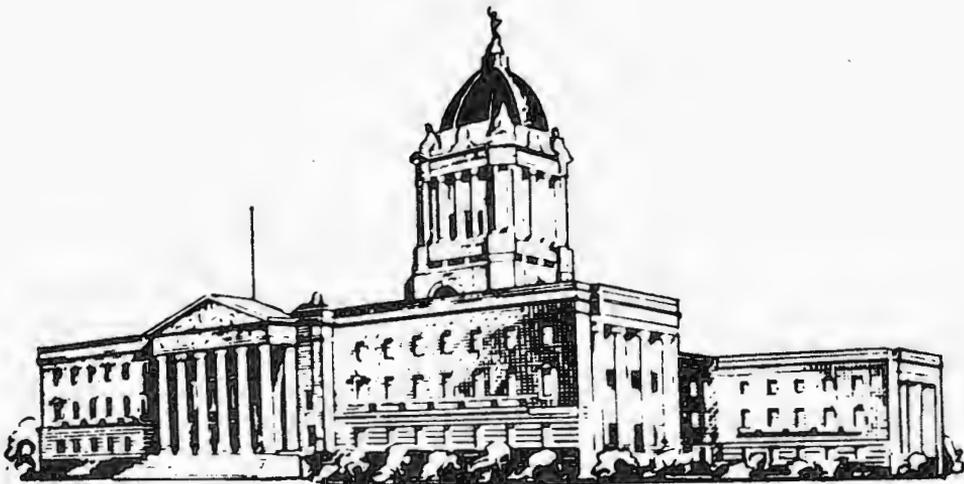




Second Session — Thirty-First Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

26 Elizabeth II

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Harry E. Graham
Speaker*



Vol. XXVI No. 26A

10:00 a.m. Friday, April 21, 1978

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thirty-First Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

<i>Name</i>	<i>Constituency</i>	<i>Political Affiliation</i>
ADAM, A.R. (Pete)	Ste. Rose	NDP
ANDERSON, Robert (Bob)	Springfield	P.C.
AXWORTHY, Lloyd	Fort Rouge	Lib.
BANMAN, Robert, Hon.	La Verendrye	P.C.
BARROW, Thomas A.	Flin Flon	NDP
BLAKE, David R.	Minnedosa	P.C.
BOSTROM, Harvey	Rupertsland	NDP
BOYCE, J.R. (Bud)	Winnipeg Centre	NDP
BROWN, Arnold	Rhineland	P.C.
CHERNIACK, Saul M., Q.C.	St. Johns	NDP
CORRIN, Brian	Wellington	NDP
COSENS, Keith A., Hon.	Gimli	P.C.
COWAN, Jay	Churchill	NDP
CRAIK, Donald W., Hon.	Riel	P.C.
DESJARDINS, Laurent L.	St. Boniface	NDP
DOERN, Russell J.	Elmwood	NDP
DOMINO, Len	St. Matthews	P.C.
DOWNEY, James E., Hon.	Arthur	P.C.
DRIEDGER, Albert	Emerson	P.C.
EINARSON, Henry	Rock Lake	P.C.
ENNS, Harry J., Hon.	Lakeside	P.C.
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	NDP
FERGUSON, James R.	Gladstone	P.C.
FOX, Peter	Kildonan	NDP
GALBRAITH, James	Dauphin	P.C.
GOURLAY, Douglas	Swan River	P.C.
GRAHAM, Harry E., Hon.	Birtle-Russell	P.C.
GREEN, Sidney, Q.C.	Inkster	NDP
HANUSCHAK, Ben	Burrows	NDP
HYDE, Lloyd G.	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
JENKINS, William W.	Logan	NDP
JOHNSTON, J. Frank, Hon.	Sturgeon Creek	P.C.
JORGENSEN, Warner H., Hon.	Morris	P.C.
KOVNATS, Abe	Radisson	P.C.
LYON, Sterling R., Q.C., Hon.	Charleswood	P.C.
MacMASTER, Ken, Hon.	Thompson	P.C.
McBRYDE, Ronald	The Pas	NDP
McGILL, Edward R., Hon.	Brandon West	P.C.
McGREGOR, Morris	Virden	P.C.
McKENZIE, J. Wally	Roblin	P.C.
MALINOWSKI, Donald	Point Douglas	NDP
MERCIER, Gerald W.J., Q.C., Hon.	Osborne	P.C.
MILLER, Saul A.	Seven Oaks	NDP
MINAKER, George	St. James	P.C.
ORCHARD, Donald W.	Pembina	P.C.
PARASIUK, Wilson	Transcona	NDP
PAWLEY, Howard, Q.C.	Selkirk	NDP
PRICE, Norma Hon.	Assiniboia	P.C.
RANSOM, Brian, Hon.	Souris-Killarney	P.C.
SCHREYER, Edward R.	Rossmere	NDP
SHERMAN, Louis R., Hon. (Bud)	Fort Garry	P.C.
SPIVAK, Sidney, Q.C., Hon.	River Heights	P.C.
STEEN, Warren	Crescentwood	P.C.
URUSKI, Billie	St. George	NDP
USKIW, Samuel	Lac du Bonnet	NDP
WALDING, D. James	St. Vital	NDP
WILSON, Robert G.	Wolseley	P.C.

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, April 21, 1978

Time: 10:00 a.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. Harry E. Graham (Birtle-Russell): At this time, I would like to draw the attention of the honourable members to the gallery on my left where we have 50 students of Grade 8 standing from Hugh John Macdonald School. These students are under the direction of Mr. Thiessen. This school is situated in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Logan.

We also have 66 students of Grade 5 standing from Prendergast School. These students are under the direction of Mrs. Penty. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Radisson.

We also have 30 students of Grade 11 standing from Green Valley Collegiate under the direction of Miss Wallace. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Emerson.

On behalf of all members, we welcome you here today.

Presenting Petitions.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

MR. CLERK: The petition of the Co-operative Credit Society of Manitoba Limited praying for the passing of An Act to amend an Act to incorporate the Co-operative Credit Society of Manitoba Limited.

MR. SPEAKER: Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. STERLING R. LYON, Premier (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, I have a brief statement to make to the House. I am pleased to report to the House that the Minister of Finance has concluded negotiations in Switzerland for the sale of a Manitoba bond issue amounting to \$100 million Swiss francs. This is the equivalent of about \$57.5 million Canadian dollars. The proceeds from the bond sale will be advanced to Manitoba Hydro for their capital purposes.

Honourable members will be pleased to learn, Mr. Speaker, that the interest involved is the lowest the province has ever negotiated on the Swiss market. The interest coupon is 4 percent and with the bonds being sold at 99.50 it brings the yield to the investor to 4.01 percent. We are particularly encouraged to have such a good rate of interest.

The bonds themselves will be dated May 18th and are for a term of 15 years. The province has the option of redeeming them at any time from 1984 on. The bond issue was arranged through a consortium managed by the Union Bank of Switzerland, Swiss Bank Corporation and Credit Suisse.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. EDWARD SCHREVER (Rossmere): Mr. Speaker, I believe it's customary, most of the time, to reply to formal statements. I will simply take this opportunity to say that we welcome the announcement. It is an indication of several things, one being that despite the movement downward of the Canadian dollar on international exchange, that because of the very favourable relative interest rate in the European capital and money market and the Swiss in particular, that notwithstanding the downward movement of the Canadian dollar this is still, from our point of view, a prudent and correct course of action, to be raising funds for the future development of this province and its renewable energy, hydro in particular. I know that there are some fellow citizens who are squeamish and perhaps they have a right to be when they look at the movement of the Canadian dollar and then wonder out loud about the wisdom of continuing to float debentures and issues offshore in foreign markets. This statement by the First Minister, in terms of the specific it contains, makes it abundantly clear that it is still a very relatively desirable debenture policy to be following.

I might comment as well that the rate that is involved here, a coupon rate of 4 percent demonstrates, among other things, well demonstrates a number of things about the money market, but it also demonstrates — and this must be a little bit bitter-sweet to my honourable friends opposite, sweet certainly in one sense, a little bitter in another — and that is that there is absolutely no demonstrable evidence that Manitoba's credit rating is in jeopardy, notwithstanding some of the things that have been said about our relative size of debenture debt. People that are at the centre of decision-making in the world money markets know full well that Manitoba's major indebtedness has to do with the building of solid, almost quasi permanent renewable energy structures for the future that will last a hundred years and more, and as such they regard it a prudent investment. Our credit rating, Sir, obviously is still very good.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

HON. KEN MacMASTER (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the annual report for Minago Contractors Limited for the year ending March 31, 1977.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur): Mr. Speaker, I would like to distribute the following annual reports for the members' information: The 13th Annual Report of the Manitoba Hog Producers Marketing Board, the 23rd Annual Progress Report of the University of Manitoba, and the 3rd Annual Report of the Prairie Agriculture Machinery Institute.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of Motion. . . Introduction of Bills. . . Oral Questions. The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, before embarking on our usual routine, I am sure the House would want me to express on behalf of all members of the House and indeed on behalf of all of the people of Manitoba, our warmest congratulations and best wishes to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II on the occasion of her birthday today. We are ever mindful of the unique and the unifying role which Her Majesty plays as Queen of Canada and which she plays in her own person in acting as the head of the Commonwealth, the head of State, for our country, for our Parliamentary democracy. We take this occasion to wish her many more years of health and satisfaction in her arduous tasks.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SCHREYER Mr. Speaker, we on this side would want to, in any case, take this opportunity in joining the First Minister in expressing our continued adherence to and reliance upon the Monarchy as a practical and unifying force within the Commonwealth and within our own country. Certainly now that the former Member for Swan River, Jim Bilton, is no longer here to express, as he was always able to do so well, a genuine enthusiasm for the Monarchy as an institution, for the incumbent as a person — and while I may not be able to do it with as much zest as he, nevertheless, lest there be any doubt, I express on behalf of Her Majesty's loyal opposition, a deep-seated and very practical view that the Monarchy serves us well, and the incumbent, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, as the individual person in that role and responsibility, has also served us well.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, I will pose the first question to the Minister of Mines and Resources. Perhaps he will take this as notice preliminary to dealing with it in Estimates, and that is, to ask the Minister whether there is under active policy review, the possibility of making changes with respect to the tax and royalty treatment accorded to oil producing operators in this province, given that most oil production in this province now, small and limited as it is, but still significant, is taking place by virtue of secondary recovery methods, step-out wells and the like, all of which have a significant added cost. And because that is the situation, I ask the Minister if he can advise whether there will be a policy brought forward that will give just that little bit extra of encouragement to the operators that are incurring added cost.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Mines.

HON. BRIAN RANSOM (Souris-Killamey): Yes, indeed, Mr. Speaker, that question is under review, and we certainly will be attempting to create circumstances under which the best possible use can be made of the limited oil resource that extraction to the greatest extent possible will be encouraged.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, my other question, since it relates to no one department in particular, I thought I should address to the First Minister, but on reflection, since it has to do with efficiency analysis, I will direct it to the Minister reporting for the Task Force.

Given, Mr. Speaker, that I personally have received, addressed to the Honourable Premier of Manitoba, Edward Schreyer, a letter inviting me to join the Federal Progressive Conservative Victory Club; and given that in one of the publications there is also from the P.C. Victory Club, addressed to Mr. — get this, Sir, — Mr. Societe Franco Manitoba, "Dear Mr. Manitoba", inviting Mr. Manitoba to join the P.C. Victory Club; given, Sir, that I have received this letter to the wrong title and the wrong address, but I still received it which is a reflection that the Post Office is more efficient than the P.C. Victory Club Campaign Headquarters. And given that Mr. Societe Franco Manitoba does not exist as Mr. Manitoba, can the Minister reporting for the Task Force advise us if he will take his Task Force and clean house at the Progressive Conservative Campaign Headquarters?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

HON. SIDNEY SPIVAK (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to report but I'm sorry to the regret of the Leader of the Opposition that Ed Schreyer is a member of the Conservative Party.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, I suppose I asked for that, but let it be clear, Sir, that there are four Ed Schreyers, the name is hardly unique. Three of them are New Democrats and one of them we consider to be beyond the pale.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, at the present time — but I think there will be a change — the Conservative Party cannot take responsibility for the Post Office.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. RONALD McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to humbly and timidly ask a question of the First Minister. I wonder if he would be kind enough to tell the House whether he has a backup Minister system or an Acting Minister system when a Minister is away, and if he does, who is the Acting Minister of Northern Affairs when the Northern Affairs Minister is away?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, if that information has not already been seen by my honourable friend, by virtue of the usual Order-in-Council it is passed and was passed when he was the Minister — maybe he didn't see it — I'll be happy to produce the Order and he'll have all of the Acting Ministers in front of him.

MR. McBRYDE: Well, Mr. Speaker, it seems that if you approach the First Minister on your knees you do get an answer. So I'll humbly ask the First Minister, which of his Ministers takes to Cabinet submissions on new hospitals, new jails, etc.?

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question and since I'm not exactly clear on the Ministerial responsibilities, either to the Minister of Urban Affairs or the Minister of Tourism. I wonder if the City of Winnipeg has requested any assistance from either of these Ministers for the construction of skateboard parks in the City of Winnipeg, and particularly in the area of the Prendergast School.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Urban Affairs.

HON. GERALD W.J. MERCIER (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, we have not yet received any requests for financial assistance.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. BEN HANUSCHAK: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Honourable Minister without Portfolio, responsible for the Task Force on Government Efficiency. I would assume that he would want to have something to say about the efficiency of the P.C. Victory Club '78.

I note in the covering letter, Mr. Speaker, that I am asked to assist this organization to restore hope and confidence. Well, Mr. Speaker, how can one have hope and confidence in an organization which uses a mailing list at least seven and a half years old and does not even know the postal code or its address, because they are too different . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. LLOYD AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Urban Affairs and it may be of some abiding interest to the Minister responsible for Housing.

Could the Minister of Urban Affairs tell us whether he has had any discussions lately with City of Winnipeg officials concerning provincial participation in the CNR East Yards Project, which the city is now prepared to go ahead with?

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, no, I have not been approached by the City of Winnipeg.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Can the Minister indicate whether the deal is still on between the Provincial Government and Great-West Life for the acquisition of their building so that they would then be free to move or incorporate themselves in the CNR East Yards Program?

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I believe that matter was under active consideration by the former Minister of Public Works, the Member for Elmwood, and we have had no discussions since we have assumed the role of government, with respect to that matter.

MR. AXWORTHY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps the Minister for Housing might answer this one: that is, in respect of the city's proposal for the CNR East Yards Project and the CNR's own

change of policy direction to now include residential accommodation as being the major component, is the Minister of Housing prepared to enter into discussions with CNR officials and city officials to determine how and in what way the provincial housing corporation or the Provincial Government itself might aid and assist in the introduction of different forms of lower moderate-cost housing in that program so that we can somehow deal with the inadequacy of supply in that area that presently exists in the City of Winnipeg?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister for Housing.

HON. J. FRANK JOHNSTON (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, we would be very pleased to enter into discussions with anybody regarding housing in the Province of Manitoba, or the core area of the city, or the whole of the city. At the present time, we are not short of land in the core area of the city but, as I said, we would be very willing to speak to the people in the CNR regarding that property.

MR. SPEAKER: Before we go any further, I would like to draw the attention of the honourable members to the gallery where we have 65 students from Regent Park School under the direction of Mrs. Gillingham. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Transcona.

On behalf of all members, we welcome you here today.
The Honourable Member for Seven Oaks.

MR. SAUL A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, further to the statement read this morning by the First Minister, could he inform the House whether the interest coupons are annual or semi-annual — the payments?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Four percent payable annually is the information I have in front of me, Mr. Speaker. I'll double-check that with the officials just to make certain but that's the brief information I have in front of me.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. SAUL CHERNIACK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address a question to the Acting Minister of Finance. On April 13th, the Minister of Finance agreed to furnish certain information to us in relation to sales tax collections and I'm wondering if the Acting Minister of Finance can arrange to have the information available.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer Affairs.

HON. EDWARD MCGILL (Brandon West): Mr. Speaker, I'll take note of that request and endeavour to provide that information.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. RUSSELL DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I want to direct a question to the Minister of Health. Can he confirm that the offices of his department have been deluged with mail from rural and northern residents in support of the Children's Dental Program?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L. R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry): Well, Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't use the term deluged. I would say that I have received substantial mail and substantial representations which I would expect to be the case in connection with that program and with the critical and urgent justification for proper children's dental health.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, a second question. Could the Minister clarify this point again. He is attempting, I gather, to determine the legal obligation of the province in reaching some settlement or understanding with the nurses. Is he, regardless of the legal commitment, considering the moral obligation of the government towards those people?

MR. SHERMAN: I answered that question in the affirmative some time ago, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Honourable Minister of Labour whether pursuant to an exchange of questions and answers here some several days ago, she is now able to — (Interjection) — a week ago — she is now prepared to table the letter submitted by Professor Woods who chaired the Labour Relations Joint Committee for some 14 years.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. NORMA L. PRICE (Assiniboia): I have them, Sir, but I haven't got them with me. I can get them right away and table them.

MR. SCHREYER: To the Minister of Tourism, I believe it's the Minister of Tourism; that is, to ask the Honourable Minister if he can confirm that the land which was acquired by the Province of Manitoba with the co-operation by the City of Winnipeg with respect to the consolidation of land along the ribbon river bank along the Red River, from approximately Portage and Main, or rather the projection of Portage Avenue east of the Red River northward to Redwood Bridge, whether that land, having been acquired by the Crown, will be now be put under Planning so that it can be put to use in a way that enhances public enjoyment and need.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Tourism.

HON. ROBERT (Bob) BANMAN (La Verendrye): Mr. Speaker, the ARC Agreement, I think the member is referring to, is going ahead. We are negotiating with the Federal Government right now to possibly include some more lands along that particular route; as to the particular development stage, I'd have to check exactly with the department to find out how far they are developed.

MR. SCHREYER: Can the Honourable Minister indicate if any of that land, having been acquired now, will be put to use in a way that does not preclude the construction of condominiums by some several hundreds of units?

MR. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, the particular park is scheduled to be a linear park along the river bank and that's the concept that we are negotiating with the Federal Government right now.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Health. Can he indicate whether his department has issued any changes in the program that is presently available to senior citizens who are on full supplement to receive full free prescriptions, eye glasses and dental services and has there been any changes in the criteria or are they, in fact, moving toward elimination of that program or a change in that program?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: No, Mr. Speaker, not to my knowledge. I'll have to take the question as notice but to my knowledge there are no such changes.

MR. AXWORTHY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister then ' in respect to that answer, clarify why officials of his department — or perhaps he would investigate why officials of his department have both been in contact with those senior citizens on that card program to tell them that they will no longer be available to them or, in fact, they are no longer eligible. Will he undertake that investigation right away' considering that many of these people are being told that the program came to an end on March 31st and have not received renewal of their cards since then?

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, if you would permit me, Sir, I would like to revise my answer to the honourable member to his first question. I misinterpreted his question. If he's referring to the Social Allowance Health Services' cards that have been in the hands of approximately 3,200 senior citizens at one point, the number is now reduced to about 2,700 in total. Those cards are not being renewed. I want to correct — obviously I misunderstood the member's original question, Sir — those cards are not being renewed. There was a pilot project in the Brandon area in which cards to a certain number of such citizens were not renewed in recent years. There were no serious impacts or repercussions from that program and it was on the basis of that that we determined the same practice could be followed with respect to the total number without serious ramifications.

MR. AXWORTHY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The Minister's revised answer gives rise to a number of serious questions. Does he now indicate that, in fact, the full program is about to be cancelled or to be phased out and not just the 500 that he's now announced have been phased out? Do we now expect that the whole program will be eliminated? Secondly, would he be prepared to table the results of that pilot project to this House so that we would be able to ascertain the results for ourselves and; thirdly the Minister ' could indicate what the alternative is to those who have been receiving those social services' cards? Are they simply going to be put on the Pharmacare Program which requires a user fee or are they simply being cut off any access to these services?

MR. SHERMAN: Sir, first of all, so there be no wrong impression left on the record, let me correct the honourable member on one point. We're not talking about 500; we're talking about approximately 2,700. It was about 3,200, and through the fact that a number of them are deceased, we're now down to about 2,700. In terms of the whole subject matter that the honourable member raises, I am fully prepared to go into it in detail, Sir, on my Estimates. My department has taken the decision at this

Friday, April 21, 1978

junction that it's justifiable and it's not harmful and it is equitable. I am prepared to discuss it in full in the Estimates process.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a question to the Minister of Northern Affairs and welcome him back to the House. I'm glad he didn't get caught in the snowstorm up north on Tuesday, although he might have got caught in some of the storms that he caused himself up there.

I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if the Minister could indicate to what use the \$85,000 profit of Minago Construction will be put to. Will it be used in phasing out that company or does he have other uses for that profit earned by Minago Construction?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I have just this morning filed the Annual Report of Minago Construction. When the Honourable Member for The Pas has had an opportunity to review it, I'll be prepared to discuss it with him, either in the House or in private, whatever he wishes.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Well, Mr. Speaker, since the Minister is closing the company I would assume that he has some understanding of the operational situation of that company. Is there an \$85,000 profit? And how does the Minister intend to spend? Does he intend to reinvest the anticipated million dollar profit from the sale of equipment? Does he intend to reinvest that in northern development? Or will that about a million dollar profit from the sale of equipment be frittered away in administrative waste in southern Manitoba?

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I just simply refuse to try to discuss with the Member for The Pas his type of mathematics.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, I'll try some more mathematics on the Honourable Minister. Maybe he does know the answer to this question. Was there or was there not, 17 miles of road left to be constructed to Moose Lake, Manitoba, and would that not have provided work for the full construction season to Minago Construction which has an \$85,000 profit and about a million dollars in assets?

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I suppose if you wish to grant to a Crown agency, or award work, you could keep many agencies going. Yes, there was additional road work to be done — northern Manitoba, southern Manitoba, anywhere in Manitoba, I suppose — we chose not to carry on awarding work to this particular company. And it's just that simple. They haven't been, in the past, involved in the tendering procedure; they've been awarded work.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. WILLIAM JENKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Honourable Minister of Labour. Can the Honourable Minister of Labour inform the House if she has yet received the preliminary report on the accidental death at Redekopp Lumber?

MRS. PRICE: Pardon me, I didn't get where he said, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JENKINS: I will rephrase the question then, Mr. Speaker. Can the Honourable Minister inform the House if she has at this time received the preliminary report on the fatal accident that took place at Redekopp Lumber a week and one day ago, on April 13?

MRS. PRICE: I was told, Mr. Speaker, that I would have the report later on yesterday, which didn't arrive, so I will check into it this morning.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. WILSON PARASIUK: Thank you. My question is directed to the Minister responsible for the Task Force on government economy. In the light of the First Minister's statements today regarding foreign capital borrowing, can he confirm that on pages 155 and 154 of Volume II of his report he recommends that a review be undertaken before foreign capital markets are used by the province for more borrowing.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. SPIVAK: Yes, Mr. Speaker. The Task Force recommendations are contained within the Task

Force Report. The honourable member is in a position to read them and examine them. They have been referred to Cabinet and they will be dealt with, I'm sure, shortly.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: A supplementary. Was this review undertaken before the Department of Finance went out and borrowed money on the European money market?

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, I am quite aware, and I think the honourable member is aware, of the date of the submission of the Task Force Report to the members of the Assembly and to the First Minister and to the Cabinet. I'm not aware of the details of any of the negotiations with respect to the Department of Finance, or its timing, but I am also aware, Mr. Speaker, and this has been repeated over and over again, that the Task Force recommendations are in fact recommendations.

MR. PARASIUK: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister. Will he confirm then that the Department of Finance, through their actions today, have rejected the recommendations of the Task Force, which was headed up by Bob Jones, Chairman of Investors Syndicate?

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, I will not confirm that, and I think that the suggestions from some of the members who have been sitting on their hands and have been talking from their seat, as well as the honourable member, should recognize that the report consists of a series of recommendations which will have to be dealt with by the Cabinet and I am sure that many of them will be accepted, many of them will be rejected, and many of them will be modified. And that will be a normal course. But Mr. Speaker, I must say that I am quite prepared to table several of the recommendations and reports that were presented to the members opposite, which were completely ignored in the past eight years.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. LEONARD S. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the Honourable Minister of Public Works. Would the Honourable Minister of Public Works advise whether his department is now proceeding with major renovations at the Brandon Mental Health Centre, relating to his often stated concerns about fire safety and buildings that are meeting fire regulations?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

HON. HARRY J. ENNS (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, I know that the Department of Public Works is in the process of working, in co-operation with the Department of Health, in addressing ourselves to the major institutions, the institution that the honourable member mentions being one of them. And in an effort to address ourselves to the fire safety problems upwards of some \$5 million in my department are being used in this particular area. I would take the question as notice as to specific contractual work that is being undertaken in any given institution at any given time. I may suggest, Mr. Speaker, that that's a subject matter that we can deal with in Public Works Estimates.

MR. EVANS: Well, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that the Honourable Minister will take it as notice and he is prepared to discuss it in his Estimates, which is fine, but I believe the Honourable Minister did make a number of statements saying that work was proceeding, or plans were proceeding, and there is considerable interest in the community regarding precisely the time frame. We don't know when we're going to get around to Public Works Estimates, so I ask again if the Honourable Minister could give us some idea as to when work will proceed and to the extent to which this work will proceed?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I can only suggest to the Honourable Member for Brandon East that just the moment that he eases off, or can get his colleagues to ease off, with that unrelinquishing attack on the estimates of Agriculture, he'll have that opportunity to talk to me; I'm next.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Selkirk.

MR. HOWARD PAWLEY: I direct my question to the Minister for Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Can the Minister advise us as to the outcome of his review in regard to the dual telephone service?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Speaker, I cannot give him a final report on that but I can give him what might be considered an interim report. The matter of the 130, approximately, telephone customers who enjoy dual telephone service in the area of Winnipeg was re-examined by the Board of Manitoba Telephone System and it was their decision that these services which now exist should be, for the present, allowed to remain, and that they will recommend to the Public Utilities Board that this be the policy in respect to those services which now exist. But they may, at some future time, be discontinued where a break-in service occurs or where the area is upgraded to a single line service, or where construction in the area results in a realignment of service. But I can now tell the member that this review has

produced some stay of execution in respect to having to make a decision in August, and that it would appear that these dual services will be permitted to continue until such time as some changes in the area occur.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SCHREYER: Well, Mr. Speaker, I seek not any reply in substance from the Honourable Minister reporting for the Telephone System, but rather may I ask the Honourable Minister if he will at least undertake to consider in depth and seriously, with Telephone System and other persons, the relative merits of proceeding to proceed without abatement in the replacement of telephone operators by automatic equipment in rural centres? I am not referring to metropolitan Winnipeg but to rural centres. Will the Minister undertake to give this serious consideration rather than give justification — however plausible it may be — with respect to carrying on on a relentless path of automation replacement?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Speaker, the question posed by the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition sounds very much like the question that was posed some days ago, and the response given then, I think, can be equally applied in this instance, that we are indeed examining and weighing the difficulties that are produced by this technological change in respect to the personnel involved and the operator situation throughout the whole of Manitoba. Certainly these matters are under review. I know that Manitoba Telephone System is aware of the concerns of many people in respect to the modernization of its system and the reductions which sometimes occur in the number of staff that are employed to perform certain functions.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, there was a question placed in respect to plans which MTS might have for Selkirk in terms of the telephone operators. I am able to tell the member that there are no current plans for any staff reductions in the Selkirk area, outside of what normal reductions might occur as a result of fluctuations in traffic volume.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I want to direct a question to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for the Task Force. Given his responses today and a couple of days ago, two days ago and today, could he indicate to the House whether he finds it hotter in this Chamber or in Nassau?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Vital.

MR. D. JAMES WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Honourable Minister of Labour. Has she, or any of her department, released information to the news media regarding the Retail Businesses Holiday Closing Act?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MRS. PRICE: Yes, I did, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a supplementary, may I ask the Minister when she will favour the members of this House with similar information?

MRS. PRICE: Mr. Speaker, I apologize for my speaking to the news before it was circulated. I am fairly new here and I have made an error; I didn't realize I had to wait.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SCHREYER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Labour. It has nothing to do with admonition for making an error; rather it is to ask the Honourable Minister if she can advise whether she met in formal consultation, or in consultation simply, with any major group in the province with respect to the drawing up of the legislation and the substance thereof?

MRS. PRICE: Not with any major groups, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SCHREYER: With minor groups, then, and if so which ones?

To be more precise, Mr. Speaker, can the Honourable Minister indicate if she met with representatives of the Retail Merchants Association and groups such as that? Can she indicate if that is so?

MRS. PRICE: No, I didn't, Mr. Speaker, not with that particular group. I spoke to some of the minor ones — as the Leader of the Opposition says. I did have discussion with some of them.

MR. SCHREYER: Could we be advised as to which groups she considers minor?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. SIDNEY GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Honourable the Minister of Labour. Can the Minister of Labour advise me whether she has received a reply from the Attorney-General to her request that he investigate the unlawful use or the possible fraudulent use of emblems belonging to this province by the Manitoba Government Employees Association?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MRS. PRICE: No, Mr. Speaker, I haven't.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SCHREYER: A final supplementary with respect to the matter of store closing hours. Could the Honourable Minister indicate if she met with the Retail and Wholesale Clerks?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Burrows. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SCHREYER: I'm sorry; I know that under the rules the Minister need not necessarily reply but

A MEMBER: She shook her head; she shook her head in the negative.

MR. SCHREYER: Oh, I'm sorry. Perhaps I should put it on the record. I asked whether the honourable lady met with the representatives of the Retail and Wholesale Clerks. I understand that she responded negative. Let the record show.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Honourable Minister of Education in view of the fact that after the completion of the Estimates the Honourable Minister of Health was able to find a way to make provision for the major repair of a hospital in Snow Lake. Would the Honourable Minister review his own Estimates of expenditures to see if he could find a way to make provision for the continuation of the Inter-universities North Program at a level of funding that it requires to do the job for which there is a demand?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. KEITH A. COSENS (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, I believe I answered a question by the Member for The Pas on that particular topic and I assured him, at this time, that the University Grants Commission had in turn assured me that there would be some \$120,000 available for the Inter-universities North Program in the coming year — \$120,000.00.

ORDERS OF THE DAY — ORDERS FOR RETURN

ORDER NO. 51: On Motion of Mr. Malinowski, Order for Return.

THAT an Order of the House do issue for a return showing the following information:

1. The name, position, salary and qualifications of each person hired since October 24, 1977 to work within the Civil Service Commission, and in agencies reporting to the Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission, and the nature of the competition held for the position.

ORDER NO. 52: On Motion of Mr. Malinowski, Order for Return.

THAT an Order of the House do issue for a return showing the following information:

1. The name and address of each person in the Civil Service Commission and in agencies reporting to the Minister responsible for the Commission whose employment was terminated or who has ceased employment with the government service of the Province of Manitoba since October 24, 1977.

2. The position as of the date of termination of each such person in the Commission and the branch in which each such person was employed.

3. The employment status of each such person, i.e., permanent civil servant, term employee with more than one year seniority, contract employee.

4. Method of termination in each case. In the event of discharge, the cause for termination.

5. The name of each person demoted within the Commission since October 24, 1977, and the nature and cause of the demotion.

6. Which established positions in the Commission vacant as at October 24, 1977, still remain vacant, or were eliminated.

7. How many staff man years in the Commission as approved by Management Committee, vacant as at October 24, 1977, still remain vacant, or were eliminated.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MRS. PRICE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I accept these Orders.

GOVERNMENT BILLS — SECOND READINGS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. WARNER H. JORGENSEN (Morris): You can call Bills No. 2 and 3, Mr. Speaker.

BILL NO. 2 — AN ACT TO AMEND THE DISTRESS ACT

MR. MERCIER presented Bill No. 2, An Act to amend The Distress Act, for second reading.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, this is, I would term, a minor housekeeping bill. The objective and purpose of the bill is to remove the schedule of fees from the Act and allow them to be set by regulation, which is — I think as all members will recognize — is the normal course that is followed now where most fees are set by regulation rather than in legislation.

I might add that the tariff of fees which is in Schedule "A" in The Distress Act is the same schedule as was set out in 1891, the Revised Statutes of Manitoba, Chapter 46, with the exception of paragraph 2, which was increased from \$1.50 to \$2.50 in 1924.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Honourable Minister would allow a question. Could he clarify — and I have not looked at Schedule "A" in the present Act — could he clarify whether this Schedule of Fees relates to the fees charge by government or by private agencies?

MR. MERCIER: My understanding is it is in the main private agencies, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CHERNIACK: Well, a second question then, Mr. Speaker. Is the Minister then saying that fees chargeable by agencies outside of government will now be fixed by the Governor-General-in-Council without reference to the Legislature, to determine the value of the work to be done.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. May I suggest to the honourable member that he perhaps should enter into a debate on this. The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I was not entering into a debate, I was asking a question. If the Minister didn't want to answer it I suppose he wouldn't do it. But, Mr. Speaker, surely I have a right to ask a question so that I can get a response which might well prevent the need on my part to enter into a debate. —(Interjection)—

MR. SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? The Honourable Member for Selkirk.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker' I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for St. Johns that debate on this bill be adjourned. MOTION presented and carried.

BILL NO. 3 — AN ACT TO AMEND THE PROVINCIAL JUDGES ACT

MR. MERCIER presented Bill No. 3, An Act to amend The Provincial Judges Act, for second reading.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, this again is what I would term a minor housekeeping bill. The new section 5(1) will merely permit a provincial judge who retires or resigns to dispose of any matter with which he has been ceased during a period of 12 weeks following the retirement or resignation.

Similar provisions are in the Court of Appeal Act, The Court of Queen's Bench Act and The County Courts Act.

The amendment to section 6(1), dealing with the composition of the Judicial Council, is merely to ensure that there will be a continuing Judicial Council.

The Provincial Judges Act came into force in January 1st, 1973, and at that time the previous government appointed Mr. Justice Nitikman as Chairman and the then President of the Law Society of Manitoba, Mr. Peter Morris, now the Honourable Peter Morris of the Court of Queen's Bench.

Mr. Justice Morris was later replaced by Mr. Buchwald, Q.C., when Mr. Buchwald was President of the Law Society. The other member in good standing is Mr. Henry Carroll, Q.C., of Brandon.

While the two lay members of the Judicial Council will continue to be appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, the other three members of the Council will, as a result of this amendment, not require any reappointment.

We are continuing the tradition set by the previous government in appointing the President of the Law Society as a member of the Council. We are building in some flexibility by allowing the President to appoint some other senior member of the Law Society when he is unable to act, and the present President of the Law Society, Mr. Rich, has indicated that only one of the senior members of the Society, the Vice-President or Chairman of the Discipline Committee or Chairman of the Judicial Committee would be considered for nomination.

The involvement by the President of the Manitoba Bar Association is a new concept, and again the current President of the Manitoba Bar Association has indicated that only a senior member of the association would be appointed if he was for any reason unable to act, again, some person like the Vice-President or Second Vice-President or Secretary of the Bar Association.

I would note, Mr. Speaker, that it is not intended to remove Mr. Justice Nitikman from the Judicial Council, but rather to give some flexibility in the event that, for some reason, absence from his office or any other reason he is unable to sit on the Judicial Council.

So, Mr. Speaker, the intent is merely to, at least, make three of the positions a continuing body and continuing to provide for the appointment of the other two positions by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Selkirk.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Member for St. Johns that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Attorney General that the House resolve itself into a Committee to consider the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee of Supply with the Honourable Member for Radisson in the Chair for the Department of Mines and Natural Resources and the Honourable Member for Crescentwood in the Chair for the Department of Agriculture.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY

SUPPLY—AGRICULTURE

MR. CHAIRMAN, Mr. Warren Steen (Crescentwood): Call the Committee to order. Page 10 of the Estimate Book, Item 8, Technical Services.
The Minister of Agriculture.

HON. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur): Mr. Chairman, in the Technical Services — I believe the question they have been asking, that they would like to know — there are 44 SMYs in the Technical Services program; five are in the Regional Division with no vacancies; 25 SMYs are in the Technical Services branch; three positions are vacant, including a new Farm Machinery Board inspector; 14 SMYs are associated with the ARDA Agreement; two of these are vacant, both being RWS technicians. At present, there are four contract staff which will be phased out by August 31, 1978.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Can the Minister tell us whether the vacant positions are going to be reobtained, filled at some point in time, which are the four contract positions that are going to elapse, and why?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the positions will be held in place. They will be handled the same way as I have stated in the previous ones, filled on a priority basis within the department. The other question on the contract staff . . . one is a farm machinery inspector, two in the clerical staff, and one rural water technician. They are being converted to one permanent position, and the rest term positions, the phasing out of the contracts.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I wonder whether the Minister could tell us why it is that we're not going to continue with the same complement of staff, which I believe was only one, under the Farm Machinery Act, as an inspector. What's the logic or reason behind the dropping of one person there?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, it has been a contract staff and we are changing that to a permanent staff.

MR. USKIW: Oh, so you're not eliminating the position. You are just converting it. Which ones are we eliminating?

MR. DOWNEY: There are not any being eliminated.

MR. USKIW: Oh, all right; that's fine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 8.(a)(1)—pass —the Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: I'm just trying to determine here what items fall under 8.(a).

MR. CHAIRMAN: 8.(a)(1), the Salaries.

MR. USKIW: What is the money for? That's the regional staff complement; is that it? In other words, what I'm trying to determine is where do we talk about the policy here, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DOWNEY: Those salaries relate to the five regional engineers.

MR. USKIW: Okay. Then am I correct in assuming that we can discuss the whole gamut of technical services under 8.(b) as opposed to 8.(a)?

MR. CHAIRMAN: As far as philosophy, etc.?

MR. USKIW: The policy and the programs.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. That would be my view.

MR. USKIW: So then I want to wait until that point in time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 8.(a)(1)—pass. The Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. BOYCE: Under this item generally, Mr. Chairman . . . I don't want to be out of order, but perhaps the Minister can take a problem to which I don't pretend to have an answer. It is brought to mind by the current hearings of the Milk Control Board.

Up to this point in time, Mr. Chairman, there has been enough influx of people from the rural community to the major urban centre in which half of our population lives that the city people had a fair understanding of what the farm problems were. But during the last 10-15 years the influx of people to the City of Winnipeg has been largely from the non-agrarian sector in Italy, in Portugal and, latterly, from the Philippines, and also from the more northern remote communities.

It is becoming more and more evident that the people in the urban centres don't understand farm economy at the gut level. I don't want to be airy-fairy about it, but nevertheless, from the current hearings, too many people don't know that in Canada we still have a cheap food policy, in relative terms. I think the Egg Marketing Board put out the brochure recently that in relative terms a dozen eggs, relative to the minimum wage, they're cheaper today than they were.

Well, the systems that we use to get the message across in politics and in sending out newsletters, and all the rest of it, I really don't think that this is solving the problem. And as I said when I started, I don't know how we are going to solve it, but nevertheless I would suggest that rather than the whole department sitting looking at its own belly button in the sense that all research is oriented on, you know, different varieties of this, that and the other thing, and different systems relative to the agricultural sector itself that someone has to suggest.

The First Minister said if the opposition comes up with some good ideas maybe he will look at it. I don't know how much leeway you have within your budget for transfer of dollars, I'm not saying, you know, a quarter of a million dollar study or something like that. I would suggest that under this area of looking at things technically, that the department get some of their very capable, competent staff together to address themselves to this problem. But how can we talk to the people who really don't know what is involved in the agriculture sector, because it is becoming more and more evident in listening to the presentations made to the Milk Control Board, that many of the people haven't got a clue of what's involved in producing a quart of milk. Now, the processing part of it is something else, it's more over in the manufacturing sector. But nevertheless, the basic problems of agriculture, I really don't think are understood by too many of the urban members.

If you look at the political situation — and I really don't want to get into the partisan politics — but the division between the city and the rural community was quite evident in the last election. I really

don't think, in the interests of all Manitobans, that this is going to serve us well. So I would suggest to the Minister relative to this particular item, if there is some way that we can get the message across to the urban community, just what we're talking about as far as the production of food for the citizens of this particular province — exports and everything else are important too, but nevertheless I think the citizens of the urban communities in the province have to better understand the problems of agriculture and be in a position to put the capital and the moneys necessary to the advancement of our still important — about half of our provincial net product is relative to agriculture. I would just make that suggestion to the Minister, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Yes Mr. Chairman. For the member opposite, I do believe that he does have a good point, that there is certainly need for informing the consuming public what is really taking place in agriculture, and I certainly can assure him that not only the information available to the consumers, but we certainly hope to address ourselves to that, and the information service available to the farm people. I think it has to be a line of communication that is certainly kept up and discussed. I will take a note of that and give it serious consideration, as far as the Information Services.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. BOYCE: Perhaps, Mr. Chairman, I could correct the record. They had me listed in the paper that I opposed an increase in the milk price, which is not correct. My intervention with the Milk Control Board was that the evidence would appear that the price of milk should rise, but nevertheless, there are many people in our economy who are in a position that they can't afford to pay, with the freezing of the minimum wage, and therefore contracts which are determined relative to the minimum wage, these people's incomes have been effectively frozen for the past number of months.

The increase for metrification, — I don't want to be out of order by going back to the Milk Control Board, I just want to correct the record — and I don't think that the farmers should have to subsidize these people, so that my intervention was more to the point that we have to assist these people to purchase it and at the same time assure that the producers of fluid milk receive an adequate income. I just wanted to correct the record at this time, Mr. Chairman.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the Minister in introducing his Estimates indicated that he was going to phase out or close out the Rural Water Services bulk purchasing facility in Transcona. Where does that show up as a reduction in expenditures? I notice that the expenditure items are almost identical as they were a year ago. Therefore, I am trying to determine how it is that we have such a dramatic change in policy and involvement on the part of the department but yet it doesn't show up in the Estimates.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, that could be discussed under 8.(b) if the member would like to discuss it at that point.

MR. USKIW: All right, that's fine.

MR. ADAM: I would like to ask the Minister what has been done insofar as zero tillage is concerned in regards to reseeding land to forage crops or other crops. I believe it would come under machinery.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, there is a program that is working with the University of Manitoba in that area of zero tillage and seeding of forage crops.

MR. ADAM: Is there any work being done with the University and the implement manufacturers insofar as developing such a thing as a seed drill that you could just go ahead and plant without cultivating or tilling? Does the Department have such a drill available in the regions where farmers could perhaps try these machines out?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I am not aware of any work that is being done in the machinery in particular. It is brought to my attention that there is a Federal contract with the University of Manitoba on the development of a machine for that purpose.

MR. ADAM: What would a farmer or rancher have to do if he wanted to experiment with this? Would he have to go ahead and buy a machine or would he be able to rent? You know it is pretty difficult for a farmer to just move from one type of traditional way of farming and moving over to another way without any knowledge or advance experience.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, as I just said, the Federal Government and the University are working on a development of a machine. There are three, I believe, private companies that are now manufacturing equipment with a limited production. However, just from personal experience, I know of one or two machines available that have been tried with a fair amount of success. So I would just reassure the member that there is continuing work going on, and I am sure that as the machine

becomes developed, there will be trial equipment available for the farm people to use.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 8.(a)(1)—pass. 8.(a)(2) Other Expenditures— pass. 8.(b) Technical Services Branch (1) Salaries. The Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I now put the question again. Why is there not a reduction reflected in these Estimates, based on the change of government policy with respect to the operation of the Bulk Purchasing Centre, the RWS Program?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, there is a reduction in the salaries of the Technical Services Branch, from \$423,000 to \$389,900, showing a decrease in the salaries.

MR. USKIW: How many staff man years does that mean?

MR. DOWNEY: That comes with the phasing out of the Supply operation. It will mean a layoff of six term staff, and as I have stated previous to this, we will be attempting to place these individuals in positions elsewhere in the organization.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, perhaps the Minister could tell me what the volume of business was in the last fiscal year, in terms of dollars, turnover, staff complement and profit and loss, on the operation?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I'll get that information here. Mr. Chairman, for what period would the member like the dollar turnover?

MR. USKIW: The last fiscal year; the last year for which we have complete records.

MR. DOWNEY: The last complete recorded year would be \$855,030, the year ending 1977.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, how many staff were involved in this part of the RWS program, and what was the net cost to the Crown of that aspect of the total program?

MR. DOWNEY: The number of staff affected was six, as I said earlier. A breakdown on the cost to the province, after considering the cost of charging rent and the cost of interest on investment, that part of the operation would show in an approximate break-even position.

MR. USKIW: Well Mr. Chairman, just to make certain that we understand each other, the Minister is telling us that this operation did not cost the people of Manitoba any money; that in essence, it was a self-sustaining program.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I would like to state that as far as a dollar loss to the people of the Province of Manitoba, it would appear that it was a very small amount. However, I think, as I stated earlier in some of our discussions, that there is certainly a loss to the rural communities and towns of individuals who would plan the ongoing servicing of the equipment which was supplied by government, and certainly caused a breakdown in relationship with business people in the small rural communities that were expected to service this equipment in the future years. So I think that is the major conflict within the communities as the reason why it is being . . .

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I now ask the obvious question, and that is, what was the benefit to the people participating in the program of the bulk purchasing facility in terms of net reduction in costs of those materials and services?

MR. DOWNEY: The net saving to the individuals using that service was approximately \$140 per user.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, could the Minister give us an across-the-board percentage saving, because of course we're dealing with a flat dollar figure here and it will certainly vary between one farm and another one. I wonder what the percentage savings were to the people of Manitoba who used this program — an approximation.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, at this particular time it would be a very difficult figure to come forward with, because each installation, I'm sure, cost a varying degree of amount of money and it would certainly be very difficult to give an across-the-board figure. Probably the closest we can give is the \$140 per individual that was savings. However, we have continued grant with the Rural Water Services to cover any problems they might have in purchasing equipment through the Rural Water Services. The figure that I have is that the continuation of the grant to the farm people will make up for anything that is lost in the purchasing of equipment and give them continual service for the many years to come from their local plumbing and supply people within the rural communities. It is

certainly our intent to see the small towns and rural communities grow and develop and not have all the people in the farm communities rely on one government supply centre in the city of Winnipeg.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, it then brings me to a very important point, and that is the fact that through the instrument of government we were able to put together a program that reduced the costs of certain basic and important services to the farm community, which in effect had also reduced their operating costs in terms of an agricultural industry, without any cost to the government of Manitoba or any charge against the taxpayers of this province. It's an example of a program and a service that obviously can best be done by government. Here is an example where the Minister himself indicates that the farmer saved on the average of \$140 per farm, or per installation, by buying his materials through this facility without any cost to anyone else.

Now this is a very good illustration and a good example of improved efficiency in the provision of services and material to the farm community through the instrument of government, which could not be done by any other method, Mr. Chairman. And I suggest to this Minister, Mr. Chairman, that the logic of his withdrawal from this program has nothing more to do with efficiency of government than many of the other things that they have indicated they were withdrawing from, in terms of the provision of government services but it has a lot to do with ideology. We have a government that is hung up on the theory that even if it's possible to improve things collectively we're not going to do it that way. We are going to put people in a position of having to pay higher costs and higher fees because philosophically we don't believe that we should be involved in these kinds of things. That's really what this Minister is telling us here today, Mr. Chairman. At somebody else's cost, yes.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to go back and explain the basic reason that we have planned to phase out the supply depot was the fact that there were a lot of breakdowns in relationship between the people in farm communities who had to be serviced by individuals who lived throughout the farm communities and certainly there was a breakdown because of the fact government were providing a service that they themselves could have provided for the farm people and \$140 per farm person certainly is an amount of money which I am concerned about. I do not think it would inhibit farm people from going ahead and implementing or putting in that type of service to their farms and with carrying on of the grant system, as I have said, that is what will assist them.

I would also like to make mention of the fact that if the member opposite were to be concerned about the cost of farm production, that the fact that the farm people in using the Manitoba Hydro which certainly was the government of the day's responsibility to certainly continue to provide a reasonable cost of energy, has gone up at such a percentage that it has caused a tremendous amount of hardship for the people that are trying to operate their farms and certainly operate this plumbing equipment or pumps or water heaters that they have installed in their farms. So when he wants to get to the cost of production and who is causing hardships to the farm people, I think very quickly I could get some figures put together on the increases of what it has cost to operate all the electrical water pumps and the water heaters and all the water equipment that farm people have installed. I think that's where government should have certainly spent their time and efforts in trying to keep that at certainly a lower rate instead of getting involved in the area of supplying the farm people in the area where the local rural communities could, business people in the towns, could provide that service.

So if we want to get down to the fact that we're causing hardships by \$140 per farm individual, I think we can certainly look back and say that I think we are not causing them any hardships; we're still providing them with grant money which will be spent in the local towns, not in the one centre in the City but in fact spread out through all the rural communities and create a lot more employment with the local people hiring individuals and installing these things. We are continuing on with the technicians to advise the farm people, as support, to recommending to them the type of equipment that should be installed. I certainly would like to think that we in fact are not causing any hardships but are continuing on with a program which will build a lot stronger rural community.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: Yes, Mr. Chairman, to the Minister. On that particular point, it seems to me that what the Minister of Agriculture is telling us is that the grant system is going to continue, the 15 percent grant up to a maximum of \$300 I believe it is, that this has now become a grant to the plumber rather than to the farmer because the increased cost of installation that will be presented to the farmer when he gets his total job, an average of \$140 or up to \$300, is now going to reflect itself in a grant to the supplier rather than the farmer. This is where the sad situation comes in.

I would like to ask the Minister how many farmers have taken advantage of this program since its inception? I would also like to ask him — I might as well get this on the record and he can answer later — but we had one case where in July of 1977, a farmer in the constituency of the Member for Roblin, I believe, entered into a contract with the Rural Water Services Board and his application was approved. I believe it was \$149.00 that he was supposed to get back in the form of a grant and he had received a letter from Mr. Griffin on his particular application that it had been accepted and that the money would be forwarded to him very shortly. This was back in October, I believe, the beginning of October some time, and just before Christmas, in December, he wrote again to Mr. Griffin and said, "Why haven't I received my money?" You know, it seems odd that the thing had been approved, the grant had been approved in July, the farmer entered into this agreement in good faith and I believe that since that time the money has been sent but there is a delay. There has been an awful delay there

for no reason whatsoever.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Agriculture. Order please.

MR. DOWNEY: Well, Mr. Chairman, in answer to the Member for Ste. Rose on the number of people, I believe it was approximately 11,000 people that used the service of the rural water supply purchasing depot, and in comment on the fact that it is to the local plumber, it is in fact not to the local plumber but it is to the farm people. It is a grant to the farm people to spend the money on the purchase of the equipment and towards the labour of the work being done. Certainly, I'm sure that there isn't anyone within rural Manitoba begrudges farm people in particular concerned about the employment as all of the government and, in fact, it is money that can be spent towards hiring of installation of the equipment. So the grant is for the farm people in the Province of Manitoba.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, I'm not going to argue about the general difference in philosophy. The government is elected and this is one of the reasons, I suppose, that they were elected but here again, it is an example of cutting out of a program. This in no way is a matter of strength. I think the Minister has put his case forward; I disagree with him, but nevertheless he's there and I'm here.

Nevertheless, in making his comments he talked about the number of complaints. It's interesting to note that last night on the news that Chrysler had to take back 75 cars that were faulty and yet we don't hear too much about that sort of thing. But the most interesting point was relative to Hydro rates. Implicit in the Minister's remarks was that they're going to lower them, that there's some way of lowering the hydro rates. Now, if he's asking that all Manitobans — and here again, as one City member I support the need for the agricultural sector in our economy. But nevertheless, is the Minister suggesting that all of Manitoba subsidize the farm community relative to the hydro rates?'

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, if I indicated that, it was taken improperly. It is certainly something that I would not be able to make a statement on; I do not see where we could lower hydro rates. But what I was meaning to say was that the increase in hydro rates that has taken place on the farms in the past few years has caused the farm people a lot more hardship than the removal of a program supplying material that the private sector can do without causing any hardship to the farm people, because the government is continuing to provide assistance to those individuals for the purchase of equipment and the hiring of individuals to install it. If the members opposite are opposed to assistance in employing people in the province through a program like that, I cannot agree with them. But that is the grant is for the purchase of equipment and employing of individuals to help install the equipment.

MR. BOYCE: No, Mr. Chairman, I am not disagreeing with the Minister that more people should be employed in the province, but it should be on the record that how we're doing it though, is subsidizing the private sector to the tune of \$140 per unit in this particular area.

But I wanted to ask the Minister a question. I really don't know where this comes in his Estimates. It was announced in the Budget Speech that they're going to create a number of jobs in the private sector, some of them relative to the farm economy. There is going to be some program for people to go to work for farmers and be subsidized through this employment program. I wonder where, within the Department of Agriculture, this would be co-ordinated as far as the farm component is concerned?

MR. DOWNEY: That program that was announced comes under the Student Employment Program, where part of the individual's wages would be paid by Manpower for the creation of a new job. Certainly small business in the rural parts of the province would also be involved in hiring new people to, in fact, continue to do the work that has to be done in the upgrading and development of the farm water supply. Making the grants available to the farm people to use in this area gives them a choice of going ahead and developing their services to their business.

MR. BOYCE: You misunderstood my question. No, I'm not talking about the business part where the . . . —(Interjections)— Mr. Chairman, will you protect me from my colleagues?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The Member for Winnipeg Centre has the floor. —(Interjections)— Order please. Maybe the Member for Lac du Bonnet and the Member for Minnedosa can go to the back of the room and have their discussion, and permit the Member for Winnipeg Centre, who has a rather soft voice' to carry on so the rest of us can hear him.

MR. BOYCE: Perhaps the Minister misunderstood me; I meant the on-farm labour, not the business, whether it is rural or urban, the people who are actually going to be employed on the farm. You know, I would assume that somebody in the department will be looking at this — is it not under this particular item that that individual might be assigned?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, that particular program is being co-ordinated by the Department of Education, where there is assistance to farm people who employ people in new positions in their farm

operations. I am sure that the agricultural staff will certainly be making the farm people aware of that program and helping them understand it, make the program available to them. That is part of the job of the ag. rep. in the rural community.

MR. BOYCE: If I may continue; I am speaking somewhat parochially in this regard. I would like to be assured by the Minister that there will be some provision under this program that some of the people from the urban areas can, you know, have access to such programs so that they will find out that hamburgers don't grow on trees. But also, even more mundane than that, people in the city are no different than they are anywhere else when they are younger; if they are idle they get into mischief. I would like to see as many as possible. . . . If the Minister can take a look at this aspect of it, if they would take a look at some way of . . . I assume that when you say that it's co-ordinated that there will be somebody from your department involved in this particular area and that you, either through the high schools in the city or Manpower somewhere, move some of the urban people out to the rural community so that they can not only earn some money but learn something about what I spoke earlier.

MR. DOWNEY: This program, of course, is available for all Manitobans and I'm sure that the farm people, when hiring individuals when they need people to work on the farms, will certainly be well aware of the individuals from the urban centres that are available through the Department of Education. As I have stated, it certainly will be the ag. reps.' responsibility to let the farm people know of the program that is available and the supply of individuals through the Department of Education that is co-ordinating this program.

MR. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, I don't suppose I could nail the Minister down very easily anyway, but since it is involving the farm community — with all due respect to the Department of Education — I would suggest that perhaps the Minister should have someone of a high level involved in this, in the sense that if you keep relying on your ag. reps. and the people outside of the City of Winnipeg, then very few of the city people will be moved out, or even become aware of the program and that there are jobs. So I would suggest that someone in a relatively high level take a look at this, because I think it would be in the interest of all Manitobans if what I am suggesting did occur.

MR. DOWNEY: I will certainly take a look at the recommendations from the member opposite. It is a concern of mine that the urban people have equal job opportunities throughout rural Manitoba and I'm sure the Department of Education does have staff throughout all of Manitoba and can, with the Department of Agriculture, work together and help employ as many people as possible.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the Minister alleges that he is going to continue to provide grants to farmers who want to install or improve their water and sewage systems, but he has also indicated to us that in dealing through a bulk purchasing agency, the farmer was able to save additionally \$140 per installation.

Now, in our experience with government over eight years and in my experience in dealing with these kinds of programs, we found out that if you have a grant program — a simple grant program — to do certain things which required services from the private sector, that there was the tendency for the private sector to take advantage of the grant program by pushing up their margins of profit far beyond reason, and in essence, wiping out the total grant that the public was making to the individual. So there was truly no benefit to the individual applicant while at the same time there was a very substantial cost to the taxpayer of this province. That was what we found in 1969, Mr. Chairman, when we took over the reins of government. The example in particular had to do with the grants towards the eradication of grasshoppers and other pests, where we had provided grant moneys to the municipalities for a control program, who went out and bought their insecticides at exorbitant prices, Mr. Chairman, where it completely wiped out the value of the grant. When we got into bulk purchasing of insecticides, Mr. Chairman, we found out that we didn't have to give any grants but just in the savings in the bulk purchasing program we were able to do more. . . . we could do more for those people than with the grant program. In other words we eliminated a ripoff. The grant created a ripoff. That was the philosophy of the Conservative Government of the 1960s.

We are now getting back into the philosophy of a ripoff, Mr. Chairman. This Minister now wants to go back to a system which was tried and was not found to be working well, in fact it was found to be working very poorly at a very high cost to the taxpayers of this province. We are now going back again to the status quo ante and we are going to subsidize people who aren't asking for subsidies, and that's exactly where these grant moneys are going to go — into the pockets of a few people in Manitoba — not to the farmers who are installing the services. It is going to pass through them, Mr. Chairman, yes, but that is not where the saving is going to occur. The benefit of that grant will occur in the hands of a few individuals who are in the service end of this industry, of the plumbing industry, which was never the intention of this program.

So Mr. Chairman, if this Minister is scrapping the bulk purchasing aspect of the Rural Water Services Program, I plead with him to scrap the grant too, because this is an absolute abuse of the public moneys of this province, it's an absolute abuse, this money is going to do no good, the farmer is not going to get the benefit of the grant program, it's an efficiency that could be made by this

Department and this government who believes in some measure of greater efficiency — demonstrate it, Mr. Chairman — don't throw money away because this is what you are doing now in this program. You are throwing money away. No one is asking you for that. The plumbers are not asking for grants; they have never asked me once for grants, Mr. Chairman, they are quite able to look after themselves. And now we have a program for grants to plumbers. Disgusting to say the least, Mr. Chairman. Disgusting to say the least.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, as I have certainly indicated the main reason for the removal is the unfair competition government was placing on our business people in rural communities that certainly have to support the farm people with their services and the supplies and certainly we were seeing problems in the relationships between the farm communities and I think we all have to be aware of the fact that there has to be a good relationship within the communities. In fact, I would say that I am very confident in the fact that farm people — and I have a lot of faith in them that they are quite capable of running their own affairs and they have certainly indicated that they do not need the heavy hand of government placed over them that has certainly been over them in the last few years.

I would also like to say that the farm people are very confident and are capable people and will continue to run their businesses without the interference of government or minimal interference and in fact, there aren't any hardships being placed on them by the removal of the supplying of equipment. As I have stated, I am sure the \$140 is a fair sum of money. I do not believe that it is standing in the way of individuals providing themselves with equipment to their farms for the water services, in fact we have continued on with the grant to help them in their own wishes to carry on with programs that they see fit that they want to implement into their farms.

MR. HENRY J. EINARSON(Rock Lake): Mr. Chairman, the discussion that has been going on for the last hour on this particular subject, whether we do or whether we don't cut out the assistance to farmers in purchasing plumbing equipment via the setup that the previous Minister of Agriculture had established. I have talked to, I think, just about every plumber in my constituency and I have talked to many farmers in regards to this total program, and because of the fact, from the plumbers point of view, that their own business was taken away from them in regards to the supplies that they were selling before, they, in essence then, had to charge a little more for their services. Now, there are probably a few farmers in the province that do their own plumbing, but many of them don't, and so they need the services of the local plumber and because of that — I don't have any exact figures, but I would suggest, Mr. Chairman, in adding to the comments that the Minister has indicated here this morning, that many farmers had their \$140, if that's what it was, wiped out because of the increased cost that the plumber had to charge in order that he could provide the service to the farmers for this particular matter.

Now this is going to be an ongoing thing and what the previous Minister of Agriculture failed to do was to assure those farmers of adequate service for years to come and I suggest to you also, Mr. Chairman, that I think that we have to be concerned — and I understand the problems that farmers have because of their low prices for their livestock and what have you, that we need to do all we can to assist farmers. By the same token, these plumbers are probably family men, they have a business in their respective towns, they pay taxes, and they contribute to society. They are also consumers of the products that farmers produce, and so I would suggest, Mr. Chairman, in light of all this, that we do have to look at this fairly, and when the Member for Lac du Bonnet is saying that the grant system that we have still maintained, is somehow going to subsidize the plumbers, I suggest he is wrong, and I would suggest that the grants that are going to be payed out are will go directly to the farm. Now, if I am wrong, I stand to be corrected.

I fail to understand where the Member for Lac du Bonnet gets the idea that this grant system is going to be a subsidation to the plumber. I think that the program as it now will be — and the plumbers have been complaining to me that they have no choice but to increase the cost of their services. So how do you end this. I think that the plumbers have a rightful complaint insofar as their own respective business is concerned. That's just like taking their bread and butter away from them, and I would say by the same token that if the Minister of Agriculture today was supposed to bring in a program that was in favour of the plumber and taking the bread and butter away from the farmer, I would have the same argument.

MR. BOYCE: Well, Mr. Chairman, time will prove who is right and who is wrong, I suppose, we could sit here and argue forever on this one. You know, it is a difference in philosophy and it is a government —(Interjection)— Well of course when you have a thought it's common sense and when anybody else thinks something it isn't. Well that's implied.

Can the Minister provide us with the average cost of installation on this particular program? If they had saved \$140 by having this capacity, if it's average, it must be relative to something.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the approximate cost of installation is in the area of \$1,300.00. —(Interjections)— This, Mr. Chairman, the average cost of installation was approximately \$1,300.00.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. BOYCE: When you say that you are going to continue to initiate the grants, so relative to that, the average grant would be on this particular cost of \$1,300.00?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, to carry on a little more, the continuation of the grant will more than certainly take care of any increased cost of installation that is being —(Interjection)— which I have stated, we plan to carry on with the granting system to help assist the farm people.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 8.(b)(1)—pass — the Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. BOYCE: You see, I was listening very intently. I guess that's why I snarled at him. I was listening to the Member for Rock Lake. Time will tell whether what you suggest is true or not. This may not even save the rural plumbers. I understand it's getting more and more difficult to get people in the trades to work, I understand in many communities you're almost on a waiting list for these things. So, time will tell whether this alleviates the problem. But it should be underlined that the effect of this particular policy is to achieve your goals by subsidizing the private sector to the tune of \$140; it's irrefutable, by the Minister's own figures. And the Member for Rock Lake can sit there and shake his head until doomsday. If they're saving \$140 per installation on previous cost, then this will automatically be added back into it. So, it's a subsidy to the private sector to do the same program. And I'm not arguing with you, that if you say it will achieve the goal that you suggest it will, then perhaps it is worth the \$140; I really don't know at this point in time. The reason I asked the figures, is, I will ask the Minister next year what the average cost per installation is, and how much it is actually costing the farmers. Because if it's \$140 per year in 1977 dollars, it's going to be interesting to see just exactly what it costs them in 1979 dollars.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the Minister indicates a saving of \$140 on \$1,300 worth of installation. I suggest to you that there are many farms in Manitoba whose installation costs are in the thousands of dollars, tens of thousands of dollars —(Interjection)— oh, yes. Ask any Hutterite colony how much it costs them to put in their system. Ask any Hutterite colony —(Interjection)— Well, the Member for Rock Lake says you don't compare a Hutterite colony with a farm. Well, they are a farm, Mr. Chairman, and they install sewer and water services on their farm. And this program has saved them thousands of dollars, Mr. Chairman. Just the right to be able to buy in bulk at a discount price. Mr. Chairman, any large operation is in the same category. \$1,300 of installation is a very modest installation in terms of a farm operation involving livestock or poultry. So the Minister can talk about average savings, but in real terms, to a fairly substantial operation, the savings are much greater than that.

Apart from that, Mr. Chairman, the Member for Rock Lake indicates to me that plumbers have complained to him en masse against the program. Strange as it may seem, Mr. Chairman, in all the years that we were involved in this program I don't believe I had more than two letters questioning the program, and one of them came from a Brandon distributor. The manager of that company wrote me a nasty letter about this program. But within a couple of weeks after, when the owner of the company found out that his manager wrote this nasty letter, he wrote me a letter — and I can produce it today — telling me that this is the best program that we could have launched into in terms of improving the quality of life on farms in Manitoba —(Interjection)— I don't know the man's politics. The man said that this is a good program, that he recognized that there was a need to upgrade the facilities and the quality of life for farm people in Manitoba because they were far behind, far behind other provinces in Canada, and that his company would be very happy with the residual benefits of the program, and that is, to provide the necessary back-up services to those installations. And the philosophy that he espoused at that time was that the more units that you install, the more ongoing services we will be able to provide for our community and our area of operations. And that in the long term this was a good thing. That is the kind of a letter that I received from a very large company involved in the business. —(Interjection)— That's right. And I don't believe there was more than one on the negative side in all those years, Mr. Chairman. Not one. There may have been one, but I don't think there was more than one. And so the Member for Rock Lake is trying to make us believe that there was some hostility and opposition to the program. If there was, it had never appeared. It appears today in the minds of the Conservative government, who have an ideological hang-up — yes, I can understand it. But Mr. Chairman, never have I had a submission or a meeting with a group that suggested to me that we should get out of this program because it is a burden, because it is a burden on the local plumbers and the local distributors.

So, Mr. Chairman, I'm going to leave the issue, but I'm going to tell the Minister that he is not practising his philosophy. If he believes in the private sector philosophy completely then he should not provide the grants. Because there is no doubt in my mind, and it's been proven, and it's very obvious, that to the extent that grants are available, they are going to flow into the pockets of people who are not asking for them. And therefore, it's a rip-off on the people of Manitoba and I do not intend to vote for that measure, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Pembina.

MR. DON ORCHARD: Well, Mr. Chairman, at the risk of causing further discussion, I wonder if

there is any method, or any way by which we could determine the impact that the program had on installation of water services on the farms from the years 1972 on, compared to what would have been without the program. In other words, I seem to get the feeling that the Member for Lac du Bonnet is indicating that his program caused water systems to be placed on a lot of farms, and somehow I wonder if it wasn't the effects of buoyant grain prices that gave net dollars to farmers so that they all of a sudden could do something about a water service program on their farm, and that in fact the \$140 average saving was peanuts compared to the \$1,400 or whatever he had to lay down, and that \$1,400 did not come from the program, the grants, or any other source other than net farm income that was derived from good agricultural years, and that the program was incidental to the installation of probably 95 percent of the installations on the farms. That's what has always been of concern to me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, again the Member for Pembina expresses his complete lack of understanding and knowledge of the history of the need for this service in rural Manitoba. In 1968, as I recall the date, there was a study done by — I think it was the Department of Agriculture, then the Conservative government — which indicated that 60 percent of our farms in Manitoba did not have sewer and water services at that time. One of the few provinces with that bad a record in terms of the quality of life out in the countryside. That is the reason why we went into that program because most Manitobans in rural areas were not in a position to enjoy a reasonable lifestyle, a reasonable quality of life with respect to those basic services that everyone in the City takes so much for granted. It was sort of a means to catch up, that was the intent of that, a means to catch up.

All right. If the Member for Pembina thinks that \$140 is insignificant — and in itself it is — the grant attached to that is another \$300 which makes it \$440.00. Now the \$300, of course, is based on a formula of 15 percent up to \$300, so if you're talking about a fairly substantial farm installation, you're talking about a \$440 reduction in cost plus whatever additional federal subsidies towards water supply came about under the federal program. And here too you have the Federal Government that was so much interested in improving the water quality and supply on farms that they got into the program. So we had a package approach of federal and provincial programs to try to improve the water and sewage services on farmyards in Canada but in particular in Manitoba under our program. It was not just one effort there were three components: a federal grant, a provincial grant, and bulk purchasing savings to make it a lot easier financially for people to go into that kind of a program and to provide these new facilities. So it was not just \$140.00

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, under the consideration today I think is not elimination of the 15 percent grant but only the elimination of bulk purchasing which as admittedly amounted to \$140 saving on an average installation in the Province of Manitoba. I maintain, and despite my lack of knowledge as the Member for Lac du Bonnet would indicate, that that \$140 in comparison to the \$1,000-plus on an average that a person had to come up with was not the deciding factor which made that individual farmer decide whether or not he was going to install a sewer system or not. The \$140 was incidental; it was gravy on the table for the farmer in this particular instance, or whatever you want to call it, but it was still the economic circumstances of good returns to the business of farming in the latter years of the previous government's administration that caused most of the installation to be put in. If we were to go from the institution of the program and take it year by year from 1969 or 1970 on, I think we'll find the bulk of the installations will be after the crop prices increased. The \$140 as I still maintain was not the deciding factor to make those farmers install water systems as the Member for Lac du Bonnet would have this committee to believe. It was incidental to it; it was gravy on the potatoes. The potatoes were there because the farming income increased and that's why the water systems went into farms.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the Member for Pembina obviously demonstrates his lack of perception here. Let me point out to him that whenever you have a grant program, that if the people that are wanting to purchase material have no options in purchasing that material, then you end up with a rip-off program, not a grant program and that is essentially the main reason why we had to get into a bulk purchasing aspect. It would have been much simpler to simply raise the grants, and the more we raise the grants the more the price of the materials would have gone up, but there would have been no real value to the person whom we were intending that this program would help. There would have been no real value there so, given the fact that we had the facility to bulk purchase, the farmer had the option of buying from the bulk purchasing depot or he could have bought from any private individual and he still got his grant, he still got his grant. He was not compelled to buy from the bulk purchasing depot but our experience was that the more farmers became aware of it the greater the volume of sales were and for obvious reasons, because there were savings to be made and that people could afford more easily these new installations because of a combination of grants and savings. The moment you foreclose the option of buying from such an agency then what you are doing is simply forcing those people into the hands of people who have no control, who are not controlled by government, by regulation in terms of the prices that they are going to charge for these components, and therefore you end up with a government cost, by way of grants, which flow through the pockets of the farmer but end up in the pockets of the supplier. Hence, you have no logic in maintaining the grant program, just no logic whatever. Any simpleton will tell you that. You don't have to be very brilliant to find that out. That is the way the system functions. You don't have to be

very brilliant to come to that conclusion, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. BOYCE: Well, Mr. Chairman, we've heard arguments from the Member for Lac du Bonnet and the Member for Pembina. The Member for Lac du Bonnet makes the point that the 15 percent grant shouldn't be made and the Member for Pembina makes the point that it's gravy anyway to the farmer, so the —(Interjection)— well, the assistance of any kind whether it's in the reduction of price or in a grant. Can the Minister advise us how much in this allocation is earmarked for grants in this particular program? Perhaps the item should be reduced by that much.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: There is no money in here for the grants; it's under the capital.

MR. USKIW: Yes, but how much is it?

MR. BOYCE: Well, since you have combined current and capital to impress the electorate just how inefficient we were, where is the allocation for these funds relative to this program, the portion thereof.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I believe there is \$300,000 in place for grants which is 50 percent federal, 50 percent province, shared.

MR. BOYCE: Relative to this item?

MR. DOWNEY: That's right' Mr. Chairman.

MR. BOYCE: \$300,000 and that's the provincial share.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, \$150,000 would be the provincial share.

MR. BOYCE: \$150,000.00. So we're giving \$150,000 grant to subsidize . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, this isn't my argument, it's the argument of the Member for Rock Lake and these people that make money. The subsidy is to accomplish a program which will take it out of bulk purchasing and when we're talking about these ideological hang-ups, I've got a hang-up. I'm sorry, I don't divorce the government from myself. The government is us and all government involvement is in one hell of a big co-op and there's some things the government should be in is a co-op, and that some of — the Member for Minnedosa shakes his head, and I understand that . — (Interjection)— Well, perhaps this is something we should . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. Maybe the Member for Winnipeg Centre could direct his remarks towards the Chairman rather than the Member for Minnedosa, who pops in once in a while to stir up the pot a bit.

MR. BOYCE: Well, the Member for Minnedosa and the Member for Winnipeg Centre have had this thing going for a number of years and they probably will continue and need the direction of the Chair on occasion, Mr. Chairman.

The reason I'm not going to vote against this particular item is that I think that sometimes there's a time for government to get into something, and time for governments to get out of something, and you people have chosen this time to get out of it, and I think that you're wrong, but I think that it should be underlined, to accomplish this particular objective, you are subsidizing the private sector by \$140 on average per unit per installation, and if this amounts to that, this amounts to \$150,000 from General Revenues.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 8.(b)(1)—pass — the Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: I wonder whether the Minister could tell us just where we're at with respect to the potential problem of forest tent caterpillars.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, we do not expect an outbreak this year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 8.(b)(1)—pass — the Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I have a number of items under that heading. I want to know what changes are going to take place under the pesticide program.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, no change is anticipated.

MR. USKIW: What is the policy with respect to insecticide distribution? That's another bulk purchasing program.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, there are no changes planned for that program.

MR. USKIW: Well, could the Minister explain to me why it makes sense to stay in the bulk purchasing of insecticides when it doesn't make sense to do it in terms of water services. What is the logic of staying in the bulk purchasing program insofar as the distribution of insecticides are concerned?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the bulk purchase of insecticides comes under an emergency situation such as the outbreak of forest tent caterpillars, and that is the reason why the government will be continuing on with that program; the assurance that there aren't any great hazards or problems that are uncontrollable by the average citizen, and we are certainly looking at that program too.

MR. USKIW: There was no bulk purchasing program with respect to insecticides prior to five or six years ago. We had a grant program. Why are we not now going back to the grant program? Why does this Minister want to continue on with an intrusion into the marketplace, as he suggests with respect to water services. Why is he not allowing, or why is he not going back to the system where the farmers will deal directly with the distributors of insecticides, likewise the municipalities? Why do we have to have the program

MR. DOWNEY: It has been stated before, Mr. Chairman, it's fairly simple, the fact that there is no ongoing service required with the insecticides. I've stated many times it's the desire of the government to continue the service to people throughout the community, to service the equipment installed and do not want to place any hardships on them, and hope to have a good relationship built back between the farm people and the people that are servicing them. But in the insecticides, because it is an emergency situation and the fact that there is no ongoing service of the product or the equipment, that that is the reason. And as I have stated, we are certainly looking at that program also.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 8.(b)(1)—pass. The Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Yes, I wonder if the Minister could tell us just what his most recent report is on wintering bees.

MR. DOWNEY: Wintering bees?

MR. USKIW: Yes. I think there were some studies carried on, and I'm not sure if they're in print yet, but is there any information available on over-wintering bees?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, it was indicated to me that a few producers have run pilot projects successfully this past winter.

MR. USKIW: Well, no, that's the whole point of my question. I'm aware of that. I want to know whether we have any reports as to the success of the program. Is there new information that we have not had before?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, we need more information. However' I said this past winter there were some pilot projects that did appear to be fairly successful, so there will be more information compiled.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 8.(b)(1)—pass. The Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, what is the role of the Technical Services Branch with respect to the engineering and the farm building sections? What are we doing there?

MR. DOWNEY: It will continue on as an advisory service supportive staff and there are no changes anticipated.

MR. USKIW: All right. Could the Minister indicate to me what the policy of the government is with respect to the engineering services for on-farm drainage, whether there's any changes or not?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, there is no change at this time. However, we do have a task force within the department looking at the whole area of drainage and water development for supply and for irrigation.

MR. USKIW: Could the Minister indicate to us just what we are doing with respect to the

expenditures on environmental control programming?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, it is an engineering service to farmers in the designing of their equipment and their buildings, their operations and layouts of their operations.

MR. USKIW: Could the Minister indicate to us just what the policy of the government is with respect to units of production, animal units of production — hogs, poultry, beef — where they are adjacent to communities, where they are adjacent to rivers, streams, recreational areas, and so on. What is the government's policy with respect to environmental control?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, that comes under the Department of Mines and Resources and Environmental Management, so I believe those Estimates are on in the other committee at this time, but not under our department as far as the environmental control aspect.

MR. USKIW: Well, but Mr. Chairman, I'm aware that our department is involved in whatever does happen. The two departments do work together. And I know that our technical staff are involved in either redesigning structures, relocation projects where it's necessary, and so on.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I can assure the member that the department will continue to work with the other department in that area of environmental management.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I would like to know from the Minister whether his engineering capacity is able to tell us whether or not we would continue to approve huge feedlot operations such as the one in East Selkirk, where the rockbed formations are only ten feet below the surface of the ground, and where they have installed lagoons for waste disposal?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, that comes under the regulations of the Environmental. . .

MR. USKIW: Oh, I am aware of where it is regulated, but I know that we are involved, Mr. Chairman, with respect to working with them in establishing either improvements in the installations that are existing or recommending new ones.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, it has been in discussion within the department, but certainly nothing to recommend at this time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Can I stop the member?

The hour of 12:30 having arrived, I am leaving the Chair and returning at 2:30.

SUPPLY — MINES AND RESOURCES

MR. CHAIRMAN, Mr. Abe Kovnats: I would direct the honourable members to Page 57. We are Mines, Resources and Environmental Management. Resolution 82, Clause 2. Environmental Management, 2.(a) (1) Salaries — \$257,600— pass. The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I am interested in this area particularly with regard to the designation of the staff reductions, the actual reductions from the establishment load in this department. I would like it, if it's more convenient, to get it for the entire Environmental Management Division, that is, No. 2.

MR. RANSOM: Well, I can get that information, Mr. Chairman, for the division. I think the way I had it prepared was probably on a line by line situation, for instance, this particular item, there is a reduction of eight staff-man years in this particular one.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, is the Minister able to give me the eight at this point because then when we come to the various lines I will be able to discuss them rather than playing sort of find the needle. Is it convenient to give me the eight people on the basis of the Item No. 2 and then I won't be asking each time we come to one of the items. If it is not, then okay, I'll do it each time.

MR. RANSOM: Is the honourable member asking for names or the area that they are in?

MR. GREEN: Positions, Mr. Chairman. What is the nature of the reduction? Is it an inspector, is it an environmental assistant or is it a secretary? Whatever the main. . .

MR. RANSOM: In this particular item, Mr. Chairman, the one staff man year had to do with the Information Services and seven were with Administration. There were seven vacant positions in the

administration support section.

MR. GREEN: Well, Mr. Chairman, would that be item 2.(a)(1)?

MR. RANSOM: Yes

MR. GREEN: I have the information services which I will deal with, what were the other seven, what was the nature of their employment?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, six of these positions were in the division's typing pools and a clerical position in the accounting section, there being a reorganization of the typing pools.

MR. GREEN: And that deals with the entire eight staff people? Well then, Mr. Chairman, can I be advised whether in that area there was a vacancy rate which is now diminished. For instance, if we talk about twenty people and we add a normal vacancy of five, that we now have fifteen people with a vacancy of two — something to that effect.

MR. RANSOM: Well the vacancy rate definitely is diminished. I am not sure of the exact figure.

MR. GREEN: Okay. Mr. Chairman, that is the point that I wish to make. If the vacancy rate is diminished, then would the Minister not concede, and I don't really believe that I am asking him to make a very big concession, that part of the result of reducing staff is to accelerate staff hirings and to make sure that positions which are vacant are filled up more quickly than they would have been because of the pressure that results from having left less staff people available. And, Mr. Chairman, unless the Minister feels that this is a criticism, I want to immediately say that I don't believe that it is a criticism. It is merely a development that will take place because of the pressure of having less people around that your staff will be hired more quickly, which is what has happened in this area where you had six people in a typing pool which were vacant and were able to therefore diminish them. What it meant was that the rest of the people were hired more quickly, and therefore you were able to maintain relatively non-decreased levels by virtue of more active staff hiring.

MR. RANSOM: Well, Mr. Chairman, certainly when positions become vacant under the present circumstances they will have to be filled and this type of position, I see no difficulty in filling it rather promptly. I don't see it as the same type of situation as perhaps a higher level of professional category.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I thank the Minister for his answer and I am also pleased that the eight staff people that is reduced in this area is not going to be made up largely by reduction in availability of personnel, but will result in the department moving more quickly to deal with vacancies and I am also pleased that it doesn't mean a reduction in existing inspection staff because if those are the eight that are reduced out of Item No. 2. Then the inspection staff man years have stayed the same, would that be correct?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, when we get to the item dealing with the inspection staff, then I think the honourable member will see what has happened in that case.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, then I did misunderstand the Minister. In Item No. 2, I thought you were giving me the total staff, but what you have done is giving me merely 2.(a) at this point and we will deal with 2.(b) when we get there. I tell the Minister that I believe that I will save him some time, whether he agrees with me or not. I believe that I will save him some time if he will give me all of the staff reductions under Item 2 now. If he doesn't wish to, okay. If I can proceed on each item in the way we have done with administration . . . which will take some time.

MR. RANSOM: Well, Mr. Chairman, it isn't a matter of not wishing to give them; it's just a matter that perhaps we weren't organized to handle it that way. We dealt last night with 12. 1. (a)(2) Administration, where there was one deletion. In 12. 2.(a) (1) Administration, there have been six — these are permanent staff man years. In 12. 2.(b)(1) Environmental Control there are four deletions. Those were one environmental officer III and three public health inspectors. Under 12.2.(c)(1) there are two, an administrative secretary III and a biologist I; and under 12.2.(d)(1) there is one, a planner. Under Administration then 12.2.(a)(1), term staff, there were two, an administrative secretary and a clerk typist and under 12.4.(c)(1) Planning and Water Management Division, there are five, a drafting technician, three resource technicians and an engineer II. Four of those positions were in relation to the termination of the Souris Basin Study.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I want to start with the last point. I am certainly not going to be critical nor would it have been in any other way to reduce staff when a temporary project is completed. If you have the Churchill River Diversion Study that is employing 100 people and then the study is completed, I don't expect that those people will continue to be employed and I do not call that an inefficiency which is new to this government. I can demonstrate that that occurred under the previous government every time there was a discontinuation of a project. As a matter of fact, when the Estimates were brought in, we said which projects were for a term, what are they, let's take them

out, and you have to then get your people starting from the position that those projects no longer exist. So I would have gathered, Mr. Chairman, that there are some people who are just not being continued because the work for which they are hired is completed, and that relates to the Souris River Project.

I do, Mr. Chairman, have some problem — and I merely bring this to the attention of the Minister — with respect to Information Services and, lest there be any misunderstanding, I am not a fan of Information Services generally. I think that you will find that our department did not use Information Services at the government level at all except when we prepared information that we wanted disseminated. We used their offices for the dissemination of that material but we did not, as does the Minister now, use Information Services for distribution of or compiling material which he thinks should emanate from the department. I tell the Minister that that is going to cause him trouble, that the worst politicians in Manitoba are those that work for Information Services. Now, you can take my advice or not take my advice, but if they were any good at all, they'd be running for office and they'd be sitting where you are. To let them prepare your material is to get the kind of release that the Minister of Labour got yesterday where she is coming down on the Manitoba Government Employees Association for issuing pink slips, and the distressing result on the families, etc., and asking the Attorney-General to prosecute, or other such things. What I discussed earlier — and it comes under this department — that letter to Ottawa should have been completely between you and Ottawa, in my opinion, when you're negotiating with the United States; I attribute the release of that letter to some notion by Information Services that this is a good public relations' item. I don't know whether I should be trying to help you in this connection, but I tell you for what it's worth — and this is the position that I took in opposition in 1966; it's the position that I took in government — do not depend on and do not use Information Services for that kind of program.

I made the exception in our department in terms of Information Services with environmental control and environmental programming, because it's so difficult to enforce, and the Minister said yesterday that we can't have 100 percent enforcement. I wish we could have 50 percent enforcement because we are talking about a million citizens throwing papers or litter out of their cars, or leaving bottles or leaving cans, and if we could get 50 percent enforcement about the people who do that, we would be the highest enforcement province in the world. So, knowing what we are going to do, we are going to do not by the threat of penal prosecution or by punishment, but what we want to do is instill in each individual the desire not to become a litter-bug or not to pollute the environment or not to do the kinds of things that the regulations provide against, that the best enforcement is the enforcement that comes from within rather than that comes from the state.

We did, Mr. Chairman, leave in this department some capacity for — to use a blunt word — propoganda. Mr. Chairman, if the Minister is going to reduce or not have the kind of manpower to deal with many of these problems, then I respectfully suggest to him that the kind of clever — and it's not always clever, I admit; sometimes you get advertisements which are not acceptable but, fortunately, over the last four years, I have never had any complaints about the taste of the advertising — and I'm not the one who chose it — that was done with regard to environmental control.

I tell the Minister that he may have found that there was a vacant position, because that's the way this government worked — let's admit it — that was their program, attrition. If somebody left, that position was closed. If that's the way you got this Information Services closure, then it's done without rhyme or reason. It's done on the basis of the luck of the draw, who happened to be the person that quit, who happened to be the person that got sick, who happened to be the person that was lured to another province, that position was vacated. And I tell the Minister that you cannot have both a reduction in the state enforcement agencies and in the educational services. There will be a problem with regard to Information Services if that kind of thing — which is, I admit, not necessary and probably self-defeating in selling a political government, is not self-defeating if done in a clever way with regard to litter control.

Mr. Chairman, I will deal with the other people that he has mentioned when I get that far. I merely indicate to the Minister at the present time that with regard to the Administration's salary reductions, that what he has indicated is the point that I made yesterday, that largely they have not been a serious reduction because the rate of hiring and the rate of vacancy has been much reduced, which I think is good. I think it's not the best situation but at least it's not the situation which is intended to be conveyed to the people of Manitoba that we are no longer dealing with these people. What we are doing is hiring a little quicker and making sure that the vacancies don't persist. The Minister says there's no problem in getting this type of person. That's fine; I'm happy to hear it. But I say in general, it will not result in better hiring practices; it will result in worse hiring practices.

And secondly, where a program has been completed, certainly the people who are hired on that program do not have a sinecure and those people should be not continued; and if that's the end of a program, then that is no change in the administration. I was looking, Mr. Chairman, at the total of Water Resources. After all, in this department, we have two major changes. The Honourable Minister indicates reduced expenditures. One is with regard to Mineral Resources — over \$1 million — we all know what that is. That is not an efficiency; that is a change in programming, which we'll deal with. No. 2, is Water Resources — over \$1 million. I don't know what it is yet, but I know, Mr. Chairman, that you cannot be doing less water resources work. There must be the elimination of programs that have been terminated. No? The Honourable Member says no. I say that it must be the conclusion of programs. He is not going to reduce the drainage; we were low already, so he's not going to reduce it. It must be the termination of programs but I don't even ask for a reply now, we'll get to that department.

The third is capital spending, capital acquisition. It can only be land; that we are not going to buy as much land as we have been buying, which is not an efficiency at all; it's a loss. Or we're not building a building something like we have built in previous years. But those are the essential changes. That's the \$3 million that we are talking about: \$1 million in acquisition of Physical Assets; \$1 million in Water Resources; and \$1 million in Mineral Resources. Those are the \$3 million.

The balance of the departmental spending remains very similar. I'm not saying this as a challenge to the Minister. I will deal with the general observation of the department when we get to the summing up on his salary. I do not want people to get the impression that there have been massive cuts in expenditures as a result of efficiency. There is a change with regard to mineral exploration which is going to cost the people of this province money and we'll get to it when we are at that field. I do, Mr. Chairman, have a problem with the reduction in public health inspectors and we'll deal with it on that item. Perhaps other people wish to talk.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, I thank the honourable member for his advice respecting the dissemination of information. I respect his long service in this department and realize that he has been recognized as an extremely capable Minister, but I must say that I take responsibility for whatever information is put out by that particular group and if that should land me in difficulties, then I will have to accept full responsibility for that.

The matter of the elimination of one staff man year in the Information Services within the department which was basically an educational type of activity, I will quite readily admit that is perhaps not the type of reduction that I would make were funds more readily available than they are. I also would say that it's the sort of situation where a few years ago public awareness was not very great concerning the general environmental realm of interest. I think that public awareness is heightened today and that information of an environmental nature is available more generally today than it was perhaps ten years ago. No one can judge what the exact impact of that particular reduction will be. It's one that I feel was necessary to make.

Again, it was a position that had also been vacant for some time and we're looking, Mr. Chairman, to the future in being able to have control over the expansion of programs. I will be conducting very detailed reviews, again, of programs and I hope that any future expansion will be based on programs and not on the fact that whether or not there happens to be a vacant staff man year available.

I must say with respect to the funding for water resources . . . I realize that we will be coming to that, but the honourable member has been hitting the highlights through the Estimates, Mr. Chairman, and I believe that I explained in my introductory remarks that there was some shifting of funds between the Item 5 — the capital acquisition and such — that results in the actual dollars being spent in that division somewhat increased. —(Interjection)— I gather that the honourable member perhaps has had some of the same difficulties that I have encountered in trying to rationalize whether a capital dollar is a dollar or not.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(a)(1)—pass —the Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. BRIAN CORRIN (Wellington): Yes, Mr. Chairman. I have a question dealing with the propriety of raising a certain item at this juncture and perhaps the Honourable Minister, if he feels that it is unsuitable to discuss the matter under this particular item, could advise me as to when it would be appropriate. The matter deals with the question of retention of counsel — I believe the counsel is described as legal counsel although I am not certain — to carry on some sort liaison. Again, I am indefinite because there hasn't been a lot of information in this respect published to date — liaison with the Polar Gas consortium.

Obviously, the Polar Gas proposal will have dramatic environmental impact aspects and I would ask the Honourable Minister if he can advise whether it would then be appropriate for us to pursue questioning respecting retention of that counsel, and perhaps other matters relative to that, under this item.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Well, Mr. Chairman' the actual retention of legal counsel for that particular undertaking doesn't fall within my department. I can just briefly explain that the particular individual has been retained to bring together the submissions from various places within the government and to actually make the presentation on behalf of government. This department's involvement is through Frank Doe who is with the Environmental Assessment and Review process. He is handling our . . . In fact, I believe he is a member of the federal panel that will be assessing the environmental impact of Polar Gas. Then we have various specialists pulled together from other departments — technical experts from within the government as well.

MR. CORRIN: I'm not sure; I'm still unclear, Mr. Chairman, as to the actual responsibilities and duties of the individual in question. I believe his name is Mr. William Norrie. Perhaps I could ask is that correct? Is the individual we are discussing, this individual responsible for gathering this information, one Mr. William Norrie?

MR. RANSOM: Yes, indeed, it is, Mr. Chairman. And I would suggest that the details of any arrangements would best be discussed under the Department of Finance Estimates because the Minister of Finance is the person to whom he is directly responsible. I have simply explained to you the general workings of that arrangement.

MR. CORRIN: I'm still not sure I understand. Obviously, we agree that there will be . . . And it has been recognized. I think it has been recognized in the development of this particular approach that there will be a need for an environmental assessment, an assessment of possible detrimental impacts.

I am wondering now whether or not it would not be appropriate for the Minister having recognized this to allow members present to more closely scrutinize the department's position with respect to this matter. First of all, we are getting into a situation that is, I think, somewhat akin to the Task Force situation where we will at a later point perhaps be confronted with a report published under the aegis of, presumably, Mr. Norrie, as was formerly the report published under the aegis of the Task Force, but members, at least members on this side of the House will not be given the opportunity to examine the publishers of the report — those who prepare the reports — as to the nature of their findings and the reasons for their findings.

So we will be confronted with another situation where we receive recommendation but, as it were, in a vacuum. So it would appear and, as a result of this, I would incite the Minister to allow us to question this matter further in order that we can obtain some information as to his opinions, his directions given to members of his own department — this Mr. Frank Doe he mentioned — in order that we can get some idea of what, in effect, will go forward to Mr. Norrie in the conduct of his duties.

MR. RANSOM: Well, Mr. Chairman, from our point of view from this department, our involvement is in terms of assessing the environmental impact of that particular project and that will be done by technical people within the government, the same as I suppose akin to technical studies that were done on the Garrison. Certainly that kind of information should be readily available. It is information of a technical nature and when those reports are made I have no reason to believe that they wouldn't be available.

MR. CORRIN: Could the Minister then advise as to whether or not the members of the public will be solicited to make representations to a body — a body perhaps even similar to the Berger Commission immediately springs to mind when discussing something of this nature — a publicly constituted body that will be doing an environmental impact assessment?

MR. RANSOM: Well, Mr. Chairman, that's my understanding, that the federal board, of which Mr. Frank Doe is a member, will be holding public hearings and we as a provincial government would be making presentations to those hearings, as well as individuals who might have some interest.

Our concern is with the environmental matters. The matter of the co-ordinator, Mr. Norrie's involvement, deals with not only the environmental matters but with any intervention that might be made related to economic matters as well.

MR. CORRIN: I'm not sure, now, whether or not the Minister has told us that his department will be doing an independent environmental assessment or not. He has mentioned once that that was the case, but then I think he has also averred to his department working in liaison, in some sort of close co-operation or co-ordination with the federal department and my impression was that some of this responsibility was being delegated away to the federal area.

Perhaps I could ask, then, for some clarification as to whether or not there will be any initiatives taken by the Honourable Minister's department and the Provincial Government?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, there have been guidelines prepared to be followed by the Polar Gas people in the preparation of environmental impact statements. The federal panel will review those and we have representation on that panel.

MR. CORRIN: Could the Honourable Minister then tell us who prepared the guidelines and whether or not these guidelines could be tabled before this Assembly?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, I understand that they were prepared in co-operation with the Federal Government, the Manitoba Government and the Ontario Government. And I believe that those guidelines are public information and I can get a copy for the honourable member.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(a)(1)—pass — the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Chairman, just on that topic, I was supposing we were going to leave it until we discussed the environmental impact report. But in relation to Polar Gas, I have a copy of the guidelines with me that were issued in November of 1976, which I believe were the guidelines he was talking about issued by the Manitoba Environmental Assessment and Review Agency, November 26th, 1976. And if you do a quick reading of these guidelines, requiring an environmental assessment, the one thing that comes through very clearly is that there is a number of very important steps that have to be initiated, with a substantial amount of time allowed for their implementation. I

would interested in knowing, considering that these were issued in Nojember of 1976 — which gives us close to two and a half years now since it has been issued — how much progress has actually been made in establishing . . . Well, I won't go through it all, because there is some 25 pages of proposed steps that have to be taken many of which, according to this, should have been initiated about that time in order to do the preparatory work.

Just to use one example, where you have major questions dealing with flora, fauna, fish life, wildlife, that in order to get any proper degree of environmental impact assessment you have to start monitoring the quality and level of these different sorts of activities in the prior period, so that you can then measure it against some proposed impact.

Now, I would like to know, have any steps been taken to initiate the implementation of these guidelines in any way, shape or form?

MR. RANSOM: I believe, Mr. Chairman, that the guidelines that the honourable member has are preliminary guidelines and that the final approved guidelines were only made available about two months ago.

MR. AXWORTHY: Well, Mr. Chairman, I stand corrected then, but it still comes back to the point, unless there has been some drastic rethinking from the original position put in these guidelines, that in order to undertake a proper environmental impact review of the proposed Polar Gas Program that a number of studies and investigations would have to be initiated in a very early period of time to get a proper amount of research to take place prior to any serious discussion.

All I'm saying is, whenever the guidelines were issued, can the Minister tell us what is being done to give some effect to these particular proposals, which are both weighty and very complicated?

MR. RANSOM: Well, Mr. Chairman, my understanding is that the responsibility of the government is to review the assessments that are prepared by the proponents, and that we are now getting our people together — putting the technical committees together — to be able to do that. But we are not actually doing the studies, as such.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Chairman, if the Minister is correct in saying that the department itself will not do any of the assessments, it will simply review and judge the assessments done by the proponents, could he indicate then . . . Do they have any knowledge as to what is being done by the proponents of the Polar Gas project in order to live up to the guidelines that have been established?

In other words, are they now assured that the kind of research and scientific studies that would have to be done prior to, or as a prelude to, any serious proposal are in fact being now undertaken or in fact will be. I have seen some of the assessments that have come through his department and others are pretty minimal kinds of environmental impacts. If we were simply going to rely upon cursory or superficial reviews and because our environmental impact program has no legal teeth in it whatsoever, as to judgment, it's purely ministerial discretion as to whether it's good or not and there's no opportunity for anyone else, as there is in the American system, to question the validity or effectiveness of that environmental impact. Can the Minister tell us what is now taking place and is he assured, or feels assured, that the kind of an investigation that is going to be required to do a proper impact is in fact now being initiated by the proponents of this project?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, that will be part of the work of the technical group that we're putting together and that group is quite similar to the group that was put together for the Garrison studies and I believe a very competent group of people who have now had considerable experience in that area. I'm quite confident that their assessments of what the proponents are doing will be quite valid.

MR. AXWORTHY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll take as given that the Minister will assure that these studies will be done and I certainly agree with his comment that there is a high degree of competence.

I would like to ask him this though. It goes back to the question raised by the Member for Wellington. When you consider how important the Polar Gas project will be, not just in terms of its economics but it will have really substantial consequences throughout the whole northern region, is the Minister prepared now to commit that the environmental assessments that are forwarded to him by the proponents would be subject to public hearings and public review which he has the competence to order under the Act, or under his discretion. So that unlike most of the environmental impact assessments that have been done which have not been made public or have not been given public view, that this one would in fact be given that proper airing and responsiveness so that varieties of groups, native organizations up north, community organizations, environmental groups would have an opportunity both to review it, react to it and that in fact the government would be prepared to help them in responding to that so that we can assure that there was a proper and careful deliberation and discussion of this very important process?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, that's the group that I referred to, of which Frank Doe is a member, that hears the submissions publicly and, as an example, I believe we suggested that there be additional hearings in Manitoba from what was proposed. I think there were only one or two hearings proposed in Manitoba. I believe now there will be hearings held at five locations in Manitoba. I'm quite prepared to say that we will make every effort to protect the interests of Manitobans and Manitoba's environment in this regard. At the moment, I'm satisfied with the progression of events.

MR. AXWORTHY: Well, one further request if you like of the Minister. And, again, taking his commitment at full value, would he be prepared, in order to ensure that that protection that he and the rest of us are interested in will take place, to provide a degree of support to the organizations, particularly those communities that will be most directly affected by the Polar Gas proposal, so that they would be able to gain proper scientific, economic, environmental research in order to make effective judgments on the proposal?

I would simply remind him that one of the lessons that was learned from the Berger Commission and subsequent commissions is that the only way that you can ensure that the public is able to respond adequately is if they have an equal amount of information and investigation at hand. In other words, the kind of resources that the proponents of a Polar Gas pipeline have to prepare their proposals are oftentimes substantial compared to what, say, a small northern community might have or a native organization might have. While I know we're talking about restraint and I know it may sound frivolous, I would at least request the Minister to discuss with the Government of Canada to see if they would be able to provide for certain resources, financial or otherwise, or technical competence, not just on the technical committee on the government's side but for those kinds of people who would want to make representation so that there would be an opportunity to at least do it on a somewhat equal basis. In other words, they have to get their own hired guns and I think that was the great key to the success of the Berger Commission and others has been that the native organizations up there were given a certain amount of support so when they appeared before the Commission at the public hearings, that they had adequate data at hand which does cost money to acquire. I would wonder if the Minister would take that under consideration in order to fulfill the objectives that he has stated.

MR. RANSOM: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm certainly prepared to listen carefully to the advice of the honourable member. I'm not in a position to make any commitments on a hypothetical basis. I expect, without detailed knowledge of it, that the Federal Government will have some interest in terms of the reserve situations. Again, I make the commitment that we'll do whatever we feel is necessary to see that there is adequate protection of the environmental concerns.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. BRIAN CORRIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Minister has indicated that members of his department, led by Mr. Frank Doe, will be doing some independent studies and apparently — he can clarify or correct me if my understanding of his response is incorrect — but apparently he says that these people will act in response, they will react to the proponents, Polar Gas consortium's own assessments, own environmental impact assessments to that proposal. He indicates that that will effectively initiate the assessment process. I would ask him whether or not, in view of those remarks, he is aware . . . Well, perhaps first I could ask him, is that correct or is that wrong? Is my understanding correct or incorrect?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Well, I believe that your understanding of it is basically correct, that the proponents are the people who are actually doing the impact statements according to guidelines that were prepared for them by government and there will then be an opportunity to review the level of acceptability of their actual studies, whether or not they met the terms of the guidelines.

MR. CORRIN: Could then the Honourable Minister confirm as to whether or not he is aware that one, I believe it's called Carson Templeton Engineering, but in any event it's Templeton Engineering Company, has been commissioned by the Federal Government to do an environmental impact statement on its behalf?

MR. RANSOM: I wonder if he would repeat that please?

MR. CORRIN: Well, it is my understanding, Mr. Chairman, that Templeton and Associates, a Winnipeg engineering firm, has to date done fairly extensive assessments relative to the environmental impact of this particular proposal and it is further my understanding that that has been done in concert with members of the Honourable Minister's department. I'm asking him whether he can confirm that that is in fact so.

MR. RANSOM: I can neither confirm nor deny that, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CORRIN: Well, in these circumstances, I would then ask whether the Honourable Minister would undertake to make himself privy to that information in order that he can publish it before this Assembly and we can all be informed of the matter.

MR. RANSOM: Of course, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CORRIN: I'm sorry, I didn't hear. Did the Minister reply? **MR. RANSOM:** Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(a)(1)—pass — the Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. CORRIN: Mr. Chairman, we've heard some discussion of the need for an environmental impact assessment. I'm wondering whether or not within the terms of reference as prescribed by the guidelines, the terms of reference passed on to Mr. Norrie, whether or not there has also been an indication by the Honourable Minister that cultural and economic impacts should be assessed. I'm wondering because I'm quite aware that within the purview of this Minister's department, it's matters relative to the environment that are of primary concern, not matters involving culture or economics, but obviously we're dealing with a synthesis situation that entails a great deal of synthesis and cross-reference.

It seems to me that it's almost impossible to assess environmental impacts without also looking at possible adverse cultural impacts. An example would be situations of remote natives who have to date been relatively inaccessible to modern culture, who may find that although there is necessarily no adverse environmental concern to their way of life, there well may be with the opening up of new road systems and new technology in remote northern communities, there may well be the possibility of most adverse cultural impacts.

You know, living in these times, I think we've all become sensitive to the need as was reflected and represented in the efforts of Mr. Justice Berger in his Commission, to be sensitively aware of those possible repercussions. One has to be brought to mind of the recommendations of the Berger Report. Berger was not only concerned about possible adverse environmental impact but he indicated that he felt that there was a possibility of something I believe he termed cultural shock, something that would entail a great deal of difficulty for people in remote northern situations to be able to bear as a result of this new technology being introduced to their community and their way of life. So I would ask the Honourable Minister, in the light of the recommendations made by Mr. Justice Berger, whether or not he wouldn't think that there would be a need for some assessment with respect to cultural and economic impacts and he would accordingly charge his departmental members, namely Mr. Frank Doe and his cohorts with such a responsibility.

MR. RANSOM: Well, I appreciate the honourable member's concerns, Mr. Chairman. I believe that they are quite valid in an overall perspective of the Polar Gas situation and I believe that the guidelines that were prepared for the proponents to follow do in fact give considerable attention to the social aspects of it but the responsibility of our department is basically with the protection of the ecological systems and I would suggest that any further discussion of a broader nature should take place when the Chairman of the Co-ordinating Subcommittee of Cabinet for Polar Gas is presenting his Estimates, the Minister of Finance.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(a)(1)—pass — the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Chairman, if we're through that particular topic, there are a couple of other questions I wanted to ask the Minister relating to some environmental matters. I could ask them under this section unless you feel that they don't quite fit. One was the proposal that, pardon me, not a proposal but a program of study that was being done on water quality and we were told that the report would be issued some time this year. I believe the Clean Environment Commission was responsible for it. They were doing a total study of water quality standards in the Province of Manitoba. Now I haven't seen a copy of that report and I'm interested in knowing if that water quality study is going to be issued this year. I have a particular reason because if the Minister will recall, I asked a question of him in the House about three weeks past concerning a study that was done by the Federal Department of Health and Welfare on water quality standards in the City of Winnipeg, and he indicated at that time that the Department of Health's study was sort of a one-shot examination in that while it seemed to show there was some serious problems, that he was given assurances that overall the water quality in the City of Winnipeg was acceptable.

I am wondering in light of, at least a signal of alarm that there may be some difficulties with these new kinds of oxides — I forget the name of the particular — that takes place in the water system, whether the water quality study has been completed, whether it includes an analysis of that particular problem, and whether the Minister can tell us what the government intends to do as a result of that water quality study? What steps do they intend to take from this point on?

MR. RANSOM: The report that I believe that the honourable member is referring to has not been completed yet.

With respect to the second question dealing with the halomethanes, I believe the question arose out of an article in Macleans magazine which in my view was quite an irresponsible statement based on the information that was available. I believe that the honourable member used the term that there was a serious problem. On the basis of the information available and on what is known about standards established in the United States, in fact the level in Winnipeg was 75 parts per million or something, and the acceptable standard is 100. It is within the acceptable limits but was higher than some other cities. But the city now is aware of that, of course, and they are doing fairly regular testing now, I believe every three months that they are sampling and running tests on that particular

contaminant. It is not considered to be a serious problem but because it is there it is being monitored now to see if that conclusion is correct.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Chairman, I thank the Minister for the information. I would like perhaps just a little further explanation on it. My understanding of that particular article was that this particular problem with halomethanes is one that is now just appearing as sort of one of those issues that, I think, the Leader of the Opposition referred to last night — you solve one problem and all of a sudden you discover you have got a number more on your hands — but that this is now a consequence of the use of chlorine in the water systems, a by-product of that is the emergence of this new halomethane component in the water itself, and that they are suggesting that this will require alternative treatment systems perhaps moving in towards the area of tertiary treatment systems in order to capture that. I would be interested in knowing whether that particular area of concern is included in the water quality study and whether the province in conjunction with the City of Winnipeg, if it is not being included, would undertake to perhaps issue some form of a statement or analysis of exactly what is going on and what is intended, because it has caused some degree of anxiety in the minds of people who are interested in those problems? It seems to me that it may, if the report from the Federal Government is correct that it is a new emerging problem, that there may be something that the department should be looking at.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, the particular study that he refers to did not include that. I believe this is a problem that has probably arisen or been recognized since that. It is one of those things that no doubt has been there because chlorine has been used for a long time to treat water. It is as a result of the interaction, as I understand it, between the chlorine and the organic matter in the water. If you test the water from Shoal Lake it is not there, it is after it is treated. But still any indications that we have now show that it is within an acceptable level, and I know that the honourable member has some judgments and some concerns about what is an acceptable level. Well, I can agree that those points are debatable as well. But at the moment in the United States where there is a standard established, by comparison to that we find that the water quality is quite acceptable, but certainly it is something that has to be looked at. The city is quite aware of it and I am sure that because of the concern that the honourable member refers to, that it is going to be looked at very carefully.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(a)(1)—pass — the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Well, Mr. Chairman, leaving that topic aside, we come to another one affecting the City of Winnipeg and that again goes back to the Annual Report of the Environment Commission which indicated that the majority of cases that they dealt with in 1976 and 1977 had to do with solid waste management, and that there was a proposal coming from the City of Winnipeg that indicated that there should be a new form of solid waste recovery that would provide heat and steam heat, I think, primarily through the burning and conversion of solid waste, rather than it being put into dumps and other forms of disposal items now.

I would want to know if the Minister has been in discussion with the City of Winnipeg concerning the proposal to deal with this incineration of solid wastes and the development of a new solid waste treatment centre for the City of Winnipeg, as recommended by the Clean Environment Commission. I see he is in consultation with his colleague, the Minister of Urban Affairs, and I wonder if both of them or either of them have been in any discussion with the City of Winnipeg concerning this problem, considering that we are producing now almost half-a-million tons of solid waste per year and if the government is again taking any steps in this area?

MR. RANSOM: Well, Mr. Chairman, I am advised that the hold-up in that regard at the moment is with the Federal Government, that there have been discussions between the province and the city and the federal people and that they now are waiting for a response from the Federal Government.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Chairman, I wouldn't doubt in the least that there has probably been maybe some delay in that level, but I would be more interested in knowing what exactly and how far have we progressed? I mean have we reached the stage where the city and the province have now agreed that they will now initiate a solid waste treatment plant that would provide heat resources for the City of Winnipeg, and they are simply now asking for support from the Federal Government, or are they just simply discussing it on a maybe basis. I would more particularly like to know, do we have a clear idea or agreement, at least, between authorities within the city and the province that this is the direction that they want to go?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, I haven't been personally involved in the negotiations or in the consultations and if the honourable member would permit I will check into that in some detail, and we will discuss it before the end of the Estimates.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. CORRIN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to harken back to the questions, the line of questioning and answers and responses that were received by myself and the Member from Fort Rouge earlier with respect to the Polar Gas consortium's proposal.

Mr. Chairman, I am aware and I would hope that the Minister is aware that the First Minister of this Province has taken a position with respect to this particular proposal. Notwithstanding the fact that the Minister has risen this morning and the Minister has indicated to this Assembly that there will be independent assessment and analysis of the environmental impact of this proposal and has indicated that there will be an opportunity for public participation and so on and so forth, notwithstanding that, the First Minister of this province already told the people of this province that he supports a wholly provincial, a Manitoba southern line, with respect to this proposed development.

Now I would ask, in view of the fact that the Minister obviously has demonstrated a concern in this regard, and has set out to my satisfaction what would seem to be a rational approach to assessing the possible impacts of this particular proposal, I would ask whether or not he could reconcile that position with the position taken by his First Minister. It would appear to me that first of all knowing that there are two alternative routes, one of which is for the most part wholly within Manitoba, another of which involves for the most part the high Arctic and northwestern Ontario, and in view of the fact that the Honourable First Minister has indicated that his government — well I presume he speaks on behalf of his government, well at least himself — is supportive of the wholly Manitoba route, the one that would go, I believe, via near Thompson and through Winnipeg in its progress in a south-easterly direction. I would ask whether or not that position can be reconciled with the position of the Minister of the department?

MR. RANSOM: Well, I see no difficulty with that, Mr. Chairman. I believe that perhaps the honourable member is making an assumption that it is strictly environmental concerns that would determine the route that the pipeline would follow, that somehow there is a right or a wrong route for a pipeline based on an impact assessment. My understanding of an impact assessment and the application of ecological knowledge and information is that you determine what the difficulties are. In some cases, of course, there may be some changes or damages judged to be unacceptable, but you apply that information to minimize the disruption of the environment, and to make a judgment, to say that we support generally the route through Manitoba is not a particularly conflicting position in my view.

MR. CORRIN: Well, I am led to respond, Mr. Chairman. It is not my understanding and I would take exception to the remarks of the Honourable Minister. It is not my understanding that the purpose of environmental review is to simply minimize the disruption of the environment. I believe those were the words used by my honourable friend. That is not my understanding of the purpose of an environmental impact review at all. Obviously, it is an opportunity to gather all relevant information that may be pertinent to a particular proposal. Obviously, once that information is actually received then there is an analytical process that must be undergone, and in the context, as my honourable friend has told us earlier, in the context of the public participation, one has to weigh the cost and one has to weigh the benefit not only to the environment, but as I said earlier with respect to cultural impacts and economic impacts as well.

Now my honourable friend has told me that his department, of course, is not responsible for matters economic, that is within another bailiwick, it's within another Minister's purview, that's the Minister of Finance. Matters cultural, I know what the Minister of Finance will tell us when we examine him on his Estimates, he is going to say matters cultural are not within his bailiwick. So we have a situation which is apparently developing where we are told that we will have an environmental impact study but we are told that the route itself is a *fait accompli*, I presume that the response received and elicited from the Honourable Minister in fact corroborated the statement I made, that in fact the government has made a determination, has made a decision to send this route via the southern access points, namely Thompson and Winnipeg, on a south-easterly basis. Now if that is the case, I don't think we should go through the sham of having an environmental impact review. I would say it is superfluous, it is a waste of time, and a waste of money.

Now I ask the Honourable Minister if he can indicate to me, if he can attempt to reconcile my understanding of what environmental impact review is about with his, because it would appear to me that he is just setting off on a completely wasteful process. There is absolutely no reason to do a review, if in fact all that the review is intended to do is to minimize the disruption to the environment.

MR. RANSOM: Well, Mr. Chairman, the honourable member is quite indignant about the answer that I have given, but I can assure him that Manitoba does not make the decision as to where the route will go. We cannot unilaterally decide that the route is going to go through the Interlake. As a matter of fact, at the moment I think it's a fair assessment to say that the Interlake is not being seriously considered by Polar Gas as a route. They are looking at one route which goes through northern Manitoba and into Ontario, and by the honourable member's reasoning relating to the carrying out of impact statements, you are in fact saying that there is no purpose then, in carrying out an impact statement when Polar Gas is proposing to follow only one route. That is a sort of statement, Mr. Chairman, that I find to be very difficult to accept.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. CORRIN: Is the Minister then telling this Assembly that he disclaims himself or he removes himself from the earlier statements made by his First Minister?

Does the Minister then not recognize the fact that his Minister did indeed publish information to

the effect that he was supportive of the southern Manitoba route, that would access and exit via Winnipeg as opposed to northwestern Ontario? Will the Minister not take any responsibility for that statement?

MR. RANSOM: Of course, Mr. Chairman, that was the statement. But any position taken by Manitoba as a proponent of wanting the line to come through the Interlake region, does not in any way mean that that is in fact where the line is going to go.

MR. CORRIN: Since we were told earlier that we are going to assess the proponents' environmental impact statement, I would not so facetiously ask the Minister who the proponent is. Is the proponent his government, represented by his First Minister, or is the proponent the Polar Gas consortium? And in light of that I would ask this Minister, and I suppose, in view of what I've been told, I will have to ask the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Northern Affairs, the Minister responsible for Cultural Affairs as well; in succession I will have to ask them, in fact, what instructions have been given to Mr. Norrie? What terms of reference have been given to him with respect to the preparation of his report, and the selection and presentation and publication of that material?

MR. RANSOM: Well, Mr. Chairman, the honourable member will have to ask the Minister of Finance for the particular terms of reference. As I've pointed out, he serves a co-ordinating function to bring together information that comes from various departments in the government. But in terms of specific terms of reference he would have to ask the Minister of Finance for those or I can undertake to get them and bring them here for discussion.

MR. CORRIN: Will the Honourable Minister then be willing to assure this Assembly that the report prepared by Mr. Doe, an employee of his department, will in fact and indeed be published in its entirety, unedited, uncensored, unabridged, in order that members of this Assembly and members of the public — citizens of this province — are put in a position to be able to discern the actual findings of that particular Commission of Inquiry? And the Minister, of course, at his pleasure is entitled to present the alternative. Or will he tell us that as in the case of the Task Force and as in the case, more recently, of the Rent Review Report, that the government will see fit to reserve to itself the entitlement to make necessary amendments with respect to matters that they regard to be of public policy — governmental policy — and therefore instruct Mr. Norrie to deal with the Ministers — and this would include the Honourable Minister before the House — with respect to the publication and presentation of reports?

Which will it be? Will it be independent reports by your department as an individual — and as I said I will put this question to each Minister as we go down the Estimates line — or will you reserve to yourself the right to make amendments, additions, deletions and alterations?

MR. RANSOM: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm quite prepared to deal with questions that are asked in order to elicit information of which the member has a right to have concerning my departmental Estimates.

I'm afraid that I rather reject some of the implications and the premises to some of his questions. Also I might point out that he misunderstood what I was saying. Perhaps I can take some responsibility for not having been able to communicate it clearly enough to him, but I don't believe I said at any point that Mr. Doe, in his responsibility, would be asked to prepare a report. He will be one of a panel who will sit in judgment over the impact assessment that is filed by the proponents.

In addition, I will have a group of technical people who will be advising me on the suitability, on their assessment of those guidelines as well. So it's sort of a double — not only is there the panel, the Federal panel that Mr. Doe sits on — we also will be making our own assessment on that as well.

I can assure the honourable member that any technical report that comes to me for which I have responsibility, that I will be reviewing those reports very carefully and I will be asking technical people to substantiate information that is in those reports, and any information that cannot be substantiated within those reports, then will have to be shown as such. That is a traditional procedure for the publication of technical reports.

If the honourable gentleman has ever had the occasion to have a technical report published in a scholarly journal, he will find that that is the sort of review that an article is subjected to; that either you are able to substantiate the statements that are made there or they must be shown as statements that cannot, in fact, be substantiated.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Well, Mr. Chairman, I know the Minister seems to be getting a little vexed by the line of questioning. I don't want to sort of totally ruin his Friday or his weekend — (Interjection)— or even had his lunch, that's right.

But I'm interested because he is just taking over the portfolio, in how he is going to approach this overall problem of applying environmental impact procedures to proposal. I would hope he would make clear to the House whether he sees his role and the role of his department in these different committees as simply acquiring information about proposed damages or problems that may arise as a result of the specific route that the Polar Gas proponents are going to follow, and then use that

report to suggest modifications. Or does he see himself in the position where, if those reports indicate substantial damage, that he is prepared to recommend against them? And who is going to be providing the ability to say there has got to be an alternative route or you don't build it at all, or that where you're going to build is the wrong place to build it? And is the capacity built in, in terms of that kind of assessment that is now taking place, both to acquire that kind of information to make those judgments? And is the Minister also prepared and does he see his role as the Minister responsible for the environment, being prepared to stand up to the First Minister or the Minister of Finance, and the Polar Gas Companies, if in fact it's warranted in absolutely saying that, "My studies show that you shouldn't build it, or you should build it in a different place, even though it happens to be in northern Ontario, exclusively, and not in northern Manitoba?"

Now I'm just curious as to how he sees himself with that kind of latitude and is prepared to undertake that. I'm not saying it would be that way, but is he prepared to do that?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, in my view, clearly the responsibility of the Minister of this department is for the protection of the environment.

I believe the honourable member will realize that under the broader considerations there are more people involved in the decision-making. Very clearly, my responsibility as Minister is to see that the environment is protected and that certainly will be the way that I will approach my responsibilities in this department.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2. (a)(1)—pass; 2. (a)(2)—pass — the Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. CORRIN: Well, harkening back again to the former item, Mr. Chairman. With respect to the response just elicited by the question from my honourable friend, the Member for Fort Rouge, I am most concerned with the response — or should I possibly say, lack of response — evinced from the remarks made by my honourable friend, the Minister.

It would appear to me that although those remarks were not — and I don't want to distort what he said — they were not callous in sensitivity to the needs and demands of the times, I must say — and I don't believe I'm editorializing and I don't think I'm being politically subjective in making this observation — but I think the response was simply inadequate. I don't think it addressed the needs and demands of these times, and since the entire discussion was taking place relative to a proposal of such size, scope and magnitude as that made by the Polar Gas consortium, I would simply say that this is not acceptable. This is a deficiency on the part of the Minister.

I would say that if he views his responsibility in such a narrow way we the people of Manitoba are in very very serious trouble. I don't think in these times — and this was of course embodied and recognized in the principle inherent in the Berger Commission — I don't think in these times that we can afford to make simple political decisions, and that's what, in effect, he's told us. He's told us that he will make the decisions. He is the Minister. He will protect the environment. Well, I say, "nuts to him". With due respect, you may be responsible for the environment, but there are over a million of us who have to live in your environment. We want to be privy to those decisions. We want to participate in a public way. We want to dialogue with the government. We want to communicate with the government. I don't believe that you as a result of having simply been elected to this high office have the right, although you have the responsibility, have the right to unilaterally say that you will sit in judgment as to what developments adversely impact the environment of this province.

I would submit those decisions can only be made through a due process, a process of natural justice — being a lawyer I tend to talk in legalese but it's the only thing I can think of that's apropos — a process that would entail the involvement of people and not just business people but people all throughout the province; those who in the history of this province have never had an opportunity, very very seldom have had an opportunity to participate in this thing I call a "due process of natural justice".

There are thousands of people living north of the 53rd parallel that most definitely dealing specifically with the Polar Gas proposal, are gravely imperilled. Whether that line is driven on the Ontario access or whether it's through the Interlake Winnipeg access, is of great consequence. I would suggest that the Minister should, in fact he's a young man and he should respond to the times, he should be aware that there are people who are dependent on his judgment. I would suggest to him that he seriously consider, when confronting this Polar Gas proposal, he seriously consider — and I would say this with respect to any other weighty and grave matter that's brought before his departmental responsibility — that he seriously consider an independent environmental review and he seriously consider an allowance of a process of public hearings akin and similar to the Berger Commission in order that all the people of Manitoba can be heard; all the people of Manitoba can be given the opportunity to express their opinions; and in order that not only members of his Cabinet, of his government caucus are privy to information, but in order that all of us are put in an equal position in order that we can all bring to bear our experience, our aspirations for our province with respect to matters environmental.

So I would call upon him to rethink his position with respect to his responsibilities and to bring to bear the needs of our times.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Well, Mr. Chairman, there are going to be public hearings in Manitoba. I have difficulty in appreciating why we should duplicate the process of public hearings that will be established under the system that has been worked out between the Federal Government and Ontario and Manitoba. I'm afraid I've missed the honourable member's point there.

MR. CORRIN: I will attempt then to make a clarification, and I suppose it goes to the heart of what we believe is our responsibility as elected representatives. I believe that my responsibility is to the people I represent and I don't believe that I narrowly represent just the people of my constituency; I believe that I represent all the people of this province. I do not believe that it is within my purview, within my authority or jurisdiction, to unilaterally make decisions that will affect the lives of not only a million people living in this generation, but many millions of people to come. I believe that it is my responsibility to reflect public opinion, and I think that with respect to this particular matter, given the fact that none of us, including the Honourable Minister, really have the expertise necessary to make such weighty decisions, I would suggest that it is incumbent upon the Minister to recognize that fact — and I do respect the fact that he has had more experience in this field than I have. I, as a lawyer, have had a relatively limited experience, although I might tell him that when I worked at the office of the City Solicitor I was involved in environmental matters, and as a matter of fact, did extensive work in the field of environmental impact study, and wrote several reports which were, in fact, published, on the very subject. I did not regard them as technical reports. They were reports that I felt dealt with substance.

But I would suggest that the Minister has a responsibility to the people to listen and to be sensitively aware to their demands and needs, to review all the information pertinent to making such decisions. I would suggest that for him to callously say — now I will use that term, before I said that I didn't want to, but now I will use that term — to callously suggest that he will make decisions, and that he will make decisions upon receiving recommendations or information from his department people who are captive to him — and I will say that because they are, realistically — they're not independent. I have a great deal of respect for those who work in the Civil Service; at one point in my life I worked in the Civil Service. But realistically, through my own experience I can tell you that they are not independent. They will say effectively whatever you want them to say. You give them instructions; they don't give you instructions. You can set the terms of reference, and that's why I asked you what the terms of reference were for Mr. Norrie, because he's working for you, you're not working for him now. So I would suggest that in these types of matters, I don't want to hear from people you control. I want to hear from people that you don't control. I want to hear from the people of northern Manitoba; I want to hear from the people of southern Manitoba. I want to hear from the business community, and I want to hear from the consumer as well. —(Interjection)— I've heard too much from you.

I suggest to the Honourable Minister that he give serious consideration to re-thinking his approach, his perspective on public service. Far be it from me to admonish — we're both new members — far be it from me to admonish the Honourable Minister in this way. But I suggest that there's such a variance as between our perspectives that clearly something is wrong. He may suggest that I'm off base, and maybe that's the nature of his belief. But I would suggest that I am not, and I would suggest that a poll or survey of a cross-section of our society would indicate that I am not. So I would suggest that he give serious consideration, if there is a Polar Gas proposal, to having access to a person or a group of persons similar to Justice Berger, people who have the ability to make an independent analysis and assessment of the situation, people who are not within the context of his control. I would suggest that that will produce a result that will be of benefit to all Manitobans, present and future.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Well, Mr. Chairman, I almost, I think, would like to hear the comments of the former Minister as to the question of whether or not the technical people within the department are the captives of the Minister. What I said to you was that I will ask that my technical people be able to justify every statement that they make, and that is an entirely correct procedure for me to do. I am sure that the former Minister asked them, on occasion, to justify their statements. I'm sure that he didn't ask them to change any of the statements that they could justify, and neither will I. And for the honourable member to suggest that the technical, professional people within this department, or any other department, are captives and controlled by the Minister, is an insult to those people, and it certainly is not the case.

MR. CORRIN: I would suggest, first of all, for the Minister's edification, that it was he, not I, who suggested that his responsibility and the responsibility of environmental impact review, that that process was simply to minimize the disruption of the environment. Now, given the fact that that is his perspective, how can he stand up — how does he have the audacity to stand up . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The hour is now 12:30. I am now leaving the Chair. The House will re-convene at 2:30 p.m.