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Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Fortieth Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALLAN, Nancy	St. Vital	NDP
ALLUM, James, Hon.	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	NDP
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WIGHT, Melanie	Burrows	NDP
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<i>Vacant</i>	The Pas	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, June 5, 2014

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 and know it with certainty and accomplish it perfectly for the glory and honour of Thy name and for the welfare of all our people. Amen.

Morning, everyone. Please be seated.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

RESOLUTIONS

**Res. 24—Celebrating the 50th Anniversary
of the Mennonite Heritage Village Museum**

Mr. Speaker: As previously agreed, we will be calling private members' resolutions, as was agreed, starting with the first resolution, Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Mennonite Heritage Village Museum, sponsored by the honourable member for Steinbach.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Good morning to you. I move, seconded by the member for St. Paul (Mr. Schuler), that,

WHEREAS the Mennonite Heritage Village in Steinbach is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year; and

WHEREAS the Mennonite Heritage Village museum is one of the premier tourist attractions in Manitoba and is designated as one of Manitoba's Signature Museums; and

WHEREAS the Mennonite Heritage Village exists to preserve and exhibit the history and the experience of pioneer Mennonites, particularly Russian Mennonites, who migrated to North America; and

WHEREAS the Mennonite Heritage Village features the depiction of a turn-of-the-century Mennonite village street including a classic Mennonite house barn and a fully operational

European windmill which has become the iconic symbol of the museum; and

WHEREAS the Mennonite Heritage Village now houses nearly 16,000 artifacts and offers visitors the opportunity to experience the life and culture of early Mennonite settlers to Manitoba through offering Mennonite food at the Livery Barn Restaurant and holding annual festival days; and

WHEREAS Mennonites have contributed greatly to the economic and social fabric of Manitoba.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba commend the board of directors, staff and volunteers of the Mennonite Heritage Village in Steinbach on their 50th anniversary and for preserving and researching Mennonite history; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba encourage all Manitobans to visit the Mennonite Heritage Village to celebrate its 50th anniversary.

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable member for Steinbach, seconded by the honourable member for St. Paul,

WHEREAS the Mennonite—

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense? Dispense. The resolution is in order.

Mr. Goertzen: Just before I start—I know that there'll be mention of it later on—but I do want to note the tragic events that are happening in Moncton today and this morning. And all of us, I know, have our thoughts and our prayers with the RCMP officers and their families in Moncton, those who lost members yesterday in that tragic event and those who were injured. We know that the search for the individual, as far as I know, is still ongoing. And all of us are thinking about the RCMP officers who are doing that difficult work in finding the individual who is responsible for these horrific crimes.

I do want to now speak about this resolution, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the government giving me the opportunity to bring forward a second resolution this session. I think that this one will be less controversial

than the first one and probably have more of an opportunity to pass.

The museum in Steinbach is something I think that all Manitobans recognize. Not all Manitobans have visited the museum, and I would encourage them, on this 50th anniversary of the Mennonite Heritage Village, to do exactly that.

Started 50 years ago by its founders, Mr. Speaker, it was always intended to be a place where the story of the Mennonites, the early Mennonites to Manitoba, particularly the Russian Mennonites who came to our province to find a new life, fleeing difficult circumstances, the museum was always intended to preserve their story and to tell the story to the next generation. I think it has fulfilled its mandate in the first 50 years admirably. I think it has probably exceeded the expectations of the early founders of the museum in terms of what it would become.

For those who have visited the museum, of course, when you walk into the museum, there are exhibits that happen in the exhibit hall. But most are familiar with walking down the main street, which depicts an early settlement of the Mennonites in southern Manitoba. And you really can feel like you're walking back in time.

You get a sense of the difficult life that early Mennonite settlers would have had. You certainly get a sense of the strong faith that they had, which is one of the reasons, of course, they came to Manitoba, for the ability to practice their faith freely.

You also get a sense of how industrious the Mennonites were, even in those very early days, with the small stores that were depicted that are symbolic of the stores that they started in their own villages. But you knew that it was a difficult life, a hard life, not a life without challenges, trying to exist in the harsh Manitoba plains, as it were sometimes, in difficult circumstances.

Often, those early settlers, when they came, they didn't have time to build a house before the winter, and so they would live in what's called a semlin, which is a small dig-out into the ground, which is a house that's half in the ground and half out of the ground with a grass roof on the top. And that's how they would live for the—for their first winter. Sometimes, if it was extremely cold outside, they would bring their animals into this very, very small home, as it were, because it was partly in the ground and partly out of the ground.

I've heard the stories of how, when there was a significant snowfall, sometimes the snow would actually cover the home, and they would have something that they would stick out of the roof to indicate to their neighbours that they needed help to get out of this structure, and their neighbours would come and help them.

It's hard for us to imagine. We complain about the winter. And certainly the last winter that we had was a harsh winter. But we know nothing of that existence, to try to exist without garage door openers or garages or heated garages or vehicles that are heated. Those early settlers lived a very, very different and difficult time.

But we do hear the stories that, while there was a difficult time, that there was much reward, as well. They had the ability to practice their faith freely. That is depicted at the museum significantly. And faith was always, and still is, obviously, a significant part of the Mennonite history and the Mennonite experience early on.

It's not easy to keep a museum of this nature going. It's a large facility that there's many acres that it has, Mr. Speaker. They have 16,000 exhibits. So it takes a lot to keep something like this going.

The windmill, of course, which is the iconic symbol, the European windmill is the iconic symbol of the museum, and many Manitobans would recognize that. Even if they haven't visited the museum, Mr. Speaker, they would recognize that symbol.

*(10:10)

We lost the museum a number of years ago as a result of a fire. It was a very difficult thing for those who were involved in the museum, but also for the entire community because it really was a symbol of the community. But we saw the individuals that operate the museum, those who are donors and the entire Steinbach community come together to ensure that they had the funds to build a new windmill, to bring it up to the requirements for security now—it's now lighted in a way to try to prevent what happened the first time from happening again—and have different preventative measures from that happening. And they also brought from overseas those who could build a windmill that was the closest depiction to the original windmill.

And so it has survived, the museum, a number of different challenges. Again, it's not easy to operate a museum. There are times when there's been financial

challenges, and the community has supported the museum through that to the extent now that it is one of the Signature Museums in the province of Manitoba.

As it celebrates its 50th anniversary, I have a number of personal memories at the museum. As a young child, I often visited the Pioneer Days, which is one of the festivals that happens at the museum. I think there is a picture of me in *The Carillon* as a young boy at the museum, on the back of a—I think we were taking a hayride on one of the horses being pulled, Mr. Speaker. And it may have been an oxen; it was a horse or an oxen, I can't remember. I was younger than I am now. But there is a picture, and I enjoyed going to the Pioneer Days, still enjoy going to Pioneer Days, going to Spring on the Farm, going to Fall on the Farm.

Also—and I have to acknowledge that I have something of a conflict, and it's important to, I think, under our rules, to admit the conflicts that we have when we're talking about things, Mr. Speaker. My mother, Anne Wiens, has worked at the museum now for more than a decade in the restaurant there, and she still continues to work now. She's over 70 years old and yet she continues to work long hours at the museum, longer than I would wish her to, but she enjoys the job; she loves it. And so, often I get a chance to go and visit her there for coffee. So it's more than just a museum for me, it's very much a place where I'm—I feel at home, and I have grown to appreciate it more.

Sometimes, I think, when you have something within your own community, you have—you can sometimes overlook it and you don't realize how special it is because you've grown up with it and because it is just simply part of what you've always known, and you often have to have people from the outside come and tell you how special something is. That is, in many ways, the case for the museum. I do still run into people in Steinbach who've never visited the museum.

And so I would encourage those who are near or far to take this opportunity on the 50th anniversary to come and see what the museum has to offer. History is something that we should never forget. It's something, in many ways, we should be able to celebrate. It's something that we should be able to embrace, Mr. Speaker, and the museum offers all of those opportunities to celebrate during the different festivals, to remember through the artifacts and to ensure that it's not forgotten, that it is remembered,

and those who helped to settle much of the southeast, the Mennonite communities, have done a great thing for the province of Manitoba.

Still today—and I know my friend from Morden-Winkler would confirm—the communities that have a strong Mennonite heritage in them are doing well. Steinbach is, I think, the fastest growing community in Steinbach, and Morden is somewhere behind that. But we do know, Mr. Speaker, that the Mennonites have made a tremendous contribution throughout the province of Manitoba, whether that's in southern Manitoba, Winnipeg or different parts of the province.

So it's a great opportunity to celebrate the Mennonite heritage museum, it's a great opportunity to ask Manitobans, if they haven't had the opportunity to visit the museum, to do so on this special year, and it's a great opportunity to ask all Canadians to take the opportunity to come and celebrate this special treasure that we have right here in Manitoba, in the city of Steinbach.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Very pleased this morning to rise and speak to this particular resolution brought forward by the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen). And it's in particular an important resolution for this House and for me to speak about because of my own Mennonite heritage. And certainly the Mennonite Heritage Village museum has been an important part of my family history and a point of pride within the Mennonite community and a place that, I think, all of Mennonite background can appreciate and do appreciate and certainly see as a point of pride for our community.

It's fantastic that here in Manitoba we're fortunate to enjoy a vibrant cultural history. It's been shaped by the coming together of many cultures, of course, Aboriginal people, who first called the prairies home and now many different immigrant backgrounds that have come together to settle in Manitoba.

Museums are an important part of how we remember that past, how we celebrate our heritage and how we move forward together as a community and celebrate who we are and how we can come together as Manitobans to make this province a better place.

The Mennonite Heritage Village museum, I think, is a great example of how a community can come together to create a symbol for themselves

within this multicultural society that we have. I would say, in fact, from my point of view, that the heritage museum, as a symbol of Steinbach, is more etched in my mind than the automobile maybe, Mr. Speaker. I know Steinbach is The Automobile City, but I—when I think of Steinbach, I think of the Dutch windmill at the heritage museum and I think about the important part that it plays in who we are as a province.

You know, my own family, when we come together, we have spent many times at the heritage museum and, in fact, just recently, we had family from all over the world, in fact, Mr. Speaker, cousins—of course, you know, it's a big family. I won't try to even navigate all my cousins and aunts and uncles, and I think other members of the Mennonite heritage might also understand where I'm coming from with that, but two big families that came together, and so we have members of the family that are all over the world. And when they came back together recently for a family reunion, we came to the heritage museum, and it's something that they appreciated as being from now away from Manitoba, and we appreciate it as, you know, Manitobans, as Mennonites living in Manitoba and how we, you know, can showcase that now to others, just how proud we are of that heritage.

You know, I—when I meet folks from different parts of the world, different countries, that have come to live in Manitoba in my constituency, Mr. Speaker, and they're in varying stages of becoming Manitobans. Either they're here—brand new here and not yet citizens, they're maybe citizens first generation, maybe second generation, third generation, and one of the common themes that I find is holding on to that heritage and ways that they can strengthen that understanding for themselves and their children now of where they came from and what their past was.

And so I find that the heritage museum is a great example for, in fact, all cultures, on how they can celebrate and how they can appreciate their own heritage and create a symbol that really endures and continues to show where that heritage is from.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, many cultures in Manitoba and, you know, the heritage museum is just one of many museums that I know our government has been proud to support through the Signature Museum program. So, as I said, the Mennonite heritage museum is one of them, but the western Canadian aviation museum, the Manitoba

Agricultural Museum, New Iceland Heritage Museum in Gimli, Commonwealth Air Training Plan Museum in Brandon, and the St. Boniface Museum—all of these are what we call Signature Museums and what we're able to do is support them through the Signature Museum program. They help celebrate who we are and where we're going. All of these museums have unique collections and all of them are related to Manitoba's historical development, and I think that's one of the greatest things about the heritage museum in Steinbach is that they have a massive collection of artifacts that they are now preserving, and these will go on for generations and generations.

* (10:20)

Of course, the heritage museum has been in place for 50 years, Mr. Speaker, and this is just an incredible achievement. As the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) mentioned, this is—running a museum and keeping a museum vibrant and relevant is not an easy task for those folks that have had that experience in their past with dealing with a museum and a board and all the volunteer hours that go into making a museum function. It is just a phenomenal bringing together of folks who are committed to that vision.

And so I did want to take some time, Mr. Speaker, to congratulate all the hard-working volunteers and board members and others that have given their time and their money, frankly, because it does take a substantial amount of money to keep an institution like the Mennonite Heritage Village museum functioning.

So I just wanted to thank them and thank all of those that have lent their support to the museum in the past and who will continue to support it in the future.

Mr. Speaker, it's always a great honour to stand up and be able to talk about my own heritage and my own family background, and so it's a very great day that I get to speak to this particular resolution.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Ron Schuler (St. Paul): Indeed a pleasure to get up and speak about the Mennonite Heritage Village. How often did we drive out to Steinbach and with the kids in the back seat, the first question always was: Are we there yet? And we'd always say to the kids, okay, when you see the big windmill, then you know we're in Steinbach. And in those days, Mr. Speaker, the windmill was on the outskirts

of Steinbach, and since then the city has grown around it. In fact, the windmill someday will almost seem like it's in the heart of Steinbach. But when we reached that point, the kids knew we had finally gotten to Steinbach, and it is clearly a symbol not just of Steinbach but of that region. Everybody knows the windmill and sort of the significance and the importance it has.

The museum is incredibly well done. It's very tastefully done. It's laid out in a really nice pattern where you can walk up and down the street and you get a sense and a feeling of what things would be like. In fact, Mr. Speaker, in the few minutes that I do have, I often get family coming in from Europe and having just been in Ukraine where you have a castle of, you know, 800 years old or that one's 500 years old or that one's 300 years old, and they come here and they see, you know, buildings are 100 years old and initially it's sort of like, oh, well, you guys call that old, until you start walking through.

And we had a tour guide one time and there were a group of Europeans, and they took us into one of those sod huts, and you walked down into it and they said how difficult it was to heat them because—especially if, like my colleague from Steinbach mentioned, if you got one of those blizzards—and we got a taste of that winter this year where it would get down to -50° , -55° —the rafters really never did keep warm. They had to be careful that they didn't suffocate in them because of the snow drifts.

And they mentioned that they built the rafters open—and this was a real eye opener for us—that if a loved one passed away, they had nowhere to go with the body, and they couldn't actually go out and bury it because of wildlife. They actually used to wrap them and hang them in the rafters until they could actually bury the people.

Anyway, our European friends stood and their jaw was on the ground, and they realized how tough life was back when the prairies were being settled. This was—as Joe Clark said, the Americans actually settled the easy half of North America and we got the tough half. This was definitely hardship that individuals lived through to survive the incredibly severe climate. Not just was it the severely cold but the very hot summers; there was no such thing as air conditioning. There were no screens on the windows so they had flies and mosquitoes, and somehow they endured.

And, Mr. Speaker, the Mennonite Heritage Village is truly a symbol of the strength of human character to persevere in some of the worst conditions and still be able to survive.

They did a wonderful job. They built beautiful communities, from Steinbach branched out a lot of other communities, and they show with the festival that they have every year the great things that were done and how they were able to survive, not just the hardships but survive it actually and still keep a sense of faith, still keep a sense of family. They learned how to celebrate together. They would celebrate with food. They learned to adapt to preserving their food, and I would encourage all Manitobans, I would encourage everybody, when you have guests, the Mennonite Heritage Village museum really is one of those stops that you should take.

And I'd like to close with saying, you know, often when a tragedy strikes a community or communities and something burns down, often a cairn is put in its place and they say here once stood, and time passes on. But not the community of Steinbach, not the Mennonites in Steinbach; when the windmill, unfortunately, burned down, they put themselves back together and they built it back right back the way it was, and it is a beautiful, beautiful symbol not just for Steinbach and not just for Hanover, but for the province of Manitoba. It is really a jewel in the crown of this province and they are to be commended for preserving heritage in the—for the last 50 years of heritage that goes back a long time before that, that our young people and all of us might appreciate how tough and how hard and how vigilant they had to be to survive the climate and the conditions that existed at that time.

So on behalf of the people of St. Paul, which is the sister constituency right next door to Steinbach, we would like to congratulate them on 50 great years of the Mennonite Heritage Village museum.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, the Mennonite Heritage Village museum is a phenomenal museum, I've been there many times. I'm pleased to congratulate the museum and all those involved in the 50 wonderful years and wish them many years ahead. Mennonite history is tremendously important in all of Manitoba. I have a personal stake in this because my wife is of Mennonite background and a very strong believer in the importance of this culture.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House—any further debate on this resolution?

House ready for the question?

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the resolution? *[Agreed]*

**Res. 25—The Icelandic Festival of Manitoba
Islendingadagurinn**

Mr. Speaker: All right then, I imagine that we'll proceed directly to the next resolution as was previously agreed, and the title of the resolution is The Icelandic Festival of Manitoba Islendingadagurinn—I've been practising that one, but apparently I'm not perfect yet on it—sponsored by the honourable member for the Interlake.

Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff (Interlake): Good morning, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the MLA for Gimli, the Minister of Housing and Community Development (Mr. Bjornson),

WHEREAS Manitobans are proud of the cultural and ethnic diversity of this province; and

WHEREAS Islendingadagurinn, the Icelandic Festival of Manitoba, is the second oldest continuous ethnic festival in North America; and

WHEREAS this year is the 125th celebration of the Icelandic Festival of Manitoba, with the first Icelandic celebration having taken place in 1874; and

WHEREAS the festival celebrates the proud legacy of Icelandic heritage in Manitoba with a fantastic parade, traditional food, athletic competitions, cultural displays, fireworks, live music and the Viking Village; and

WHEREAS each year hundreds of volunteers and organizers make the festival possible by bringing families, friends, neighbours and visitors to Gimli in celebration of the historic legacy of Icelandic people in Manitoba; and

WHEREAS the festival brings in an estimated 50,000 people to the Interlake region over the weekend, making significant contributions to the local economy.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba recognize the valuable contributions of Islendingadagurinn over the past 125 years which has greatly contributed to the rich cultural history of Manitoba; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba thank the

dedicated organizers and volunteers of Islendingadagurinn who work tirelessly to promote the region's historic Icelandic roots; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba encourage all members to attend this festival to celebrate the history and culture of Icelandic people in Manitoba.

* (10:30)

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable member for Interlake, seconded by the honourable member for Gimli, the Minister of Housing and Community Development,

WHEREAS Manitobans are—

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense? Dispense. The resolution is in order.

Mr. Nevakshonoff: I didn't want to dispense the reading. I wanted to hear your pronunciation of Islendingadagurinn one more time there. Practice makes perfect, as we all know. So, however, we will move on.

And I would just like to, first of all, begin my remarks by thanking the honourable member for Gimli for the inspiration for this resolution. As a minister, he's not able to move something like this, is allowed to second it, but he is the inspiration for this and I thank him for that.

I am blessed with a large population of Icelandic people in my constituency, the Interlake, as well, so I very much appreciate the opportunity this morning to bring this topic forward and have some discussion on it.

I should just note in passing, again, in reference to the MLA for Gimli, that this year, which is a very special year, the hundredth and twenty-five—125th anniversary of the festival, his mother, Hedy Bjornson, was chosen as the Fjallkona this year, so a great honour for him and for his family. They are true pillars of the Icelandic community, as is now recognized in the form of his mother's title for this coming year.

This is the second time that the member for Gimli and I have collaborated on measures to recognize the contributions of the Icelandic people. Back in 2010, we worked together on Bill 223, The Jon Sigurdsson Day Act—not John, Jon Sigurdsson Day Act, which is now law in our province, which recognizes June 17th as Jon Sigurdsson Day Act to

recognize the contribution of this fine gentleman to the actual creation of the state of Iceland.

They were a protectorate of Denmark for many, many years, and like all people, wanted to seek their independence and have their own state, and it was a lengthy process for them. Jon was the leader of that movement. And it was a pleasure for me to have introduced that act, because I learned so much about him and about the Icelandic people in general.

And what sticks out in my mind more than anything over that process was that this was a movement toward statehood and democracy that was done in a very dignified manner. It was entirely a peaceful process over the years. It was done without a single shot fired, without a single life lost, which I think is a good lesson to us all, past and present. When we look around the world, there still remains so much strife and so much fighting and so much war and unnecessary loss of life.

It is unfortunate that even today we're—that we continue to struggle worldwide and the—perhaps we should all collectively look back as a people around the world, the lesson that Jon Sigurdsson displayed in the creation of the state of Iceland.

One of the greatest joys for me as a Member of the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker, is I've learned so much over the years, about my region in particular, and I've met so many wonderful and interesting people. This truly is the greatest joy of being an MLA to me, and the Icelandic people in my constituency are no exception to that, I assure you.

When I first sought the nomination back in 1999, I learned very quickly that the support of the Icelandic people in the Arborg and Riverton areas was absolutely critical to my progressing toward the nomination. And just a few of the individuals, I want to put their names on the record because they were such wonderful people. Many of them are gone now already.

But first and foremost was a gentleman by the name of Palmi Palsson. I don't know if the MLA for Gimli knows him or not, but a very interesting fellow, a farmer and a poet and a very literate man, and had a very quiet sense of humour to him as well. I remember we were driving around signing up people, and he was teaching me a little bit of Icelandic. And I'm not going to repeat it now because, well, my—it's not my mother tongue to say the least. But the one saying he taught me—first I had to learn it in Icelandic and then he told me what it

meant. And it was about the rise of the feminist movement, and the literal translation of the words that he taught me were: up with the skirts and down with the pants, which was quite the thing. And so he had a little chuckle with that. He had a little twinkle in his eye when he taught me that, but he taught me a lot about his area, about farming and so on and so forth.

Another fascinating individual was a man named Oli Sigurdson, a staunch socialist and New Democrat. Many times I would sit in his kitchen and try and collect my donation, but before I got my \$100 donation, we had to have a lengthy discussion about all the political issues of the day, and that was not just within Manitoba, it was global. And I had to second-hand smoke five or six cigarettes with Oli during the process because he was a prodigious smoker and ultimately led to his demise, but a fascinating man, to say the least.

Other very important people to me were Numi and Dora Fridfinnson. All of the Fridfinnson family, as a matter of fact, were very supportive, are very supportive of me. In fact, Ross Fridfinnson, their son, is currently the president of my constituency association and keeps me in line in that region.

And last but not least, of course, I would like to also mention Gladys and David Gislason. Gladys, no longer with us. David is still with us—but very intelligent people, fine farmers. In fact, they were the farm family of the year, I think it was in 2000, shortly after I was elected. David was reeve of the RM of Bifrost for a number of years, and I did have the pleasure to nominate him for the Order of Manitoba as well, which he did receive. David is a truly dignified man. He's the kind of man, when you come into his presence, you elevate your behaviour to your utmost. You swallow your bubble gum. And he's a good friend of mine. I did recognize him in the Legislature once before. To those who are interested, he was a fine poet as well, and if you search our Hansard under his name, I read his poem called Harvest into the record at one point. So it's a worthy read.

Just before I conclude, I do want to make mention of the historic relationship the Icelandic people have with the First Nations people in Manitoba as well in New Iceland and, of course, this speech would not be complete without mention of a Saulteaux man by the name of John Ramsay, who was instrumental in helping the Icelandic people to survive those first few rugged winters in Manitoba.

Now, John Ramsay, his band was actually displaced by the government of Manitoba to make room for the Icelandic influx of people, and you'd think that might create some resentment and it may have, but Mr. Ramsay put that aside and in those first few difficult winters he went out and trapped and hunted for them and supplied moose meat to them, and was very important in their literal survival in those first few years.

*(10:40)

This was done despite the fact that smallpox, which happened to come over with the settlers, was devastating for the Aboriginal people in that area. John Ramsay, himself, lost his wife, Betsey, to smallpox, and four of his five children died, as well, as a result of that outbreak. And yet he did still contribute to their survival and establishment.

So, I'll conclude my remarks, on that note, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the opportunity to speak this morning, and encourage all members to support this resolution. Thank you very much.

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today and speak on this private member's resolution, the Icelandic Festival of Manitoba, also known as *Islendingadagurinn*.

And, of course, this is the 125th annual festival celebration this year, and it's also—something I wasn't aware of—is the second oldest continuous ethnic festival in North America. So something very exciting that we celebrate here in Manitoba.

And I want to just start off by saying, of course, it doesn't just happen that weekend, which we know every year is the August long weekend here in Manitoba, but all the organizers and volunteers, with all the work that happens ahead of time and, of course, on that weekend as well. I just want to congratulate all of those people who have been involved and all the hard work and dedication that goes into making this such a wonderful celebration for the Icelandic community in Manitoba.

My husband's afi, Eric Stefanson Sr., was one of the past chairs of this event, as well as our uncle Dennis, who passed away a few years ago, was also a past chair of the event. And I didn't have a chance ever to meet Eric Stefanson Sr., but I did know Dennis quite well and I know all of the work that he did, and with all the volunteers that he worked with, to make this event such a tremendous celebration for the Icelandic community. He loved doing it. He was in his element volunteering in the community and

helping out in such a way. And it's people like he and so many others in the community that take on those kind of leadership roles and make these things happen that make it such a wonderful celebration that it is and continues to be today.

We do know, Mr. Speaker, there are so many events that take place over the course of the weekend, whether or not it's the parade, the fireworks, athletic contests, including—I remember going—I've been to the Icelandic Festival many times in the past with my husband and kids, and his extended relatives and family from the area.

And we always love going and watching the *Islendingadunk* at the—in the harbour, where there's, I guess, an extended pole over the harbour, people gather around, and it's—and they—there's two people out on the pole and they try and knock each other off with a swing of something that I think is called the sluggers. And the first person off, obviously, loses. And it's a neat thing. Kids love watching it. It's a great part of the festival. Of course, there's so many events for kids, it's a great time for families to celebrate and to spend time together and celebrate this wonderful thing. Of course, there's music, there's visits from Icelandic dignitaries, there's a pancake breakfast. There's so many things that go on and it's a great thing for the community.

Of course, we know there's always the queen of the festival, known as the *Fjallkona*, and it's an honorary role for a prominent woman in the Icelandic community. And it's a wonderful thing to watch and to see her in her role, and the tradition around that as well, Mr. Speaker.

So, with that, I just want to say that—I want to congratulate, again, all the organizers, the volunteers that make this wonderful event happen. It is a great time to celebrate, not only the Icelandic community but all those in Gimli. It's such an honour to have this in the wonderful—in Gimli and in the area, and it's just so great.

So, again, congratulations to all of the volunteers and the organizers. And as they say in Icelandic, Mr. Speaker, *skál*.

Hon. Peter Bjornson (Minister of Housing and Community Development): Well, *takk fyrir*, thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise in the Chamber today to talk about the 125th *Islendingadagurinn*. And I have had the privilege of attending at least 50 of them, and

I'm very much looking forward to this year's 125th celebration.

And I know there's a lot that can be said about the history of the festival, as it has been around for 125 years, but I think I'll talk about it personally in my own memories of the festival, the first of which being as a young child watching the parade and being absolutely terrified by those big Vikings marching through the parade. Little did I know that a few years later I would be dressing up as a Viking, horned helmet and all, and probably guilty of terrifying a few small children along the parade route as well. And, yes, there are photos somewhere.

But there've been many fine moments and memories through the course of my experience with the Icelandic Festival. In fact, in 1875—or, pardon me, 1975, we celebrated the centennial of the settlement of Gimli, and at that particular celebration there were no less than 76 people accommodated in our house. Well, 58 of them, I think, camped, and we had 18 of them out in the—or sleeping on some floor or couch or air mattress or what have you in the house over the course of that weekend. It was all family and friends of the Icelandic Festival, and it was great to celebrate with so many friends and family.

And I distinctly remember over 100 people coming through our basement one evening to watch a film about Eldfell, which was the volcano on Heimaey, which erupted in 1973, and that was a film made by a cousin of mine. I have lots of cousins in Iceland. He had been on site in Vestmannaeyjar, the Westmann Islands, the home of Leifur Eiriksson, filming this volcanic eruption in 1973, and I remember watching that in our basement. He debuted the film, actually. We had a film debut in our basement on the Icelandic Festival weekend, and there was a lot of family and friends who took that in. That was an incredible celebration of 100 years of the Icelandic community in Gimli in the 1975 celebration.

There have been so many things that define the Icelandic Festival. I think first and foremost is family that defines the Icelandic Festival, and I know that a couple of years ago, my family reunion, my father led the charge in the parade, driving his 1938 Model H John Deere tractor that he had restored, which he started to restore when he was 70, and he drove the tractor, and his brother Sigi was sitting up on the wheel beside him, and we had about 150 of my family marching in the parade. I was in another car

as one of the dignitaries, as the MLAs tend to be, in the front of the parade, through protocol, but I was able to see my family at the end of the parade, coming through with about 150 members represented from Gudmundur Bjornson's lineage. And by our family tradition, that's actually a pretty small turnout for a family reunion, Mr. Speaker.

But I think I cut my teeth as a volunteer, actually, with the Icelandic Festival as well, volunteering when I was very young. I used to run in the athletic events that the member from Tuxedo referred to, and then I ended up running the athletic events. I also got to DJ at the socials that we used to hold at the Gimli Park Pavilion, and the member from Tuxedo's nodding and perhaps attended a few of those. And I'm not sure, when she referred to the Islendingadunk, I'm not sure if she happened to bear witness to the one time that I did enter, and I was one of the first contestants up on the pole and the rule is you're not supposed to hit in the head, but I got hit in the head, and I don't remember anything between the time I got hit in the head and I landed in the very cold harbour water.

So the members opposite have theories now that might explain a few things, perhaps, but it's about participation; it's about being with family and friends. And I know my children love it when we enter the sandcastle building competition. We have a little friendly competition with my brother's team, who actually usually wins the competition, and we have to buy lunch after that.

It's about the fireworks, as mentioned, one of the best fireworks displays that you'll see in rural Manitoba. It's about the 10-kilometre marathon race which the MLA from Minto, the Attorney General (Mr. Swan), has entered year after year. He's invited me to participate; I've respectfully declined. It's about the pancake breakfast that the seniors at Gimli New Horizons put on as volunteers, and it's a big fundraiser for them. They serve literally thousands and thousands of pancakes each day. It's about the toast to Iceland, which I had the privilege to do at the traditional ceremony last year, where I was honoured with that tradition, and that tradition involves a number of different ceremonies. It's not just about preparing a speech and giving a 10-minute toast. It's about going for a traditional flag-raising ceremony, the Fjallkona's luncheon, being in the parade in a separate vehicle as the individual with that honour to give that toast.

* (10:50)

But it is about family, and my mother and father have been long-time volunteers in the Icelandic Festival. My mother performed on the main stage at the Icelandic Festival. Where I chose to deejay at the Icelandic Festival, my son now is a performer who's been on the main stage at the Icelandic Festival.

It's about tradition, and one of the traditions is poetry. And I know my colleague, the MLA for the Interlake, did reference Dave Gislason—David Gislason, who is a poet of renown in our Icelandic community, and he was recently announced as the first *Islendingaskald*, essentially a poet-in-residence. And he is tasked with writing poems for Icelandic events over the course of the year, and it's an incredible honour. I know he was incredibly honoured by earning this title and has already delivered a couple of wonderful poems, one which was—or the first of which, I should say, was to honour the *Fjallkona*, which, as mentioned by my colleague, this year happens to be my mom, Herdi Gudrun.

So it is really something that people identify Gimli with, and, again, it is about family. And I—with my mother being the *Fjallkona*, she's accompanied by two princesses, and the princesses this year happen to be Angela and Alicia Sylvester, my nieces, and they're doing an excellent job as attendants to the *Fjallkona*. And I know that during the traditional program, the tradition includes presenting of a bouquet of flowers to the *Fjallkona*, and I know that my daughter Iris is very excited about this, as is my niece on—my brother's children; they will also be engaged in that process. So Sidney and Spencer will also be part of that presentation. So it's a very exciting opportunity for them to be part of history.

And there is 125 years of history, Mr. Speaker. There's 125 years of dignitaries from Iceland attending. We've had many presidents and prime ministers attend. We've had Miss Iceland attend on a few occasions. We've had Magnús Ver Magnússon, who earned the title of the strongest man in the world, attend. And I know it was quite a sight; something you don't see every day at the Icelandic Festival is a man pulling a large truck down the Centre Street to the cheers of thousands of people. So it's quite a variety of activities that have been part of the Icelandic Festival.

But, again, 125 years, the traditions that have been the keystone of that particular festival continue to grow and continue to be very strong. A lot of people talk about the *Islendingadagurinn* parade and

the fact that it is one of the largest parades that you'll see outside of Winnipeg, and that's a tradition that has included the participation of the Shriners. And we've had many, many Shriners over the course of the year talk about coming to Icelandic Festival and being a part of that parade. And it's one that continues to grow year after year.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm delighted that we brought this resolution forward today. I want to thank my colleague, the MLA for the Interlake, for bringing this resolution forward. And I do know that, as referenced, there's only one other festival that has been running longer in North America than *Islendingadagurinn*, and I understand it's a festival started by an Irish community in Montreal that has been going for more than 125 years.

But what it gives us an opportunity to do, it gives us an opportunity to celebrate our diversity, to celebrate our culture, to celebrate our heritage and to share our stories as Canadians about what makes this country such a great place to live, what makes this country such a great place to raise a family and what makes this country such a great place to have that expression of culture, of heritage and celebration of who we are as Canadians.

And I think when you consider the story of the Icelandic community, it's not unlike many other stories that we've heard where individuals who—I have incredible amount of admiration for our ancestors who would decide to pack everything they owned into a box, travel across an ocean and try to make life—carve life out of a very harsh environment and make life better for their future generations, and certainly *Islendingadagurinn* is a celebration of that success, a great Canadian story.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. I, too, want to just congratulate the community and all the volunteers that have worked so hard over the last 125 years to bring this celebration for Manitobans to enjoy. In fact, I know that there's several Icelandic families. In fact, when I was representing the Lunda area, the ambassador to Iceland came and we had the opportunity to show him around and it was a great opportunity. And I can remember him coming to the parade in Lunda as well. And I can tell you that it's left a moment in my mind that I will remember forever.

And I can tell you that every Manitoban in Manitoba loves to celebrate. The member from

Steinbach brought forward his resolution here this morning for the Mennonite community of 50 years and certainly this should be commended for that as well.

I will talk a little bit quickly just about some of my experiences with the Gimli weekend. I usually chase the little white ball around. I'm not really a golfer, but the Friday before I played in the golf tournament up there and it's just a great time. It's always a sellout. I don't know, you know, if people try to get in but we've been fortunate enough to be able to play in it and had just a great time.

And I can also tell you that the member from Gimli was talking about the Icelandic iron that they wear, and one year I was helping in the parade and I remember it because it was a very hot day and they were wearing their full garb and they'd just finished the parade and they collapsed. They fell off the wagon and thank goodness they were all right. But I can just imagine how hot those uniforms or gear would be on a body being closed in. So anybody that puts that full armour gear on and then goes in a parade, I salute him with all due respect. It's got to be a tough job. But they do it for a reason, because of their proud heritage, because of their beliefs and wanting to show the real, true spirit of those Icelandic roots that they have. And I know that all members of the community are so proud.

I have several family members that live in that area and they enjoy it, but also they don't enjoy it as well because there's so many people in town sometimes they just go away, you know, just to get away from the busyness. But it is an exciting time for them to be there. We see it in other communities where there's so many people that come in, and I know, you know, the police are there on full stance as well to make sure there's never a safety issue.

I can just tell you so much, Mr. Speaker, that every member in this House should be proud of their heritage and I know we all are and certainly want to wish them all the best.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, Islendingadagurinn is an amazing festival. It brings together people from around the province and it celebrates the wonderful Icelandic heritage we have in Manitoba.

I remember at one point going down to the basement of what was being the renovated old school, and there was a former university president,

Leo Kristjanson, working away, doing the repairs and talking about the communitarian spirit in Gimli and in Icelandic people.

Icelandic people have contributed so much, from the invention or the development of canola to the defence of Lake Winnipeg. We owe a great deal. Let us celebrate Islendingadagurinn.

Mr. Speaker: Further debate on the resolution?

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the private member's resolution? [*Agreed*]

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Just prior to our guests and—our move to the next private member's resolution, I'd like to introduce—in the public gallery today we have from École Guyot 23 grades 5 and 6 students under the direction of Michelle Paradis. This group is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Health (Ms. Selby).

On behalf of all honourable members, we welcome you here this morning.

Res. 23—Freedom and Dignity in Syria

Mr. Speaker: Now we'll proceed to the next private member's resolution, and the resolution is entitled Freedom and Dignity in Syria, sponsored by the honourable member for St. Paul.

Mr. Ron Schuler (St. Paul): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Gaudreau),

WHEREAS Manitoba's identity and cultural landscape have been shaped by strong historic ties with Syria; and

WHEREAS democracy, human rights and a strong civil society are values that Manitobans hold dear and want to see respected in a free Syria and around the world; and

* (11:00)

WHEREAS all Manitobans have expressed deep concern over violence that occurred against the Syrian people under President Bashar al-Assad; and

WHEREAS those who sought freedom in Syria paid a high price, and the people of Syria deserve a future where they enjoy the same dignity and rights as the people of Manitoba; and

WHEREAS in the interest of peace and democracy, the international community has condemned violence in Syria, including the use of

chemical weapons by the Assad regime on its own population; and

WHEREAS Manitobans are working together with the Syrian Assembly of Manitoba to provide humanitarian assistance for local organizations in Syria who are providing medical care for those injured activists.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba recognize and congratulate those courageous people who continue to pursue a free and democratic society in Syria and encourage Manitobans to participate in international aid; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba stand with the Syrian people through their struggle for freedom by strongly condemning all violence and anti-democratic acts, both in Syria and perpetrated against Syria; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba express its condolences to the families and friends of those who were tragically killed during the demonstrations and the free Syria movement.

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable member for St. Paul (Mr. Schuler), seconded by the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Gaudreau),

WHEREAS Manitoba's identity and cultural landscape have been shaped by strong historic ties with Syria; and

WHEREAS democracy, human—dispense?

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense. The resolution is in order.

Mr. Schuler: Mr. Speaker, when good men and women stay silent, those with evil intentions win. It is important that on every street corner, that in every school and every workplace and every town council and every legislature, everywhere people should be taking about this because democracy is not a right; it is a privilege. Democracy is something that has to be fostered, it has to be grown, and we have found out that it can be taken away very quickly.

In fact, we in the Western world, including our fine province of Manitoba, we often take a lot of things for granted. We see democracy, human rights, the rule of law as basic, fundamental and 'inalieble,' so much so that we often forget that many around the world do not enjoy these privileges and that

everyday people from all parts of the globe are engaging in a struggle to secure these basic rights.

This is exactly the struggle that persists in Syria today. Syrians are actively engaged in a revolution to bring down the Assad regime and its tyrannical reign. The people of Syria want nothing more than to enjoy the freedom and democracy that we enjoy every day here in Manitoba.

It is now Manitoba's time to stand with Syria and stand up for democracy and human rights. We have a strong cultural tie with Syria historically, and many Syrians have immigrated here over the years. We need to stand with these individuals as they support their mother country. Let us be mindful that the Western inaction in Syria has given us the problems now faced in Ukraine. Western inaction in Ukraine might give us even greater problems in other areas in the world.

This is precisely what this private member's resolution presented before you today is all about. It is about standing up for Syria. It's about encouraging Manitobans to lend a hand and contribute to the international aid of Syria and recognizing those who have already contributed so much. And, finally, it's about honouring those who have paid the ultimate price in the struggle for freedom and offering condolences to their families, friends and communities.

Canada has continued to be a leader in Ukraine and in Syria, and we commend Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Leader of the Opposition Thomas Mulcair and Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau for their bipartisan support on these issues. I urge all members to show support for this cause and use their positions of influence to help our Syrian friends.

It is important to have a quick background of the conflict in Syria to contextualize the importance of this resolution. Unrest in Syria began March 15th, 2011, as small 'groots'—small grassroots movement, and by April of 2011, widespread mass protests began to percolate throughout the country. In April of 2011, the Assad regime deployed the Syrian army to try and quell the protest and keep a grasp on their 'dictorial' reign. This led to many of the non-violent protesters being fired on and slaughtered in the streets. By July of 2011, over 3,000 civilians had been murdered by the Assad regime, and, in response, Syrians retaliated by forming the Free Syrian Army. The Assad regime pushed Syrians past the point of non-violent protest. It was time to fight back.

After years of fighting between the oppressive Assad regime and the Syrian freedom fighters, the casualty toll has already surpassed an estimated 160,000 civilians. A turning point in this conflict that will go down in history as one of the most heinous crimes that a government has ever perpetrated against its people was the use of chemical weapons by the Assad regime. In August of 2013, the Assad regime formed an air strike using chemical weapons over Al-Ghouta, killing thousands.

Since the beginning of this conflict, more than 4 million Syrians have been displaced and over 3 million Syrians have fled the country as political refugees. Millions have been left in dire living conditions with shortages of both water and food.

On February 23rd, 2014, the UN Security Council agreed unanimously to approve a resolution on the access to 'humanitarian' aid in Syria. The struggles in Syria continue to this day, and while the dynamics have changed, the threat to individuals' freedom and self-determination remains. In times of crisis, the need for aid becomes imperative. With millions of Syrians being displaced and an even larger number living in dire conditions without access to food, clean water and health services, the international community has answered this call. But more needs to be done to help address these dismal conditions.

The Syrian Assembly of Manitoba has spearheaded this effort in Manitoba, working to not only help deliver humanitarian aid and assistance, but to help provide information to Manitobans and spread awareness of this ongoing struggle for freedom. Manitobans need to work together with organizations like the Syrian Assembly of Manitoba to help in the efforts to assist those who need it most.

Part of this resolution is to commend the individuals at home in Manitoba, abroad and in Syria for their role in this struggle for democracy and freedom, whether it is in the front lines or helping to provide support to those affected first-hand by these events.

It is important that we stand up for our friends in Syria and officially condemn all violence and anti-democratic acts that are perpetrated against them. As a province within a nation that enjoys a rich and strong democracy, it is important to help our fellow human beings to achieve this basic and meaningful privilege. It not only stands to benefit Syrians, but also benefit the world as a whole. Democracies are safest when surrounded by other democracies. It is

important to stand up for what is right in this world, and when individuals want to attain a goal that we possess already, we need to lend and help. Wherever we can, we have to give a hand.

This resolution will also officially express condolences on behalf of Manitoba to all the families and friends of people who have lost their lives, have been injured or affected negatively in any way by this conflict. People who have paid this ultimate price deserve our respect and our sincerest sympathies.

It is not every day that all members of this Legislature agree on an issue. In fact, in many cases, we are polarized on issues and debate passionately about our positions. And, Mr. Speaker, this is precisely what this resolution seeks to recognize: democracy, where we have the right to stand up and freely stand up for our positions and debate as we believe is right and not have to be in fear of our lives, not have to fear for our families, not have to fear for basic needs of water and food which is denied us. We should have the right here to debate and to have our conflicts and to have our divisions, and that's what the Syrians want. They want what we have here today. We're allowed to debate and to different opinion, because in democracy, minority rights are protected. Syrians are fighting to have this right. Syrians are fighting for freedom.

I encourage all members to see this bipartisan issue for what it is, a chance to do our part to help in the struggle for freedom that Syrians are currently engaged in. I hope all members will see merit in this resolution and vote accordingly.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize members of the Syrian Assembly of Manitoba present in the gallery here today, and I hope I have the complete list in front of me: Dr. Farouk Chebib, Azeez Ciba, Yasmin Elzayat, Rami Elzayat, Tarek Habash, Laila Chebib, Salam Al Sayed, Nora Kasas, Amir Jabri, and if I've missed anybody, I apologize. But we want to recognize them and the work and the efforts they've done.

Mr. Speaker, they had a third anniversary reception on probably one of the worst Manitoba nights they could've. It was a Sunday night, and there was a big storm blowing. But what they presented that night certainly impacted me as an individual, and I know one of the NDP—one of my NDP colleagues was there, as well. And I've actually used that example—they showed different videos—and as I speak to students across this province and I go into

schools, I mention to them about the young people who have been slaughtered, fighting for what we have here. All's what they want is what we have. They want democracy and freedom.

* (11:10)

We stand up for Syria when they need us most. They deserve the privilege of democracy, freedom and human rights. For, Mr. Speaker, when good men and women stay silent, this is when those with evil intentions win.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Dave Gaudreau (St. Norbert): I want to welcome our guests today in the gallery as well.

And I'd like to take this opportunity to commend the member for St. Paul (Mr. Schuler) and welcome him back from the—from Ukraine and his mission there. And I'm very happy to see you back safely because I know that there was some danger involved there, and I really admire you for going and taking that stance on democracy because we all know in this House that, yes, we do have our arguments but democracy is important and that we can all work together on resolutions such as this. And last night we had some that we worked together, and it's very important that we have this right to voice our opinions.

I do agree with the member for St. Paul that democracy is a privilege. And what we see going on around the world right now is that those privileges and the—and human rights are being violated, like in Syria where people are being displaced; 9 million people are refugees out of their homes, and people are being killed every day.

There's atrocities going on around the world, and I think that it's important that, you know, we lend our voices to that. And, Mr. Speaker, I'll—I actually—on issues like this and the one on—that I raised yesterday about the Congo, I actually did lend my voice to that. So I'm just going to read the email that I sent to our Prime Minister in urging our federal government to take more action.

So I said, dear sir, I'm writing you with urgency. Right now there are millions of people in corners of the world that have become refugees due to violence and hatred. I'm referring, in particular, to the DR Congo and Syria. In the Congo over 1,000 women are being raped and beaten and killed every week. Women are forced to—or, sorry, children are forced to become soldiers. Girls, women, boys and men are

beaten, tortured and killed daily. The cases are similar in Syria: hundreds of thousands killed and over 9 million are homeless. Millions find themselves starving and homeless. Their tears are their only meals.

As a Canadian, I'm asking our country to take more aggressive actions to send peacekeepers and allow more refugees to come to Canada. In this day and age, this type of action should not be tolerated. As Canadians we have the resources and the riches here, and we have the obligation to the world, when atrocities like these happen, to help and to step in.

To date, the world has not answered the call, and I'm asking in writing that Canada does. I'm asking that we send a delegation to these war-torn regions and start to bring people here. Please give these children hope and the people a chance for a life in Canada. I'm begging that we start the process, open our doors to these people and ultimately save lives. I'm truly saddened and hurt by these tragedies and atrocities that are happening in the world and that more actions have not taken place.

I know that Manitoba would welcome these refugees with open arms. And, sincerely, myself.

And I know that the federal government has taken some actions in Syria. They have—there's been some pledge of \$680 million in aid from Canada to those displaced in the conflict, and I—really, I'm happy to see that and I'm happy that we are taking steps. I'm encouraging that we go further.

We all know that Manitoba is a wonderful multicultural environment, and having more people come to our province would be an amazing thing for us. And it's great for everybody involved, and it would give people that hope that they need.

We heard from the people sharing their stories yesterday of the Congo, and I'm sure that the—our members that are joining us here today from Syria would have some stories that they could share with us. And it's those personal stories that they share that really help us understand what's going on and to lend that voice, as the member for St. Paul said, to encourage more action and to try to get our country and all Manitobans to understand the issues. And hopefully we can go further and help people in Syria and all regions of the world.

We're so blessed to be here. I was listening to a human rights speaker, and she said we were—we are born lucky when we're born in Canada, and I couldn't agree more. I've never known the kinds of atrocities

and violence that these people have seen in their lifetime, and I've been lucky that I was born here. And it could happen to anybody. It could happen to any one of us. If we would've been born somewhere else, these things could be happening to us.

So I agree that we must share our voices. And I also echo the member for St. Paul's (Mr. Schuler) sentiments that we need to sincerely respect your efforts for trying to bring this to the light of day and forward and making sure that people are aware of it, so that way the people who are fighting for democracy have us on their side and all Canadians on their side, because democracy is so important. And it's important that your voices are heard, and that's what the member for St. Paul has done today, is to bring forward a resolution to bring your voices forward and to show that we are all united for you and to bring your message to the world that this can't continue to go on and that we must step up as a world and as a country to help them.

I just—I think it's really fitting, too, that with the Human Rights Museum here in Winnipeg that we are debating a resolution like this today because this is about human rights. Human rights are being violated right now in the world, and I find that deeply saddening and disheartening. It hurts me when I think about the children and the people that are going through what they're going through right now, starving and being displaced from their homes and having to live in refugee camps.

It really is a painful thing for us to think about, when, you know, we are very privileged. We don't have to experience what these people are experiencing, and it's very—it's a very heavy weight and I think that by sharing your voices and having us help share your cause that we will forward this and bring it to the world's attention and hopefully we can get some actions taken that help people and, like I said, bring more people to Manitoba. We will welcome them. We welcome the world here.

You know, we've seen 140,000 new immigrants settled in Manitoba and we would love to have more come from all regions of the world, but especially the war-torn and refugees, welcoming them here so they can have a life and they can enjoy the freedoms that we enjoy in Canada and experience democracy, and then take that experience back to their countries and help the people there build and have a democracy in their country, because I think it's—that's the most important right that leads to the human rights around the world.

So I just want to end with saying, I thank the member for St. Paul for bringing this resolution forward, and I stand with him on his stance that we should forward this to the world and make sure that we are standing with you and behind you for democracy in Syria and all around the world.

So thank you very much.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): I want to thank the member for St. Paul for bringing forward this resolution. I want to welcome to the Legislature our friends in the Syrian community. I appreciated having the opportunity to meet with some of you, together with the member for St. Paul in discussions on this resolution.

The member for St. Paul is right. We have a responsibility as Manitobans and as Canadians, to shed light on atrocities that are happening beyond our borders that are happening around the world. We don't always understand all the history. We don't always understand how things came to be in different parts of the world, but we do know that we have something special here. We are among the privileged few in the world to be able to say that we live in a democratic country, and that means we don't agree on everything all the time. That means we don't always see eye to eye on certain things, but it means we have the right to discuss those issues and we have the right to disagree.

And when there are changes in government, those things happen peacefully and they happen with order, and when there are changes of government they don't happen under the threat of a gun or the military and there isn't civil war, and that's a precious gift that we have as Manitobans and Canadians.

And for those of us who were born in Canada and have lived our lives in Canada, it's easy for us to take that for granted. I would be guilty of that myself, Mr. Speaker, because we don't know any different. So when we have the opportunity to talk to our friends in the Syrian community, for example, they tell us stories that we can hardly fathom, that we can't truly relate to but that we can feel empathy for and that we can do something about. While we can't put ourselves in their shoes necessarily, because unless you've lived through something like that I don't know how you can truly understand it. That doesn't mean that there's nothing that we can do. It doesn't mean that there's nothing we can say.

* (11:20)

It doesn't mean that we can't offer support in the ways that we can here in the Legislature, and sometimes we feel helpless when we see the things that are going on around the world. Not only do we not always quite understand how it is that these things can happen, we wonder what it is we can do about them. We turn on our TVs and we see on CNN or on the—on our national news broadcaster what's happening and we see the conflict and it looks horrific and it is horrific. And we shake our heads and say, how can this be happening in the world? But then we change the channel or we turn off the TV because, well, what more can we do? We feel the empathy, we feel sadness that these things happen in our world, but we don't know what it is that we can do.

The good thing about a country like Canada that welcomes people from around the world, is we do get perspective because it's—we can get closer to the conflict than actually being in the conflict. We don't have to be there to understand everything that's going on because we can talk to people who've come from those different countries, who've come from those different conflicts and we can ask them and they can tell us about their stories. And so it brings us a little bit closer, it brings us a little bit more perspective of their realities from the countries that they've come from and the terrible situations, such as what's happening in Syria.

So when we met with the Syrian community, together with the member of St. Paul, we said, well, what can we do? And they said well, we want information. Can you shed light, can you somehow bring some amount of attention to the issue? Well, this is one thing that we can do. We can bring forward a resolution here in the Legislature; we can stand united as MLAs. Now will that have a massive impact in Syria? Well, I'd like to think that it would, Mr. Speaker, but I'm also realistic of what our impact here is.

But we have to be able to do what we can do, because if we don't do anything—as the member for St. Paul (Mr. Schuler) says—then those who are there to perpetuate evil, they triumph. We have to use the abilities that we have.

So today we stand united as a Legislature to say that we are with the people in Syria and from Syria who want democracy, who want what we have in Canada. And to whom much is given, much is required; and we have been given a democratic country and freedoms. And so there is a greater

responsibility upon us as Canadians to do what we can to ensure that those who are struggling for freedom in different parts of the world can achieve that. There is a greater responsibility on us for those who are asking for assistance and help so that they can have freedom as well, to have what we have, that we can help them in the ways that we can.

So today we do stand united as a Legislature with the members of the Syrian community; we thank them for bringing forward their stories to us, for enlightening us, for telling us things that we didn't know, for telling us things we wish in many ways we didn't have to hear, that we didn't want to know, but it's important that we know, it's important that you tell us those things.

I know that you have shown publicly videos of what happens in Syria and they're very disturbing, from what I understand; the member for St. Paul has seen them. Nobody wishes to see those sort of images, nobody wishes to hear those kinds of stories, but we can't be blind to them. We can't turn our eyes away from them because they're real and they're happening and if we don't open our eyes to it and don't—enlightens ourselves to it, then nothing's going to change.

So I hope that what we're doing here today—and I believe that this will be supported unanimously. I appreciate the seconder that we had from the government—that I believe that the Liberal member will speak to this as well, and I expect he'll support it. I hope that the unanimous support of this Legislature here this morning will say to the Syrian community in Manitoba we support you, we stand with you, we do what we can to help the situation that's going on in your homeland and we hope and we pray and we will do what we can for democracy to come to Syria.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Bidhu Jha (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, this is a great privilege for me to speak on this particular motion brought by the member from St. Paul and I welcome the members from the Syrian community here at the Legislature to watch how we debate and how we support all the things together that are important for the humanity and for the world.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very worthy resolution for us to pass because the people, as I understand, in Syria have suffered so much; 9 million homeless, 100,000 dead, for what reason? Because they want freedom; they want democracy. And this is so sad for

the world to watch and, literally, stand by and not do much to make sure that these things are stopped and not continued. Because, as human beings, we have the responsibility to share with each other, their suffering. And Canada is, as I have spoken several times—I call it heaven on the earth. This is the country that has demonstrated the values which are so universal, so honest, for the welfare of people and living beings.

That, Mr. Speaker, I'm saddened by the dictator al-Assad's ruthless rule and using chemical weapons on their—his own people. This is the biggest tragedy of humankind, that a ruler of the country's head goes and makes the—their own people suffer. I can keep on going but, it was, at one time, the world was ruled and there were disciples and people who were their subjects. That world has changed; it has emerged a new world. A lot of freedoms have come.

I was born, Mr. Speaker, in a country that was under British rule. That's India. My grandfather from my mother's side, he was a landlord, very affluent family, but he wanted the country to be free. So he joined Mahatma Gandhi's movement, and the poor fellow was put on the ice bed and beaten ruthlessly by the police to say that, you stop, do not make the movement here because Britishers will not leave. A lot of people were really suffering. They died. But, finally, it was Gandhi's movement that led India's 450 million people to freedom.

And, today, again, I'd like to share, as all of you know, how democracy has progressed—the country's rising. And only a few weeks back, the new leader who emerged—who was stamped as being a ruthless kind of a person—but I'm led to believe that—there are five religions in India—and he got the maximum support from all of the groups—because people knew that the dynasty rule, which was just creeping up in that country, it makes one family—his daughter, his granddaughter, his would-be granddaughter—would rule the country. That is not the doctrine people want to see. That was one of the elements—anger—in the minds of people to say, we need democracy; we need equality; we need justice for all.

So, I think, Mr. Speaker, if I look back at the world and see how we can make a better world, there is nothing better than the tool that we have called democracy: to express, be free to talk and open yourselves, to give your ideas to society and see whether people buy this or not buy this. This is—democracy is for the people, by the people.

And this is what I think we are talking about. The Middle Eastern countries have been oppressed by ruthless rules—rulers, that they go and dictate and do anything that they wish to, on their people, which is not acceptable to the world.

It's a small world, Mr. Speaker. I have mentioned it before. If you look at from the planet, the small little earth, there are so many people from the earth that we are differencing each other. But to oppress our own people is literally not—immoral. It is really—if there is any justice in the name of any god, this is absolutely a very big sin for anyone, to oppress their own people.

So I'd like to just say this, that Canada is a country that has demonstrated several times—we are not perfect in everything, Mr. Speaker. We do debate. We, at times, disagree, but, at the end, democracy has given the freedom. People can speak freely and they have the right to go and do anything that they want to do; they do it within the law of the country.

* (11:30)

So I would encourage all of us here to unite and support and continue this movement, to make sure that, not only Syria but other countries in the neighbourhood of the Middle East get the freedom. Your children, your grandchildren, need to breathe fresh air and free air that you deserve. And God has created all of us to be equal, so fight for it, but do it in a peaceful way and don't take rules and laws in your hands. And I am a Gandhi follower, and I think that we need to really prove that, yes, the voice of democracy can work.

So with that, I think I would like to end up and thanking member from St. Paul and—for your wonderful effort here to bring this resolution. I think the people of Syria deserve better. You need freedom, you need the dignity that you deserve.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I rise to join other members and to indicate that the Liberal Party, as the Conservative and the NDP parties, are fully supportive of efforts, of your efforts, to bring attention to what is happening in Syria, to do what we can here and to work with you in trying to look for a better future and a better path.

What we are saying in this resolution, which I thank the member for St. Paul (Mr. Schuler) for bringing forward, is basically this: that we recognize

that the problems that are occurring now—that right now Syria is going through one of the most difficult times of any country in the world, that the conflict, the dislocation of people, the death, the injury, the circumstances that are happening in Syria should not be happening, but they are. And somehow, you know, we have to come to grips with that and we have to figure out what is a path moving forward.

We thank you all for coming today, for helping to bring attention and, by your efforts, to have a discussion here. And though we are far away from on the ground what is happening in Syria, sometimes things happening in different parts of the world can have a bearing on what happens in Syria.

And sometimes ideas that come from places like Winnipeg or Canada can have an influence, and so the discussion that we are having today is in part about recognizing what's happening; it's a part about having the dialogue to search for small things or big things that can be done that can make a difference.

Right now, we—to some extent, it seems so hopeless, but, you know, in—even in the worst of situations, if we look carefully, there must be some way, there must be some things that are happening—there are some things that are happening that are trying to move Syria toward a much better place than it has been. And it is important, because of the way things work around the world, that people around the world are ready, as we are with this resolution, to say we stand with you, we cry with you about what is happening. And we are ready to see what we can do in this Chamber, what we are doing today, but in a larger context what we can do, whether it be one on one or as a larger group, to try and make a difference.

Oh, Syria is a really important country. You know, many things that were at the early stages of human civilization were things which happened in and around the area where Syria is. It is a proud country which has had, you know, an incredible history which has contributed in a global sense enormously to human civilization and to the development of teachings, whether coming through religions or in other ways, to learning, to ethics, to what we are now as a global society. And it is time that we harness not only that history, that understanding, but we harness the goodwill that I believe is there around the world, if we can harness it fully to enable Syria and that area to come to a much better place. It is not going to be easy. It seems at times hopeless, but we must never give up.

We had a group yesterday from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and we're working with them, and it is important because Syria, you know, has such a, you know, a recent situation of such difficulty that we are prepared to work with you and to see what we can do in any way to promote and to push for change. There is a need in Syria, clearly, for freedom. There is a need in Syria for recognition of human rights. There is a need in Syria for a recognition of the rights of minorities, and these are things that even though the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights was more than 60 years ago—66 years ago, I would think—that we are still, you know, a long way from beating what was talked about in—and declared by countries around the world. And somehow we have to figure out a way, one by one, piece by piece, to seek other ways of solving problems and to seek ways that will not have the devastation, the terrible impact that we are seeing in Syria.

And I am sure that many of you have some thoughts or some ideas, and we want to encourage you and be ready to work with you in looking at any way that can make a difference. Sometimes it is small things. Sometimes it is bigger ideas, but let us do whatever we can, whatever we possibly can to help this situation.

And we rely, in part, on you because you are to some extent our bridge from here in Manitoba to the situation in Syria. And we look forward to working with you in any way we can to try and improve things for you, to share things that we have learned here that may be of help, and as we move later this year to opening the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, to hope that it will be part of a larger movement that will help to spread understanding not only of problems, but of how problems have been solved.

So thank you so much for coming. We welcome you, and we just hope that there is a better place ahead for all of us. Thank you.

Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East): I, too, would like to add a few words of support to our Syrian friends that are here in the gallery today for peace and democracy in Syria.

And we as Canadians, as Manitobans, take so much for granted here. We are isolated, and I know that those that have immigrated here from war-torn countries, from countries where there's a lot of violence and no democracy, we learn from them the kinds of horrible things that have happened and the

families that are torn apart, communities that are torn apart as a result of the violence that does occur.

* (11:40)

And, Mr. Speaker, we—our hearts go out to them and we need to stand here united in our country of Canada and Manitoba and say no—say no—to that kind of activity that is going on and commit ourselves every day to trying to ensure that we can do whatever we can do. And, as my colleague always says, you know, if good people are silent, that's where evil men take over. And we cannot remain silent. We need to stand united, and I'm so glad to see that this is the kind of resolution that we can set aside our partisan differences in this Legislature and stand united with one voice and say no—say no—to what's going on in Syria, and to support those that have come.

And, you know, we are so fortunate that we can speak out. We have the opportunity to bring in legislation, to have all-party support for legislation that supports immigration to our country, talks about multiculturalism and the importance we place on multiculturalism in Manitoba, in Canada. And I have been around the Legislature for several years and I did have the proud opportunity, as the minister responsible for culture, heritage and multiculturalism, to bring in the first ever multiculturalism act in our province many years ago. That was in the early '90s, and that legislation still exists today because it's legislation that does talk about the rights and the responsibilities of all cultures that come and settle here in our province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, also, too, we in Manitoba have a proud history of an immigration agreement that encourages immigration to our province. The Provincial Nominee Program is one of those that has been extremely successful. It was negotiated and signed in the 1990s and that has continued to see increasing numbers of immigrants come to our country, come to our province, to settle here, to work here and to contribute here.

So we have a proud history and tradition. We only wish that all countries around the world had the freedom and the democracy and the opportunity to have what we enjoy here as a country, as a province, and we welcome you here to the Legislature today. We want you to know that we stand with you in your struggles, and your struggles are our struggles. We need to speak out clearly and with one voice that the kinds of things that are happening in Syria today cannot be tolerated, that we need to stand united with

one voice and say no, and we want you to know that we, as members of the Legislature, stand with you and support you and want to ensure that there's peace and that families have the ability to grow and thrive in Syria and everywhere around the world.

So I'm glad we had the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, this morning to voice our concerns about what is happening and to support each other in very difficult times.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Shannon Martin (Morris): Mr. Speaker, It's my pleasure to rise this morning and add some comments to this very important resolution, a resolution obviously designed for the members of this Assembly to add their voice to the situation that's occurring halfway around the world.

And I listened intently to the member for St. Norbert's (Mr. Gaudreau) comments and he's absolutely right about the—and really, what it comes down to is the good fortune that we have as Manitobans to live in Manitoban—or Manitoba and the freedoms that we have and how, oftentimes, it's just a—it's a matter of where we happen to be born that has such, obviously, a determinant in our lives. And right now the people of Syria are finding that as they fight for democracy and the expression of free will within that country.

Mr. Speaker, I've had the good fortune to come—I've mentioned before I come from a military family. My father was a peacekeeper in Cyprus. My brother-in-law was a peacekeeper in Bosnia and Herzegovina. So I know all too well the importance of Canada the—as a nation, our involvement in these conflicts that occur not just in Syria, obviously, but around the world, and how vital our involvement is in protecting non-combatants.

As a—as the member for St. Paul (Mr. Schuler) commented, and it was quite a striking number, that the number of civilian casualties, I believe he had said, was 200,000. I mean, 200,000 individuals, you could take—I mean, to take the entire populations of Brandon, Thompson, Winkler, Steinbach, and you could name a couple others and you still wouldn't be at 200,000. Like the entire population's simply disappearing. I mean, I guess it would be the equivalent of one in six Manitobans disappearing. And if we just look around these Chambers and imagine, or look around your own family and friends, imagine that one-in-six of them suddenly disappearing because they're a victim of violence,

and that violence is simply as a result of their desire to better their situation, their desire to have a voice in their political system.

And oftentimes what happens, Mr. Speaker, is that those institutions, and in this case the Assad regime, becomes so fearful of individuals that want to have, want to be a participant in government and recognize the injustices that occur around themselves and around their communities in their country. And oftentimes that initially these protests start as simply that, as peaceful demonstrations of individuals and concerned individuals stepping out and saying, you know, there's problems. There's human rights issues in our country and they want to bring attention to those rights, and suddenly they find themselves brutally crushed to the point that now arms have been taken up on both sides, and the brutality is something that we see on the news, but as many colleague across this House commented, that we simply just cannot fathom because it is just that, images on a television.

And, you know—and, unfortunately, with the world we live in those images are quickly replaced, Mr. Speaker, by the latest images of another atrocity going on in the world. And that's why I think by all of us coming out and talking about the freedom and dignity in Syria, the necessity—the major component, I think, from this resolution is our role as legislators, as leaders in our own communities and as—and—is to educate people and make sure people aren't forgetting that just because it may not be in the 6 o'clock news anymore, and that has gone on for years, that what's happening and what we think was happening in Syria, obviously, is very much still happening in Syria and deserves our attention, and that attention can take many, many forms.

The member of St. Norbert read from a letter that—some correspondence that he sent to the Prime Minister urging national action. There can obviously be involvement in your local church, for example, Mr. Speaker, sharing your prayers with the people of Syria. There's a number, obviously, of humanitarian agencies, because the humanitarian need in Syria obviously is something that is unparalleled for that country in its history. And in many instances it is those most vulnerable citizens that are in need of this aid. So not only are we talking about the civilian population, but, obviously, in large instances children, the elderly and the infirm are the first victims of when this brutal violence occurs. And individuals are being transported or forced to relocate and become refugees either within their own

country or forced without of their—without—or out of their country.

But this is the situation that we see today in Syria and this is the situation that we can't forget that's occurring in Syria. We need to make sure that we're standing as legislatures and as an Assembly to say that what's happening there isn't acceptable and that we in the strongest terms not only condemn it, but that we stand in support of those individuals that join us today and, obviously, Syrians across the world and in their own country that are attempting to make their voice heard, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that the loss of those 200,000 civilians, it doesn't simply become a statistic for the history books but, in fact—or a footnote for the history books, but, in fact, is something to be looked back on and say that their loss ultimately did lead—obviously tragically, but did lead to the creation of a democratic state.

* (11:50)

We're obviously nowhere closer to that, and, I mean, we're seeing the desperation that the Assad regime is going to as they try to hold onto power, Mr. Speaker. We've seen on the news and we've had the United Nations investigating and confirming the use of chemical weapons the Assad regime is using against its own—again, against its own civilian population. And it gives you idea, obviously, the lengths that this—the regime will take to hold onto power and to hold onto that institution of power even if it means literally the brutal, brutal slaughter of its own population.

That you've gone from—I remember earlier on in the conflict when the regime was denying the existence of any chemical weapons, and finally they, you know, obviously, as a stalling tactic, acknowledged those—the existence of those weapons, but unfortunately in many instances that acknowledgement came from outside agencies investigating chemical strikes and confirming that the victims did indeed die as a result of chemical weapons, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's the conflict, obviously, as I noted earlier, is displacing not just—we referenced the 200,000 casualties, but I believe the comment was that upwards of 3 million refugees of Syria. And, again, it's a number that's unfathomable and difficult for us to comprehend here in Manitoba. I mean, a population of 1.2 million people, and yet, I mean, basically take western Canada and relocate all of us, and why? Because we asked and wanted to believe in something, a brighter future.

And so the sacrifices and the situations that are going on in Syria today, Mr. Speaker, is a crisis. It's a crisis that the world needs to wake up to. It's a struggle for democracy and freedom, and this is why that I'm hoping and I'm confident that the resolution will receive the necessary unanimous support so that we are able to acknowledge not only the high price being paid by the Syrian people as they attempt to establish a democratic state, but, in the strongest terms possible, that we're condemning violence in Syria, the use of those chemical weapons I referenced earlier, and that we're—as the resolution notes, that we're congratulating the courageous people who continue to pursue a free and democratic society in Syria, and obviously encouraging everyone to do what they can to help and assist with the humanitarian crisis that is occurring.

Mr. Speaker, I hope, along with, I'm sure, everyone here, that the resolution and the conflict—sorry, the conflict winds down, and I have no doubt that as the conflict winds down there will be trials, and hopefully, through those, continued justice for the people of Syria—

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

Is there any further debate on this private member's resolution?

Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the private member resolution? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Gaudreau: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if you could canvass the House to see that we pass this unanimously.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to let the record show that this private member's resolution was passed unanimously? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Gaudreau: Mr. Speaker, I also wonder if you could canvass the House to see that you send a copy of this to the Speaker of the House of Commons and the Senate and ask them to distribute it to all members as well as send a copy to the Syrian embassy.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to—ask requested, to have this—myself, as Speaker, forward a

copy of this resolution to the Speakers of the Senate and the Parliament of Canada for distribution to all members of those two institutions? *[Agreed]*

An Honourable Member: And the Syrian embassy.

Mr. Speaker: And to the Syrian embassy. Okay, we'll undertake to do that.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to recognizing the honourable Official Opposition House Leader, we have some guests in the gallery that I would like to recognize. We have in the public gallery from École Bannatyne, we have 46 grades 4 and 5 students under the direction of Karina Scham. This group is located in the constituency of the Minister of Healthy Living.

On behalf of all honourable members, we welcome you here this morning.

House Business

Mr. Speaker: Official Opposition House Leader, on House business?

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): On House business, Mr. Speaker.

In accordance with rule 31(9), I'd like to announce that the private member's resolution that will be considered next Thursday is the resolution on northern mining—Northern Manitoba Mining Academy, brought forward by the honourable member for Spruce Woods (Mr. Cullen).

Mr. Speaker: It has been announced that, in accordance with rule 31(9), that the private member's resolution that will be considered next Thursday is the resolution on Northern Manitoba Mining Academy, brought forward by the honourable member for Spruce Woods.

Mr. Speaker: Now, the honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Goertzen: Is it the will of the House to call it 12 o'clock, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it 12 noon? *[Agreed]*

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, June 5, 2014

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