

Winnipeg Free Press - PRINT EDITION

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Dancing for duchess an honour

Re: *Boredom an art form for the Royal Family* (May 23). Many of those who performed at the RWB for Duchess Camilla were my students. They are part of a unique program designed specifically for adults diagnosed with a range of disabilities that limit movement, development and cognition.

On behalf of my students, who were proud of their performance and honoured to have had a chance to meet the duchess, shame on Bartley Kives.

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My students are adults ranging from 20 to 70 years of age and have been diagnosed with disabilities ranging from cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, developmental and cognitive delays and much more. Some can move in class on their own but rely on the assistance of their workers to get through some of the tasks of everyday living. Others in the class are reliant on others for virtually every movement, and moment, of their daily lives.

Programs such as the one presented to Duchess Camilla are based on the premise of seeing and exploring the ability of the individual, providing the opportunity to step beyond limitations

and boundaries to explore their physical world through dance.

The ignorance faced by people living with disability is magnified when those with a public forum such as Kives choose words that demean and degrade. Whether he was aware of who was performing that day or not, Kives made light of and belittled all who performed for the duchess.

Clearly Kives isn't a fan of the monarchy -- the intended crux of the column. But why tear down those who performed for the duchess in the process?

In this instance, Kives' sarcastic, critical writing style accomplished one thing -- the perpetuation of ignorance.

JACQUI LADWIG

Winnipeg

Eyes on the bottom line

So Luxottica spokeswoman Danielle Martinetti states they had to make a "difficult decision to close its Winnipeg manufacturing plant" (*Eyeglass giant shuts city plant*, May 28).

Boy, that must have been tough to make that decision, especially when you take into consideration profits will now increase by using cheaper labour.

Martinetti likely won't worry about those unemployed Canadian workers for long; the company's bottom line will, over time, far exceed the \$10.8 billion in sales and provide even greater profits.

Maybe the price of eyeglass frames will go down now that Luxottica will use cheaper labour. I'm not holding my breath.

ARNIE SCHLIPPERT

Winnipeg

With an operating profit of 20 per cent on sales of over \$10 billion, Luxottica is so focused on its bottom line it has no vision for its workers, who are a vague blur far below.

If Luxottica had thought for one moment of the workers and not its profits, the so-called "difficult decision" to close up shop in Winnipeg would not have been made.

If the company was struggling to make a go of it, which is clearly not the case, I might have some sympathy for their decision.

CHRIS KENNEDY

Winnipeg

The future of Ukraine

The editorial *Get behind Ukraine's new leader* (May 27) identifies many issues Ukraine's new president, Petro Poroshenko, must address before signing an economic agreement with the European Union.

There's an escalating crisis in eastern Ukraine, especially in Donetsk, a stronghold of former president Viktor Yanukovich. That region must be freed from pro-Russian supporters, or it will either be absorbed or occupied by Moscow territorial control.

Poroshenko must lead Ukraine out of its marshy inner turmoil and start repairing the wounds left behind by Russia's annexation of Crimea. As a leader, he needs to successfully unite the Ukrainian people and bring Ukraine back into the European context.

Poroshenko should be given the opportunity to incorporate a progressive plan for Ukraine with strong pro-Western views; Ukraine's citizens and the international community should wholeheartedly support and trust him as the country's new political leader.

PETER MANASTYRSKY

Winnipeg

The *Free Press* editorial suggests that by taking the International Monetary Fund loan, Ukraine will escape its crushing public debt.

This action simply trades Russian, Ukrainian bank, and oligarch debt for IMF debt, adding EU and U.S. austerity rules.

Greece, Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Haiti, and others haven't escaped IMF debt; rather, they have suffered lost jobs, wage and pension cuts, increased poverty and greater debt.

While Petro Poroshenko won't be Russian President Vladimir Putin's puppet, he most certainly will be one for the U.S. and the European Union.

DON HALLIGAN

Winnipeg

Re: *Manitoba MP watches as Ukrainians vote* (May 26). Did anyone else see the irony in James Bezan, himself accused of misusing election funds and supporting his government's attack on election rights at home, overseeing elections in Ukraine?

DOUGLAS DYCK

Winnipeg

Majority over consensus

I agree with Chief Bill Erasmus -- it is unlikely a consensus could be obtained from all the mayors in Canada (*Canadian chiefs reject education changes*, May 28).

However, his point is irrelevant -- municipal governments in Canada pass resolutions and bylaws based on the democratic premise the majority prevails.

Perhaps the Assembly of First Nations would be in a better position to help their people by adopting a similar policy.

TERRY MEINDL

Teulon

Oliver out of touch

Re: *Big banks to expand low, free services* (May 28). I would like to know where federal Finance Minister Joe Oliver shops that he thinks Canadians can buy a week's worth of groceries for \$50.

This man is out of touch with average Canadians -- but then, he is also not worried about the profitability of the banks.

Most Canadians think these profits are obscene, whereas Oliver takes comfort, citing the profits make them "stable."

MERVIN POLLOCK

Winnipeg

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