



## WINDS OF CHANGE



*Winnipeg* - The winds of change swept right across Manitoba on April 19, 2016 propelling 31 newly elected MLAs into Manitoba's Legislature, and in the process providing Premier-elect Brian Pallister with one of the largest majorities in electoral history, stretching back to 1915.

Cabinet Ministers and MLAs alike from the NDP were invited away from the Legislature in the clear public mood for change. With 40 seats for the Conservatives, 3 for the Liberals and 14 for the NDP, the changes are structural, massive and mark a significant political mind set and expectation from government change, by Manitobans.

The MHCA congratulates Premier Elect Brian Pallister and his colleagues for their resounding electoral victory. Their messages were clear, deliberate and balanced.

We look forward to working with the new Premier and provincial government and offer advice on sustained and strategic investment in Manitoba's infrastructure underpinned by six organizing principles: the program must be permanent, not ad hoc; it must focus first on investments to grow the economy; it should embrace innovation in every of its aspects including design, financing/funding, procurement, construction, maintenance and rehabilitation; it should embrace partnerships with the private sector the engine of ingenuity; it should be funded by dedicated revenues streams in support of its purposes; and it should be the subject of annual transparent reviews for accountability, adjustment and discipline to purpose.

It is also important to acknowledge the decades of public service made by the outgoing Premier Greg Selinger who on election night honorably tendered his resignation. Before being elected MLA in St. Boniface and being elevated to the Ministry of Finance, he served on Winnipeg's City Council. He succeeded Gary Doer as NDP Leader and Premier, won a large provincial election and offered his style of leadership and commitment to Manitobans as Premier. It took great sacrifice by Mr. Selinger and his family, and for the making and taking of those sacrifices we should all be grateful and respectful.

Similar thoughts go to all candidates who ran or run for public office regardless of party affiliation. Elected office is more often than not, a thankless position which opens elected persons to at many times unfair, fact less, and biased commentary. To all candidates regardless of strip we owe thanks and gratitude.

Rana Bokhari as a reasonably newly minted leader of the Manitoba Liberal Party arguably deserved a better fate and should also be recognized for her efforts to lead the party. Many of the missteps can be tied to relative inexperience and lack of resources. Better in a anyone's judgment to have tried and not succeeded than to not try at all. She succeed in electing three Liberals to the legislature up from the one at election call.

Bokhari presented a new, young, fresh, generational change of political leadership which should always be welcome. The public in making electoral choices is always right; it could however have been more charitable towards Rana Bokhari in offering her the opportunity of leading the Liberal Party with a seat in the House enabling even more directional debate in the Legislature.

All in all, significant political landscape changes in Manitoba with a new Premier, recently newly elected Mayors of Winnipeg and Brandon and new Prime Minister in Canada.

Winds of change indeed. It will be interesting.

Chris Lorenc, B.A., LL.B.,  
President, Manitoba Heavy Construction Association (MHCA)