
Law Amendments Committee Presentation May 5, 2015

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you.

I started in the Film and Television Industry sometime around 1989, when I was on a painting crew for the Charlton Heston show *The Little Kidnappers*. I've done a lot since then, but I particularly remember working on the second season of *This Hour Has 22 Minutes* in 1994. I remember the feeling of people in Halifax just starting to take notice of *22 Minutes*, and that they were astounded *and very proud* that it was made here, and not Toronto.

Pride is a funny thing.

There's the sort of pride that comes from doing a job you love, and doing it exceptionally well. It comes from knowing that what you do is not only worthy, but also worthwhile.

Starting in the early 1980s, film and television productions from away began coming to Nova Scotia to take advantage of our scenery and the Canadian dollar. An indigenous film industry existed then, and these from-away productions allowed our local crews to learn and develop the skills necessary to compete in the world market. Over time, our crews worked incredibly hard and grew in size and skill, to the point that they are now recognized as being among the best in the world. In doing so, they have built an industry, and brought pride and economic success to Nova Scotia. The Tax Credit may entice the from-away productions to look at Nova Scotia, but it is our crews which seal the deal. Spend any amount of time on a film set here, and you will see the pride that comes from knowing you do your job well, from knowing you are among the best in the world, and from knowing you have been part of constructing a successful, growing industry in your own home.

But there's another kind of pride. It's not as constructive, or as desirable.

It is the sort of pride that is said to goeth before destruction. Not before a fall, as is commonly misquoted, but before destruction. It's the sort of pride that is associated with refusing to admit you could be wrong; to admit that you are capable of making a mistake.

It is the sort of pride that says "I do not need to consult before making a decision. I know what's best."

It is the sort of pride that, even in the face of overwhelming evidence, will not, and can not, face up to the facts. It is the pride the Liberal government has displayed with regards to its handling of the Film Tax Credit issue. It's pride, plain and simple. I can't think of another word to describe it.

Because if it isn't pride, then what else would account for this government's steadfast refusal to admit it made a mistake by thinking the Film Industry has been given a blank cheque by this province? When, even after so much has been offered up to convince it otherwise, the government still sticks to its guns and claims it knows better than practically every other province and state in North America?

Oh, the government will say "That's incorrect; we met with the Industry and we worked out a deal," but you know that is not the case. What it did, it did in an effort to save face, to save its pride, but it is not saving an Industry. It is simply allowing AN Industry to carry on in a fashion which does not resemble THE Industry so many men and women worked so hard over the years to build, and to nurture. An industry which brought money into this province, kept young people here, and gave it some hope for the future.

Ladies and gentlemen, and here I will also address the Liberal government directly; you know that a costly mistake has been made. We know that You know that We know that You know.

You could have participated in the good kind of pride. But you haven't – yet.

Do the right thing and hold off making any changes to the Film Tax Credit until the Price Waterhouse analysis is complete. Instead of enforcing your pride on us, put us back to where we were on April 8th, and let's look at this situation together.

Thank you very much.

John Davie