

Robert T. Kristjanson

June 13, 2011, Presentation on Bill 46: Save Lake Winnipeg Act

Good evening to you all. I'm not going to speak very quietly. My name is Robert T. Kristjanson. We have been in the fishing industry for 121 years. I'll talk to that big guy who's got the whiskers on there so he hears it all. We've been here an awful long time. I came—and this is the first time that I've had—be able to speak in this great House. And in this great House, for all of Manitoba here around us, is the laws of Manitoba, the greatest province in Canada. And I'm very proud of that.

Here we put the smartest people that we could put together, and we send them here, whatever they lean one way or the other, for the benefit of Manitobans all around us. By being all around us, that means the water rights, the air we breathe and the land we—and what we sow it and how we do it. No one has the right to pollute—what we call pollute—anyone else under our law. Here amongst me, as I look around, I see every walk of life—I don't see many fishermen—many walk of life. I'm very proud to stand here because I think that it is time that we woke up. Read Canadian national geographic this month. Anybody read it? It's time you did. We're right on the front page. Is that what you want? Do you want—here, the smartest people that we can put together, and put them together and we can't understand what's on the front page.

I am firmly behind the Province of Manitoba, what they are doing. Thank goodness somebody is. From 1992—I could have brought you all these pictures and you guys would have gone oh, ah, oh, ah, but it is true, it has to be done.

Somewhere along the line here, we have to be—stand up and be counted, regardless of what we like and how we don't like it. No one here—I don't care who you are—can walk out of here and say, I'm against cleaning up the waters in Manitoba. If you are, I don't want to know you.

Now it is time that we have to. Do we want Lake Winnipeg out there to be a garbage dump? Tell me, is that what we elect people to understand? When I—last time I was in Iceland and a lot of people came to me and said, you're having trouble on Lake Winnipeg. He says, don't you have a government that regulates the water? I had to turn around and walk away. What could I say? Now we have a government, and all governments have to realize our greatest resource, and I will stand on anywhere you want, the greatest resource is going to be our water.

Right now, I feel sorry for people who are being flooded, water in their homes and having—I feel terrible about it. But I want Lake Winnipeg—tomorrow morning at four o'clock, I'll give you a call, anybody want? That's where I'll be, with two other generations with me, three generations, regardless, taking the fish that we want with nothing in them, perfect to eat. We want to keep it that way. That's why I stand in front of you, to do the biggest thing that we have is to look after Lake Winnipeg or make it a garbage dump. Which do you want?

I can't stand, every time I go around the city, here is another line of another 10,000 houses. There's another line of another 10,000 houses. I hear the mayor, or whatever he is, stand up and say, oh, we don't have to take this out because we can save some money. I

don't give a shit what it cost him. It is time that we did what is supposed to be done, whatever it costs and how we do it.

The biggest pipe you've got here is what's coming out of the city of Winnipeg 365 days a year. If the creeks dry up, water still flows out of Winnipeg here for 365 days a year with nitrogen and phosphorus and ammonia and everything else. Winter and all, it doesn't matter how hard it's frozen; the toilets never stop. Try it and see what happens—it keeps on going. That's why I've asked that the nitrogen and ammonia be taken out. I don't care what it costs. You put it there, now you take it out. Somewhere down the line here, somebody has to say, you did it, and you take it out.

If them 700 little piggies leave here then they have to be treated as that, and that's how they have to look after what they're doing. I could go on here for hours and hours and you don't want hear that. I want every Manitoban here to stand up and be counted, but I'm looking at them right here.

This is the time now. Do you want to be on the page of every single—every book. Wherever I've gone and say, this is Manitoba but I'm—we're not doing anything about it. It is time right now that this great House put into line what should be done a long time ago.

I have a great partner, Kristofferson. This man's worked tirelessly. There's Pip's over here—worked tirelessly. You've got people in here who've spent their lifetime trying to put and say what is right and what is wrong. Now is the time. There is no other way to do it. I can't harp at you any more or any stronger than what I am saying.

Tomorrow morning I have to go and fight with sticks, fight with current, fight with algae. But a lot of people that are being flooded out all over—I just say I have to live with what I've got, and I'll put up with the best I've got. But I will not put up, from end to end, with algae. I will not, because people say, well, we can do it a cheaper way. We can't do it a cheaper way. We have to do it the right way. Thank you.