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DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Ninth Legislature

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, October 2, 2008

The House met at 10 a.m.

PRAYER

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Deputy Official Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I rise in my esteemed position as Deputy House Leader of the Official Opposition to ask if you would canvass the House to see if there is leave to call Bill 240 as the first order of debate for private members' business.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House for us to go directly to Bill 240, The Justice for Victims of Child Pornography Act? [*Agreed*]

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 240—The Justice for Victims of Child Pornography Act

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck), that Bill 240, The Justice for Victims of Child Pornography Act, be now read a second time and referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Goertzen: Thanks you very much, Mr. Speaker, and good morning to members of the Assembly.

It's a pleasure to speak to Bill 240. I first want to acknowledge that the idea for this bill originally came forward about a year ago following a meeting with representatives of Beyond Borders here in the province of Manitoba. Many members of the Assembly and most, I'm sure, will know that currently under the Criminal Code of Canada if an individual is found to be in possession, making, distributing child pornography, they can be subject to the Criminal Code violations. Of course, they can be charged and if they're convicted, there's a certain criminal penalty that includes jail time that would follow a conviction of possession, distributing or creating child pornography.

However, there is a difficulty and a gap in the law when it comes to civil remedies. Members of this House will know the distinction between a criminal procedure where an individual's liberty is at stake and a civil remedy where there is a financial

penalty that is rewarded to somebody who has been victimized.

The challenge when it relates to child pornography is many of the children, and often I would say most of the children, who appear in images of child pornography are unknown and unidentified because they're often from another part of the world.

So those children, of course, can't bring a civil action in civil court against somebody who has been convicted of child pornography using their images because they're unidentified and we don't know who they are. There are, of course, some cases where the child would be known and then an action could be brought by them or on their behalf. For the vast majority of cases, the children who appear in these images are unidentified, so the child predators who are distributing or creating those images could face criminal sanction but not civil sanction.

Ms. Marilyn Brick, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

One of the things we've learned, and I've learned from people and organizations like Beyond Borders is that if you truly want to get at the root and try to reduce this particular heinous crime—I know that all members of this House would agree that child pornography is among the most disturbing crimes in our society—you need to take and have a financial remedy against the individuals who are committing that crime. We know sometimes, and we've seen the government take civil action against car thieves, for example, and where the government or MPI will sue civilly the car thieves to try to get money back. Often the challenge and difficulty there, of course, is that car thieves quite often don't have the financial resources, so it becomes, not unimportant but more difficult when it comes to those civil remedies.

That's not the case necessarily with child pornography where many of the individuals who are convicted under the Criminal Code do have financial wherewithal and could be punished civilly by having a reward, a judgment of money, put against them. That is what this bill is intended to do, to ensure that it acts as a deterrent by ensuring that the government can sue in the place of these unknown victims of crime, these unknown children, because they can't sue on their own behalf.

The logical question, of course, comes forward in that, well, what would happen to this money because, in a normal civil case where you would have a person bringing forward a civil case and there would be a tort involved and there would be a reward given to somebody perhaps by a judge, then the money would go to the individual who is suing on behalf of the damage that had occurred to them. In this case, we don't know who the victim is, so the money would go, after the government sued on behalf of these unknown victims, these children, to a fund.

That fund could be used in a lot of different ways. It could be used to support groups like Beyond Borders and other groups who are trying to advocate to reduce child pornography. It could go to police programs that are intended to reduce and to combat child pornography. It could be used to help fund the civil litigation of the known victims of child pornography where somebody wants to sue because they've been a victim of child pornography but they don't financially have the wherewithal to sue. It would help them do that. It could go into the victims of crime act to be used to help support other victims of crime. Of course, if the children were ever identified in a particular case, it would go to them in the future.

I realize and I know that the government will probably have some opposition to the bill because they will stand up and say, well, we're not sure if this will pass constitutional tests and whether or not this impedes upon Criminal Code sanctions. We've heard those arguments before, and I've been a part of hearing some of those arguments before from members opposite.

Remember when the former Filmon government brought in the civil remedies act and the safer neighbourhoods act to shut down drug houses and prostitution houses—[interjection] I know the Member for Fort Rouge (Ms. Howard) is surprised that that was the Filmon government who brought it in, but if she checks through her records, she'll see the government brought in and passed that legislation prior to the 1999 election. She's probably heard otherwise, and I'm happy to illuminate her on that fact this morning. When we brought that legislation in, there were many people who said, well, you're really impeding on Criminal Code violation because drug houses and the act of selling drugs is a Criminal Code violation.

There was a way that we could use a civil remedy against those individuals because the property rights and the civil litigation tied to them was a provincial jurisdiction under the Constitution. So, despite the fact that members of the government questioned whether or not it would in fact be constitutional, and I know there were some defence lawyers and professors who said it might not be constitutional and spoke against it, that law has not only stood the test of time, but it is now trumpeted by the NDP government who try to claim it as their own, even though it was brought in and to some extent disputed by the NDP government in 1999.

*(10:10)

I also remember the act where vehicles could be seized upon for individuals who were drinking and driving. There again, there are members of the community and some professors and defence lawyers who said, this is not constitutional; you can't use the civil courts to go after what is arguably a criminal cause. I believe that that law was tested and was found to be constitutional.

So I fully expect and I'm willing to engage in discussion with members of the opposition or members of the government. Members of our opposition say that they don't believe that the law is constitutional, that they would be concerned about the constitutionality of it.

I would say that sometimes, when it comes to reform of the justice system, you have to step out of it a little bit and you have to be bold. We've proven in the past that, when you do that, you're rewarded and you can be rewarded by finding good ways in a provincial context, in a civil litigation context, to clamp down on crimes that all of society believes are wrong.

So the government is really faced with a decision here. I know that all members of this House are opposed to this heinous crime; that's not the question. The question is whether or not they have the fortitude to step out and to say we are going to be bold with a particular piece of legislation.

I've had the opportunity to talk to constitutional lawyers, some of who are quite renowned and esteemed and have served in this Legislature themselves, who believed that this law would pass the constitutional test. So if you want to be bold, if you want to ensure that we're doing all that we can to clamp down on a crime that all of us believe is a

heinous crime against innocent children, you'll support this legislation.

If you choose to stand with the defence lawyers and those who hide behind constitutional wrangling, then that's obviously going to be your choice. But I ask all members to come forward and to support this bill because I believe that it will be groundbreaking, adopted across Canada, and something that we can say in Manitoba was a Manitoba first, a Manitoba solution to try to reduce child pornography not only in Manitoba but across Canada.

That's a goal we can all unite on, regardless of our political stripes. Thank you very much, Madam Acting Speaker.

Hon. Andrew Swan (Minister of Competitiveness, Training and Trade): Madam Acting Speaker, I thank the Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) for bringing this bill forward and for opening up the debate and the discussion in this House, because child pornography certainly is a very serious issue. I think that anything any member of this House can do to raise the profile of this concern and to seek out ways to deal with this issue is a positive one.

When I look through the bill that the Member for Steinbach has put forward, I see that it is an attempt to deal with, really, two important goals. Number one is to find more ways to provide more deterrents, greater penalties, if you will, or greater financial difficulties for those who choose to make, to distribute, to publish, possess, to access child pornography, and that's laudable.

The other important issue which was raised by the Member for Steinbach is to try and find ways to create greater remedies for victims and also greater resources for different organizations which are working very hard in Manitoba and elsewhere to try and fight child pornography.

So I acknowledge the Member for Steinbach in trying to find some ways to deal with an issue which I think all governments across Canada and North America and, indeed, across the world are struggling with. So I don't criticize the Member for Steinbach for bringing this forward; in fact, I acknowledge his efforts.

I am going to make some comments about some of the particular difficulties that any government faces and some of the difficulties with the bill as it's presented. Having said that, I am going to look forward to hear what other members from all sides have to say about this bill, because I think it's a good

thing. Any opportunity we have to debate this in this House, I think, is a good thing for children not just in Manitoba but elsewhere.

I describe this as a struggle, and the fight against child pornography is a struggle because, unlike many other forms of criminal activity in which, if there is a victim, it's an easily defined victim, a victim which is within Manitoba's jurisdiction, because of the Internet, because of the ability of people to send images through the Internet from anywhere in the world, we're dealing not just with victims here in Manitoba, but victims across the world, and that creates some major complications for law enforcement. That does create some major issues for legislators as we try to find ways to deal with this problem. So, many of the victims of child pornography, when there are arrests made—and thankfully, arrests are made and people are being brought to justice—the pool of victims, again, is not simply a group of children within the province of Manitoba, but indeed anywhere around the world.

So I do have some concerns that the way the Member for Steinbach would like to go about this is going to cause problems. That doesn't necessarily mean it's not something that should be pursued, but I think it's something we need to talk about more and we need to consider very, very, carefully.

You know, I had the opportunity when I served as the legislative assistant to the Minister of Justice to learn more about this issue, and actually hear that indeed across the country, whatever a government's political stripe, there is not just unity but certainly interest in moving this forward. I know, even among the western Attorneys General, I had a chance to attend with our Justice Minister. I met with Wally Oppal, who is the Attorney General of British Columbia, Ron Stevens, who was the Attorney General of Alberta, who is now the Deputy Premier, and Frank Quennell, who was the Attorney General in Saskatchewan before changing government there. I expect his successor is equally interested in this issue.

Now, in western Canada, you've got four different political parties, at least for the three most western provinces—different in name, at least—all of whom I believe share Manitoba's concern about this. Indeed, across Canada we have different political parties and different governments, all of whom I believe are interested in finding some creative and appropriate ways to deal with this. So there has been a great deal of talk at the FPT, the

federal-provincial-territorial level, of moving ahead on the national front to deal with this issue. I think that's positive. I'm very proud that Manitoba has been at the forefront in encouraging this to happen and it was my understanding that, but for the election being called, we might have had some movement on the national front.

Now, my friend from Steinbach may say, well, look, just because you think things are happening on the national front doesn't mean you shouldn't move ahead on the provincial front, and that may be fair comment. I know, in some cases, Manitoba has stepped ahead when the federal government has moved too slowly, or hasn't moved. I look at the work my friend, the Minister for Water Stewardship (Ms. Melnick), has done on moving ahead when the national government has lagged behind. My gut sense, Madam Acting Speaker, is that this isn't the case. The federal government is very concerned on this issue and they do have the co-operation, whatever the political stripe, of the provincial governments of moving ahead to protect children. But, again, it's not just a matter of protecting children in Manitoba, it's a matter of protecting children across Canada and across the world.

We are very lucky in this province to have the Canadian Centre for Child Protection and we are very pleased to partner with its predecessor organization, Child Find Manitoba, to deal with trying to prevent and to bring to justice those who are involved in online child sexual exploitation. Cybertip, of course. Cybertip.ca was begun here in Manitoba through a partnership of the government and Child Find Manitoba and it has been tremendously successful. The way that Cybertip has been successful though is not by necessarily dealing only within Manitoba's jurisdiction, but in terms of providing information to law enforcement, not just across North America, but across the world when they receive reports of online child pornography. I understand that, at the last count, Cybertip.ca, based here in Winnipeg, has received nearly 25,000 reports from the public. Over 90 percent of those reports relate to child pornography. Reports to Cybertip have resulted in at least 30 arrests across the world, including six arrests here in Manitoba. Cybertip also tells us, as I think everybody knows, that this is a matter of serious concern, not just for governments, but for citizens across Canada. They pointed to a poll from 2005 which tells us that 92 percent of Canadians are concerned about child pornography being distributed on the Internet. I guess my only

surprise in that poll is the 8 percent of Canadians who don't think it's a problem. Madam Acting Speaker, 96 percent of Canadians feel it's important to have a place to report child pornography on-line, and we can be very proud that Manitoba has stepped up to be a leader on that front.

* (10:20)

Manitoba has also taken steps. We have been the first in the country to take steps to protect children. As all members of this House will be aware, we recently brought in Bill 7, which is first of its kind legislation that makes the reporting of child pornography mandatory.

Just as the reporting of child abuse has become mandatory in this province, so, too, is reporting of child pornography mandatory from all segments of our society. We think this is a very good thing.

I'm very pleased that our government supports the Integrated Child Exploitation Unit in which the RCMP and Winnipeg police work together to protect children from Internet luring, child pornography and other similar dangerous situations. Indeed, when Alberta moved ahead to set up its model, its child exploitation unit, it did look to Manitoba as a model.

As I've said, we established Cybertip.ca with Child Find Manitoba in 2002, and, of course, Cybertip has expanded nationwide and, as of January of this year, they've said it has resulted not only in 38 arrests, but the removal of 2,850 Web sites from the Internet.

So, certainly, again, I acknowledge the Member for Steinbach stepping up to try and take some steps to open the debate on what continues to be a serious issue in this province and in this country and, although it's a good attempt, I believe there are some concerns with the impact of the law. I believe, as well, that the best we can do as Manitobans is to continue to stand strong to press our national government—at whichever that will be after October 14—to take steps to deal with this on a national basis. Frankly, whichever government is elected to Ottawa, I do feel strongly that they will move on this. Each province and each territory believes they should move. Citizens across the country speak and tell us they should move on it.

But certainly, I'm going to let other members participate in this debate. Again, it's a good thing. Again, congratulations to the Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) for opening up the debate today, and

I look forward to hearing what other members have to say. Thank you very much.

Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina): I certainly am pleased to get up and support Bill 240, the bill that has been brought forward by the Member for Steinbach, and I want to congratulate him on doing a lot of research into the information that he put on the record just a few minutes ago. He mentioned organizations such as Beyond Borders and others who are attempting to look at those who are vulnerable within our society in order to assist them in some way. I think the bottom line of this is, first of all, the prevention of child pornography. But we also know that there are those who are the victims of this.

But before I get into some of the comments on that, I guess I just want to indicate that I was listening to the minister, the MLA for Minto and the comments that he was making. He talked about the difficulties that governments had and that they as a government have in bringing forward a bill such as this. I would submit to the minister and ask him, if they really see this as being such a problem, I'm sure that the Member for Steinbach would be very pleased to sit down with him and to try and resolve some of the issues that are out there that he foresees.

I know from listening to the minister that, certainly, they are supportive of this bill.

On the other hand, using words such as "would attempt to" and "we find it difficult to," comments like that lead me to believe that they will not support this private member's bill, and that's disappointing.

And, yes, as has been done previously, they will listen to the comments that are made here, they will put the content of the comments that have been made, probably listen to or read the comments that the Member for Steinbach made, and then, in the final end, in a year or maybe two, they will come up with their own bill and put it in place, and really what they will have done is just use the information that the Member for Steinbach has been looking at, researching, and putting that in place.

I guess the saddest part of it would be that they will probably never do anything with it, although they agree that there is a big problem out there. Again, Madam Acting Speaker, I would submit to you that whether we have young children, whether we have grandchildren, it doesn't matter but these are the vulnerable children in our society who are being exploited.

Here is an attempt by the Member for Steinbach to put a bill forward to try and get consensus from this body here, whether it's government or whether those in opposition, but to try and get some consensus as to a direction that we could go, that we could in some way mitigate the concerns and the problems that are out there.

Madam Acting Speaker, as I indicated before, I find it interesting that the minister would get up and use some of the words that he did when, in fact, I would suggest that he does agree with the bill because he, time and a time again, referred to it and said, yes, there are problems out there. There are problems that need to be addressed, that it is those that are vulnerable within our society that are being attacked by those who, in fact, are putting this on the Internet. Again, he indicated it was very difficult to monitor and that is correct. I would agree with comments that he made there.

But, again, I would suggest and encourage, if it's the minister who finds the biggest problem, that he arrange for a meeting with the Member for Steinbach, get together, try and resolve some of the issues that are out there.

I realize that this is a complex issue. As has already been stated, a lot of those people who are putting this onto the Internet are probably not even living within this country, so it is more and more difficult to trace people like that, but I do find it disturbing that we would not try to proceed as quickly as possible in order to put forward legislation that, at least in some small way, would be a deterrent.

I know that the comment that was also made was one of where the whole area of the vehicles stolen within the province, that they have worked at trying to resolve some of those issues. Now I think that every attempt that is made out there to try and resolve those issues is important but, further to that, something does need to be done.

Here again, we as opposition are bringing forward a bill. We are bringing forward a bill that is nothing new. We know that this is out there. We know that the problem exists, so we are asking the government of the day to stand together with us and to put this bill in place, which would help to resolve some of the issues that are out there.

I know also that the bill itself, if you read it and the comments that are made—and I would just put the explanatory note; I'd like to put that on record as

well—and it says that this bill allows an application to be made to court for an award of damages from a person convicted of a child pornography offence on behalf of his or her unidentified child victims. The damages recovered will be used to benefit victims of child pornography and to assist programs working against child pornography.

Now, Madam Acting Speaker, when you look at a bill like this, the content of it isn't great but I know that what would follow would be the regulations—*[interjection]* I mean, the content, the wording. I apologize; I will rephrase this: The content is great; it's the wording that is just a short paragraph. That's what I'm trying to say. Thank you for the correction. The Member for Morris (Mrs. Taillieu) corrected me on this.

What I was going to say was that the regulations are the ones that follow, so I apologize to the Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) because he felt that I was somehow, some way, implying that his wording was not good. The wording is excellent. I think I have now made that—I've spent enough time on trying to explain what I misrepresented here before.

An Honourable Member: Remember, it's Kelvin's bill.

Mr. Dyck: That's right; it is.

An Honourable Member: You seconded it.

Mr. Dyck: And I seconded it. I agree with the bill. So, yes, I must proceed, Madam Acting Speaker.

The point I wanted to make was that the regulations that follow are the ones that again outline and detail the specifics of the bill. I just want to indicate that I find it interesting that the government of the day would get up, that they would say that they see problems with it, they see difficulties with it as a government, but would not be prepared to sit down with the Member for Steinbach and try and work out some of the details which would, in fact, make it a bill that could be implemented within the province.

* (10:30)

Again, as I said before, it's possible, as has happened before, that within a year or two we will probably see a similar bill brought forward by the government. They will use the information that we have here. They will put that into a bill, a government bill, and then they will proceed with it. I guess, ultimately, if that's the only way that we can

get some sort of a bill brought forward, that's the route that we will have to go.

But, again, I would encourage the government to look at this and, again, read some of the comments that were made by the Member for Steinbach, to look at them, to try and see what areas that he has brought forward, that they would be able to put into a bill, that somehow we can resolve the problems that are out there. I know that this is not going to put an end to it, but it is a start. It is a small start.

So, again, I congratulate the Member for Steinbach for bringing forward this Bill 240, The Justice for Victims of Child Pornography Act, and encourage all members here to support this piece of legislation and this private member's bill. Thank you very much.

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): I rise to speak on Bill 240, The Justice for Victims of Child Pornography Act. This bill allows an application to be made to court for an award of damages from a person convicted of a child pornography offence on behalf of his or her unidentified child victims. The damages recovered will be used to benefit victims of child pornography and to assist programs working against child pornography. I would like to say at the outset that we support the principle contained in this bill.

Now, we know that this is a serious problem, child pornography, and needs to be addressed. Our government has a good record of action in this regard, and I will mention a number of those items, the first one being Cybertip.ca and, because of Cybertip.ca, we have a lot of information about the extent of the problem of child pornography, for example, Cybertip.ca has received nearly 25,000 reports from the public, over 90 percent related to child pornography. Madam Acting Speaker, 93 percent of confirmed child pornography reports are images of children under the age of eight, which is absolutely appalling. I haven't seen these statistics before, but they are not pleasant reading.

Madam Acting Speaker, 38 percent of confirmed child pornography reports involve sex acts; 20 percent of confirmed child pornography reports involve a commercial aspect; reports to Cybertip.ca have resulted in at least 30 arrests, including six Manitobans; 92 percent of Canadians are concerned about child pornography being distributed on the Internet, according to a survey that was taken; only 30 percent of children who disclose that they've been sexually abused do so during childhood; 96 percent

of Canadians feel it is important to have a place to report child pornography on-line.

On average, the U.S. national centre for missing and exploited children's cyber tip line receives 700 to 1,100 reports per week. This cyber tip line reviews 75,000 to 100,000 images, videos a week, forwarded from U.S. law enforcement. We know that the cyber tip line began first in Manitoba under our government.

In March of this year, I attended a youth-at-risk conference. It was a very interesting and excellent conference. There were many, many seminars and presentations to choose from. I attended a seminar about child sexual abuse. I was very pleased that the seminar leaders said that Manitoba and Canada were leaders in this area. In fact, he said there were things that American jurisdictions could learn from Manitoba and Canada. So we're proud of our record in this regard, but there still remains much to be done, and that's probably why the Member for Steinbach put forward his bill today.

We recently brought in Bill 7, first of its kind legislation that makes the reporting of child pornography mandatory. I think this probably builds on existing legislation in The Child and Family Services Act that makes reporting of child abuse an obligation on the public. We support the Integrated Child Exploitation Unit in which the RCMP and Winnipeg police work together to protect children from Internet luring, child pornography, et cetera. When Alberta set up its child exploitation unit, it looked to Manitoba as a model.

We set up Canada's second AMBER Alert protocol with the co-operation of the province, police, the radio media and Child Find Manitoba in 2003.

Manitoba established Cybertip.ca with Child Find Manitoba, federal and industry partners in 2002. Cybertip has expanded nationwide and, as of January, 2008, it has resulted in 38 arrests and the removal of 2,850 Web sites from the Internet.

We have worked with other governments to combat child exploitation. During the 2000 federal-provincial-territorial meeting, we urged the federal government to address Internet luring in the Criminal Code—which it did, in 2002. At the 2002, 2003 and 2006 federal-provincial-territorial meetings, we encouraged the federal government to raise the legal age of consent from 14 to 16, with an

exemption for consensual relations between partners close in age. Bill C-2 achieved this in 2008.

Manitoba was also involved in a campaign to establish a national sex-offender registry at meetings of the federal, provincial and territorial ministers of Justice in 2002, 2003, and 2006. In 2000, we set up the Criminal Organization and High-Risk Offender Unit and dedicated Crown prosecutors to specialize in high-risk sex offenders, applying for dangerous and long-term offender status for offenders and for strict conditions in cases when offenders are released. We also put in place a new prosecutions policy for targeted prosecution of child predators.

Manitoba became one of the first North American jurisdictions, in 2000, to create child-friendly courtrooms designed to make it less traumatic for children to testify in court. I would like to pay tribute to the previous Attorney General, the Member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh), who was the minister, I believe, at the time that was done.

We have also put in place 18 prosecutors for specialized training for child victim cases and have capacity for child victim services in all 69 court locations in the province, including circuit courts.

The Manitoba strategy for sexually exploited youth was implemented in 2002 and includes the development of outreach services, a safe transition home and other treatment services for sexually exploited children. I have been working with people on this issue of sexually exploited youth, and I can tell the Chamber that these are very dedicated individuals. They are very good advocates. They are constantly advocating that the government do more. We have responded to their concerns by putting in place more services.

In fact, under the previous Minister of Family Services and Housing, the Member for Riel (Ms. Melnick), I was at an announcement that she made at Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre where we added more beds, more beds in a safe house for sexually exploited youth so that they would have a safe place to go.

I've done a lot of research on the Internet about what other jurisdictions are doing about sexually exploited youth, and, to their credit, the city of Atlanta, Georgia has taken some initiatives in this area, especially under their woman mayor. I was very interested to read that they have a small number of beds—I believe it's six or seven beds—in Atlanta, Georgia in a safe house and that they are the only

beds east of the Mississippi River in the United States. So we have more beds in one jurisdiction in Manitoba than the entire eastern half of the United States.

So we have been proactive. We are taking action. We need to do more, but this is a very serious problem. I think there are tie-ins between child pornography and sexually exploited youth and many of the issues that are out there that are interrelated in this regard.

We believe that we need a national approach to a strategy against child pornography so that there is consistency across the country. You know, it's not just in this area that there needs to be a national approach. There are many areas where we need laws that cover the whole country, not just one jurisdiction.

While Bill 240 is presented in a way to fall within provincial jurisdiction, many other aspects of the proposed law may lead a court to find that, in fact, the bill is an attempt to impose an additional punishment and is, therefore, outside of provincial jurisdiction. Notwithstanding that, we support the principle contained in the bill. We believe that a national approach is needed to protect all children, regardless of residency, and to ensure the constitutionality of the legislation. We will work with other provinces and the federal government to get this principle in place nationally.

* (10:40)

I think one can see from the items that I read into the record that we are prepared to do this and we do this on a regular basis, because our Minister of Justice (Mr. Chomiak) raises these issues at the federal-provincial-territorial ministers of Justice or attorneys general meetings. The federal government has taken action on some of these items, and we look forward to more action on this and other urgent matters in the future.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): I, too, want to put some concerns that I have on the record and lend our support for the Member for Steinbach's (Mr. Goertzen) private member's bill. I think that it's forward thinking and the principle of it is to deal with very serious issues that upset a vast majority of Manitobans, that being child pornography. It provides yet another vehicle in which some sort of recourse can be taken for individuals that participate.

I think it also sends the right message and quite often, when we pass legislation, what we're looking

for is education and letting the public know in terms of the general direction the Province is going in regard to certain areas of criminal activity.

I think we need to recognize that we're at a stage in Manitoba society to be bold in saying that any form of child pornography is just not right. It's not acceptable and, therefore, we're looking for initiatives that could have a very serious impact on that particular crime. Having the opportunity to launch a civil suit is very positive, and we would think that, if enacted, would indeed have an impact.

I want to make reference to some of the comments that the Member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) put on the record when he was talking about what the government has done. Madam Acting Speaker, there's no doubt that, if you're in government for nine years, there are going to be some positive steps in a number of different areas. I guess the question is: To what degree have we seen large steps in addressing some of these issues?

I think, in part, the government has failed in terms of protecting our children. I want to give an example of a case that I had to try to assist in and deal with. Here there's an individual who, through the love of his family, decided to adopt a couple of children. One of the children that was adopted was a young girl. He raised her for a number of years—I believe had adopted her somewhere around the age of five or six. About seven or eight years later, there were some issues that were coming to light, and she had some medical conditions that they weren't necessarily aware of when they had adopted the child.

To cut it short, this particular child who was, I guess, 13, 14 years old, was having some problems with the law. She was sneaking out of the house and had gotten herself into a situation where she was in a group of peers, and some older individuals started to exploit her. There was no doubt that she was being exploited sexually.

Madam Acting Speaker, the loving parents of this child tried to do whatever they could to keep the child in their custody and were really disappointed in the system. The system did not allow them to do what they felt was important for their child. The system did not protect the interests of the child.

Let me give you an example. The only agency that has the ability to actually lock up a child is government. As a parent, for example, if I wanted to protect my child, I don't have the right to lock in a

room my own child. Now you say, well, why would you lock your child in a room. I think that we have to recognize if the government fails to be able to protect our children, what right do we have as a government to prevent a parent from being able to protect the interests of a child.

Let me give you a specific example where you have a child that has a medical condition in which this child is being exploited when she, in this case, or he or she, is outside of the home the parent cannot watch the child 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They find ways in terms of being able to get out.

When I inquired into the issue, I found out that only the government has the ability to actually lock a child or put a child into a lockdown. Well, in this particular situation the child would constantly run away and once the government was able to find the child, and the parents worked with the government, they were able to get the child into one of our institutions.

That institution was able to keep her and things looked like they were moving forward, but there's a limitation in terms of how long they could keep the child in that particular institution. So then the child is released out of the institution and is put back into an environment and the boyfriend has the child outside of the home before you know it and becomes a runaway. Well, the short of the story is that this particular child becomes a prostitute as a result of not being able to get the supports necessary from government.

I want to talk now about Marymount centre as a centre that has phenomenal opportunities to try to protect many of these children. There are a limited number of beds, Madam Acting Speaker. We underestimate just how serious the problem is. That's why when the Member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) said, well, in Manitoba we have so many beds. We have more beds, I think than he said, than the eastern United States. Well, that's not true. We have hundreds of youth in north end Winnipeg alone that are in need of government protection. We can't even come close to matching the needs of these youths let alone government today boasting on how wonderful they are doing as a government.

What type of exploitation is taking place? Sexual exploitation, which includes child pornography, prostitution and that also applies to males, young male children, Madam Acting Speaker. Not only is it in terms of the sex trade, but also in terms of drugs, whether it's trafficking, taking drugs, very serious

social issues that children under the age of 16, quite often in that 10-year-old, 12-year-old and we know that is there, that is existing and that is there today. We're not talking about two or three children, we're talking about maybe a couple hundred-plus children.

We inside this Chamber, because we want to be politically correct quite often, are sacrificing the lives of children because we're not taking the action that is necessary in order to protect their lives. Well, this particular bill, I would suggest to you, Madam Acting Speaker, is a small step in the right direction. Government should recognize when a member of the opposition brings forward a bill that can have a difference, but I'm going to suggest to you that there is so much more that we can be doing, that the government would be better advised to start dealing with the serious issues facing our children today, and if that means being politically incorrect, our children are worth it. It's time for the government to start acting as opposed to just talking about the issue.

* (10:50)

I realize I talk about north Winnipeg, in many areas of the province it is a very serious issue and until we start recognizing the important role that government has to play in providing programs, it's not good enough to take a child and put a child into Marymount, and then, because of overcrowding, that child leaves Marymount and goes back into that same environment that they were pulled out of, only to pick up where they left off. That's what quite often happens. That's not acceptable.

We need to be more aggressive in saving the lives of our young people in the province of Manitoba. The government has had nine years to make a difference, and they haven't gone anywhere near far enough.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Brick): The honourable member's time has expired.

Ms. Sharon Blady (Kirkfield Park): Madam Acting Speaker, as someone that has spent the better part of my adult life as a feminist, theorist and academic, I think it's a very important issue to be discussing because, in many respects, this issue would not be at the forefront were it not for feminists theorizing about gender, power and violence and the voice of survivors.

I commend the Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) for bringing this forward in terms of opening up the debate.

But, again, as has been mentioned by my other colleagues, while it is an important issue related to a heinous crime—and the good points of deterrence definitely being a good direction to move into and the idea again being put forward by the Member for Steinbach, the idea of resources for those being involved in the fight against child pornography, again, very valiant and commendable things.

But it really has to do with going beyond in a way that—I think it's unfortunate that members opposite have basically made the comment that, in debating this and looking at this piece of legislation, one is either on the side of this bill or on the side of the defence lawyers. I think that is an unfortunate black and white statement to make because, while there are many valid points within this and this legislation does put forward again a great place for debate and discussion, it doesn't go as far as it needs to. The points related to that have been brought up from members from both sides of this House.

The fact that we are dealing with the Internet brings up a whole new realm of debate. Cyberspace is a socially constructed space. When cyberspace first began as a concept—it's not actually all that recent; it has been actually within about the past 30 years that cyberspace as a concept has been dealt with as a socially constructed space with an academic theorizing, and social theorists have discussed the possibilities of where this could go. Unfortunately, this dark side was seen very early on in the academic theorizing. What that means is that cyberspace as a socially constructed space does not have the geographic boundaries that we are so familiar with dealing with and that we can much more easily legislate around.

When one is dealing with cyberspace, one might be able to pull up an image here in Manitoba, but we're not sure oftentimes where that image comes from, whether it is a child from Manitoba or whether even possibly it's a child from one jurisdiction brought into another jurisdiction where an image is taken and then, through the wonders of technology, how that image is uploaded is rerouted through yet another international jurisdiction. So this is the problem that we face with this.

It would be wonderful if we lived in a world that was so simple and was so black and white that the idea of either being for the legislation or on the side of the defence lawyers was that clear-cut. Unfortunately, this is not that clear-cut.

There is so much more that needs to be done. We have been working with our national partners because that's really what needs to be done is work on a national and an international scale.

It would be a shame to put forth something that only, pardon the expression, had teeth in a small jurisdiction like Manitoba but where someone in Saskatchewan, someone in Newfoundland, someone in Maine, someone in Antigua can get away with something and we have no jurisdiction over that.

What really needs to happen is we need to work through all of these issues on a much broader scale. As I said, this is a larger, much more complex problem and goes beyond mere black and white. What it really is a problem of is something that relates to larger systemic issues.

Like I said, the only reason why we are discussing this is because there have been generations of feminist inquiry into this, feminist critical analysis of power relations, and this is really about larger issues of patriarchal power structures. This is about how society has allowed 49 percent of the population to be generally socialized through many different cultural forms that allow one group of people to feel that they have the right, based on gender, class and other privileges, to exploit others.

This debate first began looking at women and the exploitation of women, but women took that a step further. So this is a larger issue and really again, while we can deal with legislation based on what we can do to the cyberspace issue, what we really need to look at is a larger societal reformation. We need to be critically analyzing what is wrong within our society that allows people to think that this is okay. We can legislate many things, but we can't legislate everything. *[interjection]*

I think it's a shame that the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) thinks that this is an appropriate time to heckle, because he stands here and claims to be the underdog fighting for the rights of anyone and everyone and, in this particular case, children. But he seems to think it's an appropriate time to heckle someone that's spent the past 15 years of her life actually working with victims of child sexual abuse, teaching victims of child sexual abuse and dealing with the healing process, so a little respect and decorum would be appreciated from members opposite who have had their turn to speak.

Again, I think this is a significant issue. I think this is something we do need to keep doing more

work on and, while I commend the member opposite for having brought this forward, it again doesn't do everything that needs to be done, because it does need to be part of a national project. As was mentioned earlier, we were days away from finding out what could have happened with this on a national level when an election was called. It's unfortunate that we don't really know what could happen. We're living in a world of what-if with that.

We need to think about the fact that Canada has to have a place in this, and that Manitoba has already had a place in Canada—first legislation, that we have been part of a successful national campaign to criminalize Internet luring, and we've established CyberTip with Child Find Manitoba and federal industry partners. So the thing is work is being done on this side.

We have heard comments saying that we've done nothing. We have done far more than many jurisdictions and again we will continue to do more, but this can't be painted as merely a black-and-white issue. We need to look at the larger social complexities and the additional technological complexities brought about by the Internet, that again cyberspace is a socially constructed space that goes beyond provincial jurisdictions.

To try to create legislation that can fill up those loopholes is really in many respects, especially if you're only looking at one provincial jurisdiction, just looking at it within the continent.

Let's just say we could limit technology to merely the Internet, to merely the continent. It would be very difficult to derive those sources and derive the kind of punitive funding that the member suggests. We have to look at the sources of this.

The bigger issue is we have to look at the larger societal structure. How are we socializing our youth so that at some point they believe, whether it's as young adults or as adults, that it is okay to victimize other people? That is the larger issue.

We need to look at what we need to do as a society, because this kind of abuse is not normal. Sadly, it is a product of predominantly a western culture; within traditional indigenous societies, for example, this kind of abuse did not exist in traditional societies. Sadly, what happens is—as we know within our own society—it's those who are marginalized most. So, in some respects, those who are descended from ancestries where this kind of abuse is completely foreign are sadly sometimes the

greatest victims of it, because their cultures are now marginalized within the dominant society.

So we need to go to a much larger social analysis. We need to look at the systemic problems that exist and, yes, while we can pass legislation on certain things, we cannot really pass legislation—

* (11:00)

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Brick): Order. The time being 11 o'clock, when this matter is before the House, the honourable Member for Kirkfield Park will have one minute remaining.

RESOLUTIONS

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Brick): We will now move to private members' resolutions.

Res. 25—Global Food Crisis

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Madam Acting Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Eichler), that

WHEREAS Manitoba is blessed with an abundant, relatively affordable food supply; and

WHEREAS many other nations are not as fortunate and struggle to feed vast portions—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Brick): Order. I'm sorry. If I could just have order in the House. If the honourable Member for Steinbach would like to stand up once again.

Mr. Goertzen: —vast portions of their populations; and

WHEREAS according to the United Nations World Food Programme, hunger and malnutrition is the greatest risk to health worldwide; and

WHEREAS United Nations World Food Programme estimates that more than 800 million people go hungry annually and that one in seven people do not have enough food to be healthy and active; and

WHEREAS the UN World Food Programme estimates that each year 11 million children die before reaching the age of five; and

WHEREAS according to the United Nations World Food Programme, global food reserves are at their lowest level in 30 years; and

WHEREAS in June of 2008, Pope Benedict XVI joined United Nations Secretary General

Ban Ki-moon in calling for a worldwide increase in food production of 50 percent over the next 20 years; and

WHEREAS Manitoba agriculture industries help support impoverished people in developing nations in a variety of ways; and

WHEREAS in the face of growing global food shortages, the provincial government should not be implementing measures that will result in reduced food production by farmers;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to consider taking steps to ensure that Manitoba co-operates with organizations that assist and support people in their struggle to end global hunger and poverty; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to consider taking steps to ensure that Manitoba's food resources are maximized, not stunted, for the benefit of people here and around the world.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Brick): It has been moved by the honourable Member for Steinbach—

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Brick): Dispense.

Mr. Goertzen: Madam Acting Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise this morning to bring forward this resolution, a resolution that finds its foundations in discussions that happened with the United Nations World Food Programme and in addition with Pope Benedict XVI, who called upon the world in joining the United Nations to increase world food production. I know that members within this House know full well that today in the world we do face a food shortage, and that there are many individuals around the world who don't have the abundance that we are fortunate to have here in Manitoba, and that throughout nations in every part of the world, there are those who simply don't have the access to the food supplies that we have here in Canada.

I believe that every member of this Legislature recognizes and appreciates that we are a blessed nation and that we have reason to be thankful, and particularly at this time of the year as we approach the Thanksgiving season for all that we have in our country. But with that abundance comes the responsibility as well, and that responsibility is to ensure that we are producing food to try to bring that

to other struggling nations and individuals in the world.

We know that we have generous people in Manitoba and, indeed, across Canada. That generosity is displayed in a number of different ways. We have food banks within our own nation. We don't have the same level of poverty that other nations do and at the depth and intensity that other nations do, but there are people who struggle right here in Manitoba. Those food banks that try to help individuals, and I know all members of this House, I'm sure, have in some way supported those initiatives in food banks. I had the opportunity myself to serve as a president, a vice-president of a food bank for seven years in southeastern Manitoba. I know the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Hawranik) has also had experience with a food bank in his area, the creation of a food bank. So we have seen, as many members have, first-hand the experience of individuals who are supporting those initiatives. But there's a calling now, a greater global calling, to ensure that we're not only helping those in need in our own area, which I believe that Manitobans do, but also those around the world who are struggling with a global food shortage.

We've seen the many examples where farmers would dedicate their harvest to different organizations so that it can be used around the world to help those. The United Nations, together with Pope Benedict, have indicated that we need to set targets and goals to try to increase food production, and it's in stark contrast to what we've seen this particular government do in the province. In fact, instead of trying to increase food production in the province of Manitoba, we've seen measures taken by the NDP government to reduce food production. There has been much debate in this Assembly and in committees and in the populace as a whole about what that does to the Manitoba economy and what that does to food production locally. But what has been less discussed, and part of the impetus for this resolution, is to discuss what it does to us on an international scene. Even as this world food shortage happens across our globe, we know that, in Manitoba, instead of trying to address an international responsibility and an international need, the NDP government is in fact doing the opposite.

I've heard in the House many members of the government speak about the United Nations and speak about the work that's done within the United Nations and the need to support that. I don't believe that members anywhere in this House would disagree

that there are many important initiatives that come forward from that international joint body. But it's not enough to simply stand up and put words on the record and use it in speeches and rhetorically that you support the work of bodies and the initiatives of the United Nations and others. You need to back it up with actions. There is a disconnect, there's a gap between what the New Democratic government says when it comes to supporting United Nations initiatives, international initiatives, and what they are actually doing in the province of Manitoba. Of course, the most recent example has been the desire of the government to kill the pork industry in Manitoba, and to eliminate the pork industry—*[interjection]*

Well, and the Member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar) seems to take some exception to the fact that I would raise pork producers in this particular resolution. I'm not sure how he would want me to separate out and not talk about food production when the resolution specifically deals with the United Nations call for increased food production. He could perhaps, when he speaks on this, demonstrate to me how we shouldn't be talking about Manitoba food producers when it's in relation to a resolution that specifically deals with the increased production of food in the world. I look forward to that. I suspect it's going to be a tortured argument. I'm sure it's going to be a difficult one for him to make, but I'm sure he will do his best to dance and skate around it.

But, Madam Acting Speaker, I will not be distracted by the member who I think, probably in his heart of hearts, knows that the tack that his government is taking—he's often offside with his own government, and we appreciate the fact that he's open and forthright about being offside with his government even though he tends to vote still in line if he disagrees with it.

Mr. Rob Altemeyer, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

I think that, when you look at what the government has done in trying to kill the pork industry and not support agriculture generally, whether it's because there's emergencies that are happening in regions like the Interlake and other regions and do not support those farmers or try to kill a particular sector in agriculture, it not only hurts Manitoba, and I think we all know that it does and we've seen it. We've seen the individuals who've come forward and demonstrated how it's going to hurt them individually, going to hurt their communities, and ultimately, Mr. Acting Speaker,

it's going to hurt them as it's going to hurt the economy of the province. But now we need to cast our eyes further afield and to recognize that not only is it going to hurt us here in Manitoba, but there is an international and world impact to it. All nations should be looking at ways to try to increase their food production to try to deal with a global food shortage.

* (11:10)

All nations need to be looking at ways to ensure that we can not only provide enough food to feed the citizens of our nation but indeed the citizens of the world. We've heard many speeches and comments by, whether it's the Member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer), Mr. Acting Speaker, or others within this House, talk about the need for global initiatives on a number of different scales. This is one clearly where it's been cited by the United Nations that we need to increase food production; by the Pope, to call upon the world to increase that food production. Why wouldn't we take that opportunity as Manitobans to try to heed that call? It would benefit us. It would benefit nations around the world.

And so we call upon the government, we call upon the NDP government to look at the policies that they've put in place and to realize that they are doing not the work of Manitobans and certainly not the work of the citizens of the world, that they're, in fact, counter to what has been called upon by the United Nations world food program, in conflict to what has been called upon by Pope Benedict, and that they will have to answer to that, why they are offside with what I think is a significant and an important global cause.

So, Mr. Acting Speaker, I know that members opposite, if they want their words to match their actions, they'll support this resolution, and they'll use it to go back into their caucus and say, we need to change our approach to food production in Manitoba because we're offside with Manitobans. We're offside with Canadians, and in fact, we're offside with citizens of the world. Thank you very much.

Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff (Interlake): It's my pleasure to rise to respond to the resolution put forth by the Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen). I guess I have to note initially that it's written in typical Tory style where there are some positive attributes in the initial WHEREASES but the inevitable poison pill at the end. The same applies to the RESOLVEDS where, of course, who could argue against feeding the hungry people of the world? Absolutely. That's a

very laudable objective, and even goes so far as to invoke none other than Pope Benedict XVI in support of this objective. Who am I to argue with the Pope when it comes to feeding the people of the world? I absolutely support that, and I think Manitoba does a very admirable job in that regard in doing our part to produce food.

We're exporters for the most part. I would say probably 75 percent of the product that we produce in Manitoba here is exported abroad, the vast majority of it to the United States, but the world is open to us, and we're actively seeking other markets for our product, not just primary product but value-added product as well, which is one of the primary objectives of this government.

I do note in the resolution something that is glaringly absent, though. I really have to point out to the Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) that not only do we have to support the people of the world but we also have to support our own people, and I notice in the resolution, there are no less than—almost 10, I think—WHEREASes here, but no mention whatsoever, Mr. Acting Speaker, made of the poor here in our own province, whether it's in the inner-city areas of Winnipeg, whether it's in rural Manitoba, where we learned from the Healthy Kids, Healthy Futures task force that people are poorer and less healthy than their urban counterparts—or people in northern Manitoba, all of the Aboriginal communities up in the extreme northern areas that are in hardship, and yet this is totally off the radar screen for the Member for Steinbach. So I would just remind him that, while we do have a responsibility to look beyond our borders, let's not forget the poor people of Manitoba in the process, which seems to be the case with members opposite.

Now I want to go back to food production here in Manitoba, and I think that, even though we have experienced hard times from a weather perspective, more so than anything over the last several years, whether it's extreme drought conditions or excessive rainfall or even flooding like we're experiencing in the Interlake region today, the worst situation, it's a one-in-150 year event. So there are significant challenges to our farmers when it comes to the whole subject of food production. We have done our part, I think, as a government, and we're looking at all of our options to play a role in alleviating these pressures, but, in the big picture, we're still very focussed on the production of food. You just have to look at the increase in farm cash receipts as an

example: \$3.6 billion in 2002 up to \$4.1 billion in this year.

You look at the livestock industry, which, despite things like BSE and the flood in the Interlake, has maintained a level of receipts despite low prices. We've done so by going to higher levels of production and value-added and so forth.

We can compare ourselves to other provinces where Manitoba has seen an increase in 14 percent in market receipts over that period of time I just cited, 2002 to '08, whereas in Saskatchewan, you've seen a decrease, in fact, of 10 percent. Even Alberta, the Mecca to members opposite, a decrease of 8 percent.

Manitoba is doing well in relation to other prairie provinces. We've also focussed on value-added, and we have to acknowledge that it's the market-place that's going to drive this process, but there are things that the provincial government can do, particularly from an infrastructure perspective to assist in this regard. I look to the investment in the waste-water treatment facility in Brandon, a \$25-million investment made by this government as a case in point, which will enable that plant to move to a second shift, which will allow them to process more hogs here in Manitoba, which is a good thing, right? We have to move to secondary, tertiary production and moves like that will help us along.

I look to the cattle sector. Here I really have to look at members opposite and shake my head because they're supposedly the friends of the ranchers of this province, and yet when this government tried to facilitate the Ranchers Choice plant in Dauphin, they did everything in their power to destabilize this. From the very beginning they were saying there was enough slaughter capacity in western Canada, meaning Alberta, that we didn't need to go this direction here in Manitoba. Just completely mind-boggling their logic in that regard where it's a classic case of biting off your nose to spite your face: to take a position in opposition to the government's objectives despite the fact that it hurt the cattle sector by doing so.

I know I don't have much time, so I would like to say that, while we want to increase production, while we want to add value to our product, we want to do so in a sustainable manner. We don't want to sacrifice our environment, and I look to my area, the Interlake, and the moratorium on the expansion of the hog industry in this area that is environmentally sensitive. I live there and I know. I know that it's

ridge and swale country. There is a lot of exposed limestone ridges where you can't be spreading manure, which unfortunately, in some cases, is what's happening in that area.

* (11:20)

There has been a lot of talk about phosphorus and run-off into the lakes and so forth, which is a valid concern, but you also have to look to the aquifers. That seems to be forgotten in the current debate about Lake Winnipeg. I'm not detracting from that debate. I agree fully that the lake is in jeopardy and we have to take action and this government has, but I look to the aquifers in the Interlake as well.

This is some of the best water in the country, probably some of the best water in all of North America, found right in this area but it's highly exposed. These ridges—you have to bear in mind that the glaciers passed over this area many, many centuries ago and put a lot of pressure on these dolomite formations. They're highly fractured and then, with Lake Agassiz sitting on top of that formation for centuries, again those fractures are highly eroded.

So these are direct conduits from the surface to some of the best water aquifers in the world, and we cannot take this lightly or take it for granted that they can't be damaged. Once these aquifers are damaged, their recovery could be centuries.

I don't want to argue with none less than Pope Benedict XVI when it comes to the necessity to feed the world, but you do have to do so in a sustainable manner and make sure that our own country here is protected and our own people are taken into consideration as well. Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Introduction of Guests

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Altemeyer): Just before recognizing the next speaker, I would like to direct all honourable members to the public gallery where we have students who have joined us from River East Collegiate, and they are also hosting exchange students from Germany. These students reside in the constituencies of Rossmere and River East.

* * *

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Altemeyer): That said, we now recognize the honourable Member for Morris.

Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris): Mr. Acting Speaker, I'm pleased to speak to the resolution brought by the

Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) on Global Food Crisis.

Ms. Bonnie Korzeniowski, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

Madam Deputy Speaker, I was listening quite intently to what the Member for the Interlake had to say and, of course, he criticized the Member for Steinbach for bringing forward this resolution and talking about global food crisis. That's kind of typical of the NDP to criticize a resolution that has to do with feeding hungry people.

He also said that nowhere in the resolution did he talk about the people here in Manitoba. In fact, right in the last sentence, it says: THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Manitoba Assembly urge the provincial government to consider taking steps to ensure that Manitoba's food resources are maximized, not stunted, for the benefit of people here and around the world.

So, obviously, he talked about the people here in Manitoba. He also referenced a couple of times about the good work that he has done with the food banks in southeastern Manitoba and he also referenced the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Hawranik) who's a leader in his community in terms of the food banks here in Manitoba, Madam Deputy Speaker. So to use that as an excuse, that this isn't a good resolution, that we're not talking about the hungry people in this province is just not correct.

We here in Manitoba enjoy for the most part a very healthy province in terms of food and food production. As being a prairie province, a part of our basic economics here in this province is production of food. That's our agricultural economy and that's what we're based on here, Madam Deputy Speaker.

I'd like to tell you a story of visiting Itzke River Farm in my constituency. This farm is so vast and supplies so much food that food from this one farm—it's a vegetable-growing farm—food from this farm travels across this country. This one farm in Manitoba feeds many, many, many people across Canada, and part of the problem that the farm is experiencing, or has been experiencing, is they need to employ migrant workers to come and do the work. It's a very labour-intensive operation. They need to work when they can. It's weather related. It's an outdoor growing operation; it's an indoor greenhouse operation; it's a refrigeration operation. It's vast and huge, Madam Deputy Speaker.

They need a lot of people to come here in the summer, when their growing season is, to help. The people that do come here, from Mexico, have been coming for 25 years, some of them, and they come here because they have good employment here. They make good wages here. They're treated very well by Itzke River Farm. They have wonderful accommodations and everything that they need and that's why they've come year after year to help in the food production here.

I think that when we're talking about what governments can do to help production of food in the province, we need to encourage and support organizations like this rather than try and put laws and regulations in place that actually are going to restrict them in their employment of migrant workers, Madam Deputy Speaker.

We saw what happened with another farm, Mayfair Farms in Portage la Prairie, where the workers, under false pretences, became unionized, and what has happened in that farm is they've cut back on their hours of operation, they've cut back on their food production, they've cut back on the number of migrant workers they brought here from Mexico because of restrictions of hours. They've diversified into different crops, which takes some food out of production. I don't think that, in the overall picture, is what Manitobans want. Yet it is on the agenda of this government to put those kinds of roadblocks in place for the producers in the province.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we've also just gone through lengthy debates and committee debates on Bill 17 where there has been a permanent ban placed on the expansion of hog barns. In the overall picture here, and I just want to say that no one's arguing against clean water in this province, environment sustainability and the sustainability and clean-up of Lake Winnipeg. Everybody wants that, but we need to balance off what we're doing to an industry here in Manitoba that is a leader in producing food.

When you look at banning an expansion on production of food that could be used to feed the hungry of the world, there's an overall sense of this government failing in that respect, and I think that's why the Member for Steinbach has brought this forward is there are so many issues, broad issues, around production of food that this government could be doing more to support, encourage and enhance rather than continually trying to put roadblocks in the way of producers in this province.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to recognize the good work that the Canada food grains banks do, and celebrating 25 years, actually, in this province. What they do is they have a farmer allot a field, and then that allotted field, the production, the produce from that field—usually a grain crop—is then dedicated and donated to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank and then used to be shipped to other parts of the world to be used to feed the less fortunate and the hungry of the world.

I did raise this in the House yesterday asking the Member for La Verendrye (Mr. Lemieux), who is the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation, why he wouldn't want to assist when there was a harvest done and a celebration of a church service done in the field. What happened in this particular instance was that a number of people, churches, came together, they wanted to have a service to dedicate this harvest and donate the food to the Foodgrains Bank to be donated to feed the hungry of the world, Madam Deputy Speaker.

* (11:30)

The organizers had called and said, this is what we're going to do, can you assist us? The answer came back, no, we can't. And he said, well, you know, it's just a one-hour service on Sunday. No, you can't be having any people park along the highway, even though the RCMP had already said that this was okay to do. The long and the short of this whole story, Madam Deputy Speaker, is that this government could have been of assistance to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank in helping them celebrate the donation of this harvest, but instead, they chose to actually put roadblocks in the way of helping these people for a one-hour church service. They decided that they didn't want to support this group and support their donation to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

I just want to end, just to thank the Member for Steinbach for bringing this resolution. I think it really needs to be brought to the government's attention that there's way more that they can do to support food production, to feed, here, the hungry in our province and across the world. Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon): I guess it shows the desperation of the Tories opposite when they need a Pope to resurrect their support of the Manitoba pork industry. I don't want to slang the Holy Father, I'm a Catholic myself, Madam Deputy Speaker. But I found it very interesting that they

picked Benedict XVI, who, as Cardinal Ratzinger, was considered by pretty well all the biblical scholars and religious scholars in the world, as the most right-wing of the cardinals. So he certainly is no Leo XIII, which the member could have quoted, or could even go to John XXIII, who was the spark plug of Vatican II.

But, anyway, I found it rather interesting that the member would quote Benedict XVI. He could have quoted Pope Leo XIII, who in 1891 came up with the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* which means a new thing, and a new thing being, Madam Deputy Speaker, that the church had to take into account the working class of Europe who were being basically decimated and put into poverty because of the excesses of capitalism. Of course, that's not the Pope he wanted to quote. But, nonetheless, I do thank the Member for Steinbach for this resolution on the global food crisis.

Perhaps, you know, Madam Deputy Speaker, it's the beginning of a new era, and a kindlier and gentler Tory party. Perhaps they really do care about poor people elsewhere. Maybe that goes in conjunction with the federal leader, Stephen Harper, in the fuzzy little vest and taking his kid to school and that benign fatherly smile. Who am I to question that? Maybe that's genuine. I'm hoping it is, and we're looking at a new era where we all work together for the elimination of global poverty. So I thank the member for bringing that issue to the front.

However, as the Member for Interlake (Mr. Nevakshonoff) pointed out, there are third-world conditions in other places as well, including northern Manitoba and perhaps even in the centre of the city. So we cannot simply project our concerns outside of our own province; we also have problems within the province.

Therefore, when I see one of the WHEREASES, and I will quote it, Madam Deputy Speaker: WHEREAS Manitoba agriculture industries help support impoverished people in developing nations—but we also have developing portions of our own province.

So I look at the history of the Tory party. They were in power from 1988 to 1999; that's 11 years. Did they eliminate that poverty in those pockets in northern Manitoba, for example? We've done a heck of a lot more than they did. Let me give you an example. What did they do in 1988 to 1999 in those 11 lost years? They largely ignored northern Manitoba. They obviously put no major dollars into

the road system, into the transportation system, to improve the structures—

An Honourable Member: Is that going to eliminate the poverty out there?

Mr. Jennissen: The member asked: Will that eliminate poverty? I think if you could get all-weather roads to, for example, Lac Brochet and Tadoule Lake, you could certainly buy groceries at a much more reasonable price and you wouldn't have to pay \$13 for two litres of milk.

So, yes, we have definitely tried to address that situation with our government, unlike the other people, that other government.

Did they do anything with regard to the Bay Line which was in jeopardy in 1996? No, they did not, Madam Deputy Speaker. They almost randomly threw out and jeopardized the potential of Churchill and many of the Bay Line communities.

Did they have a healthy food initiative in northern Manitoba or across the province? No, Madam Deputy Speaker, they did not. If you compare that record to our record, you'll see quite a difference. I'm sure of that.

If you fast forward to 2008, what do you see? There is a healthy-food initiative in place. Thirty communities are involved in pilot projects; there are 400 gardens. There are over 160 freezers have been given to people—not given, I shouldn't use that word—at a very low cost, basically at cost and at a small monthly payment. People that are desperately in need of those freezers can now have them and they can store food.

That is certainly a good initiative, Madam Deputy Speaker. There are eight greenhouses; there are three refrigeration units. There are 15 families right now that are farming chickens and goats that weren't there before. Five NACC communities in northern Manitoba are working on food initiatives and producing community gardens.

Frontier School Division which covers a large portion of northern Manitoba, it partners with communities north of Thompson to develop an integrated food-, soil- and plant-science curriculum. Greenhouses will be built and are being built, for example, in Leaf Rapids. In Leaf Rapids, the school had greenhouses for a long, long time and, in fact, the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) and I have

visited those greenhouses before and we were watching teachers and students work together to develop food.

The theme is "The North Feeding the North." Now that's not a reality yet, but that could be a reality in the future. Our government is certainly interested in supporting those kinds of initiatives.

We also know that the Agriculture Minister on April 23 announced an initiative of half a million dollars of ground pork to food banks, for example, to Winnipeg Harvest and other food banks as well. It's true that there is a need for supporting food banks, and I'm very happy to be supportive of our food bank in Flin Flon, which is the Lord's Bounty Food Bank, and particularly people like Dennis Hydamaka and others who have given years of dedicated personal service to this food bank.

As well, Madam Deputy Speaker, we have to look at global hunger in a much larger context. I don't think we can just see it from only the Manitoba perspective. I think it is a huge issue and it is a social injustice we want to eradicate and exists across the world.

For example, for years NGOs have been asking the federal government to give aid to outside countries, to poor countries, aid that would be 0.76 percent, I believe, of GDP. What have we done? We've got slightly over 0.2 percent. That is not enough. We talk about seriously helping poor countries; then we have to increase this aid to them. The aid we do send has to be aid that is genuine aid, not always tied aid. In other words, the aid we send is aid that benefits the donor country and make sure that we do well or the United States does well, but not necessarily that it meets the needs of the country that it is aimed at. In fact, those people may have very little say about how those dollars are spent. That isn't quite fair.

I saw a cartoon once, Madam Deputy Speaker, and it was something like this: A large palm tree with its roots in Latin America and the fruit being picked in North America. That's how I think Third World people view how we send our aid. We make it look like we're giving a lot of money but, when you get to the bottom of it, we actually make money out of it. They do all the work; we derive the benefit of that.

Of course, you have to be very careful when we deal with social justice issues that we are aware that

there are larger structures operating, for example, the World Bank and the IMF which are enforcing structural adjustments on poor countries, countries that are deeply in debt who cannot afford to pay that debt, debt that we should have forgiven a long time ago. Unless we come to some reasonable accommodation so that these countries can survive and not erode their social programs or educational programs, then we are not really doing our job unless we go that direction, Madam Deputy Speaker.

I am heartened, however, that there are development organizations; there are NGOs across this country, there are dedicated people that are working not only to eradicate global hunger, but to do structurally important things that will aid poor countries.

* (11:40)

I think particularly the churches are involved. I know that I was part of a group called Development Education North in Manitoba. There's a group called Marquis as well, out of Brandon. The Catholic church, for example has CCOOP, Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace, very active in working with poor countries. The churches have banded together to form an organization called Kairos, which is also active. A few years ago we had an organization called Ten Days for World Development and it seemed to invigorate a lot of people, including young people, who would put on fasts to raise money to help third world countries and so on.

The issue, Madam Deputy Speaker, is social justice and it's the social justice issues we have to look at. To take global hunger in a narrow sense isn't actually doing us much good because it's part of something much larger and that has to be addressed. It's a huge issue. I think, for example, we could start by making sure that we forgive all aid to really poor countries, countries that are struggling to keep their heads above water, for example, a country like Haiti which is an extreme, extreme example of poverty in this hemisphere.

To go back to my first point, Madam Deputy Speaker, I do thank the Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) for raising this issue. I think it is a huge issue. I do not know if it can be fought successfully on a provincial level, although certainly we can help. It has to be really addressed at a national level and we need federal governments that are much more involved in this. Certainly one way they can do that is not only by forgiving the debt of poor countries,

but making sure that much more funds, at least three times as much funds are available for development work in poor countries. Raise that amount from 0.02 to 0.76 would be a good first step.

House Business

Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Official Opposition House Leader): Yes, on House business, Madam Deputy 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 The State of Rural Health Care sponsored by the honourable Member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Briese).

Madam Deputy Speaker: It was announced that the private member's resolution that will be considered next Thursday is the resolution on The State of Rural Health Care sponsored by the honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

* * *

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): Madam Deputy Speaker, I do want to put a few things on the record. I was pleased to second the resolution that has been brought forward by the Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) on the global food crisis. I do want to correct the record. I know the Member for Interlake (Mr. Nevakshonoff) and the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen) talked about the Tories and lack of caring for the poor people. In fact, the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Hawranik) was a past-president, Member for Steinbach—

An Honourable Member: Still am.

Mr. Eichler: In fact, the Member for Lac du Bonnet just said he still is the president at that food bank. We take this issue very, very seriously.

So we do want to make sure that not only the members that are in the House but also the people that are out there on the streets are standing up for our poor people. In fact, when you look at the overall scope of this resolution that has been brought forward it is a significant one. We do have people starving, not only here in Manitoba. Manitoba Pork Council has been very generous in the past years donating surplus pork to Winnipeg Harvest through David Northcott who has done just an outstanding job looking after a number of people here in Manitoba.

So when we look at not only the world food crisis, globally, we have done an awful lot here in

Manitoba, as well. So I think it's very important that we do correct the record so that the information being put on by the two previous members from the government's side certainly do recognize the fact the contribution that has been made right here in Manitoba.

Also, I want to draw attention to the ban that has just been put on the pork producers with Bill 17. The Member for Interlake talked about his area and the hog barns in his area and how they had been put in the wrong place. Well, his riding's been NDP for a number of years. Unfortunately, you know, they should have been speaking up if they were put in the wrong place. Quite frankly, they have a voice, they have an opportunity to change legislation in a way that would be meaningful.

Certainly, I know that, you know, we on this side of the House have been very supportive of our farmers in making sure that there are checks and balances in place. If there's not those checks and balances, let's put them in place in order to deal with those issues and if there're operators that need to be addressed, let's address it with those operators. I know the Member for Interlake has been opposed to hog barns. We know where his position is on the cattle producers, certainly hasn't been bringing forward initiatives in that area. So, whenever we look at the overall food crisis, you know, we have to look at our own yard first and make sure it's clean, make sure it's sustainable, make sure it's going to be there for our generation and the generations to come.

We do have an abundance, as has been pointed out. We are an export province. It makes us very proud to be able to do the things we do here in the province of Manitoba, even though a number of those products do go stateside. We have been building on those foreign markets, something that we started actually before I ever was in the political game. In the 1990s, I toured a number of old countries and am very proud of the fact that we established businesses in those countries.

So it's not only the United States, when you look at it. When you look at the world market, when you look at ways of helping those other cultures, helping those countries that are in need, helping those people with our expertise, our knowledge, in growing those products, in finishing those products, we could do a lot more right here in Manitoba in finishing our products right here at home. It's up to us as government to ensure that we put those tools in place to make sure we do everything we can for our

producers here at home in order to have that finished product, get it out to those other countries, get it out to our own people, get it out to the nations and countries which are in need.

We support this amendment. I know the government is ready to move forward and call question on this particular resolution, so I'm willing to sit down and allow the question to be called because we certainly want to have the government's support on this initiative, and we thank the other speakers for it. Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Bidhu Jha (Radisson): I'm very pleased to rise and put some of my comments on this very good headline resolution brought by the Member for Steinbach, but here we go, Madam Deputy Speaker, the hidden agenda was to talk about Bill 17 under the headline, which is a very nice headline. Like the Member for Interlake said, who can deny the support of people in their struggle to end global hunger and poverty. No one here in this Chamber would say that we shouldn't do that.

Having said that, I think when the resolution is done and there is a different motive behind that resolution, that is what I'm kind of not very happy about. Having said that, I would like to say that this is, as my colleague mentioned about the issue, global hunger is a very, very big issue, and I think that our government has done a remarkable job. I feel very honoured to mention to the House that the Deputy Premier and the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives (Ms. Wowchuk) went with me to India, which is a huge population and people in need of food.

But we look at the solutions, Madam Deputy Speaker, in a way that is sustainable. In the fields of Bihar, where I was born and the Deputy Premier and I went, there is about 30 percent of food that goes to waste in the fields because they don't have harvesting technology, and they don't have literally the power that they will produce and distribute. So we are looking at solutions of problems of hunger, world hunger, in a different context by making sure that we do things that will be sustained and it's going to help the poor for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

In our own country, Canada, I can share this with the House, and it feels very sad to see that we ourselves have not been so sufficient to feed every hungry person and child right in this country. I mean, we have Third World conditions in the northern

communities, and I think my colleague members have spoken on this, that there is a huge challenge ahead of us. This is a challenge that's much beyond this resolution to talk about.

I was very happy, very privileged to attend that forum Manitoba: A place that hunger should be history, and I am very pleased we had several speakers that spoke.

* (11:50)

One of the things that we talked about is the policy by the economist who said, how you end hunger forever is to build infrastructure. It's not to really go and give some food or go and watch on the television and give to some charities and feel good about it. That is not the way to solve the problem forever.

We need to help these countries that are developing food to go to technology and make their productivity much more sustainable and, also, make the nutraceutical values for their food that they eat.

I think that we have been doing a remarkable job in that. Working with the University of Manitoba, I know that the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives has done a very good job in promoting that kind of technology to be shared with developing countries and developing emerging markets.

But we need to look at this resolution not only in the context of Bill 17 which is what they tried to bring, and that really bothered me. I think that we have to see how we make the world better and safer, so that they can grow food and they can enjoy a good quality of life. So quality of water, environment and better food is extremely important for us to see in the futuristic point of view.

So I would say that when I went to look at the farm in India, in Bihar, where I was born, which is, unfortunately, under the flood water these days, we were trying to help, to see how we can work with them.

But the issues are not literally as they would say, that one bill, Bill 17, is the important aspect of making the world food crisis be solved.

I think we are looking at some of things that have been done by this minister and this department to make technology work, to make science work and some other things that we have been doing, like we are a large producer. Manitoba exports over

80 percent of agri-products to other provinces, to other countries. So we are already doing that. We need to enhance that, enhance the poverty issue by making those countries self-sufficient.

Now, I'm going to share with you, in the early '60s when the Green Revolution came and the Green Revolution was something that was—because at one time P.L. 480 was a program that the United Nations, through the U.S.A., was giving aid of wheat and barley to India, to hungry people on that continent. But Green Revolution was brought up by which even the small farmyards can be backyards of the houses. They grew kitchen gardens. They started doing some of the things that have brought a huge amount of self-sufficiency of food, and India became self-sufficient in food.

I think that there are ways how you solve the problem, and that solution is more of the pattern that we have talked about. I'm never going to say that the Tories don't like to eradicate poverty, but their approach is definitely different to ours. Their approach is to perhaps look at a Band-Aid solution. Our approach is to look at a grass-root permanent solution that is sustainable and that is for the future.

So I would say that even though the resolution's headline is good, like the Member for Interlake said, this has a different agenda, and I would say that we need to modify this. But, of course, we will work together with all the members to make sure that such projects are on our table to build and make sure that poverty becomes history on the face of the world. We are good producers of food and agriculture, and we will support that.

With those few words, I'd like to thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Rosann Wowchuk (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives): Mr. Speaker, I want to take a few moments to put some comments on this record regarding the need for food around the world.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about food around the world and helping with economic development, I'm very much in support of that, but I am also very much in support of starting at home.

Mr. Speaker, we know that we have some very high poverty rates. We know that we have some very high food costs and our government, since we've taken office, has been putting a tremendous amount of effort into increasing food supply in northern communities, because we have many representatives

from northern communities here who have spoken, to talk about the cost of food in the north, but we recognize that the closer you can produce your food close to home, whether it is in another part of the world or in our northern communities, you are improving the quality of life and the health of those people.

That is why we have put in place the BabyFirst initiative. That's why we have put in place greenhouses and gardening programs in the north. I would encourage other members who not very often will talk about the north or recognize the resources and the value of the north to look at the programs. In fact, there's going to be an event in Thompson very shortly where we will have the opportunity to look and sample some of the foods that have been grown in northern communities.

I think that, as we look at that issue, I'm very proud of our record and I want to continue working on the gardening program in northern communities and the greenhouse program, so that food can be produced closer to home.

We do also have to do our fair share on supporting people in other parts of the world and that's why we are working with India, a country that can produce a tremendous amount of food, a country that has some extreme poverty and a country that wastes a lot of the food that they produce, because they don't have the processing ability.

That's why my department is working with three states in India. The first one is Bihar where we are looking where we might transfer technology, the technology that we have built in the food development centre. They are interested in taking that kind of technology, so that they can process food and not have the tremendous losses that they do.

Our government has also worked with other countries. We have a program in Ukraine where we are helping with improving the quality of their livestock, transferring agriculture technology, so that they can indeed raise their quality of life and increase their production.

Some people will say: Why do you want to help people raise more food when those are our export markets? Well, in reality, the more you help a country, the more affluent they become, the healthier they become and their wage-earning power increases. Then there are more opportunities to work with those people.

But there is no doubt that there is hunger around the world and there is poverty around the world. As governments, we have to continue to work and share our information. Manitoba is one of the most generous societies when it comes to donating when people are in despair but, Mr. Speaker, it is the transferring technology and helping them raise their standard of living that we can help them the most.

I very much believe that, if you're going to do something, you have to start at home. We have an issue in Manitoba and our government has been working on that. I would encourage members opposite, as I said earlier, to look at the potential of raising food in the north, to creating a healthier society in the north.

We talk about labour force—the shortage of skilled labour. There are many people in the north, but there is a lot of poverty. If we can help raise having healthier children, better education standards, better quality of food, less money spent on transportation of food and the ability to understand food production right at home, then we will make

a difference in the north. At the same time, we have to continue to try to make a difference in other parts of the world.

Manitoba is an exporting province. We export about 80 percent of our agriculture products to other provinces, but we also export to other countries. We will continue to export, but we do not just want export markets. That's sometimes the problem with just saying, you can send food to somebody else. We have to work with them to improve their quality of life, to help them grow more food at home, process more food at home and have much less losses than they have.

I want to also recognize the work that the co-operative—

Mr. Speaker: Order. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable minister will have four minutes remaining.

The hour being 12 noon, we will recess and reconvene at 1:30 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, October 2, 2008

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