentations in my riding of Brandon East, or Brandon West if I'm fortunate, I always start off by mentioning that we are on Treaty 2 land out there or, in Winnipeg, Treaty 1 land and home of the Metis people, so I don't think it's

something that's lost on this House. We do need to look at a few things.

I want to point out that our PC government is committed to working positively with indigenous people and communities to bring respectful and effective partnerships that will ensure a bright and inclusive future for us all. It's important because our government has undertaken an engagement process with indigenous communities in developing an improved duty-to-consult framework for productive and respectful consultations with indigenous communities.

There's certainly lots of—pardon me, information, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And, again, at the urging of the First Nations women, our Premier (Mr. Pallister), during his time as an MP, joined the struggle to equal matrimonial property rights for the indigenous woman.

So, lots of things that we do. Our government, again, is committed to advancing reconciliation. However, this is not something that we can accomplish alone. We encourage all—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: When the matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Isleifson) will have three minutes remaining.

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, May 18, 2017

CONTENTS

ORDERS OF THE DAY		Resolutions	
PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS		Res. 15–Recognizing Indigenous Peoples as Founding Nations of Canada	
Debate on Second Readings– Public Bills		Lathlin	2243
Bill 219–The Surface Water Management Act (Amendments to Various Acts to Protect Lakes and Wetlands)		Questions	
Teitsma	2233	Teitsma	2245
Swan	2234	Lathlin	2245
Helwer	2236	Fontaine	2246
Cox	2238	Isleifson	2246
Klassen	2240	Klassen	2246
Eichler	2240	Nesbitt	2246
Ewasko	2242	Debate	
Wishart	2243	Teitsma	2247
		Kinew	2249
		F. Marcelino	2251
		Klassen	2251
		Isleifson	2253

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