

Second Session - Fortieth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

Official Report
(Hansard)

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authority of
The Honourable Daryl Reid
Speaker*

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Fortieth Legislature

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<i>Vacant</i>	Morris	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, August 20, 2013

The House met at 10 a.m.

Mr. 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, 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.

Good morning, everyone. Please be seated.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, can you canvass the House to see if there's leave to move directly to Bill 205, The Election Financing Amendment Act, brought forward by the honourable member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Pallister).

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to proceed directly to Bill 205? *[Agreed]*

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS— PUBLIC BILLS

Mr. Speaker: We'll now call Bill 205, The Election Financing Amendment Act, standing in the name of the honourable member for Kirkfield Park, who has eight minutes remaining.

Bill 205—The Election Financing Amendment Act

Ms. Sharon Blady (Kirkfield Park): In going over Hansard from the last time we spoke on this subject, I realize that I kind of ended with a lot of background noise and unable to complete a quote that—I mean, I already had mentioned words from Judge Monnin regarding the election rigging that members opposite had engaged in previously and his thoughts on that, but then I had moved on to the Conservatives' chief financial officer, and it was his quote that kind of got lost in the shuffle.

And he had said of their 2011 election reimbursements that, and I quote: This amount was the highest reimbursement the party has ever seen, end quote; noting that compared to the NDP, quote:

We're receiving higher reimbursements than they are. End quote. And as—that's from page, I believe—oh, no, there's no page number on that. That's the CFO's report that was presented at their 2012 AGM. So, I mean, I find it interesting that they sit there and they want it both ways. They want to denounce public financing one day and then brag about it the next how they've received more public, you know, reimbursement than anyone else has.

And what I also find interesting is, whether it is on this particular bill or on other bills in debate, that the notion of how each party finances its election campaigns comes up for debate. It gets thrown in as a passing thing, and I found it particularly interesting, you know, when some members have cited, you know, their particular methods or how they claim to be out there on the doorstep. I think of the member for Midland (Mr. Pedersen) specifically, and what was interesting is the member from Midland in his own nomination had the candidate that ran against me as his guest speaker. And I guess he wasn't terribly familiar with her financing methods, because I know how—one of the ways by which she tries to raise funds for the 2011 election, and that was she had tickets advertised—\$100 apiece tickets—and it was to meet the future premier of the province, the then-member for Fort Whyte, my former classmate, Hugh McFadyen. They were hundred dollar apiece tickets and they were at a local restaurant.

And—now, the licensing for that restaurant, if I'm, you know, correct—because I'm very familiar with that restaurant, it's quite the neighbourhood hot spot—is about 78 people, I think, if I remember correctly. And she had approached this business person, made arrangements to have it there and insisted that she have the entire eve—the entire restaurant to herself for this event. She would be selling tickets, they negotiated a price at which she would pay per person.

Couple weeks before the event unfolds, she calls the owner of the restaurant and explains that she's only sold about 30-some-odd tickets, and he gives her the opportunity to—well, you know what? I mean, that's going to be a night for me where I can have people in—I believe it was a Thursday night—and she—he says, you know what I can do is we can cut down

your numbers. I can prepare less stuff for the amount of people there you're anticipating. It'll bring your costs down, and then I can open up the restaurant to other folks and I can have my regular clientele base come in. No, no, no, no, no, I want the whole restaurant—I want the whole restaurant. Fine.

She calls in a second time, mentions she's sold a few more tickets. I believe she passed about the 40 mark at this point, and again the offer is extended to her to cut back and allow him to bring patrons in. No, no, no, that's fine—that's fine—we'll go ahead.

The night of the event unfolds, she still has not sold more than the 40-some-odd tickets—that's what shows up. The owner is turning away clients, people that want to come to his restaurant because they know what a wonderful place it is, what a gem it is in our neighbourhood. So she has said that she wants the whole place; he is turning away paying customers.

At the end of the night, when it comes time to settle the bill—and she had said that she would go for the full amount before—guess who doesn't want to pay the full tab and only wants to pay for the people that attended—for the number of people that attended? So, he had prepared for nearly 80 people, 40-something show, she only wants to pay for the 40 that showed even though he's already prepared. And she has the gall to say to him, well, this will cut into my fundraising for the evening.

So, as somebody advocating for small businesses, to see that be done at the purpose of fundraising—so, please, to the members opposite, get off your—what you claim to be some sort of moral high ground, because I watched that unfold. And what that did—I guess that cut into the number of bus benches she was able to put up in my neighbourhood. I think there was three or four that she didn't have.

But the point is that when we talk about elections financing, I think members really need to stop and think about the fact that they are accepting money, about the track record that is there, the experience that I've seen. Yes, I do go and ask people in our neighbourhood. I have supporters and I have no problem with that, because that's what we each do as a party.

But public financing does serve a particular role, because it can't be about he who has the biggest pockets can buy the biggest election. That's not what it's about, and public financing plays a role. And

what's interesting, if you look at organizations like Democracy Watch, they actually say that the support of public financing is actually what increases democracy because it levels the playing field. It puts limitations and caps. Again, we are the party—we are the government that ended corporate and union donations, which, again, means that he with the biggest pockets does not get to call the shots.

So I think members opposite really need to, you know, again, reflect on what they're saying and, again, think about the idea that if they're going to talk about any kind of moral high ground, again, two words: Monnin inquiry. You know, again, the quote that we are all so famous—so familiar with, the famous quote about—from Monnin where he said, on page 16, in all my years on the bench, I have never encountered as many liars in one proceeding as I did during this inquiry—in his reference to the Conservative Party. He found that that everyone from Taras Sokolyk, Allan Aitken, Cubby Barrett had hatched a plot to induce an Aboriginal candidate, Darryl Sutherland, to run in order to draw votes from the NDP candidate during the '95 election that Gordon MacFarlane, the party accountant during the 1995 election, broke the law when he filed a false election return.

And we know that these Tories got away with minimal prosecutions because the time limit for prosecutions under the legislation in effect was six months. Monnin said there was nothing else that could be done legally. So, Mr. Speaker, it is a classic case of those that live in glass houses with seven-car garages and 12 sprinklers should probably put down the stones that they throw.

*(10:10)

I think it's wonderful that we can debate these kinds of issues, but I do think that, again, some reflection should be made by all members in this Chamber, especially those opposite, when they talk about this because, again, it is very important, public financing does play a role and one should not be hypocritical when one chooses to bring forth such kinds of legislation.

But, again, you know, another little something to put on the record as I wrap up. It's interesting to see that the woman that, again, ran against me definitely received more in reimbursements than I did. She received thirteen thousand—

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

Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Midland): Good morning, Mr. Speaker, and I won't bite. I'll take the high road on this one.

And, Mr. Speaker, last night when I was done here, I left the Legislature about 6 o'clock. I went back to my apartment, grabbed something to eat, but because it was such a beautiful night I thought I should go for a walk. I should get some fresh air, get some—enjoy the nice warm weather we're having. We've—hadn't—haven't had a lot of that this summer so I thought I'd take it in. And so I went downstairs down onto the—and I just got out onto the street in front of the apartment block and I ran into Alice. Now, Alice is one of the seniors that lives in the block that I live in, that I have an apartment in, and Alice is a wonderful person. I met her in the elevators different times. I've met her in the lobby, always like talking to Alice. But Alice was out on the sidewalk and Alice had just come back from a walk and, of course, we did the usual weather story—weather talk about how nice it was and everything else. And then she—Alice proceeded to tell me the story about she had just been down to Kitchener to visit her daughter and her grandchildren, her grandchildren who are living on their own down there. But she was down to see her daughter and her grandchildren and Alice was very, very excited to tell me the story. She was telling me about how they had treated her like—treated her very well. She didn't have to prepare any meals, they wouldn't let her clean up, and I was kidding Alice. I said so they treated you like royalty, and Alice says, well, yes, they kind of did. And so she did enjoy the visit.

So anyway, as the talk proceeded, then Alice told me she had just come back, and she had her cane in her hand and she had just come back from a walk to the Legislature. Of course, I kind of picked my ears up there because she had taken the river walk and gone to the Legislature. And I said, well, that was good, and she—right away Alice said to me, she said I hear the government is giving out money to everyone, so I went to the Legislature she said. So I said to Alice, so how did that work for you? And Alice, without even breaking a smile or anything, she says, and I'll quote, she says: I'm a senior. I'm expected to give and not receive. So that was sort of the end of the conversation about going to the Legislature that—but she did enjoy her walk. She said—as we parted ways, she says, well, I'm going for a cup of tea. I'm going to relax after her walk, and I said, well, that's good. I'm going to go for my walk and then I'll have a cup of tea after all. So we said

good night and she went away and so I went for my walk. But, you know, as I was walking it was—you get thinking about this and here's a senior. She's gone to visit her family in another province. She had just got back on Sunday, so she was just freshly back.

Now, this government has decided to increase taxes at record rates. First of all, they increased fees on every service that a senior and every other Manitoban will use. They increased the PST illegally, but they've still raised the PST. She's paying that every day whenever she buys something that's taxable, and on top of that she's—with her tax money that she's contributing to the Province, she now has to pay for the NDP vote tax, because, apparently, the current public funding is not enough for this government. It's not enough. Apparently, they want more. They want \$5,000 each. So, rather than go to the doors like any other candidate will, they've decided that they will tax Manitobans \$5,000 for each NDP MLA, and Alice now has to pay this. She doesn't have a choice. She doesn't have a choice. The NDP won't go to her door and knock on her door and ask her for their—for her support, ask her whether she'll contribute to their party. No, they have decided to take it automatically out of tax money. This is a senior that's on a fixed income. She lives modestly. She doesn't live poorly, but she lives modestly, and yet now—now—she is expected to pay for the NDP's election campaign in full—in full.

So now Alice is going to have to decide whether she can afford to go to see her daughter in Kitchener and her grandchildren. She had a very memorable trip, but now she has to decide whether she can afford to do those, or whether—she doesn't have a choice here. She—her taxes get paid first, and then discretionary income after, unlike this government, which is spend and don't worry about where the money comes from. Just raise taxes and go farther into debt. That's not how Alice has ever operated. That's not how she operated when they were a family together when her kids were growing up, and that's not how she operates now.

So Alice has to make sacrifices. She will have a lower disposable income now, thanks to this government, and she will have to decide where that discretionary income will be spent after taxes because she knows that there will be less. And it's unfortunate that this government has—seems to have no shame when it comes to taxes, to spending, and she was not joking when she said, seems like government's giving out money to everyone, except when she went to—but then, again, and I'll just—I'll

quote her what she said exactly. She says, I'm a senior. I'm expected to give, not receive. And yet here we have this government that, in their arrogance, has decided to not only use public financing that's available right now under current legislation—that's not enough for them. They want more, and by getting more, they'll take the vote tax and they will not—apparently they have no shame.

So—and I—I like to listen to people like Alice. I think she has a lot of life experience that she can share, and she's certainly not shy about sharing that life experience. And, you know, I could have pursued it farther. I could have asked her, well, what do you think government should do, but her sentiments were very clear, that she was unhappy with what this government is doing. And they can try to justify this all they want, and I know that they're chirping from their seats, Mr. Speaker, about all the programs that Alice is eligible for, but the fact is, though, that this government is out of touch with seniors like Alice. She questions why her taxes keep increasing and she doesn't feel that she's getting anything in return. You would think with 192 spinners that they would be able to get this message out, but I think they've lost touch. In fact, I know they've lost touch with everyday Manitobans, with the Alice seniors of Manitoba. Whether it's—you're a senior citizen, whether you're a young person, whether you're a businessman, there is no accountability from this government. And that's what hurts people like Alice, because she just—she spent her whole life trying to do well for herself, for her family, for this province, and this is what she feels she's getting in return, now, in her senior years. She's getting a blind eye turned towards her and an arrogance coming from a government that has lost touch with the electorate.

* (10:20)

And, you know, this is—we can banter all we want, Mr. Speaker, back in the House, back and forth, but it's stories like Alice that come home. And we realize that no matter what is said in here, what's really important is what is being said out in the public and from taxpaying Manitobans, from hard-working Manitobans, from seniors who have worked hard all their life, and they expect better. And that is the crux. What we tend to forget when we sit in this Chamber is we tend to forget sometimes what Manitobans are thinking.

And I hope it's nice out again tonight. I'd like to go for a walk again tonight, and I'm always open to

listening to what Manitobans have to tell me because it's always a rewarding—that's one of the rewards of this job is that we get to talk to so many Manitobans and get to hear their real stories.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): Good morning, Mr. Speaker. It's always a pleasure to be able to stand up, rise in this House and talk about things that are of such interest to me, personally. Oh, how can that be so nice, elections finances? I would want to make it as interesting as possible.

When I first immigrated from the Philippines to this country, my first impulse was to go back. This country, its weather, was too cold. Now, how does that relate to elections finances? It's too cold. But then I found that its people are all warm-hearted—all of its people. And elections finances as it relates to weather comes up like this: (1) it's so cold that you would rather walk fast when you're campaigning, and when you're walking fast it warms you up. And what really warms you up are the people that you meet. You meet a lot of them. And I never met a Conservative in Tyndall Park, not one, which made me really sorry about it. *[interjection]* Hey? *[interjection]* They actually ran away from me? Maybe.

But the way that I see it is I don't see them as Conservatives; I don't see them as Liberals; I don't see them as NDP. They are people who are also interested in the political process. See how I could put that together? Because the current election finances act is one wherein we encourage, we implore, we are urging people to get involved. That's why we have the Liberal Party still around, because of the elections finances act that currently gives them enough money—*[interjection]* Well, I know the Conservatives will go after him—I mean, the Liberals. But from my point of view, the Liberals are also a good component of the electoral process—

An Honourable Member: But you don't go after him?

Mr. Marcelino: Ah, we should, but I won't.

When we read the 60 or so pages of that report from the distinguished Professor Paul Thomas—I have a copy of the report in our washroom, in my washroom in my condominium and I read it every day. I read it every day in order to really be able to speak about it without shame. I received over \$15,000 in public election finances and there's a reason for it: those are the rules—those are the rules.

And when we live by those rules it's only because there has to be rules in every democracy. The rules are to be followed and in any democracy the government can suggest that laws be amended, repealed, extended or otherwise changed if it's for the good of the public.

There's no such thing as a law written in stone except for the 10, the 10 that was given out by somebody who appears to be cast in stone within this Chamber. Those are the only laws that are cast in stone. All other laws made by humans can be changed, can be repealed, can be extended, can be ignored by the government. Why? Because governments are supposed to be dynamic; governments are supposed to be alive; governments are supposed to be a living organism that could change anything for the good of the public.

So when we say for the good of the public, The Election Financing Act as it stands now gives a chance to the Green Party, the Communist Party to be there and get involved in the electoral process, and the electoral process suggests that each and every one, for those who would want to be involved, do not have to worry too much about whether they are poor or rich or middle income—or those who are in-between when I say middle-income—and for those who are so rich enough that they can run on the basis of their deep pockets cannot just say that, oh, I can buy this election. I could spend all the money I want. The Election Financing Act requires also the limits in the expenses. It also gives the maximum limit. And the way that we see it—*[interjection]*

And I know that the member from Steinbach will not stop chirping in. I thought you're a friend? But, come on, keep on talking about the Premier (Mr. Selinger), the Premier compared to any other premier who has been premier in this province is among the best. The social fabric of this province relies entirely on the political system. The political system that we have has allowed somebody like me, an immigrant from the Philippines, 33 years ago, to be able to stand up and say, I want to serve, too. It's The Election Financing Act that has given me that chance, because when I thought that I should run, my wife chirped in, but in a nice way. She said, you're really stupid. Why would you run at age 65, eh? And I said, no, I was born in 1946. So in October of 2011, I was 64 and 11–64 years old, 11 months. So she said, we don't have money. And I said, really, do I need it? She said, yes, it's elections. You have to spend money for your campaign. I said, no, I read up on the elections finances act and it says you could

run and then raise funds later. The way the system works is that my party, the NDP, financed me first, then I fundraised later. But then I could not have run because I did not have money.

* (10:30)

It was the act that allowed me the courage to put my name in and, fortunately, win. And the rest is history.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Stuart Briese (Agassiz): I'm pleased to rise to put some remarks on the record on Bill 205, The Election Financing Amendment Act.

And I find it quite ironic that, you know, the NDP like to put forward the suggestion that the vote tax that—which they are imposing now on the taxpayers of Manitoba, is levelling the playing field. I would submit that the playing field was levelled a number of years ago when corporate and union donations were placed on the back burner, and the playing field was levelled.

You know—and I listen to the member from Kirkfield Park talk about the election financing in 2011. And the main reason that they've got a big concern about that is because we were able to raise more money in 2011 when—than they were. I noticed that she doesn't refer to 2003 or 2007, both of which years they took more public financing than we did and they were able to raise more money at the grassroots levels to access that. Now their noses are out of joint because we've been able to go out there and out-fundraise them, and out-fundraise them under the rules of the Province.

And I would also remind the members opposite that in '99 they overcharged Elections Manitoba \$76,000, a scheme in which the Premier actually got a save harmless letter from his party, admitted he had the letter and then destroyed the evidence. I wonder, when they're referring to Judge Monnin and his remarks, what Judge Monnin would have to say about that kind of action by the NDP party.

What this vote tax actually does is once the party receives it for the operation of the party, they—it gives them the opportunity to double-dip by using it as election expenses and claiming the 50-50 rebate that comes with election expenses. So they'll not only pull in their \$200,000-a-year vote tax, they will have the opportunity to use that to finance election

expenses that are eligible and draw another hundred thousand dollars on it.

So it's really kind of a strange process that they think they're embarking on here, and it has nothing to do with levelling the playing field; it has everything to do with a little bit of jealousy on the ability of our party to raise money at the grassroots level. We continue to be able to fundraise very well, and I would remind the—all the members of the House that most of our donations are small donations. A high percentage of them are very small donations from very many people at the grassroots level.

You know, the member for Tyndall Park (Mr. Marcelino) suggested that they went out and implored the—or they were implored by taxpayers out there to put the vote tax in place and force Manitobans to actually support one political party—or two or three—all political parties, but some of us will refuse to take it—with their tax dollars.

It's highly ironic that they would even go that route. It just shows the total laziness of the members opposite to go out and raise their own funding for the party operations. It's not hard to do—you go out, you talk to the people, you ask them if they support your principles, you ask them if they'd be able to make some contribution to your party and move ahead with that.

You know, there was some quotes from the member for Kirkfield Park (Ms. Blady) but there's other quotes, there's always quotes you can use.

A senior research fellow at the Brunel University, Dr. Michael Pinto-Duschinsky, said if we go down further down the road of state funding of political parties we risk 'exacerbating' the long-run trend that is converting parties from popular democratic institutions into top-down bureaucracies.

And that, to me, seems like a pretty clear statement. Once the parties become dependent on state money, they become fundamentally altered and less able to carry on their democratic functions.

William Cross, from the Canadian parliamentary democracy at Carleton University, said essentially the new federal public allowance system—and he was talking about the federal one which I understand is going to be retracted and removed—and he said that it makes political parties wards of the state and diminishes the incentive to communicate with partisans between elections and involve them in party affairs.

Now I don't know why the members opposite don't get that picture. If people want to donate to a political party they'll do it. They don't have to be forced through their tax money to do it. And this is at a time when this party—this government—has been cutting funding in so many different places—or not keeping up funding to various organizations—various things that have had some funding before—and saying they haven't got the money to do it.

They've taken us into \$500 million a year extra taxation field and still haven't got the money to do the things like funding for autistic children. But they do have the money to make sure their political party is funded. That's highly questionable.

Time after time we hear, oh, we can't do that, or we hear—I hear the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) sit here—every time funding for something's mentioned he goes 'ta-ching, ta-ching'. Well, I didn't hear him doing that when they brought up the vote tax. I didn't hear him imitating a cash register when they brought up the vote tax. I wonder why he wouldn't do that. He certainly wants to do that on anything we bring up.

So the bottom line is we will not, at any time, support the vote tax. We think it's something that is unfair to taxpayers. People of Manitoba, all Manitobans, have a right to decide whether they're going to support a political party; they should not be forced to support a political party through their taxes. They should be—have the choice to support political parties. I believe in that, I've believed in that all my life. I stand by that.

Thank you very much for the opportunity.

*(10:40)

Hon. Ron Kostyshyn (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives): It's a great opportunity to speak on behalf of Bill 205, election act.

I've listened to two presentations today, and it's quite ironic that you—I get the impression is that they're wishing for this, but they don't want that to happen. So it's kind of a—they want the best of the two worlds, Mr. Speaker, and it's quite ironic to make that present today when we talk about Bill 205.

To the member from Midland, his commentary in talking to an elderly lady, I sense, from Winnipeg here by the name of Alice—and I think what the member opposite has probably chosen to divulge the communication that he had with Alice because I'm sure he's quite talented to pick out certain

commentaries as he spoke with Alice. But I think one of the things that the member opposite probably chooses not to share that the senior probably does—has opportunity to express their appreciation to this government of being very supportive—and when we talk about building homes, senior homes, providing minimum financial hardship for the seniors. As we know, when we talk about to the members opposite and the federal government, I'm sure the member would somewhat relate—Alice would probably relate her concerns that the federal government chooses to reduce or not increase old age pension. I don't imagine that would have entered the conversation when we talk about, well, looking after the seniors in the province of Manitoba, but federally as well.

One of the things that really does concern me is that the PCs have asked Elections Manitoba for more than \$1.3 million in reimbursements from the 2011 election. Opposition's received almost \$16,000 in reimbursement, so here we go again. They're choosing to choose their words very carefully. What's good for them is great, but don't tell anybody else about it. Let's just pick on the members opposite, the NDP party for the reimbursement they have received.

But the reality is, Mr. Speaker, that we're here to work on behalf of the general public. There is a democratic society that we pay to—into the appropriate political parties as he so choosed to. You know, often we—members opposite, we've got two vacancy—potential vacancies for MPs, and I know members opposite, the potential candidates may be running in the re-elections in the MPs position. And what I'm really concerned is that historically we're talking about the Mike Duffys and Pamela Wallin, and we want to talk about fairness in the system. Well, you know, to the members opposite that may stand a pretty good chance of getting elected, I hope you will set precedents that we won't have a reoccurrence of that what Mr. Mike Duffy per—has indicated or Pamela Wallin, and it's all investigation. And I know when we talk about allegedly the illegal actions that may have occurred in 2005—*[interjection]* I see that members opposite don't really like us to bring that up, but the fact is reality is reality.

Members opposite choose, Mr. Speaker, to somewhat criticize, but you know what? They don't refuse the dollars they've received back in the last election. The 2000—member from Emerson, prime example, received \$9,900 back in reimbursement. I didn't see him turning around and sending the cheque

back. The other member from Lakeside received \$8,200 he received back. So you know what? The fact is that we all get our reimbursement so how are they any different when we talk about Bill 205 here.

It is truly amazing that they choose to use their words carefully and criticize us no matter what we do in the government. We're here on behalf of the democratic society, and what we have, the Bill 205, I think really reinforces our commitment. What—the thing that really troubles when we talk about the MP's allegations, but also we go back to the 1995 election, and we're following the allegations that took place. And when we had chief Alfred Monnin make a judgment call off certain individuals of the tactics that they choose to play with, and I—it really is troublesome when we have to get up and speak on behalf of this and we don't really have an opportunity to have members opposite to really be very honest in our allegations that has been somewhat brought forward from the 1995 election.

We've—we have another situation, prosecution from the 1999 elections that took place in the Rossmere in 1999 where there was charges exceeding the limit of expenses of \$7,500 in November 22nd, 2001. Now, the MP that's been charged, you know, pleaded not guilty to the charges of May 20, 2004, on the grounds that the provincial Tory party should have not attributed all his expenses into his account. Well, it's very appropriate how we could kind of choose the words very carefully and kind of slither away out of being totally in the democratic society.

In 1999, the provincial Tory candidate signed an agreement to give \$7,500 in their spending allowance to the party's central campaign, claiming party officials exempted him from the agreement because he was seeking re-election in Rossmere, a closely-contested riding which he ended up losing, unfortunately, I guess, to the member opposite.

But I guess what I—the main component of my conversation, Mr. Speaker, is that it is troublesome to hear members opposite kind of disagreeing what we're talking about today, Bill 205, but yet they don't really—really, they entertained the thought, well, we'll take the money, but don't let, maybe, the opposition party take the money, because we don't see it as being fair.

Let me refer to other statistics, Mr. Speaker. A Tory candidate in Inkster in 1999 was fined for \$350 in a loss of potential election reimbursement—expense reimbursement of \$2,140. So what I'm really

troubled by—and I'll refer to the member from Midland when he referred to ALUS—I think what we have a situation here is that when we talk about the governments of the day, when we talk about federal and provincial governments—and let me veer into the agriculture sector.

Our challenge is, as today, that we have the federal government in partnership with agriculture provincial governments, that the downloading is really becoming somewhat challenging for us. And we talk about the community pastures and we talk about Canadian Food Inspection Agency individuals. What we're seeing is, basically, dollars, Mr. Speaker—that are very challenging for us in our provincial party—being off-loaded to the provincial. I don't hear members opposite writing letters, voicing their concern as we move forward. And so, when we talk about the reality of finances and expenses, it all has true relevance, at the end of the day, for the betterment of the representatives, the people of the province of Manitoba, whether it's ALUS that the member from Midland had the opportunity to speak to.

Now, in closing comments I would like to say that the reality is the members opposite choose to want to debate this but, at the end of the day, they've got their hand out to take advantage of the reimbursement dollars. If they were so truthful in that respect, well, why don't you just put it back in and give it to ALUS, who really maybe needs additional dollars. So, in my summarization—so—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order, please. Order, please.

I've indicated yesterday during question period that I'm going to take a hard line on comments that are made from across the floor from either side for members that do not currently have the floor to be part of the debate. I'm asking for the co-operation of honourable members to allow the person who has the floor to continue their comments as long as they're within the parliamentary language that we have in our rules. So, I'm asking for the co-operation of all honourable members.

The honourable Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, to conclude his comments.

Mr. Kostyshyn: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I just want to basically sum up my comment here, is that when we talk about fairness, the democratic society that we live in, I think that we have the opportunity to speak to people publically and we will continue to

on behalf of our party. And I thank the opportunity to speak on behalf of Bill 205 for the betterment of the democratic society in the elections of the province of Manitoba.

So, thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity.

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, just sitting listening to some of the comments from the NDP, it is so interesting to see how they have twisted this particular issue to try to make it look like they are, in some way, getting a different return than all of us.

We all know that once we run in an election, that we all—you know, based on the money we raise, we get a certain amount back, and we're all the same. It's no different from anybody. So, this government is trying to make it look like somehow they're being hard done by.

* (10:50)

Well, if they want to get the same return as us, then maybe they should go out there and fundraise the way we have done that. I would note that in 2003 and 2011 elections, the NDP raised far more money than we did, and there was no indication that they wanted a vote tax. Right after 2007—and we started to out-fundraise them, was when they brought in their first vote tax in 2008, and that, coincidentally, was the year that we raised more money than them.

And then again, under this new Premier (Mr. Selinger) in 2012, again, when we out-fundraised the NDP, they brought in a second vote tax because Gary Doer, wisely, saw the writing on the wall with the first one and he backed away. He was pragmatic about it. He knew that this wasn't a good idea, and he backed away.

But not so with this Premier. In fact, he rejigged the whole formula so that, in fact, on this second vote tax, the NDP would bring in more money for their coffers. And it's interesting, when we look at who are our funders, Mr. Speaker. Most of the people that donate money to us have been grassroots Manitobans. We get small donations from a lot of people, but we're not lazy. We go out there and we actually ask them for money and they're giving it very willingly. They're not being forced by any law to fund a party that they don't want to fund. And this whole vote tax that the NDP certainly have brought in is nothing more than a self-serving tax so that they can continue on their lazy way and look for more money without having to go out and work for it. It's a lazy levy; it's a lazy tax, and the NDP should be

ashamed of themselves. They could easily go out and approach the number of people we do and just, you know, ask people to be supportive of them. But they have chosen, instead, to look for some wiggle room and they have gone the route of a vote tax, even though they all get already the same returns as we do, and they don't need the vote tax.

I heard the member from Tyndall Park say that he already was able to earn \$15,000 in an election. Well, then I would ask him why does he need any more. Why does he need \$5,000 more from Manitoba taxpayers every year when he's already raised \$15,000? Why does he need more money? And, you know, I would look at the member for Swan River (Mr. Kostyshyn) who raised sixteen and a half thousand dollars. Well—[interjection] No; that's the rebate, the \$16,000 rebate. Well, then, why does he need \$5,000 more dollars?

The member from The Pas—almost \$10,000 in a rebate. The member from Selkirk—11.6 in a rebate. You've already got a lot of money. Why do you need more money? That is, you know, once we start looking at the NDP numbers, your rebates are the same as ours, and you already have thousands of dollars coming to you in a rebate. Why do you need five thousand more dollars coming your way to pad your political pockets as you're going into another election? And what a time to do this, too, when we look at the debt doubling in Manitoba, when we look at this government running another half a billion dollar deficit this year, when we see the government renege on some of their promises or refuse to fund the program for autistic children, or when they are having cutbacks on literary awards in Manitoba, something that the literary community was very proud of. And it wasn't auspicious, you know, awards that were given to people and writers in Manitoba.

We can't keep nurse practitioner quick clinic care—quick clinics open because we don't have enough nurse practitioners. Wouldn't that \$500,000 every year that goes into this vote tax and amounts to a million dollars over a four-year period, why would we expect a government at a time like this to then be taking this issue and being self-serving and paying themselves a vote tax, when instead there are so many other front-line issues that could be helped with this vote tax? So, you know, it's something that our party has refused right from the beginning. We just think it's morally wrong to go in this direction, and we would urge the government to pay more—a little bit more of attention to what public needs are

rather than looking at what is going to be in their own best interest.

This government has had an embarrassment of riches over the last number of years, whether it's its own tax—you know, own-source income coming in or whether it's federal transfer payments coming in, it certainly isn't an era where they need to keep digging into Manitobans' pockets. Then we see them increase the PST after expanding it last year and now, the other day, we see them now making a move to tax the dead in Manitoba. So, I mean, where does this government stop in terms of taxing Manitobans, and now looking to pad their own political pockets going into another election? And, you know, they went so far as to change the process or the formula from the first time the vote tax was put out there and they changed the formula so that on the second vote tax, you know, they gave the person that was looking at it the rules that they wanted and they ended up with more money under the second vote tax.

So, Mr. Speaker, I don't think the general public should be forced to fund political parties. Just on principle, that is something that we think is very, very offensive. And I would like to read a paragraph from an editorial from the Winnipeg Free Press, and it says: But the NDP government says it can't in good conscience take that much out of the stressed provincial coffers. This disingenuous, vacuous gesture ignores the fact that any amount it accepts digs Manitoba further into debt. An administration with integrity would have scrapped the odious vote tax law entirely. End quote. And I certainly totally agree with what the editorial board of the Winnipeg Free Press says.

It's also been pointed out to me that the member from Gimli also received almost \$18,000 in a rebate. Why does he need \$5,000 a year more? These are all numbers that are out there in the public realm. We will have a look at every one of them and we have to wonder when, you know, a lot of them probably got a rebate better than some of us, why they feel they need to go down this road of asking for more money.

So, Mr. Speaker, we really encourage the NDP to have a better look at this, to do what is right for Manitobans and not is—that is something that they feel they want for their own selves, to stop being self-serving with this tax and to put that million dollars towards a better use in Manitoba. So I hope that the government now would be very willing to pass this private member's bill because it would be the right thing to do.

Mr. Bidhu Jha (Radisson): It's a great pleasure for me to rise and speak on this particular act–bill which is important. We are talking about elections finances act. We are not talking about funding of a political party act. We are talking about election finances act, which means anyone–any party which runs a part into the democracy–which this country very, very badly needs. We have a democratic deficiency. We have a lot of people who are not coming to vote, so we have to encourage that process that people participate and we get all together to build–

* (11:00)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Radisson will have nine minutes remaining.

The hour being 11 a.m., it's time for private members' resolution, and we'll start by calling Resolution No. 5, the 100th Anniversary of the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba's "Dome Building", and it's standing in the name of the honourable member for Spruce Woods, who has two minutes remaining.

DEBATE ON RESOLUTIONS

Res. 5–100th Anniversary of the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba's "Dome Building"

Mr. Cliff Cullen (Spruce Woods): It's a pleasure to put a few more words on the record this morning regarding this resolution, and first of all, I do want to make clear to the Chamber that we really appreciate the work of the volunteers on this very important project for not only Brandon, but certainly western Manitoba and, I think, Manitoba in general. Certainly, for those that have spearheaded the fundraising aspect of this project, I think it's very important work that they are doing, and I want to applaud their efforts and also the efforts of those that have come to volunteer their time and also those who have put forward money into this very important project. I think it's also very important to recognize the very positive contribution the federal government brought to the floor in terms of this project going forward, as well. And I know the work is ongoing, and we certainly look forward to the time when this particular restoration project is done. And I think it's a signal for the importance of agriculture in Manitoba and, certainly, in our region of the province it's certainly very important to us.

And I know the–certainly, the member for Brandon East (Mr. Caldwell) wanted to make some political points when he brought forward this

particular resolution. I know the NDP are certainly all about trying to make political points on whatever the issue is of the day, Mr. Speaker, and, certainly, as a result of the discussions we had earlier in this, he did take it up on himself to make some interesting political statements and comments. But we look forward to hearing what all members of the Chamber here today have to say about this important project. And, certainly, I want to just say that agriculture is a very key 'imponent'–component to Manitoba and I just want to say hats off again to those undertaking this very important work in regard to this restoration project.

Hon. Ron Kostyshyn (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives): It's a great privilege to speak towards the support of–as recognizing the Dome Building, brought forward by the member from Brandon East.

I was in Brandon yesterday. We had a board meeting and had the opportunity to observe the Dome Building and really recognize the great history of the Dome Building that's being restored and the great attitude towards the people involved.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think what our tendency is that we have individuals that are involved in the restoration, and I don't know if you have had opportunity to be in Brandon to observe. It's a great building with the history that it brings forward. But I do want to acknowledge in public documentation is the volunteers and the people that have been involved in restoring of the building. I'm sure there was the opportune time for the building–of the decision making to have it destroyed. Now, with the dollars that are–that has been invested and through support of the government today that we continue to move forward with the restoration, the building itself now has become a sound building in regards to the exterior protection of it. And when we talk about exterior, we talk about the windows, we talk about the roof, we talk about the siding of the building to restore.

More work is still needed to repair the building, as you see, but at least at this stage of the game we know, Mr. Speaker, that the building itself is of sound mind as far as restoring it so it doesn't continue to deteriorate. And it's all part of the work and efforts of the ag society that's been involved in it and the exhibition people that have been involved in it. There was a total budget of about \$7.2 million set aside to put towards it and the government of Manitoba contributed \$500,000 to the project in

2010 and another \$450,000 in 2011. So on behalf of the taxpayers of the province of Manitoba and our government it's a true recognition of the importance of museums and the history that goes behind such a great building as we see there. Presently, the building is being used as—for cold storage. And it will be continued to move forward as we talk about finding additional dollars to complete the renovations as we see the importance of it.

But it's very unique being in Brandon East yesterday, and the initiative—when we talk about the Keystone parking lot, we talk about a mixture of the accommodations that the Keystone facility provides being, basically, a hub of agriculture in the province of Manitoba. And I want to publicly be acknowledged for the fact that we still are moving forward 'inpravrouing' the agricultural services and being at Ag Days, which is a great testament and a great flagship towards the agriculture in the city of Brandon and the Keystone board, but also it's a true testament that we talk about the Dome Building which definitely is one of very unique buildings across Canada that was actually constructed. And I think this is one of the last archives that we talk about in the province of Manitoba as far as the Dome Building. And it's truly—I would encourage all members present given the opportunity to be in Brandon, take the time to drive by and observe the great work that's gone into it and the great 'arkifact' that's going to be remained for legacies as we move forward.

So, I would like to just basically close up my 'summetry' thanking the—our member from Brandon East to bringing forward this resolution. And on behalf of agriculture in the province of Manitoba and the great ideas that have been brought forward, I truly support the Dome Building 100th anniversary.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for having a chance to speak on this resolution.

Mr. Stuart Briese (Agassiz): Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to speak on the resolution on the 100th anniversary of the Dome Building of the provincial exhibition. It's a resolution that we're obviously quite supportive of.

It—agriculture has been such an integral part of this province. Agriculture is one of the basis that this province was built on, and anything pertaining to that agricultural legacy should be preserved. I—we've lost direction a little bit in the last few years on honouring and paying attention to the agricultural industry in this province. The grain and oil seed

areas have been quite good with the prices that are going on and so it becomes a little bit more advantageous to the government to somewhat ignore those industries. But the basis of this province is on a strong agricultural footing, and any country, any province, any nation that forgets their agricultural basis will end up paying for it in the long run.

I heard the minister talk about—Minister of Agriculture referring to in previous remarks about the federal government downloading an ag, and I think he's just trying to pass the buck for the downloading he's doing in his own department.

I remember as a child in 4-H attending the Brandon winter fair and the old barn down on the corner of 10th and Victoria, I believe it was, and what a wonderful experience that was for a young person like myself. We were raised on the farm—we didn't get off the farm a whole heck of a lot. It was—you got to town maybe on Saturday afternoon—maybe. And we made our own fun and so on, but when we got the opportunity once a year to go to that Brandon fair with our 4-H club, it was quite an outing. We made friends there that have lasted lifetimes and it was one of the things that based my life in agriculture. The fact, of course, that I was raised on a farm certainly helped, but, you know, I—it was where I started to see agriculture as a bigger picture, when we got those opportunities to go to the fair.

And the Dome Building is part of that agricultural legacy in the province. It's a remarkable building, it's—I heard the minister talking about the amounts of funding that have went into it, and I was actually somewhat surprised at the overall cost. But I do want to pay tribute to all the volunteers that are making that happen—all the fundraisers, the fundraising events, and I'm pleased to see some provincial funding go into that renovation of that building too. It's something that we should all be proud of—especially in western Manitoba where the building is—but agriculture, in general, across the province. And every Manitoban should be proud of that agricultural legacy we have in this province.

* (11:10)

We've seen cases where sometimes the impact of the agriculture industry gets somewhat forgotten.

I've heard the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), the other day, just say, imagine a Conservative even being interested in the environment. Well, I beg to differ with him.

Every farmer is an environmentalist. Every farmer in this province is the environmentalist. Every farmer—farmers think in generation terms; they want to leave the landscape in better shape than they found it.

My own family has farmed on that same section of land, not out of the same yard site, but on the same section of land, since, roughly, 1890, where I grew up, where I farmed for 40 years myself. And I always thought about the environment.

I was one of the first in the area, and probably one of the first in the province, to start putting in riparian fencing around waterways. I was able to win an environmental stewardship award in 1997. And there's only one of those given in the province each year, by the way. And to have the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) get up and question my interest in the environment, is really, really questionable to me.

My municipality, and other municipalities in the area, of course, were the first conservation district in this province. If that isn't environmentally minded, I don't know what is. And we have the Whitemud conservation district, the first one in the province.

And just in the last three–four years ago, my own municipality, along with the neighbours from the municipality of Lansdowne, did the largest conservation easement in the province, when they deemed the community pasture area there, the PFRA pasture, as a conservation easement—entered into an conservation easement agreement on that. So those things, they're near and dear to my heart.

My own farm, at the height of my, I guess, my heyday, I had about 2,000 acres. A third of that was bush, permanent cover, pastures, hay land, a third—fully a third, of my farm. And I challenge anybody to come out and take a look at those things and tell me we're not environmentally minded.

But to circle back, and it's all related to agriculture, but to circle back to the Dome Building, it truly is a wonderful building. And it's something that does display this province's commitment to agriculture. Will be very useful in the years to come for any number of reasons.

Space, I'm told, is going to be home to the Manitoba Agricultural Hall of Fame—another aspect of agriculture that's very important—to have a hall of fame for the agriculture people of this province; 4-H is going to be based there; and some of the Provincial Ex activities will be there.

And it will form a very strong agricultural foundation for the city of Brandon. But, also, for the commitment we make to sustaining the history and the economic importance that agriculture has in Manitoba. Those are very key, and anything we can do to support that.

Mr. Mohinder Saran, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

Recently, I know the Threshermen's Reunion went on in Austin, and I know the provincial government has cut back some of the funding to that venue, but I also think that's another very important, very much a legacy of the agricultural success we've had in this province.

It's amazing. I was out at a farm the other day where they were doing a threshing demonstration with a steam engine and a threshing machine and horses hauling the sheaves and men forking them into the machine, and just down the field there was a brand new combine with a 35-foot header running, and the comparisons to the way things were done in the past and the way they are now, is it better? I don't know. But it's certainly a progressive industry that does have to look at the past, look at the basis that put us there and things like the Dome Building and—being renovated and used for agricultural-related events, and going forward is a great idea and I support it fully.

Thank you.

Hon. Flor Marcelino (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism): Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to share just a few words on the proposal by the honourable member from Brandon to honour the Dominion Exhibition Display Building No. 2 on its 100th anniversary.

Since 2008, it was a pleasure for me to be able to visit the Royal Winter Fair and the ag fair in Brandon. And that Dome Building attracted my attention. In 2008-2009, it looked like it was going to crumble, that very building. However, by 2010, until this year, when we visited Brandon, it has been transformed remarkably, and rightly so because that very building holds a rich history. I just heard from members opposite that he enjoyed visiting that building as a young boy. Unfortunately for me, I enjoyed—or I appreciated that building, not as a young person but in my old age, but nevertheless, I'm grateful that our Province, our government had seen fit that this heritage building be restored to its original glory.

In 1913, Mr. Acting Speaker, Brandon was awarded the right to host a prestigious national agricultural exhibition known as the Dominion Exhibition, and that domed agricultural display building, known as display building No. 11, was built in 1913 for the fair. The Beaux-Arts style of the building is typical of exhibition buildings of that era built all over the world. That display building was originally owned by the provincial exhibition and was turned over to the Keystone Centre along with the rest of the land and buildings in 1971.

That building was opened to the public for Doors Open Brandon July 20th and 21st this year. And the completed building will complement the agricultural activities being-taking place at the Keystone Centre and will be a cultural and tourism asset for Westman. That building will host school tours, day camps, meetings, bus tours, agricultural workshops, performances and much more. Most especially, it will have environmentally friendly geothermal heat providing cost savings in operations.

* (11:20)

Mr. Acting Speaker, I would like to turn over—I would like to say that I support the—my colleague's resolution on Dome Building 100th anniversary, and I thank you for the opportunity to say a few words on this piece.

Mr. Ian Wishart (Portage la Prairie): I appreciate the opportunity to put a few words on record regarding the provincial Dome Building at Brandon and certainly the restoration process. And I guess I'd like to start by showing my appreciation for all of the volunteers, the fundraisers and those that are working on restoring such a historic building. Certainly, for many years we've all seen it sitting there not really improving in condition because of its lack of use. And it's nice to see it restored, particularly as it represents the last standing building that was part of the—a national show back in 1912–1913—the Dominion Exhibition Display Building as part of the last Dominion Exhibition that was done.

And there's a long history associated with that and, of course, a long history associated with provincial and national shows related to agriculture because agriculture is such a basic component of this country. It is what, in particular, what the west was initially built on. The reason that so many people came west were—was to immigrate and to have their own land and be part of agricultural production and it was how the west was settled. So it's nice to remain—

retain at least a fragment of the history and this building certainly does exhibit some of that.

There were at times in past—there were actually other buildings like this around the country. There was one in Toronto, very similar, that is in their history books there at the Toronto royal that shows a lot of similarities and the 'provinc'—the PNE in Vancouver also had a building that was somewhat similar. And even in my own hometown there was a much smaller version at the Portage exhibition for a number of years. It was destroyed by fire back in the 1930s and is really just part of the history books that we have their now.

But it was a style that was used certainly in recognition of the exhibition nature and the fact that it was a gathering point and a bit of recognition for everyone in the industry. And agricultural exhibitions have huge history in western Canada. Often it was one of the first things put in place. After a community was recognized and settlement began they would have their winter exhibition. And the first winter exhibition actually done in Portage was 145 years ago—we actually celebrated that at our annual fair this year—which goes back a long way and the community was much smaller, really just coming together. And—but it was very important to them to have some recognition of quality of agriculture and what they did.

And it was also an educational process and it was interesting to hear the member for Agassiz (Mr. Briese) talk about what has developed in agriculture. Certainly, agriculture today looks quite different than it did 145 years ago. But he made reference to the fact that we're always surprised on this side of the House when they think we're not asking questions or that we don't understand environmental issues. Agriculturalists and farmers were the original environmentalists. Until recent years when artificial fertilizers and pesticides became available, really, it was all about managing the landscape to produce a crop on part of that landscape. And so some of the people that actually wrote the history and showed the greatest insights in how to manage western Canada's landscape were actually farmers. And it certainly—that type of recognition—and is really farmers that manage the landscape even today.

And it's rather sad, frankly, that they—the government opposite doesn't really recognize who the landscape managers are in this province. They seem to think that by passing rules and regulations they can be the landscape managers. It's simply not

the case. Those that actually do the work every day are—will ultimately always be the ones that manage the landscape.

And, certainly, putting programs in place that encourage them to do more of what the member for Agassiz (Mr. Briese) actually obviously did on his farm because he got recognition from the conservation district for good agricultural and conservation practices—which are environmental practices in anyone's book—certainly is an important recognition of what it is we produce in the agricultural industry besides the food and fibre that are traditionally recognized. It's the ecological goods and services that the landscape produce that all Manitobans and all Canadians actually benefit from.

And I can't help but think I was very involved in the agricultural policy at one point when this government introduced their first version of nutrient management regulations. And, of course, it was brought in for a very noble goal, to help deal with Lake Winnipeg's issue, but, because they had such a poor understanding of how nutrient management actually worked in the rural landscape, and that not only included water but in land management, because you simply can't separate the two—it's impossible to separate the two—that they came in with a version of regulations that were based on aerial photos that had been taken 60 years previous and that they extrapolated ahead and said, well, this is what—where we think no nutrients should be spread any longer, which covered a very significant portion of Manitoba that is part of agricultural Manitoba.

Well, nutrients are generated from any livestock industry. And, of course, they also come from natural sources—or artificial sources as well. But they didn't understand what it is that they had tried to introduce. They would have put an end to a lot of forms of agriculture that are essential parts of the rural community and, frankly, are part of the landscape. We have replaced the buffalo herds that roamed initially thousands of years ago with livestock of different types, mostly of cattle herds, though in much smaller numbers, and different types of agricultural cultivation practices that, to some degree, recognize and duplicate what Mother Nature did in terms of—I think it was often perennial production with grasses there, and fire was the tool that was used then, actually, to regenerate, and now we regenerate much more with cultivated practices and other artificial means.

But those types of practices were actually going on in this area, and we were keeping the environmental process actually functioning—working, turning over, reusing the nutrients because, without the reuse, it's a one-ended cycle and production drops off relatively quickly without having a nutrient cycle in place in most of these rural areas. But the initial regulations that were brought in place actually had no recognition of this and were simply very restrictive. And I had certainly attended a number of meetings where the message was brought forward very clearly to the government at the time that their regulations simply would not work. And they withdrew those initial proposals. We went back and said to them, what it is—what is it that you think you need? And once they told us what they thought they needed, we could show them a way to get that, and working with the farm community and actually getting regulations in place that worked. But they didn't bother to come to us in the first time and said, you know, we have a problem, how do we deal with that problem. There was actually no discussion up until the point of the regulations being introduced.

It was a very one-way process, very confrontational, when, frankly, it didn't need to be. There's certainly a lot of willingness in the farm community, in the rural community, to be good environmentalists, to be good conservation. It's ingrained, actually, on almost every farmer at his father or grandfather's knee, to leave the land in better condition than you found it. It's something that we hear very, very commonly when you talk in agricultural circles. That is one of the obligations that we have in our part of life, and that is probably a really good attitude in terms of the long-term success of the industry, the sustainability of the industry, and it actually bodes very well to dealing with environmental issues in this province if you engage those people in the process. But if it becomes a confrontational process, well, everyone knows that when you become confrontational, co-operation usually suffers as part of the process.

So, certainly, that's the response they got. At that time we were able to work beyond that and at least make it work to some degree. And, frankly, I would think that you—if you check now, you would find that most farmers are quite accepting in working with environmental regulations when it applies to nutrients because it works for them too. Nutrients, at today's prices, actually do cost us quite a bit of money if we have to go and buy them and import them into the farm. There are still a few farms out

there that don't need to import nutrients, actually recycle or import enough in one form or the other on their own farm, particularly livestock farms, where they actually have a surplus of nutrients, and these days we're encouraging that more and more to spread that around amongst other farmers, rather than have your own farm get to a level where there is actually a risk of nutrient loss.

So that type of information, actually, has led to better nutrient management, and, ultimately, there's some studies out fairly recently that indicate that agriculture's actually doing a pretty good job on managing nutrients and not losing them from the landscape. So there will always be some loss from the landscape; it's a natural process. So, we're really minimizing that to a significant degree.

* (11:30)

I guess I'd like to come back to the content of this particular bill. It is nice that the building is being preserved, and I think it's a very important part for all of Manitobans to remember their history and, particularly, as it relates to agriculture, and this is simply one way to do that.

So, thank you very much, Mr. Acting Speaker, for the opportunity to speak.

Mr. Clarence Pettersen (Flin Flon): Let me say a few words on this. The building that I want to talk about is the name that we gave it many years ago, which was called the barn. And I think I'm going to dwell on the history of it, because I was part of the history of the barn or the Dominion Exhibition Display Building back in 1972. And I'm sure everybody remembers the shot heard around the world in 1972, and you'd think, yes, it was Paul Henderson—Canada beats Russia.

But in 1972, there was even a bigger game in the barn where the old ManEx was in Brandon, and that was the game between economics and geology from the University of Brandon. And I happened—and I want this on record—I happened to be at that game, and I was one of the stars of that game. *[interjection]* Thank you, thank you.

When I think of the old barn, I think of going there with somebody that you guys might know in that—Brock Lee, a lawyer from Carman. He was with me in economics class with Errol Black, and Errol wanted me to play hockey. I was from Flin Flon, so everybody in Flin Flon was born with skates—with skates on their feet. So, I was their ringer, and, yes, I

did not disappoint Errol Black, although my marks weren't as good as I thought they should be.

But having gone to the barn, we put on our skates. There was straw and hay all over because of the multi-use of the building, and the rink wasn't a full-size rink. And we skated around and I notice—they put in blue lines and a red line—that I noticed that you could almost shoot from one end to the other.

So it was getting down—and I want you to listen very intently—it was getting down to the last minute of play. The score was 7-7. I had the puck. I went around the net. I took one hand off my stick and I waved at my girlfriend that was standing on the side—who later became my wife—and then I shot the puck. And I scored. *[interjection]* Yes, yes, and to this day—to this day—she married me, yes—to this day, I always think economics dominated the hockey league at the University of Brandon.

But getting back to the historical significance of that building, I know it was used many, many times for many things. At that time, the Keystone Centre was not built, and they had the ManEx Arena, and we—they flooded the floor which—there was straw and all that—very uneven—and we used the building. And I think it's very important that Manitobans recognize their heritage—their history, and this building, I think, is important for the history of Brandon.

So, will they raise a plaque saying that I scored the big goal in '72? Could be debatable. I'm thinking about the honourable member from Brandon may be bringing that forward and putting my name—

An Honourable Member: Will you pay for the plaque?

Mr. Pettersen: Well, you know what? Personally, I will, yes. If you put the plaque in, I will pay for it. Okay? Ka-ching—I will do that.

But, yes, I just want to say that historical buildings throughout Manitoba are important. I'm full-heartedly behind this, as I think both sides of the House are, and thank you for giving me the opportunity to add my take on history in the old barn.

So, thank you very much.

Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Midland): And hard to follow an act when the guy's a hockey hero, but I'll try anyway.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I certainly want to give my congratulations to the fine folks in Brandon, who have volunteered their time, they volunteered their money to the Dome Building, as it's being referred to—the hundredth anniversary and the rebuilding of this building. Let's also pay recognition to the federal government who put some money into it also, but it's really the volunteers and the people who have contributed their own money to doing this, and that's—we're very proud in Manitoba of our ability to be the volunteer capital of Canada, and that's how building—projects like this continue on.

We—certainly, the Brandon fair, whether it's the fall fair or whether it's the spring fair, has certainly got a lot of history behind them. We have small fairs across the province in our communities and—but really the culmination of all those smaller fairs is going to Brandon whether it be the fall fair or the spring fair in Brandon. And, you know, the livestock certainly was a key driver of these back in the days. Our livestock industry has shrunk quite a bit in the last number of years for various reasons, and although the horses play a huge role in the Royal Manitoba Winter Fair in the spring it's—horses are certainly a huge part of that. But the lives—the cattle side, the hog side is—certainly was a significant factor over the years and still is a—an important industry across the province, the livestock sector and the grains industry, and it will continue to be.

And this—with the restoration of the Dome Building, it certainly gives a home for these ag industries to be able to continue on whether it's through the Manitoba hall—ag hall of fame, the Manitoba 4-H Provincial Ex and whatnot. They'll be able to have their offices within there and it gives that agricultural foundation which has been in

Brandon all these years, and it just gives them a place to continue that.

And so with that, Mr. Acting Speaker, I just want to congratulate again all the people from all across Manitoba that have contributed financially and to the volunteers who have contributed their time and energies into restoring the Dome Building in Brandon. It is certainly worthwhile and it's another one of the jewels in the province of Manitoba.

Thank you.

The Acting Speaker (Mohinder Saran): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the resolution? *[Agreed]*

I declare the resolution carried.

Mr. Reg Helwer (Brandon West): I wonder if it would be the will of the House to make it unanimous.

The Acting Speaker (Mohinder Saran): Is it the will of the House to make it unanimous? *[Agreed]*

Now, we proceed with the Resolution No. 6—

House Business

Hon. Andrew Swan (Acting Government House Leader): On House business, Mr. Acting Speaker.

I think if you canvass the House you'll find there's will to have it called 12 o'clock.

The Acting Speaker (Mohinder Saran): Is it the will of the House to call it 12 o'clock? *[Agreed]*

This House is recessed now and stays recessed until 1:30 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, August 20, 2013

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