



Third Session - Thirty-Seventh Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report
(Hansard)**

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Seventh Legislature

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, December 6, 2001

The House met at 10 a.m.

PRAYERS

ORDERS OF THE DAY

House Business

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, on a matter of House business, could you canvass the House to determine if there is leave for the report from the Law Amendments Committee meeting held yesterday afternoon to be presented to the House this morning.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave for the report from the Law Amendments Committee meeting held yesterday afternoon to be presented to the House this morning? Is there leave? *[Agreed]*

PRESENTING REPORTS BY
STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Standing Committee on Law Amendments
First Report

Mr. Doug Martindale (Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the First Report of the Committee on Law Amendments.

Madam Deputy Clerk (Bev Bosiak): The Standing Committee on Law Amendments—

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on Law Amendments presents the following as its First Report.

Meetings:

Your committee met on Wednesday, December 5,

2001 at 5:00 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building to consider bills referred.

Matters Under Consideration:

Bill 4—The Order of Manitoba Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Ordre du Manitoba

Bill 300—An Act to Amend an Act to Incorporate the Portage District General Hospital Foundation/Loi modifiant la Loi constituant en corporation la Fondation de l'Hôpital général du district Portage

Committee Membership:

Your committee elected Ms. Korzeniowski as the Vice-Chairperson.

Substitutions received prior to commencement of meeting:

Mr. Rondeau for Ms. Allan

Hon. Mr. Doer for Hon. Mr. Mackintosh

Hon. Ms. Mihychuk for Ms. Asper

Mr. Laurendeau for Mrs. Dacquay

Mr. Enns for Mr. Gilleshammer

Mr. Penner (Emerson) for Mr. Praznik

Motions:

Your committee agreed to the following motion:

THAT this Committee recommends that the fees paid with respect to Bill 300—An Act to Amend an Act to Incorporate the Portage District General Hospital Foundation/Loi modifiant la Loi constituant en corporation la Fondation de l'Hôpital général du district Portage, be refunded, less the cost of printing.

Bills Considered and Reported:

Bill 4—The Order of Manitoba Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Ordre du Manitoba

Your committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

Bill 300—*An Act to Amend an Act to Incorporate the Portage District General Hospital Foundation/Loi modifiant la Loi constituant en corporation la Fondation de l'Hôpital général du district Portage*

Your committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

Mr. Martindale: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

* * *

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, is there leave to proceed with third reading of Bills 4 and 300?

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave to proceed with third reading for Bills 4 and 300? [*Agreed*]

THIRD READINGS

Bill 4—The Order of Manitoba Amendment Act

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister responsible for volunteers, Culture, Heritage and Tourism, and Sport (Mr. Lemieux), that Bill 4, The Order of Manitoba Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Ordre du Manitoba, as reported from the Standing Committee on Law Amendments, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Attorney General, seconded by the honourable Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism, that Bill 4, The Order of Manitoba Amendment Act, as reported from the Standing Committee on Law Amendments, be concurred in and now be read for a third time and passed.

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Point of Order

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Opposition House Leader): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The Leader had risen to speak on the bill. That is why I said, no, not yet.

Mr. Speaker: I did not hear the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Murray), so I would like to ask leave for the House to revert back. Could I have the bill again?

* * *

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Attorney General, seconded by the honourable Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism, that Bill 4, The Order of Manitoba Amendment Act, as reported from the Standing Committee on Law Amendments, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and to all honourable members of the Chamber, thank you for allowing me to put a few words on the record with respect to Bill 4.

I think that it is an important initiative, Mr. Speaker, for a number of reasons. First and foremost, I think it is important that all members of the Chamber would realize and acknowledge that the Order of Manitoba, which is a very prestigious order of recognition of the ability of Manitobans through all walks of life, is a tremendous recognition of volunteers and people who make Manitoba a great place to live.

It certainly adds to the quality of life, and I think it is important to recognize that the Order of Manitoba was instituted by the previous government. It was an initiative taken on by the previous government because they understood the importance of exactly what I said, recognizing Manitobans who distinguish themselves in their communities. In many respects, Mr. Speaker, I think we can probably make reference to some of these people who are

involved, and we can call them Manitoba heroes because, really, they are heroes for making a difference, whether it is on the education side, whether it is on the volunteer side, whether it is on the health care side, whether it is on the sporting side. I think that there are tremendous opportunities to award and recognize Manitobans.

One of the things that I think the Hollywood movie industry does so well is they recognize their accomplishments. You cannot turn on the TV when they are not acknowledging themselves, whether it is the People's Choice awards, the Golden Globes, the Oscars. The list goes on and on. What they are doing really as an industry is they are congratulating themselves.

Well, this, Mr. Speaker, allows the Order of Manitoba to recognize the ability of Manitobans who do make a contribution. I think it has been acknowledged throughout numerous stories in various newspapers across the land, various articles, that Manitobans, not only do they give financially more than others on a per capita basis throughout Canada, but I think that the amount of volunteerism that takes place in Manitoba, they set the record in terms of the number of hours that they volunteer their time, not for an award, they volunteer their time because they believe in making a difference in their community. I think that is the beauty of an award like the Order of Manitoba.

Typically, some people will get into a competition. They will enter some kind of an event perhaps, Mr. Speaker, because there is an award being given for that event, and they are competing for something. The beauty of the Order of Manitoba is that, typically, it is thrust upon those people who least expect it. These are the people who are not volunteering their time because they want to be recognized; they do it because they want to do the right thing. They want to strengthen the community. They want to make Manitoba a stronger and better place to live, and it is their way of perhaps taking precious time away from a family in order to volunteer, to help out, for maybe those who are less fortunate. I think that those are the kinds of heroes we have in Manitoba who do it because they believe in their heart they are doing the right thing. When we have the ability to then

recognize those people, they are very surprised, and so they should be because it is not that they are doing it to be recognized; they are doing it to help others.

* (10:10)

I think, Mr. Speaker, the fact that the initial number that was put in by the previous government—it was put in at eight and is now being raised to twelve—makes a tremendous amount of sense because, Lord knows, there are more than twelve Manitobans on an annual basis that we could recognize for this very high honour. But the fact is that twelve allows us to recognize more Manitobans than currently under the eight. So we think that that is something that we very much would strongly support.

I will say that, in a very humble way, prior to the Order of Manitoba, one of the recognitions that was offered in this province is the Order of the Buffalo Hunt. I was very, very fortunate to have the opportunity to work with some couple of 2000 or so volunteers throughout the province of Manitoba, volunteers right here in the community of Winnipeg, volunteers in the communities of Selkirk, volunteers in the communities of Portage la Prairie, Brandon, Teulon, Morden. That was all to do with the World Junior Hockey Championship, that Manitobans came out and supported and set a world record for attendance, they set a world record for the amount of revenue that was generated, and they set a record on TSN, RDI, the two French and English sports networks that watched the gold medal game between Canada and Russia.

It was truly an honour for all of us, as volunteers, to be recognized and to be given the Order of the Buffalo Hunt. Again, not because one person got involved in that because they thought there might be some award at the end of it. The award was to be part of the event.

I can go further to say that when those that were involved in the Pan Am Games were given the same ability to be recognized with the Order of the Buffalo Hunt because what they did for those two weeks during the time that we in Manitoba hosted that event, all of the eyes of the world were focussed on Manitoba. The tremendous pride that all of us felt during those games

was exemplary. I think it showed that we can compete with anybody in the world when we all work together for a common goal, to do the right thing. It was all about trying to make the community and showcase our community to the world to say that we are No. 1.

Clearly, through the course of the Pan American Games, we know that the attendance was tremendous. Frankly, the weather was unbelievable. It was a memorable two weeks for all of Manitobans so that those people that were involved had a chance to be recognized for what they did.

The chairman of the games, Sanford Riley, is, again, a leader in the community and had a chance to accept on behalf of some 20-odd thousand volunteers that were involved in that. It is not about one person. It is about the team. It is about everybody getting a chance to get involved and make a contribution.

We know that in Manitoba we have a chance, as elected members, to meet a lot of these great people throughout our time. So when we get a chance to meet some of these Manitobans and to be able to bring some of their names forward to allow them to be recognized appropriately in the Legislative Building from the premier of the day, the lieutenant-governor of the day, I think it is a wonderful tribute to Manitobans. I think that we all acknowledge, because whether it is through our political careers, the number of volunteers that come out and help because they believe in a cause. I think it is something that all of us in this Chamber would sit back and reflect on the volunteerism that takes place and say: Wow, all of these people are giving up their time to come out and help those of us get elected. They are incredible. They are unbelievable Manitobans that take the time, that take the energy and take the effort. Not because they are looking for any kind of recognition at all. It is because they believe in something.

The ability to believe in something is a very, very treasured emotion. It causes you to rise above anything that is happening in that particular time and focus your efforts on something that you as an individual want to make a difference. Any time that we as a legislative body, the

lieutenant governor of the day, the premier of the day, can sit back and recognize Manitobans for making a difference, for cherishing the ability to have the opportunity to get involved, to have the opportunity to reach out and perhaps make somebody's day just a little bit brighter. As I said, it is all about Manitobans, whether they are in the labour movement, whether they are entrepreneurs, whether they are those that are helping somebody perhaps; every day they go down and they shovel the snow for some elderly people. It is a showing of gratitude. It is a showing of their abilities to make Manitoba a better place because they believe in our province. They believe in what it is that we stand for. We believe in what it is, of why we decide that Manitoba's the place that we are proud to call home.

The Order of Manitoba is the highest honour that anyone in Manitoba can receive. The beauty of the Order of Manitoba, that it does not recognize what sex you are or what your religion is. It recognizes the ability of an individual to make a major contribution to our province.

Mr. Speaker, the Order of Manitoba is a very, very prestigious honour that any person in Manitoba has the opportunity to be awarded, and that, I think, makes it all the more special because, when you talk about criteria, we talked about this in the House the other day, or the lack of criteria, when you talk about criteria, their only criteria for the Order of Manitoba is that you are recognized in your own way as a community leader. So that kind of criteria enables all Manitobans in all walks of life to have the ability to stand up, be recognized by their community, to be put forward, to be recognized, again, to wear proudly the Order of Manitoba on their lapel.

I believe that in life there are opportunities that people have that people take advantage of, and sometimes it is a monetary reward that people receive. Well, I think that the Order of Manitoba transcends any kind of monetary award, any kind of award that might allow for those to benefit in any way, because it absolutely transcends all of those levels and speaks to the heart of really what is important to Manitobans, and that is making a contribution on a day-to-day basis.

We believe on this side of the House that the Order of Manitoba is something that we cannot do enough of. We can acknowledge and support the hard work of Manitobans through all walks of life, through all four corners of this province. The Order of Manitoba is, in a small way but in a very prestigious way, an opportunity to say to those of Manitoba: A job well done; we are proud of you; this speaks highly of you; when you walk into a room, you hold your head high. People look at you and say you have made a difference. You have made a difference to Manitobans. Having the Order of Manitoba going from eight to twelve, we believe, is something that is very important. I would like to say that on this side of the House we support Bill 4 because we believe it is important to acknowledge the hard work of Manitobans.

I would just like to say to those who were the initial inductees to the Order of Manitoba last year, acknowledging that one of those was the former Premier of the province, Gary Filmon, and others, I think it shows it is those people that have helped make the province a great place to live. We know that by adding another four, it is just going to give us another chance to go out and acknowledge those hard-working Manitobans and show that we are very, very proud of them.

On this side of the House, I would just like to say that we very much support the initiative of Bill 4. We think it is the right thing to do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

*(10:20)

Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism): It is a pleasure for me to rise and an honour. I know all members in this House feel the same way when you get an opportunity to speak in this Legislature and you have the privilege of doing so. It really is an honour to be in this Legislative Building.

On Bill 4, it is a pleasure for me to rise and acknowledge the fact that raising the membership in the Order of Manitoba from eight to twelve is truly important, because it does acknowledge the fact that there are so many volunteers and people who give of themselves in this province, who have an opportunity to be

recognized. As was mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Murray) just moments ago, people do not do this because of some selfish reason. They give of themselves and they volunteer on a daily basis, an hourly basis in this province, and it makes our province special.

Mr. Speaker, just on the point of volunteerism, last year the Premier of the Province of Manitoba made me the minister responsible for the volunteer sector, and I have had the opportunity to meet many, many individuals and groups and have a better appreciation of all the volunteer work that is done in the province. Many of these people will undoubtedly not receive the Order of Manitoba, and that is regrettable, but they give of themselves freely, and it is important to note that fact.

I know that the Order of Manitoba is the highest honour that we can give in this province. With regard to this honour, Mr. Speaker, it has been shown in the past that many, many individuals from the arts sector, the cultural sector, the sporting sector, the multicultural sector, the education sectors, health sectors, the business world and, of course, the labour movement—they have all had individuals who have been fortunate and privileged enough to receive the Order of Manitoba, our highest, highest honour we can pay tribute to anyone.

I know that within those sectors, Mr. Speaker, there is Pamela Rebello, the director of India School of Dance; there is Israel Asper from the business world; Carol Shields, Burton Cummings. There are many individuals from the sporting community, as well as my close friend, Dick Martin, who was a former president of the Manitoba Federation of Labour. Mr. Martin received this award and has since deceased, passed away of cancer. I know that his family and he were extremely proud to receive this honour. I know that members opposite had also paid tribute. I know that the Member for Southdale (Mr. Reimer) mentioned Mr. Martin in his remarks, about how fortunate it was that he was able to receive Manitoba's highest honour before he passed away. I know his family was deeply touched, as well, because he has since passed away with cancer.

Mr. Speaker, the volunteer sector in Manitoba, as was previously mentioned yesterday on the day that is recognized as paying tribute to volunteers across Canada and around the world, that we in Manitoba often do not appreciate how many countless hours people put in. If we had to put a dollar figure on that, millions upon millions and millions of dollars if you had to put an hourly rate attached to the volunteer hours that are put in.

I know that members opposite have an appreciation for this, and this is an honour that is truly one of these non-partisan type of honours. I know the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Murray) made mention that it was the previous government that brought in this award, and they should be commended for that because this is an award that really does pay tribute to our leaders. They are the ones who, often when they are approached and notified that they are going to be presented with this, are quite, not reluctant to take it, but they are very hesitant to take the spotlight for it, because they gave of themselves their entire life and career, not looking to attain any kind of reward in any way or honour, not looking to receive this kind of recognition.

Yet we do have to pay tribute to them. Without them, without the leadership and without the volunteers in this province, that is what makes this province special. Manitoba is really a special place and I think you have a better appreciation of it when you go to the community rinks, when you go to the soccer pitches, you go to the art galleries, you go to the museums around the province and you see the people who really are the heart, the heart of what makes Manitoba special. I know that all of us feel the same way with regard to this volunteer sector, because it is so important to pay tribute to these people. I know the Leader of the Opposition mentioned about the individuals that volunteer themselves in the political arena.

I know there are many people that have become cynical over the years about politicians, about those individuals that would actually volunteer of themselves to door-knock, to become involved in the political system. I just want to make a couple of points with regard to that because it does take a lot of effort. All political parties, no matter what your political

persuasion and view, you need people out there to be supporting you, to be working hard for you to get your message to the people as to what your party, your movement stands for. Those individuals deserve a lot of credit because they work tirelessly for all political parties across this country and in this province to try to make the province what? To try to make this a better place. To try to make this a better place for those seniors that live in the province, to try to make it a better place for themselves and trying to make Manitoba a better place for their children and those that follow after us.

You know, Mr. Speaker, this particular honour, the Order of Manitoba, raising it from eight to twelve is so important because there are so many every year that individuals will often raise when they hear the name and the list of people that are given this honour: Well, what about so and so? Well, you missed someone else, or you missed someone from the university; you missed someone from the arts community; you missed someone from the labour community; you missed someone from the business community. That is why this is so important, to go from eight to twelve, because there truly is some room to add a number of different individuals to receive this prestigious award.

I know that often we become partisan, and, yes, we have to because we do believe in our views and what we are trying to do for Manitoba as a political party, as a government, yet when it comes down to individuals receiving the Order of Manitoba, we often will talk to each other informally about individuals who have received this award. I know the previous Premier of the province, Mr. Gary Filmon, received the award just last year. No matter if I differ with his views politically and his approach that he has taken to politics, this is an individual who served for many, many years in public life, donating of his time and energy. He is an individual whose family, obviously, made a commitment with him to do this. But this is not an individual who did it and said: I am going to become involved in politics and receive the Order of Manitoba. He is a person that gave of himself.

I know that our Premier, Mr. Gary Doer, will someday receive this outstanding award. Why? Not because he is doing it to be Premier

or to be involved in politics or the labour movement all of his life to receive some award or recognition. No. To try to make Manitoba a better place. I know members opposite would agree with that as well, that individuals such as the premiers that we have had have worked so hard to make Manitoba a better place no matter what political stripe. It is really important that we salute them, and we salute the leaders of our province.

I just want to summarize and conclude my remarks with regard to Bill 4 in raising the number of individuals who are going to receive this award from eight to twelve as being extremely important. I know members on this side of the House are totally supportive of it, and I know members opposite must be as well because it really does offer us the opportunity to honour those individuals, those leaders that above and beyond the call of duty have worked tirelessly on behalf of Manitobans in trying to make Manitoba a better place. I know as minister responsible for the volunteer sector and the Minister responsible for Culture, Heritage and Tourism, and Sport and recreation that we have so many volunteers and so many individuals that give freely of themselves on a daily basis to make Manitoba better. I just want to say that we on this side of the House totally support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank you once again for allowing me the honour to speak on this bill.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

* (10:30)

Bill 300—An Act to Amend an Act to Incorporate the Portage District General Hospital Foundation

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Fauschou), that Bill 300, An Act to Amend an Act to Incorporate the

Portage District General Hospital Foundation; Loi modifiant la Loi constituant en corporation la Fondation de l'Hôpital général du district Portage, as reported from the Standing Committee on Law Amendments, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. David Fauschou (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to thank all members of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly for their co-operation in regard to Bill 300 and what it will mean to the residents of Portage la Prairie and area. The bill will expand its charitable purposes to include the Portage and District General Hospital, The Douglas Campbell personal care home, the Regency House elderly persons housing unit, and will also provide for the responsible management of the corporation by the board of directors, as appointed by the local municipalities.

I would like to also say at this time that the immense number of individuals who have contributed over the last 15 years to this foundation has made a significant impact in the lives of individuals who have come to reside in the three particular facilities. I want to thank them for their generosity in their contributions. I do want to say on behalf of all those who may some day have to rely on these particular facilities in their later years, we very much appreciate the support of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly in amending this act, as it will benefit many into the future.

In relationship to the Portage and District General Hospital, this foundation is pledged to support the very vital need that Portage la Prairie has for a new Portage and District General Hospital that has been in the Minister of Health's (Mr. Chomiak) hands. We look forward to the Minister of Health making an announcement in the not-too-distant future of the new facility, with certainly the co-operation of all members of the House, that will serve central Manitoba. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Motion agreed to.

* * *

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Faurichou), that the fees paid with respect to Bill 300, An Act to Amend an Act to Incorporate the Portage District General Hospital Foundation; Loi modifiant la Loi constituant en corporation la Fondation de l'Hôpital général du district Portage, be refunded less the cost of printing.

Motion agreed to.

House Business

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I understand there is not leave to waive private members' hour after consultation with the Opposition, but I understand the Opposition House Leader (Mr. Laurendeau) does have a proposal for the House in terms of private members' hour then.

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, seeing as we have used up a half hour of private members' hour, I wonder if we might call it 11 o'clock right now, and we would deal with one private member's resolution and then the House could rise, and also that we would seek that there be no quorum called between 11 and 11:30, so that members of the House could go for the celebration at the tree.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it 11 o'clock? *[Agreed]*

Is it the will of the House to deal with Resolution 1? *[Agreed]*

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Res. 1—Dual Marketing of Hogs

Mr. Speaker: Resolution 1, standing in the name of the honourable Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), Dual Marketing of Hogs.

Mr. Harry Enns (Lakeside): All of us are aware of the importance of the hog industry in Manitoba, and particularly, of course—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Would the honourable Member for Lakeside please move the resolution first and then speak to it?

Mr. Enns: Mr. Speaker, sure. I am in a co-operative mood this morning.

I move, seconded by the honourable Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau), that

WHEREAS according to the Manitoba Agriculture Yearbook 2000, Manitoba farmers produced close to 5.35 million hogs, an increase of 12.4 percent from 1999; and

WHEREAS according to the Manitoba Agriculture Yearbook 2000, increased hog production and prices in 2000 resulted in a \$224 million increase in the total value of hog production to \$700 million; and

WHEREAS according to the Manitoba Agriculture Yearbook 2000, Manitoba producers marketed over 2.9 million hogs for slaughter by Canadian plants in 2000, 344 000 more than in 1999; and

WHEREAS in 1996 the previous Progressive Conservative government implemented a dual marketing system for hogs, a more flexible marketing system that was one of a number of initiatives designed to maximize the economic potential of the hog industry; and

WHEREAS the implementation of dual marketing of hogs has provided the necessary flexibility to respond quickly and efficiently to changing needs in Manitoba's hog industry; and

WHEREAS a dual marketing approach has resulted in millions of dollars in new investment and the creation of hundreds of jobs in Manitoba's hog industry; and

WHEREAS dual marketing is the best way to ensure the future prosperity of the hog industry and has led to such initiatives as the construction of Brandon's Maple Leaf plant; and

WHEREAS during the New Democratic Party Convention 2000, Resolution 00-AG-05 discussed the need to return to the single-desk system of marketing of hogs in Manitoba.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to recognize the merits of the current system of dual marketing of hogs and to consider maintaining this system that allows farmers to have a choice in how they choose to market their hogs.

Mr. Speaker: Prior to moving the resolution, I would like to ask the House if there is leave and agreement to not call quorum count for the rest of this morning. Is there agreement? *[Agreed]*

Motion presented.

Mr. Enns: Well, Mr. Speaker, the resolution says it all, and their action in not passing this kind of resolution, believe it or not, also says it all. That is a tragedy. You do not understand that by not passing this resolution, by not giving a clear signal to such an important part of our agricultural industry, you are shying away the orderly continued growth of this industry. The Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) should know that. You know, the tragedy is that this is an industry that I know she is aware of the importance of, and it is doing reasonably well. It could be doing better.

We are, of course, not unmindful of the fact that our producers and the government of Alberta, I might add, are aggressively looking forward to capture more of the expansion of the hog industry here on the Prairies. In a very aggressive style, they have done some very specific things such as accept the responsibility for future siting of hog barns, which seems to be such a problem for some of our municipal governments. They have aggressively set very high targets. They are talking about potential production of 12 million hogs in Alberta from their current level of 2 million hogs.

* (10:40)

Mr. Speaker, I do not choose to put numbers as to what is the appropriate number. All I know is that for our producers in Manitoba and for the job creation that it means to Manitoba and for the job creation that it means in cities like Brandon, and it could have meant in Winnipeg as well, the maximization of our hog production is a natural for Manitoba. It fits in with the

requirement for our grain producers to find a ready outlet for the grain production, feed grains that they produce rather than pay the exorbitant freight rates that are now a matter of life for prairie grain producers. I hope and I believe that a great deal more research should be spent to improving those feed grain varieties. We are still spending most of our research money on malt barleys. I have no problem with that as such.

Again, everything that needs to be readjusted to what happened on August 1, 1995, when the federal government stopped, in a very substantial way, supporting the movement of grain out of the prairie region. For us in Manitoba particularly and eastern Saskatchewan, the impact was massive. It calls for a changed way of looking at things.

Mr. Conrad Santos, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

So I believe that we should be devoting much more of our research efforts. I know the Minister of Agriculture, when she was in opposition, she would frequently call for the need for research and more attention being placed on agriculture research, understands the importance of research.

Here in Manitoba, for our growing livestock industry, I want our producers to be able to confidently grow corn or grow barley that is free of the diseases that are sometimes bothering us, that are not tolerated by livestock, like hogs. I would like our feed barley to be fully competitive with American corn. I would like to say the same thing for our feed wheats. We spend a great deal of time maintaining and enhancing and ensuring the reputation that we deservedly have, that our hard spring wheat has with respect to its milling quality. But that is fine. Let us understand also that Saskatchewan is the big wheat producer in this country.

Here in Manitoba, with our diverse livestock, which includes poultry, where wheat is a major factor, we should be putting more emphasis on research and the development of high-yielding, high-quality feed wheats, along with the feed barley. As the minister knows, we are sending too many of our hogs across the line to be finished there. That could be corrected if

we dedicated more of our time to the feed wheats.

I come back to the resolution, and I say this very seriously. Your refusal to accept this kind of resolution sends a signal to the hog industry and sends a degree of uncertainty to the hog industry. It is absolute nonsense and irresponsible to talk about returning to the single selling desk. The minister knows that, and she has no intention of doing that. She has no intention of doing it. So then why not make it clear?

It is this attitude that chased the big Smithfield multimillion-dollar operation out of Manitoba and nothing else. For a moment, we had accomplished everything that I had set out as minister to do. Two world-class packers competing for our producers' hogs; that is the way it should have been. But you came in, started talking about returning to the single selling desk, and the Americans walked away. *[interjection]* Yes, you did. You talk about it at every one of your conventions, and you will not stand up and support this resolution. I am going to sit down and let them stand up and support this resolution. By not supporting this resolution, they are denying a thousand jobs being created in the province. They are denying orderly growth in the province. They are putting uncertainty in the brightest spot in agriculture simply by not accepting this resolution. It is so silly. They are doing it solely for ideological reasons.

They know that they will never return to the single selling desk. They know that, but ideologically they have to go along with what they hear and what some of their supporters like to talk about when they hold their annual meetings, when they hold their annual conventions, as they did in Brandon. They like to hold out, she likes to hold out in a totally misleading way to some of their supporters: Well, we may go back to the single selling desk.

They are doing that just for political reasons. Well, I do not mind if it was just a bit of fun and games that they have at their conventions, but it is keeping unnecessary uncertainty in the orderly expansion of the hog industry that is so vital to agriculture in the province of Manitoba by reacting that way.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let the Minister of Agriculture stand up, let her acknowledge that she is not going to return to a single selling desk, and that you will pass this resolution.

Hon. Rosann Wowchuk (Minister of Agriculture and Food): Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am very pleased to speak on the resolution put forward by the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) and his views. But I want to say to the member I am very pleased that he follows our convention. Unfortunately, we do not have the opportunity to follow their convention because I understand that they do not even debate resolutions, and, if they do, they debate them behind closed doors that nobody will have the opportunity.

At least in our convention we have an open dialogue. We are acceptable to hearing the views of delegates from across the province. I think it is very healthy to have debate and look at opportunities and ideas, because that is how you generate.

So I am not ashamed at all about the debate that takes place on our convention floor. I would encourage the members opposite that they look at the model that we use and have an open discussion. I understand they do not even debate resolutions on the floor, that all of this happens behind closed doors and it is very controlled and the membership does not have an opportunity to participate. So I am pleased that they do follow our convention. Hopefully, they will learn from the method that we use to involve the public and have healthy discussion.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, with respect to this resolution, the member talks about the production increasing at 12.4 percent in 1999. Well, I want to tell him that the production has even increased greater. The expansion of the industry and the approval of barns has been about 19 percent. So there is additional growth. The industry continues to grow in this province and grow in a very healthy way.

I want to tell the member also that although he is doing a very self-congratulatory image here of the work that they did with the industry, if he looks back in history, he will remember that the

hog industry was growing at a reasonable rate prior to 1996 as well. Changes were happening in agriculture. We lost the Crow, and our producers were looking for alternatives. I give our producers a lot of credit, because when changes came they had the initiative and the high, ethical work skills to look at other opportunities. They have done well in adapting to the change that ended with the Crow benefit.

You know, when the member opposite was talking that we should allow farmers to have choice, where was his allowing farmers to have choice when back in '96 the pork producers own survey said that 76 percent of the producers did not want to move away from single-desk selling? The member, who was the minister then, did not listen to producers at that time. Farmers and hog producers were very critical of the previous government and the minister for his undemocratic position, because he did not involve the industry.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there have been changes made. We have moved to a different system of marketing hogs. People will adapt to the system that is in place. I have had discussions with Manitoba Pork Marketing, with Maple Leaf. People are working together to try to work within the system that is there to ensure that there is stability in the industry.

* (10:50)

We always have to think about the growth in the industry, but we also have to think about a fair return for producers. As Minister of Agriculture, I hope that the previous minister thought about those kinds of things as well. I am always conscious of that. I want the industry to grow. I want it to be diversified. I want value added, but I am always looking at how the benefit can also go to the producers so that we will continue to have a large number of people involved in agriculture and a growing agriculture industry.

When I look at this resolution, I tell the member that there is growth in the industry right now and producers are working with Manitoba Pork Marketing, with Maple Leaf. The member is right, not all producers are happy with the system that they have or the marketing opportunities that we have here in this province

because many hogs are going south of the border. That is a real challenge for us to have that many hogs raised in Manitoba and then go to another market. That is a challenge for us. It is a challenge for the processors, but it is the issue of prices of grain. Right now there is a very high subsidy on grains in the U.S. and that gives those producers an unfair advantage. People are looking for where they can get the best return for the hogs that they produce.

As well, when we took office we recognized that there was an opportunity for growth, but we wanted to ensure that that growth was sustainable, that there was planning, that we could get away from some of the conflict that we have when a hog barn is coming into an area. Certainly one step that we did take that I am very proud of that we took was the whole Livestock Stewardship Initiative where we put in place a panel of three people who went out and consulted and made many recommendations on how we could better ensure a sustainable growth of the livestock industry.

I want to commend the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (Ms. Friesen) on the steps that she has taken to ensure that municipalities are doing their planning and putting by-laws in place so that there is not again the kind of conflict where there is no zoning, no by-laws in place, that ends up in a very serious conflict issue.

So we have taken steps. The Minister of Conservation (Mr. Lathlin) as well has initiated the water strategy. We have initiated map aid to ensure that people know what the soils are like, what the water tables are like. So you have all of this information collected so that we can make sustainable decisions. So we have taken many steps to address the issue of how the livestock industry can grow in this province in a sustainable way. We will continue to work with the industry.

When we were doing the Livestock Stewardship Initiative, we consulted and met with Manitoba Pork Marketing, with Manitoba Pork Council, Keystone Agricultural Producers, the Association of Manitoba Municipalities. All of these people were involved in this initiative, and we continue to work because this is not an

issue that is going to end tomorrow. We have taken some steps on the Livestock Stewardship Initiative; additional steps will be taken. We involve the industry.

The member talks about single-desk selling. I am trying to make a comparison about how we are working with the industry. We are consulting with them and trying to have the industry grow in a sustainable way. Under the previous administration, the minister made a decision that he was not going to have single-desk selling, against the will of the producers. It was against the will.

What I am trying to explain to the member is that we are working with the industry in full consultation. We are working with them and discussing how the marketing system is working, how it can be improved on, what steps we can take to ensure that hogs continue to be finished in Manitoba.

The member across the way talks about how he doubled the number of hogs in the province. I am sorry, in fact it was not him that doubled it. It was the industry. It was the farmers. It was the farmers that made that decision. They started growing this industry before 1996, and they were doing a good job at it. I congratulate the hog producers and the farmers of Manitoba and how they have adapted to change. When they lost the Crow benefit and the feed grain prices dropped, they had to look at opportunities. I congratulate the producers for what they have done. I congratulate the producers for the way they are adapting to other changes and converting from grain production into a wide variety of crops, into beans, into potatoes, all of those things.

But the member has just been so agitated by the fact that we have open discussions at our convention. I am not sure whether they have a convention coming up. Maybe he wants to take this issue to his convention or something like that.

We have healthy debates and ideas. We are not afraid to have the debates on the convention floor, but we are also not afraid to have debates with the industry. Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you go out and check with the industry, I encourage the member to talk to Manitoba Pork, to Keystone

Agriculture Producers and the Pork Marketing and find out whether or not we have been having discussions with them and looking at ways that we can have better opportunities for producers.

I am sure that his goal is the same as mine. That is to improve the return for farmers, because this is not just about farmers, this is about healthy rural communities, having people live in rural Manitoba.

You can pick an issue and try to take a lot of credit for it, but I would remind the member too that there were many people who were critical of him in his comments on the change in supply management. There were people who were critical of other issues of the member when he talked about supply management commodities.

But I have to say there are many issues that we have to continue to work on in this industry. It is one that the member talked about. It is the feed supply. It is the disease in the grain that we have in this province and the amount of grain that has to be moved back and forth from other areas. Because of that, we start to lose some of our advantage. The issue of disease is very, very important. The issue of research on these commodities and cereal grains is also very important, because if we are going to continue with this advantage we have to have a food supply that meets the demands of the industry.

I just had a discussion yesterday with an individual who talked about growing corn in Manitoba. Is there a possibility of doing research or looking at some genetics of corn that would fit into a shorter growing season? Those are all good ideas. I think that those are the things that we have to work on, new varieties of seed, a larger food supply. The member talks about genetically modified seed. Yes, and there is a huge issue with genetically modified wheat.

We know what happened with the genetically modified canola, although our farmers have adapted. Farmers are getting a good return for it. Then the European market says that they will not accept this. We are an exporting country. We always have to be conscious of finding a balance, because it may be a better return for the producers. Many producers are growing it, but is there going to be

a market for it? That is the issue with the wheat as well, the concern about how you can separate the genetically modified wheat from the traditional wheat. The issue of disease in our cereal grains and our feed supply are all very important issues.

* (11:00)

I have raised many, many issues. I want the member to know that our Government intends to work on these issues. We will do it in consultation with the producers. I want to tell this member that I am not prepared to give credit to him for what he did and I am not prepared to take credit for what I have done. What I want to do is give credit to the producers, because it is the producers who have been innovative. It is the producers who have seen the opportunity and want to take advantage of it.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are many things that we can work at, and we will continue to work with the industry to provide and work with the industry about how we can get more monies into research. We will work with the industry on how we can stem the flow of hogs south of the border and work towards finishing them more here in Manitoba. We will work on the issues that are very important to the producers, and that is having a feed supply that is safe and close to home to meet their demands so that indeed the industry can continue to grow.

We know that there are opportunities for a second shift at Maple Leaf. I just met with Mr. McCain two days ago to talk about that second shift and what the challenges are, and he is very happy with the progress and the growth of industry in Manitoba.

Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the opportunity to speak on a very important topic.

Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin-Roblin): Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is indeed an honour to rise and speak on this private member's resolution put forward by the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), the former Minister of Agriculture in this province.

It is very interesting. It is very interesting that the Member for Lakeside would criticize

this side of the Government for having an open and honest discussion about the hog industry at one of our conventions. I can only surmise that the Member for Lakeside is jealous that his own party does not do these sorts of things at their conventions. I would second what the Minister of Agriculture said in her words just preceding me that maybe the members opposite could learn a little thing or two about running a convention and about having open and honest discussions about issues of the day, issues that Manitobans think are important.

The media reported the highlight of the most recent Progressive Conservative Manitoba Convention as being a fashion show. That would have been very interesting to see at a convention. That is the highlight. That is their contribution to the discussion here in the province of Manitoba. Actually, it would have been very good to see the Member for Lakeside strut down that boardwalk, down the catwalk with the new logo and the new uniform with the new snake logo on the lapel of the golf shirt. It would have been a sight to see the Member for Lakeside walk down that catwalk and pirouette at the end to the thunderous applause of all the Tory delegates at that meeting, if that is what the Tory party thinks important to Manitobans.

I would say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that they have missed the boat, that they cannot say that they are in touch with what the hopes and aspirations of Manitobans are, and they cannot pretend that they are working for the best interests of the people they purport to represent in this Legislature.

I want to say, through you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) that, as he sees it, the good old days of Tory rule in this province did come to an end, people of Manitoba did look forward to a better way of doing things in this province. They do look forward to a government that will listen to their concerns. The old days of the former Minister of Agriculture, the old days, in his term, the good old days, where there was no public input, those days are over. The old days when planning was not important to the Government of Manitoba, those days are done, too. The good old days when the minister felt that hog manure smelled like raspberry jam, they are over, too. I suggest

the Member for Lakeside should just come to grips with that. The Member for Lakeside, I think, knows that raspberry jam does not smell like hog manure or vice versa, but I do know the Member for Lakeside is a man of his word. I do know that he is willing to put his money where his mouth is, and he proved this one time when he swam across the Assiniboine River out here. He made some statements, and he kind of put his money where his mouth is. To his credit, he did. So maybe he will do it again.

I would say to the Member for Lakeside, if he does believe that hog manure smells like raspberry jam, invite a few of your friends over. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Member for Lakeside can invite some of his friends over, and I know he has many friends, and maybe you can serve them up a sandwich, spread a little hog manure on it and try to tell them that it smells like raspberry jam. Make some toast. Have a little tea and toast with some of your friends and try to convince them how much that hog manure smells like raspberry jam. I think the Member for Lakeside might take me up on that. He has done those kinds of things in the past.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to draw on two points in the words that I want to put on the record here today. First of all, in the 1980s, hog production, and I think the Member for Lakeside understands this, that hog production through the 1980s doubled. It was the Pawley government that was in power. Single-desk selling was in place, and the number of hogs produced in this province doubled. The number of hogs after we lost single-desk selling has doubled as well. I think that is factually correct, and I think the Member for Lakeside understands that. It doubled with single-desk selling. It doubled after single-desk selling. So he cannot stand in this Legislature and say that because of his unilateral, undemocratic decision, not supported by farmers in this province, to get rid of single-desk selling, that that is somehow responsible for the large growth that we see in the hog industry in Manitoba. The basic premise of his private member's resolution today is wrong.

The other thing that I want to point out, the other difference between then and now is that, we said this in opposition, we said that we could grow the hog industry in Manitoba and also

strengthen the environmental protection for farmers, for communities, for people living in rural parts of our province. We said that in opposition, and whether the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) likes it or not, we are proving it in government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the good old days when manure smelled like raspberry jam, when the Tories were in power, there was no consideration on the environmental side of this whole equation. There was no consideration. If there was consideration at that time, then we would have seen some things that should have happened a long time ago that we are doing here in government today. Over the last couple of years, we have done a lot of things to make sure that we not only grow the industry but that we improve the environmental conditions in all parts of this province, including areas represented by members opposite.

I want to start by saying that we on this side of the House have put together the Livestock Stewardship Initiative, the first real, substantial, honest attempt to provide some type of protection for both the industry and for the environmental concerns in this province. We just did not do something unilaterally. We just did not meet in a Cabinet room somewhere like it was in the good old days of the Tory reign in this province. We consulted with the Association of Manitoba Municipalities. We consulted with the Keystone Agricultural Producers. We met with people from the industry. We met with communities and groups and offered anyone and everybody to come forward and tell us what they thought, what their vision was for the growth of the hog industry in Manitoba.

That is a consultative model that our Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk), our Minister of Conservation (Mr. Lathlin) and our Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (Ms. Friesen) had the courage to do. They have done that and it is going to improve the growth in the hog industry and also protect our environment.

* (11:10)

Absolutely key, in my view, to the growth of the hog industry and not just to the growth of the hog industry but key to the growth economically

in this province is the word "planning." Now, some of the latest cold war speeches that I have heard the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) here the last couple of weeks impart I find very entertaining and very informative and very historically interesting. In those speeches he has given, I know the word "planning" might make his skin crawl or might upset him because it sounds like a word out of the old Soviet regime, which he really must not like. If the member opposite, the Member for Lakeside, would really think about it, he would understand how important the word "planning" is in the growth of any industry, including the hog industry here in Manitoba.

There is a great deal of pressure, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on rural municipalities in this debate. There is a great deal of pressure on communities throughout rural Manitoba, and there is a great deal of pressure on people who live out in rural Manitoba who potentially can benefit from a barn going in their area, but who are naturally worried about the effects, the impacts that that growth will have on their communities. They want in on this discussion. The planning process that we have put forward allows people in on this discussion. Everyday, normal, regular, ordinary Manitobans can now be part of this discussion and have a say in whether or not a barn is built in their area.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

I do not know what members opposite have a problem with that for. I think they, on the other side of this House, would be well advised to listen to people when they say we want to participate in this discussion. You did not involve them before. You do not want to do it now, but I would suggest, maybe, at your next convention instead of doing fashion shows, you should listen to some real people who may come to your convention and say, you know, there are some issues here that you should deal with.

Mr. Speaker, when we became Government just over two years ago, we showed that we were very committed and very determined to get more rural municipalities to pass by-laws dealing with the expansion of industry in their areas, including the hog industry. We were very determined and, I think, showed commitment

and leadership, in particular our Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (Ms. Friesen), in getting rural municipalities to take an organized, planned approach to development.

You can see the results of this now. The Member for Lakeside, I am sure, knows that since 1999, since we became Government, the number of rural municipalities with by-laws has increased vastly. I think he has to agree that that is a good thing despite his anti-Soviet rhetoric of the last couple of speeches I heard and that more rural municipalities have joined planning districts than at any other time in the history of this province.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, we have had more R.M.s with by-laws and more R.M.s join planning districts in the last year than any of the 11 years that the previous government was in power, including the Member for Lakeside who was in Cabinet that whole time. So he can say here today in the Legislature that he agrees with us, but when he had the chance to act on this, he did not do it. In one year, we have more R.M.s.— I will repeat it just in case the minister did not hear. In one year, in the last year, we had more R.M.s adopt planning by-laws and join planning districts than the whole 11 years of the previous government. That is impressive. That is something that the members opposite, No. 1, should be agreeing with now, and it appears they are and, No. 2, should have been doing a long, long time ago.

So what does that mean? What does that actually substantially mean for people in the industry and for people who live where these barns are being built? Well, it means that the public is part of this conversation now. The public is part of the decision-making process. Another thing we did, the technical review committees are now mandatory for any development over 400 animal units. Why was that not done in the past? It seems like a very common-sense thing to get some decisions made on scientific data.

Speaking of scientific data, why were there no maps ever put together under the previous government, ground water sensitivity maps? It makes sense to do that. Why was it not done before?

Well, Mr. Speaker, we have proven a couple of things in the last two years. We have proven that whether you are on single-desk selling or dual marketing, the number of hogs have doubled. We have proven that in terms of growing the livestock industry, you can grow the industry at a good rate and also protect the environment, something members opposite did not quite understand when they had the chance to do something about it.

I congratulate the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk), the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (Ms. Friesen) and the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Lathlin) for leading this province through this growth in the hog industry and for providing those protections for people on the environmental side of this equation. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff (Interlake): We will not call the question just yet. I would like to have an opportunity to speak on this bill for a few minutes.

An Honourable Member: It is not a bill; it is a resolution.

Mr. Nevakshonoff: Well, sorry. It is not a bill; it is a resolution, as the Member for Lakeside correctly points out, and we will discuss it.

I must say I have been sitting here listening to the Member for Lakeside for the last few minutes commenting quite vehemently about this bill and egging us on on this side of the House. I have to wonder if he is still smarting a little bit from times past when they made the very controversial decision in this province to do away with the single-desk selling of hogs and go to the dual market system that they are lauding so strongly today.

The Member for Lakeside no doubt recalls the controversy back then. I am just looking at some of the newspaper articles dating back to then, where Manitoba Pork which was the recognized organization that basically had control over the system was not consulted when it came to this decision. I wonder why that was the case.

On this side of the House, we are very serious about consulting the people of Manitoba and finding out what the producers have to say about how the industry is developed. That, unfortunately, was sadly lacking when the Conservative government was in power. There was no consultation, although Manitoba Pork did their own consultation. They sent a survey out and 76 percent of them, more than three-quarters of the producers, said no to the move away from single-desk selling, 76 percent of them said no to it. The Member for Lakeside should take note. Yet, still, they went ahead on this. Still they proceeded, despite the fact that the producers in the province did not want it. The producers were quite content to remain with the single-desk selling system in this province.

That meant nothing to the former Minister of Agriculture and the former Conservative government. They decided that they were going to go with the large corporations. The small farms were of no interest to them. The family farms in this province meant nothing. It was the corporate path, the Smithfields of the world. Welcome to Manitoba. We will do away with the single desk and you guys can have control of the system. That is what happened here. Nobody is fooled here. The people of Manitoba were not fooled by this action, and the result was that they were removed from office.

There is a very distinct parallel to this move away from the single desk, and that was the selling of the Manitoba Telephone System. There was no consultation on that front either, was there? Here was a government-owned corporation that was doing just fine. I think it is recognized that Canada is one of the leading nations when it comes to telecommunications in this country.

* (11:20)

Here we are on the verge of the new millennium, with the expansion of the Internet and all that, with a chance, when we had a chance, to make some serious money in the telephone business. What did they do? They sold it off to their friends, and the people of Manitoba lost as a result of it. So it is factors like this; it is the loss of the telephone company and the loss of the single desk, that resulted in you people being thrown from office.

An Honourable Member: Why do you not correct it?

Mr. Nevakshonoff: Well, the Member for Lakeside says: Why do we not correct it? I suppose you would like to have a producer vote now. Would you? Would you consider including the past producers? Those three-quarters of the producers that are no longer in the system, compliments of the fact that you did away with the single desk. All those small producers are now gone, went out of business. Maybe we should ask them to come in on a producer vote and see what happens. Right? Do a real consultation of the people, past and present, that were involved in the industry, and it might be interesting to see what the results of a poll like that would be, but, Mr. Speaker, we have to move forward. You know we cannot spend our entire term looking backwards, correcting the mistakes made by the previous administration. We have to—*[interjection]*

Well, the Member for Lakeside, I think he needed more than 15 minutes to discuss this resolution, but let us look at it from a different perspective. Let us look at it, not from the perspective of single-desk selling, but from the perspective of single-desk buying. That is really what has happened here.

Now we have the large producers that are calling the shots in here. We have no more lobby groups to represent the producers in this industry in this province. It is not the people, it is not the producers, it is not the farmers that are making decisions now. The decisions are made by the big shots, by the big boys, the feed companies, the processors, those are the people that are making the decisions. They have got a monopoly on buying hogs in this province, and that is the problem. They are dictating their prices to the producers now, telling them what they are going to get for their price. They are telling them that they have to buy their feed from them, otherwise they will not buy their hogs. The downside of moving away from a single desk is that these small producers do not have any say anymore in how things are done in this province. That is the most undemocratic thing that I have seen. That was the reason that I mobilized, I got involved in politics and I ran for office, was because of inequities like that.

I will tell the Member for Lakeside that I do not have to go very far from home to see the effect of your action, of the action of doing away with the single desk. I see in the R.M. of Fisher, my home municipality, that there is only one hog producer now, and his name is Mr. Barrett, Mr. Cubby Barrett, good friend of the Member for Lakeside. In fact, he made campaign donations to his election campaign, I think. So we can see on which side the bread was buttered by the former Minister of Agriculture, catering to the needs of the millionaires in our society, to the detriment of the small producers, because I look around the R.M. of Fisher now, and I do not see any small hog producers. I do not see anybody producing 500 hogs or 1000 hogs. The only operators are the Hutterites, good for them, and Mr. Barrett. Those are the only hog producers in the R.M. of Fisher now.

All those small farmers that used to produce pigs, all the small farmers, independent farmers, had their own businesses, had their own land. Where are they now? Mr. Barrett's holdings have grown by more quarters as they have gone out of business and sold their farms. Now they are working in his barn for 6 bucks an hour, not even \$6.25 an hour because the minimum wage does not apply in the hog industry, but that was all fine and dandy. So one producer, everybody else off their land working for the man now, working for the man, compliments of the former Minister of Agriculture and the fact that he did away with the single-desk selling of hogs, which guaranteed that people had access to the market.

When there was a single desk, if you wanted to grow 10 hogs or 10 000 hogs, you had a market for them. You had a place to sell the hogs. The board made sure that you could sell your hogs, and the price was known by everybody. That is not the case now. That is not the case. Nobody knows what the price is. That is decided by the large corporations. They will set the price as they see fit, and we can take it or leave it. They decide whether or not they want to buy your hogs, too. They do not have to. To be honest with you, Mr. Speaker, they do not. Why should they? They do not have to. No, they will go to the big operators. The small operators, they are not interested in dealing with the small producers any more, are they? They are not interested in the least in dealing with small

producers. They will deal with the big operators where they have got shares in these barns now. They are double dipping. They have vertically integrated, right from the top right down to the farm gate now. That is the greatest travesty that has ever been imposed upon the farming community in Canada. *[interjection]*

The Member for Lakeside, still smarting over the thumping that he took from his own constituents when he introduced this. Deny it. I ask him to deny that his own constituents were opposed to this. His own constituents, right here, it says in this newspaper article; and I refer to a little lobby group that formed in the R.M. of Rockwood here: the producers protesting interfering government, PIG, for short, the acronym. Nice acronym. You have got to love it, eh. These made up by the former producers, former producer group formed in the R.M. of Rockwood by, no doubt, supporters of the former Minister of Agriculture to protest this arbitrary, undemocratic imposition of the dual market system on the industry which, in essence, as I said, was the death of the small hog farm in Manitoba. The death of the small hog farm.

Well, there is none in the R.M. of Fisher that I know of, other than the one big kahuna there, the one big kahuna and the rest of them are all out of business now. The rest of them are all out of business, the big kahuna owns all the land and those guys can come and work for \$7 a hour in his barn, or leave the country and come to the city looking for a job. Those are their options.

And not just in the R.M. of Fisher, but I recall listening to a speech by the Member for Emerson (Mr. Jack Penner) last session how he was talking about his own operation, and how all his neighbours were going broke around him. His neighbours to the north were going broke. They came to the Member for Emerson: Please sir, buy our farm from us, and then give us a job working in one of your barns. The neighbours to the east of him. He was quite proud of this, I think, the fact that his farm was growing larger and larger at, basically, the expense of all his neighbours. So it was not just in the R.M. of Fisher, but it was in one of your home camps, the same scenario was playing itself out. Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, the same scenario has been playing itself out across this province. Small

farmers going broke, going out of business, their land being bought up by these large corporations, the large operators, and I think that is wrong. And that is a direct result of doing away with the orderly marketing system that we had in place prior to this arbitrary act in 1996.

Now, our Government, we are going to consult. We are not going to impose anything on anybody here. We believe in consultation. We believe there is a lot of things that could be done with this industry, a lot of improvements to be made. For instance, we are concerned about the environment. Now that is a novel approach, I think, in comparison to how the previous government operated. They like to brag about the fact that they put in the guidelines that were there, the most stringent in the country. Unfortunately, they did not have any resources put into the system to enforce them. They cut the department of environment down to a skeleton staff, so nobody really had the opportunity to go out and keep track of these operations. So, yes, I think there is opportunity for improvement here.

* (11:30)

The member also referred to the Smithfield operation, well connected with Schneider's and how we lost the plant in Winnipeg. Well, that was one of the first initiatives of this Government. This Premier (Mr. Doer) signed an agreement with them that we fully intended to welcome this operator into our province to increase manufacturing and all that. However, we put environmental guidelines on the table. We insisted that they run a clean operation in this province. Thank God for that, because I am responsible for Lake Winnipeg. That rests entirely in my constituency. I had vested interests in making sure that we had clean water coming out of this city into that lake. Unfortunately, I guess our guidelines were a little bit too tough for them and they decided not to come.

Well, we know their record. We know how they performed in other jurisdictions across North America. Their home base, I believe, is in North Carolina. If you look seriously at how the hog industry developed in that jurisdiction, I think all would have to agree that it has been a disaster. They drove the industry there. They had

good political backing, senators and all that who owned shares in the corporation.

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

Hon. Scott Smith (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to stand and speak to this issue that has been proposed by the member opposite from Lakeside. It is certainly this side and this Government that believes change is inevitable, whether it be in the high-tech industry or in the way we do things in Manitoba regarding the livestock industry and in fact our grains and oilseeds industry.

I know we have looked at structuring things on a long-term basis with consultation with people in the community. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I cannot say the same for the members opposite in the approach that they took certainly through 1996 regarding this industry.

The R.M.s that we have had join the planning districts in the last while have certainly been a positive approach from this Government. I have to give full credit to our minister working very hard with many of the districts and many of the members throughout communities all across Manitoba in forming a good partnership and planning districts with the interested community members from around the province.

Certainly the expansion and diversification in the agricultural industry as we have seen in the last decade throughout Manitoba has been a positive one. It has certainly been the producers who deserve all the credit. Obviously producers are the people who are the best stewards of the land. They are the people that bring about change. They know the markets themselves. They know how the industry affects them, how it affects their neighbours, and how it affects the people who are downstream, so to speak, of their operations. Unfortunately, the previous government did not take into consideration consultation with the producers and with the people in the communities.

If you look at the stats from 1996, Mr. Speaker, you see that over three-quarters of respondents disagreed with the former government's decision to abolish the single-desk selling at that time. The industry was growing. People and producers in the area realized that diversification and the reduction in the Crow, which, I might add, members opposite supported as well, I know members opposite, many of them I had heard speak throughout those years that elimination of the Crow was a good, positive thing to do. I think if you talked to many of them, producers throughout the community here in Manitoba and certainly in Saskatchewan would disagree with the member's stance on that, and I do as well.

The credit, as I mentioned before, goes to the producers. They are the stewards of the land. I know when we introduced the Livestock Stewardship Initiative that we did in the province here through the ministries and through conservation, the minister had worked very, very hard with the Keystone Agricultural Producers, with AMM, with people in the industry and throughout the communities in looking at the stewardship of the land.

I know the member opposite likes to say that consultations took place, but in fact that is not true. When you have three-quarters of the producers—

Mr. Speaker: Order. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs will have 12 minutes remaining.

House Business

Mr. Speaker: On a matter of House business, this morning a motion was moved by the honourable Government House Leader (Mr. Mackintosh) for the refund of fees paid in connection with Bill 300, An Act to Amend an Act to Incorporate the Portage District General Hospital Foundation. Technically, this motion required leave to be moved, as it was not listed on the Order Paper.

I am now asking the House after the fact: Is there leave for the motion to have been brought forward and dealt with today?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave. Leave has been granted.

The motion has already been agreed to by the House earlier this morning so this concludes the matter.

As previously agreed, the hour being twelve o'clock, this House is recessed and will reconvene at 1:30 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, December 6, 2001

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