

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
Thursday, 12 March, 1981

Time — 8:00 p.m.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY
SUPPLY — HEALTH

MR. CHAIRMAN, Morris McGregor (Virden): As we adjourned, we were on 3.(a)(1) and the Member for St. Boniface had the floor.

MR. LAURENT L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I'd asked the Minister where the public health nurses and I think it was determined that the public health nurses were in the field staff of the Department of Community Services. The funds for the Public Health Service paid to Winnipeg was part of block funding that they have now. There had been a change and that change now is I think to the Minister of Urban Affairs.

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to say a few words now in view of the fact that we have in front of us a problem. I understand that the public health nurses employed by the City of Winnipeg might be going on strike tomorrow. I can't understand that the Provincial Government is not taking its responsibility at this time. I bring it here although the financing is under another department and the staff is another department but the Minister saw fit to comment on it yesterday. I happened to be watching the news on television when I saw that and the Minister is saying that there's no responsibility at all to the province. I disagree with that. Why I say this, I know that there's block funding and the city is supposed to make do with this but then you're talking about a certain amount of money that you're giving the city to help them in their programs. But this, in effect, is a program that is more or less delivered by the city for the province. It is the responsibility of the province and if I remember right, the service of public health is the responsibility of the province in rural Manitoba, outside of Winnipeg, and in the suburbs also.

Then there's certain areas the Minister said, well I'll look, I have no control over that and he's right. Every year we have this little box here, a conciliation statement and that explained well there was so much vote but then there's always more because a contract was signed between certain staff. There's no other way that could be done, but that means that they cannot ask for the money ahead of time because they're not sure. Sometimes they have very little idea what the contract will be, what finally the union or whoever, the employees, will settle for. This is an example here of people, and the Minister said himself that we're in danger of losing our nurses for one thing. We are going to have the Minister setting up a committee on nurse manpower. Do you still call it manpower or person power or something? Nursing manpower. That's a good idea but this is an idea that all of a sudden for about 40 nurses, the Minister is washing his hands away, he doesn't want to hear about that and I don't think that's quite right. This is a responsibility that we have.

Not long ago the Provincial Government made quite a fuss because the Federal Minister, the

Solicitor General came in and he wanted to reduce the participation of the funding of the senior level government for the police in the rural area. We're already getting this deal at less than cost and it is not the responsibility of the Federal Government, but there was a lot of noise on that and I think there's a resolution now asking us to condemn the Federal Government for doing such a thing and from a government that is talking about restraint and cutting down the deficit.

So, Mr. Chairman, I really think this is the responsibility of the Provincial Government. Health is the responsibility of the Provincial Government and this is delivered as an agency, just the same as you'd have the Children's Aid Society, different Children's Aid Societies that are actually accepting a responsibility of the government, delivering it, because they're an agency designated to do that. That's exactly what the city is doing. So it's not the same, although there is block-funding that doesn't mean that there's not an added responsibility here of the province.

We can lose these nurses. The Minister, I think, signed a very good, very generous contract with MONA or with the nurses, and I think the government can accept some of the responsibility for having to settle for such a high increase because we did say to the Minister, I think it was 1978, if you look at Hansard you'll remember that we prophesied what was going to happen. We had a surplus of nurses then; the conditions were bad; there was a freeze on the wages and we said, "look out, when they're in the driver's seat they're going to pay". The nurses had told us that too, and this is exactly what's happened. All of a sudden we're faced with a big increase. We're talking about losing the nurses and this is going to help; we're forcing the city to pay an added cost without actually taking that into consideration, the increase and the need, because of the shortage of nurses, the need of paying the nurses well because there's no doubt that these 40 nurses when everybody else has an increase, there's no doubt in my mind that they're going to settle for less, or not very much less if any.

Another important point to be considered at this time. One of the first priorities of this Minister, which again I agree with him, it has been a question of prevention. I remember the last Budget that I brought in as the Minister of Health, although there was a restraint on staff and so on, that this was one of the only exception we made, or one of the only exceptions we made, and I think we requested quite a few more nurses for the department. So I think the Minister should reconsider.

I know that he might tell me that this is Urban Affairs, but the Minister accepted some responsibility by the way he talked yesterday. I would be satisfied if he would tell us tonight that he's going to talk to his colleagues, talk to the Members of Cabinet and make them realize that the city could say, okay, here, you run it. They don't have to do that. Health is the responsibility of this Provincial Government and especially now. We have block-funding, but there was more money given on the Health side and that's part of Health. The Minister said we wanted flexibility

and I think that Public Health, and that was one of the reasons why that flexibility was given instead of tying it up, where we could spend wisely. I think that this kind of a prevention is very important. I think that an awful lot could be done on this, so I very seldom have criticized the government for not giving more money to the city, that was a battle between two levels of government, but in this case it is the responsibility of the province and I think they should accept these responsibilities. I'd be very interested to know what the Minister thinks about that or at least give us his reason why he feels that nothing extra should be done by his government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

HON. L.R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry): Mr. Chairman, I must say that the government doesn't feel and I don't feel that the position the city finds itself in is any more the province's responsibility than we could expect to look at the other side of the coin and say that the position the province has found itself in is British Columbia's responsibility or Alberta's responsibility.

With respect to the contract that has been reached and is now in place between MHO and MONA, the 43 percent end rate two-year contract, that was precipitated in substantial part by very large settlements that were granted in British Columbia last year and in Alberta last year and spilled over into Saskatchewan which obviously were going to affect Manitoba and every other province. The settlement in British Columbia was approximately 46 percent and at that, nurses in Manitoba did not have parity with nurses in British Columbia as the honourable member knows. The 46 percent came with a position of superiority in terms of wage scales prevailing in British Columbia as it was.

All the Health Ministers in Canada have looked at this kind of thing, what is referred to I guess, as a spillover effect, it's really a tidal wave effect. There's not much that Health Ministers alone can do about this kind of thing. It's something that has to be addressed at the First Minister's level and at the Finance Minister's level as well as at the Health Minister's level and even then, because of the different imperatives, political and otherwise, that different governments and different Ministers operate under. I don't know that we can make very great progress in developing some sort of united position that will prevent some of these enormous settlements from taking place and spilling over and affecting other provinces.

So I would say that the city's position vis-a-vis the province is no different than the province's position vis-a-vis British Columbia and Alberta. As the member recalls, Alberta had a nurses' strike before they reached their settlement and it was a very bitter and unwelcome several days that all parties went through.

I can't recommend to my colleagues that the Government of Manitoba put itself and the Provincial Treasury and the taxpayers of the province in the position of exceeding to a request from the city to help them out of a difficulty that parallels the difficulty that we found ourselves in and that I've just referred to. If we did it in this instance, there would be no justification for not doing it in subsequent instances where other civic employee groups, where

other bargaining units in the city were frustrated with the increase that the city was prepared to offer and were then in a position to argue that the city turned to the province to get helped out on the nurses, so therefore the city should turn to the province to be helped out with respect to these other groups.

To my knowledge, it's not the \$100,000 that has been the difficulty for the city. The block grant from the province to the city is 16.5 percent larger this year than it was last year and, as the case was presented to me, it was not the \$100,000, it was the psychological effect, as the city portrayed it, of a 41.6 percent settlement. That was the agreement reached between the city negotiators and the local, which includes these nurses in question.

The city's position was that it put them in an extremely difficult position with respect to other bargaining groups. Their proposed solution, or one of them, was that the city should pay part of that and strike a percentage increase that would be roughly equivalent to the kinds of things they're talking about with other civic employee groups, and the province pick up the remainder so that the city could say to these groups, well look, we only were able to come up with 22 percent; the province provided the rest. I have no objection to that proposal having come forward to us, but I describe that as a retreat into rhetoric, or a retreat into mere semantics; that's just words.

What effect would that have on the Honourable Member for St. Boniface if he were a business agent or a negotiator for an employee group, and indeed what effect would it have on me? We would simply say, well Mr. Mayor, we don't care where the money came from or how you divide up those percentages; the fact is the increase was 41.6 percent and we want the same. So I don't think the province has any responsibility to put itself in that position. We fund the Municipal Hospital nurses anyway; it's only the 58 public health nurses that are in question. The basic problem arises from the fact that that bargaining unit embraces both hospital-based nurses from the Municipals and public health nurses. We are going to have to address the situation respecting our provincial public health nurses. I don't think we can isolate and separate a component of City of Winnipeg public health nurses and deal with them separately at this point in time, when the public health nurses of the province are covered and included in a two-year MGEA contract which provides for certain limited increases for another year. But there's no question that we will have to address that challenge when that contract expires.

So the city really approached us on a matter of principle, not on a matter of dollars and I think the principle is unacceptable from the provincial point of view. We are prepared to say to other groups with whom we have to bargain, we don't classify you all in the same category; I'm sorry ladies and gentlemen, but different professional and occupational groups fit into different categories in terms of what they deserve and what is justified in their wage scales. Our nurses were far behind nurses to the west of us because those western settlements were in a competitive market in that field and the city knows that. I think really what happened here was that a number of members of City Council didn't fully, because they're not as closely involved in it as I am

and the Member for St. Boniface is, because they have other interests and other political priorities, I don't think they fully understood the dynamics that are taking place in the nursing field and the nursing wage field at the present time. I really think that their decision the other night was a decision that simply was one to step back, stand back and take a look at it and re-examine it. It is my understanding that as of this evening the Civic Policy Committee has recommended that the 41.6 percent proposal be endorsed by the city and paid.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Well, Mr. Chairman, I reject completely these observations. I think the Minister was talking about mere words. I think that was the exercise that we just witnessed, that's what is was. The Minister is reaching when he says it is the responsibility or it's the fault of B.C. and Alberta and up to a certain point he's right. But they have no responsibility towards our provincial taxpayers or our municipal taxpayers, and it's unfortunate that this is going on. There would be only one way to solve this. I'm not blaming our Minister for this. But if the provinces would get together instead of leap-frogging every time there is a new contract in every province or an election in a certain province that there would be a big increase. I think that this is not a good situation at all.

The only way that it could be done is if there was some kind of negotiating and guidelines all across the country. You know, after all, it's the same country and we're all Canadians. Now the Minister is talking about B.C. and Alberta and the difference, and that's exactly why we feel it's so important to have a strong central government and that is exactly why when we want to make sure that if their talking about certain rights, certain things that should be in the Constitution, that the equalization is taken care of. That's the only way that certain provinces such as ours can do anything about it and B.C. and Alberta are helping in this equalization thing. We've had a government who has had practically a laissez-faire attitude towards separatism. If somebody wants to start a different country without the rest of Canada, where would be we be then? Then we would have no equalization.

I could understand Alberta talking about that because they don't want to share, it's a selfish attitude but Manitoba is a have-not province and I don't think that they can afford that.

Now, there is something the Minister didn't understand in what I had to say. Now, there is no doubt. I'm sure, the Minister didn't have to tell me that they will have to deal with the public health nurse the same as they did with other R.N.s, there's no doubt in my mind. There's no doubt either that the city will eventually have to do exactly what the province did. In other words, you negotiated for them. The point is, that problem will still be there when it's time to negotiate with other unions, with the bus drivers, and so on, they will have problems and they'll have to take certain attitudes like the province did and say, well it's a question of supply and demand, and that problem will not go away.

But the point I'm not suggesting for a minute that the province should, that would be starting a precedent, and when the contract for the bus drivers

and municipal employees comes up the province will have to pay the shot, although I'm sure that they will have to take it into consideration when they look at this block funding. But the block funding up to a certain point has no reasonable date when it comes to health. This is what I'm trying to say. This is the role of the Provincial Government and the city is doing the work for us. We were helping them, we were doing it in the rest of Manitoba, and they're doing it and we were footing the bill. There was a change in the format, now you say there's going to be block funding. If you want to call it block funding I think that you have to make sure and I think it is your responsibility, sir, as the Minister of Health to make sure this is done. If you say block funding you know what that means — hands off. That you have nothing to with it.

MR. SHERMAN: They asked for it.

MR. DESJARDINS: Okay. I'm not saying that they didn't ask for it. But if you accept block funding, the same as you claim that everything was fine with the money you received from Ottawa. So therefore you say to Ottawa hands off. Well they can say the same thing to you. If they cut down on health what are you going to do then? You would have to step in and you would have to take over because it is your responsibility. You might say well, okay we're not worried about this, we don't like it and this maladministration by the city, but you cannot afford to do that in the field of health, and you cannot afford to lose any more nurses for the Manitobans here at all. These are the points I'm trying to say, especially if you're saying and if you're going to constantly say — and I'm with you 100 percent. Excuse me I should direct my remarks to you, Mr. Chairman, I'm with the Minister 100 percent that the main thing is prevention before the people get sick and so on and that you have to spend an awful lot of money; I'm with the Minister 100 percent. But more than half the population is here around Winnipeg. I think the people of Winnipeg, if anything, are paying more than their share right now in taxes.

For a long time there was a 10 percent for construction capital until we changed that. But a lot of the people from the rural areas were using the general hospitals as the Minister knows in the city. That now is more equal, there's not this 10 percent in construction cost, that is a way. But how could the Minister then explain to say if it's not his responsibility, if he's accepting the cost and the full cost in the rural area. The Minister is not saying this public health nurse is working in Swan River or somewhere else, so Swan River will have to decide. This is the responsibility that you accept so I don't think there's a valid comparison there, Mr. Chairman, when we talk about the nurses and a bus driver. I don't say that those people shouldn't . . . and they will no doubt, it'll make it tough. They will come in and they'll say hey, if we can have that we're going to try. It's not easy and I sympathize with the Minister. I know what it is; now the doctors want more. What do you do?

In a way those are the highest paid people but you want to keep them because that's what the traffic will bear. But in the meantime to pay them what they want to keep them, unfortunately too often we're not taking care of the people at the bottom of the

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ladder. As I say, the Minister was quite proud of himself when he said that the people pushing a broom in a hospital, the maintenance people were getting an 8 percent increase, but apologized when he could only give the doctors a certain amount of money. But that's the name of the game. We've got to keep these people here and I understand that. You can talk about block funding, you can say that this is what they want but you have to accept more when somebody is delivering a service that you're responsible for, that is your full responsibility.

I'm sure that if the Children's Aid Society would come in and say well we can't operate like that you would have to consider and you would have to increase and you'd say to them well, if you approve, what you would do is approve so many staff man years and then whenever they settle you'd have to make sure they get the money to pay the wages. I'm not saying it's an easy solution but I was a bit disappointed that the Minister — and I think he brought this upon himself when he made that statement yesterday. If it's block funding, it wasn't any of his business to comment on it at all, but he did rightly comment on it because it is his responsibility, as the Minister of Health, to see that Public Health Services and this is one of the first priorities, as I say, I'm with the Minister on that, and his department to see that you go ahead and take care of people before they get too sick. It's a hell of a lot cheaper that way.

Mr. Chairman, I don't think the Minister can say, well, it's because of B.C., I don't understand that. They have no responsibility for any of our taxpayers. In a free enterprising society that's what you're going to do, you compete and this government has always believed in that and I'm not commenting on that. I'm saying this is the policy of this government who believe in free enterprise and to go along with what the market can bear or what they need. I can understand that but I don't think they are consistent when they say no, we can't help you, we can't consider this.

You know, right here, as I said earlier, and we're accepting so much for Salaries. We've voting on everything for Salary now. Next year — well, I don't know when the contract is, maybe not next year — but most of the years when we come in when this column is here for the following year there's an explanation and a certain allocation for a general salary increase, in this department alone over \$1 million. The Minister has no control over that. That is what I am saying, that the city has no control over that; there is no way that they can refuse to pay these nurses the same as the other RNs are getting. They're qualified in the same way, it's in the same province, and if they do that they're going to lose them. The Minister said today that we need more public health nurses. Well, I know we need more public health nurses, we need more nurses and we need psychiatric nurses.

I'm sorry that I can't go along with the Minister in this case, I think we are letting the city down. We are letting the people of Winnipeg down who are paying their portion to give the service to rural Manitoba and now they'll have to pay more for their service here. I don't think it's a valid point to say, well, if we do that; every time they are settling with another union they will come back to us and want more

money. They will come back to you but they will come back to you and that will be considered when they are looking at the block funding in general, but that is not the same thing because you haven't got the responsibility. You have a total responsibility to see that all the municipalities are running well but your responsibility of transportation in the city has never been your problem, the same as health was. You are getting some money from Ottawa to do these things also.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, if the honourable member is proposing that the province should take over health and the delivery of health services and programs in the City of Winnipeg, that is a valid proposal to make but that is not the present circumstance. What we're dealing with is the present circumstance and I'm not blaming anything on B.C. What I said was if the honourable member says the city can blame it on us, the other side of the coin is we could be saying, which we are not saying, we could be saying, well we had no control over it either. In any event, Mr. Chairman, I respect the honourable member's comments on it but this is my position on it and the position of the government. I don't know what more I can add to it.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I want to say this. As the Minister is clear, there is no point in prolonging this too long. I think I made the point of what we believe but I want to say this that I'd never blame anybody. I'm not blaming the province, I don't think that the province should do anything else but I'm saying that because of that, and in view of keeping the nurses, the city has no alternative either. They can't say, well, we'll see. If they look at just the block funding they would have to say, well, we can't give it all to the nurses; we've got to keep some for the bus drivers, those people have to live also. The Minister said there's a point that if you want to take over the health in the province, that could be another debate. I'm not sure if I want that but it has been accepted, in principle up to now, that the province has indeed accepted the cost but the delivery of service was done by the city. That's the big difference.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Transcona.

MR. WILSON PARASIUK: I'd like to add a few points on this. How much of the City of Winnipeg is covered by the provincial Public Health Nursing Program? Surely not the entire City of Winnipeg has public health nurses provided by the City of Winnipeg; how much is? Fort Garry, is that provided by the provincial program or by the city? St. James, Transcona?

MR. SHERMAN: The whole City of Winnipeg.

MR. PARASIUK: Oh.

MR. SHERMAN: All those parts of Greater Winnipeg that were separate municipalities before the amalgamation took place in 1971-72 and are generally referred to as the suburbs are covered by the province. The inner city is covered by the city. Now there are some differentiations to that general rule; for example, mental health is the responsibility

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of the province and is supplied by the province. Home care is another example of universal provision by the province but, in the sense in which the member is asking the question, public health and public health nursing, it's the province in the suburbs and the rest of the province and the city in the inner city.

MR. PARASIUK: Then I think the problem is much more serious than it appears to be on the surface. There must be some sort of grandfather clause provision here or something to do with personalities but I can't understand how that patchwork continues. I think a valid case can be made for some uniform delivery, especially since we have Unicity, and I think that the province cannot in any way, shape or form abdicate its responsibility for health. I certainly don't think it should abdicate its responsibility for public health. It's rather ironic, in my estimation, that one day after the Minister makes a statement to us, which he did in his opening statement, that public health would be a new thrust of this government, the day after he makes that statement to us he, in a sense, ducks on the issue of public health nursing in the area of the province that, in my estimation, probably needs public health nursing more than any other area in the province.

If we're talking about the inner core we are talking about a whole set of very complex problems which often manifest themselves in poorer health. So, when the Minister says, well, the city doesn't want to set a particular precedent, they have block funding, I could indicate to the Minister that the province funds other activities outside of block funding. Handi Transit is funded outside of block funding. So if that's the case, is the ambulance funded outside of block funding? Are the ambulances funded outside of block funding? I don't know how the Minister can hide behind the umbrella of block funding.

MR. SHERMAN: Well, technically on ambulances the answer is no. The ambulance grant, is calculated in when the block funding figure is being set. — (Interjection)— It's a per capita grant, that's right.

MR. PARASIUK: Handi Transit technically is outside the block funding, so that I think we have a situation here where we have some type of a patchwork system. We have had surely in this negotiating process between the Municipal Hospitals and the nurses, provincial observers from the Manitoba Health Services Commission; they've acted as observers in negotiations with respect to other contracts, so I'm certain they must have been involved in this process itself. There was a memorandum of agreement agreed to. This was referred to the nurses on the one hand and referred to the City of Winnipeg on the other. Now the Minister is shaking his head. Does that mean that we don't have observers in those negotiations?

MR. SHERMAN: Well I stand to be corrected, but absolutely to my knowledge, Mr. Chairman, we had no observers at those city negotiations.

MR. PARASIUK: That means then, that with respect to the Manitoba Health organizations, in those negotiations, that the province does say we do not abdicate our responsibility for health, we will have

observers and that's been established for some time and the Minister indicated that last year? That had been established before, I believe. I would think that the people who are in the Municipal Hospitals surely deserve the same type of provincial attention as people who are in hospitals elsewhere and I don't think that the Minister has a very strong leg to stand on in this respect. I think that if in fact, the nurses go on strike —(Interjection)— They did settle? Who said they did? Well, the EPC then has said. But you know, I think the Minister put himself in a very difficult situation.

I'd like to know from the Minister why he is not thinking about putting the entire Public Health Nursing Program under the province, especially since all the suburbs are covered already. Then I think that if the province is going to develop a renewed, expanded thrust in public health which I think it should be doing, it would be able to do so without having to get caught up in internecine warfare between levels of government.

Finally, I do not believe that the Minister can get away with saying that the City of Winnipeg is no different from the Province of B.C. or the Province of Alberta. The Province of British Columbia and the Province of Alberta are separate entities under the Constitution. The City of Winnipeg is a creature, and all municipalities are creatures of the province, and when it comes to the division of responsibility according to the Constitution, ultimate responsibility for health rests with the province. I think we would find ourselves in a terrible situation if the province does not take on that ultimate responsibility, because I think in that situation the people will have to hold them accountable.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I've already said if members opposite are proposing that the province should take over responsibility for delivering and funding and administering health services in the inner City of Winnipeg, that certainly is a legitimate position to put and to debate. I would suggest to you it should not be, and cannot be properly debated by the government and the opposition in this Legislature. There's a third party to be considered and that is the City of Winnipeg.

We have not been inclined, and we are not now inclined to act in an authoritative manner in that respect, or in a unilateral way. If the City of Winnipeg is interested in that kind of a future, they will no doubt put the proposition to the government insofar as the block funding arrangement is concerned, that was done at their request. The block funding is calculated on the basis of the general block grant, plus the ambulance grant, plus Handi Transit and some ancillary grants of that type and adds up to a certain figure that, for general purposes, can be described as the total block grant. Those items are all taken into account when those negotiations are concluded with the city, as they were in very recent days, very recent weeks, or subsequent I think to the time that the MHO-MONA nursing negotiations were going on.

I can only suggest to the Honourable Member for Transcona that the City of Winnipeg has assumed for some considerable historical time, responsibility for health services in the inner city. If they wish to change that arrangement, they will no doubt speak to us. Insofar as the nurses at the Municipal

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Hospitals are concerned, we pay that payroll anyway. I don't think the Minister in this case put himself in a difficult position at all.

What happened was the city came to us with a request and we looked at it and responded to it. I might also say for the record that I did not respond publicly to it until I had spoken to the mayor. The media of course, was interested and I told them that I had to consult with the mayor before we'd be able to make any statements on it. The mayor was fully apprised of our position before the media carried it.

MR. PARASIUK: I just want to clarify something for my own thinking in this respect. If the Minister says that the city came and asked the province for block funding, and in that block funding is assumed the funding for the Public Health Nurse Program, now what would happen in that situation if the city decided for its own reasons to reduce the Public Health Nurse Program by 50 percent? What would the province do in that situation? Because the Minister seems to be telling me that the province has abdicated its responsibility for the Public Health Nurse Program in the inner city because the city somehow has come and asked that it assume all of this under the block funding program, so now that whole area is the city's baby. I believe that the province has the final responsibility, the ultimate responsibility for the provision of health services in Manitoba. So therefore I ask the Minister, what happens in a situation where the city, for its own reasons, might decide to reduce the level of health care through the Public Health Nurse Program in the city? Is the province prepared to sit back and say, this is not our responsibility anymore because the city asked for block funding?

MR. SHERMAN: Just perhaps before we lose track of that question, I don't mean to cut off the Member for Fort Rouge, but just before we lose track of that question, it's a hypothetical question in the first instance and if it happened we would have to deal with it.

The city is aware of its public health nursing responsibilities that it has desired up to this point in time to maintain for itself, when they are negotiating with the province on the block grant. They look at all the needs of the city. They look at streets and transit and they look at environment and they look at the various other commitments and obligations that they have, and it includes public health nursing.

So I can assure the Honourable Member for Transcona that it is highly unlikely that they would come two months later and say, we're going to reduce our public health nursing by 50 percent or any other such figure. What I've tried to explain is that in fact, the position put to me by the mayor did not revolve around the \$100,000.00. It revolved around the psychological headline which the city feels it will be difficult to live with. Well, it's going to be difficult for the province to live with, but that's the competitive arena that we live in, in the nursing field at the present time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Fort Rouge.

MS. JUNE WESTBURY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I've been waiting with some impatience to get into this and I have quite a lot to say in this whole . . . We're on 3.(a)(1), are we?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes.

MS. WESTBURY: And I may take almost as long as the Member for St. Boniface, so he's just going to have to be a little bit patient with me this evening.

On this whole matter of the Municipal Hospitals, I think one of the difficulties perhaps in this area, Mr. Chairman, might be the fact that the Municipal Hospital nurses and the Public Health nurses are in the one association and that perhaps is where some of the difficulties arise, and it's not the first time that has happened.

I did ask the Minister, I think it was last Friday, some questions about the funding to the Municipal Hospitals and then we had a talk afterwards because he wasn't quite sure exactly at that stage what the funding situation was, but when I left the Municipal Hospital Board in 1979 after 10 years, I was aware then that the city had not put \$1.00 into the funding for the Municipal Hospitals since about the year 1957. I may be out a year or so either way there. The Chief Commissioner of the City of Winnipeg at one stage, the former Chief Commissioner, felt very strongly that the city shouldn't be in the health field at all. The City Councillors, some of them who came in 1972 and later, felt the city shouldn't be in the health field but after they'd been there for a while they changed their attitude. There was one time when somebody initiated an inquiry; it went to every community committee and there were 13 community committees at that time, it was around 1973 I think, where there was a debate in each community committee area with the resident advisory groups and the other residents involved on whether the entire Health Department, Public Health Department, should be transferred over to the province. If I remember rightly, Mr. Chairman, 12 out of the 13 were vehemently opposed to the City giving up its Public Health Department. These even included some of the suburban people, the former suburban people, who in 1972 thought that was what they wanted.

The experience, Mr. Chairman, was that the suburban councillors coming in, and I could name them except it's not my place to do so, but I could have them down here and tell you — they were asking why the suburbs, and I'm not trying to cash shadows on anyone, but they were asking why the suburban areas and the suburban councillors couldn't get the same attention as the former City of Winnipeg, the Inner-City Councillors could get, because I think everyone agrees that municipal councillors are very often closer to the grassroots than other levels of government, because that's where the problems arise and that's where they are referred first. I know in my experience that was so. The councillor then gets the complaints and can phone directly to the health officer or to the health nurse. I still phone the City of Winnipeg, Director of Public Health Nursing. Just last week I sent her into a centre, I asked here to send someone into a place in Elmwood where there was an elderly lady who was phoning my office because she was afraid to phone anyone else. She didn't know me but she was afraid to phone anyone else. So because of my past connections with the city I asked them to send someone in.

It's the city that does not want and would bitterly oppose any provincial takeover of Health. To suggest that it could be a terrible situation and so on as the

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Minister said, Mr. Chairman, there's a third party to debate this whole matter of provincial takeover of municipal health, and the third party is the city. My experience in the city tells me that they would continue to oppose it vehemently.

I would wish that the Member for Transcona would ask the members of his party who are City Councillors and especially those representing Inner-City areas before he suggests a provincial takeover of the City Health Department because they don't want it.

As far as the Municipal Hospitals are concerned, I think everybody's in an awkward situation with this threatened strike. I just don't have to get involved with it and I'm just as happy to have it that way, because it is an awkward situation, and 40 something percent sounds like an awful lot of increase. I haven't heard the dollars and I wish people would talk in dollars instead of percentages.

Why should the Municipal Hospital nurses and the Public Health nurses, who have taken an extra course in Public Health after they've become R.N.'s, why should they be paid less than all the other nurses in the province? That's the question that has to be addressed. It has not been answered, nobody has answered that question I don't think, Mr. Chairman. They're just as good nurses, anyone working in the geriatric field, which is an area in which I couldn't work as a nurse because I'm not a nurse, but if I were a nurse I would chose to go into something more glamorous and easier. I think the people who work around the geriatric wards have a very difficult working life. I think it's hard to see some of those old people sort of fading away and I have the greatest admiration for those people and I can't think of a single reason why they should get less money than the other nurses in this province. That to me is the only question that has to be addressed.

I think today Executive Policy Committee, with whom I've disagreed on many many occasions, I think today they addressed that, came to grips with it. I hope that the rest of the City Council will agree with them. I still don't know what the dollar figures are that they're talking about because we never hear about it. The media hasn't addressed that. All we hear is 40 percent. That's apparently to bring them up to par — they should be at par whatever par is. As far as I'm concerned, Mr. Chairman, that's the question.

I do have some other questions on the general provincial Public Health field which seems to be where we are. They mostly arise from some of the questions that were brought up in a series of reports last year and which I don't think were ever actually answered.

The requirement of The Public Health Act is still that there should be eight Medical Officers of Health in eight regions in the province, is it?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes.

MS. WESTBURY: How many of those are appointed? The report that was conducted by The Tribune said that five are without full-time medical officers of health.

MR. SHERMAN: It's correct that there should be a Medical Officer of Health for each of the eight

regions, Mr. Chairman. We have three vacancies at the present time in MOH positions; one in Westman; one in Winnipeg and one in Eastman. We have asked in our Estimates for three new MOH positions, but at the present time that's the existing situation. We've suffered for some time in Public Health with a reduced enthusiasm on the part of professional medical people for service in this field. It's something that my office, my officials and I are very intensively trying to change. We've had many many meetings, discussions, and interviews with medical persons, young and not so young, over the past 12 months and we believe we have some new recruits coming in the new fiscal year. But quite frankly, what happened over a period of some 10 years was that the . . . well, my Deputy Minister has suggested attrition and attrition certainly occurred; in some cases the worst form of attrition — death.

But the real nub of the problem was that the Medical Officer of Health had felt himself, or herself, subordinated to other initiatives and other emphases in the Department of Health and Community Services as it then was, and there was not much sense of status or sense of authority or sense of decision-making strength and it became an unattractive position. We're making a very intensive effort to reverse that in discussions with Community Services with the Link Officer that we have between Community Services and Health, Mr. Don McLean to the left of the Deputy Minister, through the Regional Personal Services Division of Community Services, we have attempted to tie the directorates of the various programs in Public and Community Health together with Community Services through that Regional Field Services Division under Mr. McLean and to revive the position and the influence and the importance of the Medical Officer of Health.

We hope that will help us attract new medical blood to those positions. I don't deny that it's been a challenge in the department for some time. We haven't stunted in our efforts to change it but the only thing that's really going to produce meaningful change is a demonstration that the Medical Officer of Health counts for something, more than he or she felt she had come to count for in the last 10 years or so.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Fort Rouge.

MS. WESTBURY: I'm a little confused here. You said you're asking for three new positions. Aren't those three vacancies already budgeted?

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, it adds up to a total of six. We are asking for three new positions and we've got three vacancies right now. We're asking for three new Medical Officer of Health positions.

MS. WESTBURY: My confusion is this. When you have a vacancy, that position is still budgeted. I'd hate to think every time a senior officer left you had to go back and get permission to rehire. That's my confusion. Isn't that a continuing open position already budgeted for?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, that's a continuing provision and there are three MOH vacancies at the present time. But we're also asking for three new MOH positions.

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MS. WESTBURY: Oh, three new ones in addition.

MR. SHERMAN: Yes.

MS. WESTBURY: Oh great, okay, I can only wish you success. At the time, there were a number of apparent remarks from a former Medical Officer of Health and one of the considerations that he brought up was concern about confidentiality of medical records in view of the fact that non-medical people were able to obtain medical records from hospitals on the basis of their status as Department of Health employees. Has that been corrected or does the Minister not view it as a problem?

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, that hasn't really surfaced as a identifiable problem for us. I know the articles and the references to which the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge is alluding and certainly one or two of the people who expressed opinions in those articles had some pretty strong grievances which they put forward. They don't necessarily though reflect anything more than personal attitudes and personal grievances. That has not been a problem for us and of course those records are available to professional personnel. Our staff are obliged to act responsibly and observe the principles of confidentiality where a professional is directly involved with the patient. Those records are of course available but they are not made available to anybody outside of the doctor-patient relationship, so it hasn't surfaced as a problem for us. I think there were probably some personal attitudinal grievances that were contained in some of those criticisms.

MS. WESTBURY: Mr. Chairman, if I remember rightly the arrangement with the city on the matter of venereal disease reporting was that those four nurses came over from the city, didn't they, to work for the province on the matter of venereal disease control. Are they now provincial employees — these questions were asked last year — they haven't transferred over, have they?

MR. SHERMAN: No, Mr. Chairman, those four city nurses are still functioning in venereal disease contact-tracing field on behalf of the province or for them, but we have been in discussion with the city very recently on the the whole subject of venereal disease control and deployment of manpower. They have expressed, or some sectors of the city administration have expressed some interest in having those nurses returned to general public health nursing duties with the city and we are in discussion with them on the point right now. We've always taken the position that venereal disease is much a public health problem for the city as it is for the province and that's why the arrangement was originally struck and the city was in agreement with the arrangement during the past two years but we're re-examining it and reviewing it now because they have raised some concerns.

I'd just like to answer an earlier two questions from the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge, Mr. Chairman. When she asked me the question in the House the other day about funding for the municipal hospitals I hedged by answer because I wasn't precisely sure whether there were some slight

differences in arrangements on funding. But the fact of the matter is that the municipal hospitals are fully funded by the province. The only difference between them and other hospitals is that if there is a deficit, the city has the responsibility for picking it up, but not in my experience and I doubt whether in either of my predecessors' experiences that has ever happened.

The other question that the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge asked me, Mr. Chairman, was why should public health nurses be paid any less than hospital-based nurses? My answer to that is why, indeed? I agree and I know that we will face and I'm prepared to face that situation with respect to our public health nurses. The first thing we did was get the hospital-based nurses up to a proper level and there's no question that we will have to do the same with public health nurses.

MS. WESTBURY: Thank you for the answers to the Minister, Mr. Chairman. The statements were made that provincial public health nurses in many cases not reporting to medical officers of health and I take it that they were meaning to say even in those areas where there are medical officers of health that they are reporting to employees of the Department of Community and Social Services instead of to the Health Department and to social workers instead of to medical people. That was seen as a problem as far as morale was concerned and just general public health discipline was concerned. Mr. Chairman, what is the situation there now, please?

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, the public health nurses report either to senior Department of Health nurses or to the Medical Officer of Health who is in the region or to part-time medical officers of Health, practitioners whom we have engaged on a part-time basis to fill those responsibilities where they are vacant or to our Directorate, which is the component that's covered under this section of the Estimates, the public health nursing directorate, which functions under Health whereas the actual field delivery functions under Community Services. This has been one of the difficulties.

The Member for Fort Rouge really treads on the ground of morale, on the question of morale, and that's a legitimate point to raise. It was always going to be a difficult and challenging exercise to try to split the Department of Health and Community Services into two departments. We felt that it was necessary because of the constituencies that have to be served. We felt that the various constituencies, professional, occupational and consumer constituencies in that broad field of health and social services could not properly be served individually by one Minister because of the size now and complexity of the field, so we made the decision to divide the department.

But that kind of move always brings with it a certain amount of uncertainty, concern, and anxiety and indecision with respect to status and future in reporting lines and it has taken some time to shake that down. It is now thoroughly shaken down except for the regional field service, the regional personal services, the delivery in the field and the single unit delivery system. That is still under Community Services but I have no hesitation and no qualms about admitting to the committee that its transfer

over into Health is under very serious consideration because we argue in Health and I think it can be demonstrated by Mr. McLean and others that at least 70 percent of the services delivered through our regional field service delivery system are health services. So we are looking at a final conclusion to this exercise which would separate out such services as child and family services, income security, etc., and put them under Community Services and put all the field health delivery services under Health. We haven't dotted all the "i's" and crossed all the "t's" on that yet, but that's part of the reason why there has been some of this unrest.

MS. WESTBURY: Mr. Chairman, I understand, or it was stated that under law health inspectors are accountable to the MOHs that are actually now under the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, so here is another strange separation of responsibility. The medical officers were saying that they're expected to sign documents presented to them by the health inspectors without really having full knowledge of what the documents were about. Is that being clarified or is it about to be clarified?

MR. SHERMAN: No, from a legal point of view, their actions still come under The Public Health Act and under the Department of Health but in terms of their operational functions the inspectors come under the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and the Environment, and environmental public health inspections are carried out under that aegis. In fact, the fragmentation is worse than that, Mr. Chairman. Occupational Health and Safety is under the Department of Labour and so we have a situation here in Manitoba where two vital health functions are carried out under the operational direction and reporting line of two other ministries that are not the Ministry of Health. The separation of those functions occurred under the previous administration and I'm not arguing for or against them. I think there is a good case that could be made for that separation. There is obviously a good case that could be made for re-integration but I don't think there is a consensus either way yet, Mr. Chairman.

MS. WESTBURY: This is another matter. It has been suggested to me that milk inspections should be under the control of the health departments. A number of years ago, four health inspectors were transferred to the province to inspect milk — this is around 1971, I keep going back in history — but were transferred over to the province because in fact they were doing the milk inspections for the entire province. A lot of people are naturally concerned about the quality of milk and this has been suggested to me on more than one occasion by more than one individual in the provision of care field and I wonder if any consideration has been given to that transfer by the government.

MR. SHERMAN: Not yet to my knowledge, Mr. Chairman. Milk inspection is under Agriculture.

MS. WESTBURY: That's another one.

MR. SHERMAN: That's another example of the fragmentation. I'm sure the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge is quite aware that in many provinces,

so-called Ministers of Health do not have the range of responsibilities that the Minister of Health in the Province of Manitoba has even with the divided department. In many provinces, divided down even further and they have Ministers of Health institutions, for example, or institutional services they sometimes call them, so they look after the hospitals and the personal care homes and then somebody else looks after public health and somebody else looks after occupational health, so we're not as badly fragmented as some jurisdictions are but it's confusing and it's difficult and in some ways it appears to be irrational.

MS. WESTBURY: I just wanted to bring that to the Minister's attention that there are people in the community who feel that milk is a special case that should perhaps come under health inspectors. I'm not really saying it should, but I would like somebody more expert than I to look at that and make a reasonable decision. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I've finished my questions on this line.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, before we leave this I want to make a point quite clear. The Minister is the one that introduced the subject of the responsibility delivering health, that is the actual delivery of health and at no point and I understand that maybe the Member for Fort Rouge might have been under the impression that this is what we were advocating. We haven't even discussed that although I think some day somebody will have to look at it especially now that the city is larger and I think it has to be uniform, I don't think you should have part of the city delivered by somebody and the rest by somebody else, but that is another topic.

The point we were making is this — that the delivery was done by the city but the financing responsibility was accepted by the province. They would look at the average of what was done and that was it. Now if the City of Winnipeg and at times have done that, that they wanted a richer service, that was their responsibility. But when I talked about the province's responsibility I'm talking about the responsibility of financing the same service that is provided for the rest of the people of Manitoba. I might say before we leave this also that I agree with the statement of the Minister; I would hope that this will be done, that the field operations should come under Health, I think we said that a few years ago — we could see that there would be problems of setting up the system here — you're responsible for personal care homes also and for many of these services. I think that it would be much better if you had the people actually delivering the service and especially if the Minister is going to push on this question of prevention and so on, I think it well belongs with the Department of Health.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 3.(a)(1) — pass; 3.(a)(2) — pass; 3.(a)(3) — pass; 3.(b)(1) — pass; 3.(b)(2) — pass; 3.(c)(1) — the Member for Fort Rouge.

MS. WESTBURY: Mr. Chairman, has there been a cutback in the funding to the Victorian Order of Nurses? —(Interjection)— Is that Continuing Care? Where's Continuing Care, 3.(c); okay, thank you.

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MR. SHERMAN: No, Mr. Chairman, not to my knowledge. We purchase home care services from the Victorian Order of Nurses. It's done through the Department of Community Services. It's purchased on a fee-for-service basis. I can't answer the question as to whether or not Community Services is purchasing as much home care service from the VON this year as in past years but I'll ask the Minister of Community Services.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, when the Minister asks that question, could he find out also if they're getting block funding or if the actual wages of these nurses are taken into consideration for them delivering the service? I think the Minister knows what I'm driving at.

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, I may be able to answer it right now with the help of Mr. McLean. The first question having to do with the purchase of homemaking services from the VON actually reflects an increase for 1980 over 1979 and 1979 over 1978 in terms of the average monthly number of persons receiving selected services. Homemaking services, community and VON 1980, the average monthly number of persons receiving these selected services was 5,192; 1979, 4,396; 1978, 3,835. The figures for nursing services reflect the same kind of increase: 1980, 3,329; 1979, 3,075; 1978, 2,871, so these figures certainly would not appear to reflect a reduction in purchases from the VON.

On the second question, let me ask my officials, Mr. Chairman. The question was whether Community Services purchases services from the VON on a block fund basis or whether it's actual fee-for-service unit by unit. I'm advised it's a negotiated fee for service, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I imagine that by now the Minister knows what I was driving at — that's exactly the same thing I think, the same parallel that you are providing. What I would have to have at this time, not necessarily how many people they see but how many hours of service do we get from the Victorian Order of Nurses and then what the pay is. I'm sure that they, especially the nurses that they have, would be paid pretty well the same as the nurses and that would reflect in the grant or in the money that they would receive, so that is an example of somebody that is delivering the service. It is their responsibility but they're doing that, they're contracted more or less by the province and the province would have to look at the actual cost.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the honourable member's point. The responsibility though actually comes under Community Services and those Estimates haven't appeared before the House yet and perhaps it could be explored in more detail at that time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 3.(c)(1) — pass; 3.(c)(2) — pass — the Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, we're going to spend more of our time discussing this program when we come to Community Services. Does this contain the office of Continuing Care? Is this the appropriation?

MR. SHERMAN: This is the directorate, Mr. Chairman. This is the office of Continuing Care.

MR. PARASIUK: Okay, then I have some questions in looking at your Annual Report. You've got some explanation of the Home Care Program and it says that the office of Continuing Care is responsible for co-ordinating the delivery of the Home Care Program, assessment for placement into insured personal care homes and services to seniors' program. So that in a sense the management of that program of which the bulk of expenditures in the Community Services Department is done through this particular appropriation, I would guess, therefore I've got a few questions.

First, is home care contracted out in any way?

MR. SHERMAN: I'm not sure what the honourable member means.

MR. PARASIUK: Are the staff of the Home Care Program hired by the government, administered by the government, in terms of providing this service, or are we contracting out with private groups, say of a profit-making nature?

MR. SHERMAN: No, Mr. Chairman, the only contracting out, the only purchase is the purchase of service from the VON. The rest of the service is delivered by homemakers who are hired and paid by the department and there are, of course, many volunteers attached to the program too.

MR. PARASIUK: From a management point of view has the quality of service provided by these homemakers and the administration of them been satisfactory in terms of the objectives of the program or have the managers of the program found that these people have been deficient in some way, shape or form in terms of providing these services to the elderly?

MR. SHERMAN: No, their services have been found to be very satisfactory, Mr. Chairman.

MR. PARASIUK: Well, I'm delighted to hear that because, you see, your own papers tell us that in a typical month some 1,682 persons are employed part time to deliver homemaking services. We have 103 registered nurses, we have 76 licenced practical nurses and 136 home care attendants to provide health services and personal care.

It would strike me that that is quite an accomplishment to organize and administer that, and it's done with respect to a very vital necessary service, namely home care primarily to the elderly. The public is doing it and the public is doing it exceptionally well we are being told by the Minister.

So therefore, I hope that continues, that there is no attempt in this area, as there has been in other areas to contract out services to private groups, who might do this for a profit motive. I think that this is another example of the public doing it, providing a service for people in an extremely efficient manner on a nonprofit, at-cost basis. I only hope that this government would follow this example with respect to personal care homes, with respect to other activities, because this is a very complicated service to try and deliver and the experience has shown that

it is possible, in a fairly short period of time, not only to organize this type of laudable service but to deliver it well. I think the people of Manitoba can feel proud that the government, both the New Democratic Party Government in the past and the Conservative Government today, have been able to deliver a very much needed public program very efficiently.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Fort Rouge.

MS. WESTBURY: Mr. Chairman, I certainly have to agree that home care, the continuing care and public health care has to be provided equally to all. I cannot, however, get hung up on whether it's private or whether it's government. I personally don't see any reason why, subject to proper regulations and an avoidance of any exploitation, I and my party really does not feel strongly that people in the health professions and in the provision of health care shouldn't be just entitled to make a profit as any other profession or trade. I want to say this, because I think this is an important principle, and I don't think that because people are — a person in a job is working for a profit, they're working for a wage or salary and they're working for a profit, they're working for their old age and they're working to get a little more money than they spend, and I really cannot see that this business of provision of health care, subject as I have said, Mr. Chairman — Were you going to bang the gavel on me?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, I was going to bang the gavel on other parties talking, though. The Member for Fort Rouge.

MS. WESTBURY: . . . subject to, and I feel very strongly that the regulations have to be adequate and people who knew my work in the City Council know how strongly I felt on regulations, but I just didn't want this business to go past me of the matter and I will be speaking on the resolution in the House as well, but that's a separate item.

I do not have any objection to someone setting up a home care service for people who need that service and who are willing and able to pay for it, provided a similar service is available to those who need it but can not pay for it, and they can both offer the service and I just can not for the life of me see what is so terribly wrong with that.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I want to acknowledge the remarks of the Honourable Member for Transcona with respect to our Home Care Program in Manitoba, which indeed is a credit to the previous government and to the present government and which is a model for programs of its kind in North America. In fact, our leaders and directors in the Office of Continuing Care have been much sought after speakers at various points in North America to offer guidelines and suggestions to other jurisdictions as to how to set up a home care program in Canada and the United States. I certainly acknowledge the leadership shown by my predecessor, the Honourable Member for St. Boniface, and I think that we have continued in that leadership and we intend to expand and reinforce the program as responsibly as we can.

I also want to say to the Honourable Member for Transcona that I understand fully what he is alluding

to and I'm sure we will be debating the question very fully under the Personal Care Home appropriation and the Manitoba Health Services Commission.

On that point, I might say, that we have not, as he inquires, we have not contracted out any services of this kind to private corporations or operations and we are well served by those who are working in the capacities that I have described up to the present time and see no reason to change that.

I also want to acknowledge the remarks of the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge, and I appreciate what she has said and I look forward to her participation in the debate on the particular resolution on this subject on the Order Paper, because she expresses reasons and reason to which members of my party and I subscribe in this area.

I don't think this is the place to debate that issue, but the Member for Transcona brought it up and also made reference in passing that we were licensing and approving and encouraging private competition to enter certain fields of health care. That is not correct, Mr. Speaker. What we have dealt with in that respect is the continuation of operating licenses of operators, private operators who were in the personal care home field to begin with, who always were there, who were there under the previous government before that. We have not licensed any new operators in the field, not that we won't, but we haven't done so. Our moral obligation was to those who were in the field who co-operated with us in trying to meet public health and safety standards.

Certainly I agree with the sentiments expressed by the Member for Fort Rouge and I thank her for placing them on the record.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member from Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: A quick explanation as to why the Minister says that he has not considered contracting out. I have heard arguments for contracting out made in other areas. I don't have much sympathy with him, but I've heard those arguments made and I'd just like to know for certain why the Minister feels that he wouldn't want to get the so-called or the clean benefits of contracting out or having a profit incentive in the provision of home care?

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, we have had applications from private contractors and we have rejected them on the basis of cost. If the cost were competitive, we would certainly not have any ideological objection, but we have a responsibility as trustees of the public's money and the costs have not been acceptable.

MR. PARASIUK: What about intern services? There are intern services provided to people in their homes. I don't know if that's done under the Home Care Program. I do know of people who have chronic illness or are handicapped and have required home care homemakers and other assistance which have been part of the Public Home Care Program. Sorry, it's not intern services, it's the Home Orderly Services, and there is a home orderly service that is provided, which in my estimation is a continuation of the whole home care or the set of home care services. Is that provided under this umbrella? When I say umbrella, in that the office of continuing care is

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responsible for co-ordinating the delivery of the Home Care Program.

MR. SHERMAN: It's provided under this umbrella, Mr. Chairman, through the Regional Field Services component.

MR. PARASIUK: In that respect, I would like to point out to the Minister that the orderly service is indeed contracted out to private firms, and the amazing thing is that as a constituency representative, I have had virtually no complaints from the citizens, who use home care, about the public program, but I have had a continuing set of complaints about the Home Orderly Service, which is a private, profit-making corporation. It's been sawing back and forth all the time. I point that out to the Minister, I draw it to his attention because when we get to the other department, and that's one of the difficulties of discussing the department in two appropriations, when indeed your own annual report recognizes the close links between it. I don't want to get into that today in terms of the extent to which these two have to mesh, but I do feel justified in raising that particular point right now, because it strikes me that the overall co-ordination is critical and that if there are weak links in this overall program it should be brought to the attention of the Office of the Continuing Care and to the Minister responsible for the Office of Continuing Care.

I would like to, at some stage, over the course of the next month or two, just to take a look at that; just to take a look at what you have in the way of your Public Home Care Homemaker Program and take a look at what you have in the way of your Orderly Service. Take a look at whether, in fact, the Orderly Service is strained; whether in fact they wear any identifying uniforms or identification when they go to homes. Some of the homes that they go to, you have people there by themselves, the door has to be opened, these people aren't that able to determine who's at the door. There have been complaints; I think they are of a serious nature. The point that I'm making is that I have had virtually none with respect to the public program, but I have had them with respect to the orderly service. I don't know whether it's the management there or whether there is an attempt to reduce the quality in order to gain more of a profit.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I really think the honourable member is going to have to bring this up under the Community Services Estimates, because I have not had any such complaints and we do not contract out for home orderly service. We hire home orderlies in the same way as we hire homemakers in the Home Care Program, in precisely the same way, individuals who are hired and paid to perform that service for so many hours a day or so many days a week. It's not a contracting out operation so what he is referring to is something that I'm not familiar with. Further to that, I can say that we have had no complaints. I certainly would entertain any information or complaints he could give me. If we had any complaints about our home orderlies or our homemakers, we would take legal action, I can assure you of that. In the past there have been one or two complaints and the department did take legal action against the offending persons.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 3.(d)(1) — pass; 3.(d)(2) — pass — the Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, I see it, I've read the Annual Report here. There's a fairly significant increase; I think it's a wise increase. What I'm not sure is what your target population is.

MR. SHERMAN: On home care?

MR. PARASIUK: No, I'm sorry, we're into 3.(d)(1).

MR. SHERMAN: Oh, I'm sorry.

MR. PARASIUK: Or 3.(d)(2), you know, I'm trying to keep up with the Chairman and . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm going very slow.

MR. PARASIUK: I know you are.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 3.(d)(2).

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, the target population in rural Manitoba is the general population. In Winnipeg it's the low income population which needs help in home economics counselling, nutrition counselling, budgeting and debt counselling and various skills. It would be difficult to put a firm parameter on that but let me say that in the Nutrition Education Program which comes under this directorate, Home Economics, the program in fiscal 1979-80 reached 31,038 people with face-to-face educational programs and individual services. That of course is just one phase of the overall Home Economics operation, that's nutrition education, but the target population is as I've described it, young families, low income families, pre-marriage couples and families in financial and income difficulty.

MR. PARASIUK: What proportion of your staff and I'm just looking at this, in Home Economic Services you have 12 staff here, what proportion of your staff would be located in the city, and maybe you could give me the numbers, the city, what I'd call rural Manitoba and Northern Manitoba?

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, we have 7 personnel in the directorate and 12 in the field. In the field there is a home economist in the Thompson region, a home economist in Westman region, two home economists in Norman and eight home economists in Winnipeg region and there are additional services delivered under the Department of Agriculture. I think the honourable member knows that there is a home ec component under Agriculture which includes an additional 12 home economists. They similarly take their direction from this seven-member directorate, so there are 12 in this component in the field who take their direction from this directorate and 12 under Agriculture who take it from this directorate.

MR. PARASIUK: I would assume that most of the 12 in the Department of Agriculture would be in rural Manitoba.

MR. SHERMAN: That's correct.

MR. PARASIUK: I therefore conclude that we don't have a sufficiently balanced thrust here in Northern

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Manitoba. I would think that the need in Northern Manitoba is very high. I would think that in terms of the demands on staff it would be approximating the need in the City of Winnipeg and the inner core. You were talking about remote communities, I think that if you look at the description here, home management, budgeting, food buying, nutrition, all of those areas, it strikes me that there's a tremendous demand for this type of counselling, for this type of advice and it's required in the north. People spend a lot of time travelling in the north and I would hope that the Minister would consider taking a look at this to determine whether in fact there is sufficient coverage, because on the surface it would appear that there isn't.

MR. SHERMAN: Well, I will, Mr. Chairman. We have three in the north, one in Thompson and two in Norman. We also have additional service and assistance provided by a combination home economist and dietician from Thompson General Hospital who is working with us. We also have a number of volunteers who operate in this field; 37 women registered with the program this year as home ec volunteers and provided us with a total of 500 hours of manpower, but I accept the suggestion of the Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. DESJARDINS: I only have one point in this to mention and I'm quite disappointed. It seems to me and I've repeated that for a number of years now, that the home ec should work, at least some of them, should work very closely with Fitness and Amateur Sport, especially the fitness component. I hope the Minister is not telling me that this is done, because it isn't done. I think we all give lip service to that. Now more and more we realize on any position, any doctor will tell you that you can't divorce one from the other, you know, exercise and all this fitness is only good if there is a balanced diet and the proper food. It seems to me, I know that it's difficult, but I would ask the Minister if he could look at it again and make an effort to discuss it with the Minister responsible and at least have somebody talk to the people delivering the Fitness Program and be available if needed at certain times anyway.

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I will discuss that with the Minister of Fitness.

MR. DESJARDINS: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 3.(d)(2) — pass; 3.(e)(1) — pass — the Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUKE: This is one area where I think the government really is contradicting the Minister's statement. If in fact we're going to do anything in the whole area of preventative health care, I would think that the major emphasis, as I said in my response to the Minister's statement, has to be in forums where we can get at people and talk to them in a rational way about wellness, well-being is a better word, and I think we've fallen down somewhat in the schools in the past. We used to do a fair amount in the past before Medicare came in and I think we thought that a lot of that would be picked up in doctors' offices and it isn't.

So I think we have to concentrate a lot more of our health education in the schools. I think we have

to upgrade our program, I think we have to increase our focus, I think we shouldn't just do it in a course called Health Education, I think it should be a particular dimension of many courses. It should be a perspective that children pick up and we should concentrate in the schools, focus our attention in the schools. We certainly should do it in senior citizens' homes. We should be doing it in adult education classes. When I look at this appropriation where it says, "To provide health education material and consultative services to regional staff and external social and health services agencies," I see some increase in salaries, not in staff, so we really aren't expanding the program here and I see a decrease in Other Expenditures, which means that we are really reducing the material that's going out and should be going out, to schools, senior citizens' homes, senior citizens' drop-in centres, to schools for adult education courses in the evening. I just think that we have to pick up our focus here, we have to increase our effort and we have to do a much better job. This is one area where it strikes me that we are decreasing our prioritization in the department.

MR. SHERMAN: Well, there's no such decrease, Mr. Chairman. The particular appropriation is Salaries and Other Expenditures for the directorate. The items that the Honourable Member for Transcona is referring to really come under the next appropriation, Library, Films and Publication Services and there is an increase in expenditure rather than the decrease that he suspects.

We have attempted to embark on a couple of very major educational programs in the preventative health field and one of them is the Child and Maternal Health Program based at the Health Sciences Centre and the St. Boniface General Hospital, which is proving to have some spectacularly positive results to date in reducing our infant mortality rate and perinatal mortality rate. We are in the midst, at the moment, of a major Public Health Program in child and maternal health and we are continuing to support the task force on child and maternal health that is operating under the aegis of the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg. Those are major thrusts in a very important health education field.

Overall, what this directorate is concerned with is the developing of resource material for different health programs including the education health curriculum which is under revision by my colleague, the Minister of Education, and focuses on such areas as safety and accident prevention, family life education, health education teaching methods, developing positive health and lifestyle attitudes, teen-age pregnancy. Our other programs under this directorate support basic public health programs such as immunization and sanitation, in addition to the very important field that I mentioned, maternal and child health.

So that I think in fact, Mr. Chairman, we could be said to be intensifying our efforts in health education. I don't dispute that it's a crucial field in health. More needs to be done but more is being done and as we can shift the emphasis of expenditure away from curative medicine to preventative health programs, we will be able to expand on these kinds of thrusts.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I've never doubted the sincerity of the Minister when he talks

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about prevention and lifestyle and so on, so for that reason I would want — it's certainly not a criticism — but I would like to share an idea with him providing of course that he gives it serious thought and this is in health education. It's something that I've lived. I think I could see that we could save pain, we can save many hours lost and we can save thousands of dollars besides that. I'm talking about a program that I was fortunate enough to follow at St. Boniface Hospital in their Rehab with the physiotherapist. I've had a chronic sore back now for years, I've gone to doctors, I've gone to chiropractors; I'm convinced that chiropractors will not cure you but at least at times when the pain — and I saw George smile.

MR. SHERMAN: You'll get the Deputy mad at you if you say anything against chiropractors.

MR. DESJARDINS: But I think they really relieve you when the pain is really bad. I have been going on an average of twice a week for months to a chiropractor. I finally decided to go and see a doctor and I figured, well, if I need an operation, to hell with that, I can't stand this any more. I was on a holiday and I was on my back for two weeks on the floor and I followed this program and it's fairly simple. It's explaining things that the majority of people don't really understand about the back and it explained the situation, the reason why, and the only thing, there is no other way, it is to prevent that, you don't wait till you have a sore back, it's the exercise to tighten up certain muscles in your stomach and so on. I could say that I'm quite pleased to say that I followed that around the Christmas season and finished after the New Year. Just before that, I had been going to the chiropractor, as I say, two or three times a week. I followed this; I hate like hell doing this exercise but I do it, it takes about 15 minutes. I do it every day and sometimes twice a day and I can say that there's been a marked improvement.

Now I think it is a known fact that there are more hours lost at work from a sore back than anything else and I would think if we really mean what we say and this is a good example and it would be fairly cheap; I think the Minister should discuss with the physiotherapists, if they can have the service of some of them, I think they should lecture and explain the situation in class. There is no reason why I should have had to wait until I'm 56, 57, before I found out about this thing. I think it could prevent an awful lot and it would be quite cheap and I wonder if the Minister could discuss that with the people in the program and maybe have somebody explain that program to him and I think he would be quite enthused. I was waiting for this chance to tell the Minister and I think this would be very much worthwhile and it would save. It would not only save a lot of people the pain but it would save millions of dollars over the long run. Mind you, I covered that under Library and Films. Also, they might need some support in that also.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I would be happy to entertain that suggestion. I'd like to discuss it further with the Honourable Member for St. Boniface and get full briefing on his proposal.

MR. DESJARDINS: I would be very pleased to do it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 3.(e)(1) — the Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: I'm just wondering, how is that health education material coming along? Has this department been involved at all in the preparation of that?

MR. SHERMAN: We are involved in it quite fundamentally, Mr. Chairman, but we purchase a considerable amount of it from other sources, from research groups, specialists in various fields. If it's Safety and Accident Prevention, we turn to safety councils and accident prevention councils for their manuals and their guidance.

MR. PARASIUK: Has the Minister or the Department of Education been consulting with the general population on this? I know that there's some type of a curriculum advisory committee to the Minister of Education, Education Advisory Committee. The reason why I raise this is that I was in California earlier this year looking at health facilities in the health program there and the state government of California had developed I think a very aggressive approach with respect to health education in the schools. They found that over the course of the last two years, the groups that sort of go under the label of the moral majority, especially in Southern California, had attacked the whole notion of health education and had wanted all health education withdrawn from teaching in the schools. They said that is a function that is best performed by the family. I think they were concerned and I think they weren't right in this concern but they were concerned that somehow this is the thin edge of the wedge with respect to very detailed sex education with respect to family planning, and yet I looked at the curriculum outline and it didn't really get into this at all but there seemed to be a great deal of concern about that and I'm wondering if the Minister has come across any feedback like that here in Manitoba. I haven't to date, but I'm wondering whether he, as the Minister has, or whether he has knowledge of whether his colleague, the Minister of Education, has come across that type of criticism.

MR. SHERMAN: I have not, Mr. Chairman, we work very closely with the Department of Education in this sphere, not only on a one-to-one basis as between the respective offices of the ministries and the deputy ministries but through the Community Services Committee of Cabinet. This whole health education programming area includes a heavy emphasis on in-service health teaching seminars for teachers. In the fall of 1979, we had 11 such in-service sessions which reached 115 teachers and in the fall of 1980, there were 41 such in-service sessions which reached a total of 828 teachers and that process is continuing to expand. In the area, for example, of nutrition education, we have conducted many nutrition education workshops with teachers in their classrooms and last year, 2,557 teachers attended such workshops. There's also been co-operation between the two departments in the development of a nutrition segment of the health curriculum. So far, so good, I would say, Mr. Chairman, but there is always difficulty in fitting additional programs into the school curriculum and I

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know that the Member for Transcona is aware of that. The Department of Education and the teaching profession considers its primary responsibilities to lie in the area of teaching our children the basic skills in basic educational curriculum, so there is always some difficulty in fitting these additional necessary subject areas into the curriculum but we've had good co-operation so far.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 3.(e)(1) — pass; 3.(e)(2) — pass; 3.(f)(1) — pass; 3.(f)(2) — pass; 3.(g)(1) — pass — the Member for Fort Rouge.

MS. WESTBURY: Mr. Chairman, is this where the Department of Rehabilitation Services would come?

MR. SHERMAN: I beg your pardon, Mr. Chairman. I'm sorry, I missed the question.

MS. WESTBURY: Rehabilitation or Vocational Rehabilitation?

MR. SHERMAN: No, this has to do with the medical supplies and home care equipment that are supplied to Manitobans who need specific pieces of equipment like wheel chairs and ostomy equipment and respiratory support systems and that type of thing.

MS. WESTBURY: All right, well, I just have one small question and I asked a similar question a few weeks ago in the House. I was surprised to find that an elderly gentleman who lives at Beacon Hill Lodge had to buy his own wheel chair. I did not know that people who were living in residences like that would have to provide their own wheel chairs.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, as I understand it, wheel chairs are not supplied by nursing homes, personal care homes, to their patients just automatically. If a person's physician, whether that person is in or out of a personal care home, requests a wheel chair, then there are different considerations that are brought to bear. Certainly anybody who is in a wheel chair and goes into a personal care home can take that piece of equipment with them but if they're in personal care homes we don't buy wheel chairs for them. There always are of course in a personal care home some wheel chairs available for transporting some residents around but there is not an automatic universal supply of wheel chairs provided to personal care home residents. If the gentleman's physician in question requested of our Medical Supplies and Home Care Equipment directorate that a wheel chair be made available for this person on a permanent basis, I would think would certainly be accepted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 3.(g)(1) — pass; 3.(g)(2) — pass; 3.(h)(1) — pass; 3.(h)(2) — pass.
Committee rise.

SUPPLY — CONSUMER AND CORPORATE AFFAIRS AND ENVIRONMENT

MR. CHAIRMAN, Abe Kovnats (Radisson): This committee will come to order. I would direct the honourable members' attention to Page 32 of the

Main Estimates, Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Environment. Resolution No. 39, Clause 4, Environmental Management, Item (b) Environmental Management Services, (1) Salaries — pass.

The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. SAUL CHERNIACK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wonder if I could ask the Honourable the Minister if I'm correct in assuming that he has had an opportunity to review the transcript of the trial of Simplot Chemical Limited, which took place in Brandon just prior to February 10th?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

HON. GARY FILMON (River Heights): No, Mr. Chairman, I have not.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, does that then mean that the Minister is not familiar with the facts that came out on the trial?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, I'm familiar with the fact that charges were laid as a result of initiatives by my department and I'm familiar with the judgment that was rendered in terms of the fines that were levied, but that's the extent of my familiarity. I spoke about that incidentally Tuesday evening in the House as you'll recall.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, what interests me, and I'd like the Minister to comment on it, is the reported statement by the company's representatives that they were unable to learn why the effluent went into the river. That's sort of surprising to me that they've been charged and pleaded guilty to the discharge of nitrate-phosphates-laden effluent into the river, but they claim that they don't know why it went into the river because apparently they have another location where they expect it to flow.

The next statement is that the references made that a spokesman for the provincial Environment Control Branch told a Sun reporter, Brandon Sun reporter, that the amounts in the dumping were not harmful, but he did not know what level was unsafe for humans. I wonder if the Minister can ascertain from his staff just what is the situation in regard to that. Here is a firm where the Crown had suggested fines of \$2,500 to \$3,000 on each of six counts, where the magistrate fined them \$1,000 on each count, which means that he disagreed with the Crown Prosecutor, and the Minister of course is not familiar with what took place there, what was said, but it would appear that the magistrate did not think it as serious as the Crown Prosecutor thought. But then we have this statement that they did not know how it got into the river, that is Simplot didn't, and then the quotation about the pollution standards themselves and the quotation which may or may not be correct of course, that the Provincial Environment Control Branch spokesman said he didn't know what levels were unsafe for humans.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, firstly I'm not aware of which official of my department might have made that statement. Certainly the Clean Environment Commission order limits the pH level of the effluent that goes into the river and there is always a

discharge of effluent to the river from the Simplot Plant and they're aware that there is an ongoing discharge. I don't understand their reference to the fact that they don't know how the discharge got to the river because it's a meandering stream that reaches the river, and certainly it's an ongoing thing and they should be aware of it, so I can't comment on their lack of information.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, this is a matter that appeared in court. It was statements made publicly and surely the department would have to follow up on what was said at the hearing so as to make sure that there is no discharge. If the company said they don't know why it flowed into the river, then what assurance do we have that it will not flow into the river again, and again, and again? It seems to me it's not enough just to say it's a meandering flow that does it, and the Minister doesn't know why the company doesn't know why it gets in there. The fact is that apparently, I'm guessing that the Magistrate was more inclined to believe the firm than the Crown Prosecutor on what happened. But regardless of that, surely it's important that the department responsible for the environment is making sure that Simplot, for example, knows what's going on so that the next time there may be a discharge the prosecution will be able to say with certainty that the company knew and that it continued to discharge.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, perhaps the member didn't understand. They are licensed to discharge to the river. The point is though that they are only allowed to have a certain pH level in their discharge effluent, and what they are saying, obviously, is that they don't know how it got that high, but I can assure the member that there were a number of meetings with representatives of our department beforehand indicating that our monitoring was showing higher pH levels than they were permitted to discharge under the Clean Environment Commission order. Having found that they weren't correcting the situation, our Department had no choice but to lay the charges, and they were done and the firm was prosecuted for that.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, it's clear that they are allowed, they are licensed; as a matter of fact the information in the newspaper clipping I have said that they are permitted to dump no more than 450 pounds of nitrogen, 400 pounds of ammonia and nitrogen, 25 pounds of phosphates, and 2 pounds of . . . chromium each day, into the ditch which leads to the river.

Obviously, they did more than that, and the Minister said that they were warned several times before the charge was laid that it was happening. So obviously they are talking about the amount, the quantity, the proportion that went in, and they say they don't know. Well, then if they're lying about that, they surely have to be challenged with that statement.

Now I see by this clipping I read, and I'll quote that line. "The amounts involved have been described by Provincial Environment Control Branch Director, Larry Strand, as not harmful for humans or aquatic life." I wouldn't know from reading that story whether he means the amounts allowed or whether

the amounts actually discharged, which exceeded that amount, were or were not harmful.

This leads me to ask the Minister, whether — well, I assume we're dealing with regulations. I understand the department establishes certain guidelines before it establishes regulations. I'm wondering when the guidelines were established for this amount of discharge and when they were changed from guidelines into regulations; the difference being, of course, that guidelines and objectives are not something on which you can make a charge, whereas on the regulation, one can. I'd like clarification from the Minister on that.

MR. FILMON: The prosecution was based on the fact that they were discharging effluent at a higher pH level than was allowed for under the Clean Environment Commission Order. There was no regulations, no guidelines, it's a Clean Environment Commission Order which states the level of pH that they are permitted to have in the effluent that's being discharged ultimately to the river, and it's not on the basis of any amounts of discharge. The prosecution was based solely on the fact that they were exceeding the pH level that they were allowed under the Clean Environment Commission Order.

The matter of whether or not what they said was the truth or a lie is not something that we went after or challenged, simply because the evidence was clear. They were convicted on the basis of it and our department stands ready to continue to monitor and to continue to press charges if the situation is not corrected in the future. We're lead to believe that it has been corrected but we'll still continue to monitor the effluent.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, the sample was apparently taken from the river in late September. How frequently after September has the department been taking samples and inspecting them?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that we don't sample the river, but we sample the discharge from the plant, that's the basis on which we make the judgment of acceptability. We sample on a frequency basis of once per month.

MR. CHERNIACK: Can we assume then that there has been no sample obtained which is in excess of the amount set out in the order since September?

MR. FILMON: We're not aware of any violation since the incidence which resulted in the charges, but we continue to monitor and if we find any incidence we would go through the same procedure again.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, the procedure as I understood it, was that they would receive several warnings before the charge was laid. I would think that after September they're not entitled to any warnings. Therefore the procedure, it seems to me, should be different; if there's continuation, if they're caught again then there should be a charge laid and no warnings. Now does the Minister mean that there may have been warnings given since September and they're still under a warning?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, if the situation has been rectified, which our sampling indicates it has,

and at some point in the future it shows up again, it could be as a result of some malfunction, not a deliberate attempt to pollute, and we would likely give a warning before proceeding with a charge.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, then can we assume that the company is no longer unaware as to why the effluent was discharged in excessive quantities.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, we don't believe they were ever unaware, but certainly we can confirm that they're not now unaware.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, I won't belabour the point. It just seems odd to me that they are making statements which are reported in the newspapers that they are unaware. The Minister doesn't believe them. I think that should be clarified in some way so that the people, who read the newspapers and form opinions based on what is reported, should be made aware of what the department and the government thinks is the truth. That's a comment.

I wonder if the Minister could comment on the quote the effect that the amounts involved have been described by provincial Environment Control Branch Director, Larry Strachan, as not harmful for humans or aquatic life.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, I don't have any comments to make on that.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, the Minister's Salary will not be up today. I wonder if by then he will be able to make a comment along these lines. I think it's rather important. Again, it's quoted in the newspaper, there is editorial comment on it and for the Minister not to comment, there are two reasons, one is that he's not aware of the answer and therefore he's well advised not to comment. But unfortunately the other interpretation could be that he doesn't choose to and I'd rather like to think that it's the first rather than the latter.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, because it is the view of one of the technical people in our departments I would have to have some further information in order to make comment on it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. WILLIAM JENKINS: Mr. Chairman, I'm not just sure this is the right place to discuss it or not and the Minister can let me know, but recently it has come to public attention. I think it's a problem that's been in existence in around the Stonewall area where two industries were allowed to locate near human habitation and this has caused a disturbance to the people that are living in the area and the person that was involved made complaints to the — I'm not sure if it was the RM, I think it would be an RM and I just want to know, does the Environmental Management Services have any input into the granting of building permits for other industries near human habitation where they would draw this to the attention of the permit-granting authority? Since I believe there was gasoline storage and fertilizer, I

believe was the other, and the person involved now is complaining that his water supply which is I imagine from wells has been adversely affected, does this part of the Environmental Management have anything to do with that or is it under the Clean Environment Commission?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, we don't have any control over that because it involves municipal zoning authority but if asked or made aware of it we would certainly do an environmental impact study on the potential location. In this case, we weren't aware of it or asked about it but having become aware of it and because of the publicity generated it has been referred by my department to the Clean Environment Commission and a hearing will be scheduled later this spring on it.

MR. JENKINS: Mr. Chairman, that brings me to my next question. Is the Minister and the Commission, and I guess it would have to work in conjunction with the Department of Municipal Affairs, looking at legislation since most small municipalities and small towns would not have an environmental commission or body set up as such in order to monitor and to make sure that the granting of building permits are not given to people to locate in an area, and that works both ways; that works bringing human habitation, allowing permits, to be built near where there is already in existence, say, an industrial complex and water supplies in the area would be affected. Does the department and the Minister feel that they have any responsibility in this area? Because what seems to come to the fore is what happens is we're trying to correct a situation that should never have been allowed to come about in the first place. The old adage is that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. In the case of the one that we're talking about in around the Stonewall area, where an ounce of prevention would have made an awful lot more sense, and now we're probably going to have to have a pound of cure to enable to cure it.

I'm not blaming the industries that located there because they were given permission to locate there, but they were given that permission over the opposition of the person that was already in the area. Therefore I would say that if the municipalities, small towns and cities in the Province of Manitoba don't have those facilities or to ascertain that there may be a potential damaging of the environment and the living standards of the people or the industry that is already located there — because it works both ways, the coin has two side.

I think a classic case was one about a pig farm, which had been in the area for some time and then human habitation was allowed to be set up in the area and people started complaining about the smell. The problem was not the fault of the piggery, it was the fault of the municipal authority that granted the permission for other people to come into that area. Surely if we're going to have any protection of the environment, I think that we've got to have some rules and some regulations. The coin has to have some balance on either side.

I just wonder if the department and the officials are looking at this.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, may I just respond to that briefly. The particular installation at Stonewall,

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as I understand it, is close to 20 years old and it was installed at a time when our department was not made aware of it and the municipal zoning standards were not well defined and varied a great deal from place to place. Our department is called in on all new subdivisions today by the Municipal Affairs Department. As well as that, there are new municipal land use guidelines that are in effect. Such things that weren't even dealt with before, such as the location of subdivisions adjacent to old landfill sites, where there's the potential of seepage of methane gas, and all those things are being taken into account. The guidelines are very well defined in these particular instances.

As well, we're working at the installations that we are aware of that would not fall within the new guidelines. We're trying to encourage the local municipal jurisdictions to move them away from the built-up area, the inhabited area. In so doing, we're discussing this with various towns and municipalities to remove anhydrous ammonia storage tanks, to remove gas, propane, oil, fertilizer storage facilities away from the built-up areas, but this will require substantial expenditures on somebody's part, so there's negotiations and discussions going on to try and decide how they can best be moved out as far as existing installations go, but certainly in all new installations we are being consulted.

We are recommending the guidelines that are being held to by the municipal land use authorities as a result of our involvement. The same thing holds true with piggeries or whatever else might violate these things. Now we are being consulted in the beginning, rather than after the zoning has been arrived at.

MR. JENKINS: Mr. Chairman, that's all very good, but the Minister says that they're in an advisory capacity. Supposing you get some local council that is adamant when it is given the criteria and says, "Now this is potentially a bad situation", and they still go ahead. What are you prepared to do now? That is the thing. If we're going to prevent these things, then I say the best prevention is to stop them before they start. If you just have advisory capacities at the present time; as the Minister, do you have the discretionary power to stop a potentially hazardous situation from being set up? That is what I want to know. If you haven't, are you anticipating bringing in legislation to deal with that sort of thing?

MR. FILMON: We don't have the legislative authority. Municipal Affairs does and they do not approve the plans of subdivision based on our recommendations.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I'm just a little concerned with what the procedure is, now that the Minister has mentioned it, because it's my impression that the Department of Environmental Control is strictly concerned with pollutants to the environment, polluting of the land, air or water, that it might consider it's terrible environmentally, in the quotation mark sense, to have an abattoir next to an R-1 area. I and everybody in the House would agree.

But the member's question as to whether a municipality can zone an abattoir next to an R-1 area

is solely at the discretion of the municipality. Then the abattoir has to meet acceptable environmental standards for an abattoir. Therefore the member's question, as I understand it and as I understand it used to be, is that the environment in the broad sense, namely beauty and other things, is not something over which the Department of Environmental Management has any authoritative control and that the other feature is strictly a matter of municipal planning and zoning.

The reason I'm saying this, Mr. Chairman, is that I think it should be so, because otherwise we're going to have bureaucrats assigned to the Department of Environmental Management, who are arguing with the bureaucrats assigned to the Department of Municipal Planning, and there will be more pencils being pushed and more arguments made and the citizen will not know where he stands.

There is a perfect example of it, that the Minister may be aware of, where a municipality had a piece of land zoned for residential construction and there were flood plains listed on it, but somebody from Water Resources said that this land may flood some time. The person is refused a development even though he complies with all regulations, but somebody else comes in and says, "We don't like this particular situation".

Now with regard to the Stonewall situation, the Minister has the means of dealing with this, if his predecessor the Member of Finance hasn't sabotaged the whole procedure, which he may have. We enacted a provision which entitled the Department of Environmental Management to conduct an abatement program where there were conflicting uses, and this is where the pig ranch came in, and the Member for Logan will possibly recall it, that you did have a pig ranch that was operating in a completely environmentally sound manner.

In other words, there was nothing about their pollutants which our department could find anything wrong with for a pig ranch, but it was situated in a residential area. That was done by the municipality. Both people were enjoying their lawful rights. Some were not enjoying it as much, excuse me. The people who lived in the residential area were entitled to build residentially, but they lived next to an area which was zoned for a pig farm, which was operating as best a pig farm could operate, but at best a pig farm does not smell like a rose garden.

Mr. Chairman, the same thing was true of a foundry in the north end of Winnipeg, an old foundry which caused the citizens years and years of problems and yet, it was operating as a foundry, as it was entitled to do. Mr. Chairman, we enacted a piece of legislation which was called The Power of Abatement, which permitted a municipality if they got a finding of the Clean Environment Commission that there were lawful, law abiding but conflicting uses situated in the same area, then the municipality could move one or other of the uses and there would be an agreement with the province, and the province would agree to pay 50 percent of the costs of the move on a discretionary basis. In other words, it wasn't a mandatory program, but the province could do it, and we did abate certain industries on that basis. It seems to me that even if in the Stonewall area, it's been there for 20 years, that an abatement program could be the proper program.

The other question that was raised by the Member for Logan, in my respectful submission, is not one for building up a bureaucracy in the Department of Environmental Protection to start saying how land should be zoned. You will have enough problems, as a matter of fact you'll have more than enough problems, saying what standards there should be for lawfully existing uses and for what the levels of permitted use in terms of discharging effluence or discharging contaminants. If the department would gear up to finding out what are the permissible discharges of contaminants in every area and concentrate on that I would suggest that they should not have so much to say, and shouldn't be saying much about municipal planning but that is a role of the municipal planner. Surely what the Member for Logan says is correct. You shouldn't have conflicting uses but, Mr. Chairman, I must say that this is rather new to the world, that when I lived on 716 Selkirk Avenue we had a horse and a stable in the house. If we had kept that horse alive today it would have been a permissible use, that's right, because they did not discharge — when they rezoned they didn't undo existing uses, therefore you can go through parts of the city and find anomalous uses which have been carried over for years and years. The only way of dealing fairly with them is not to penalize the person who is doing what he has a lawful right to do but to conduct an abatement program so that society pays for the change, not the individual who happens to be involved.

MR. FILMON: The member is quite right about the role of the Environmental Management Division with respect to municipal planning. He is also right about the section in the Act respecting an abatement project, but it requires a resolution of the municipal authority requesting that an abatement project be requested and so far Stonewall has declined to give that resolution. Therefore we are unable to act without a request from them.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I indicated, Mr. Chairman, that it's possible that the previous Minister of the Environment, the present Minister of Finance, has sabotaged the program and indeed he has, Mr. Chairman, because that piece of legislation was enacted when we were of the opinion that municipalities wanted to correct the situation. There was a situation that arose two years ago in one of the constituencies of my honourable friends in southwest Manitoba, where everybody agreed that it wasn't fair what was going on, but the municipality, because they didn't want to pay their share refused to ask for a program. May I say, Mr. Chairman, that the Minister then said that he could not act because the law did not permit him to act and I told him that he could change the law, and say that where it is necessary that the municipality in the province do it — that it be at either the request of the Provincial Government or of the municipality because otherwise the municipality is going to drag its legs on correcting a problem which is its responsibility. If the bureaucracy is showing you the Act, you don't have to look at it, you are right about what it says. It says that the municipality has to make the application. But a bill was introduced in the House, from this side of the House, and the member said, remember last week the member said anybody in the Legislature

could do it and he said you could do it. I took him at his rights and said yes, I'll do it, will you vote for it.

The previous Minister said that he couldn't do it, the Act didn't permit him to do it and so in order to be helpful to the Minister, which is always my wont to do, I introduced a bill into the Legislature which said that where the municipality — (Interjection)— Mr. Chairman, I'm trying to be helpful. The Minister has indicated that the law will not permit the abatement program because Stonewall won't ask for it; now we're back again to where the strike situation which I'll deal with on the Minister's Salary. Do you agree that should be the law? Because if you don't I'll tell you a secret, you can change the law — you are the government. You don't want to change the law? Let us be the government, we'll change it. You want help, we'll give you help.

We introduced a bill into the House from that side of the House which made it possible for the province to insist that such a program take place if the municipality didn't want to do it, in which case the municipality and the province would pay the cost of it. It really should be a municipal cost; they're the ones that created the zoning problem but because again we want to be helpful we were prepared to introduce it in such a way that we would require that municipality and the province to conduct a sensible abatement program and alleviate the problem.

Mr. Chairman, when the bill was passed and I was the Minister who moved the bill and I suppose the member will blame me for saying that why didn't you put this in then, because at that time it never occurred to us that the municipality didn't want to alleviate the problem. The only requests we had up until that time which were requests which involved the municipality wishing to co-operate. But does the Minister say that if the municipality does not wish to co-operate and you have a pig farm next to a residence and the people are unhappy and the people cannot get their municipality to move and the municipality has created that situation by their bad zoning that he refuses to do anything about it, because if he's worried about the existing law he can change the law. If he hasn't got the time, tell me and if he undertakes to vote for the change I will bring the same bill forward that was voted against by the Conservatives two years ago.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't want the Member for Inkster or the Minister to get the idea that I was advocating an added bureaucracy. What I have been trying to get through to the Minister is prevention; prevention is a helluva lot better than trying to cure something. (Interjection)— I wish I could prevent the noise from over there — that might help me a bit. (Interjection)— That's pollution. Other than putting a rubber stopper over his mouth I don't know how I can.

But to get back to the situation, that's what I asked the Minister — that if there was something that needed to be done legislatively would he be prepared to do so? The Member for Inkster has brought out a situation that is one that is true, that is one of the things that is causing the problem. If your legislation isn't adequate — I know you're a new

Minister and I would hope that you would be better than the two previous Ministers. But this is a problem that is here and it's real and it's real to the people that are involved. Surely we should be trying — no, we're not trying to score Brownie points off you or anything — we're trying to help the people who seem to be have a problem. If the problem is the municipality won't make the application for the abatement then I think you should change the legislation and you'll score your Brownie points on that. But that's not what we're here for; we're here, Mr. Chairman, to see if we can help the people who have problems, after all that's what we're elected for. But to get back to what the Member for Inkster was saying, he didn't want to see a whole bunch of bureaucrats pushing pencils around. That isn't what I want either. What I want to see is that we are able to prevent these potential things from happening in the future and that the Legislature in the year 2000 won't be sitting around and saying, well, in such and such a little town, 20 years ago, or 19 years ago, in the year 1981, something like this happened, and lo and behold, we still haven't got any change in the legislation, if by some fluke the Conservatives are still in power. But, you know, we should be trying to prevent these things from happening, not trying to cure them afterward. We talk about preventative medicine; we talk about accident prevention. Well these things are preventable, Mr. Chairman.

We have now had the benefit of seeing how the environment is being polluted, and I don't say that it's being polluted deliberately. Surely we can learn by the experiences that we've been having in the past while. That's all we're asking of the Minister is to seriously look at that problem. If you have a problem in the legislative sense introduce a bill and that will go a long way towards alleviating that problem, but by the same token let's take a good look, make sure that we're not creating potential Stonewalls and piggery situations in the future. That's all I'm asking, Mr. Chairman. I don't think that's asking too much of the Minister or the Department or his Commission.

So, I would hope that the Minister would seriously consider it and at least favour us with a reply one way or the other. He can even tell us to go soak our head or something. If that's the way he wants it, well then that's the way it'll be. We can introduce bills on this side of the House till we're blue in the face, but until we get enough members to pass that legislation, that's when it will be passed. You have the horses right now. If you want to make the change, the ball is in your court, you make the change.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, not only is it reasonable, but it's already in place, except that the authority rests with the Department of Municipal Affairs not with the Environment people, but they act on the advice of our Environment people when making those final decisions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1) — pass; The Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. JENKINS: Well then, Mr. Chairman, I would urge the Minister, if the legislation is such that it is not he that has to introduce the Bill, that he prevail

upon his fellow Minister for the change of the legislation that the Member for Inkster was speaking about it. If it is The Clean Environment Act, then it is the Minister that has to make the change.

The Minister hasn't answered the question. Is he prepared to introduce changes to The Clean Environment Act, so that an abatement program that makes some sense will be in place. That I don't think is the responsibility of the Department of Municipal Affairs. I think that is the responsibility of the Department of Consumer, Corporate and Environment and that is the Minister's Department, not the Minister of Municipal Affairs. We'll have our go at him in turn. But what I'm asking for now: Is the Minister prepared to consider the idea? He doesn't even have to tell me today that he wants to do it, if he just will tell me that he's prepared to consider it. That would be at least a step. I will get him on the right track.

MR. FILMON: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1) — pass — the Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. JENKINS: I want to thank the Minister that I at least got him to consider it, and perhaps I should quite while I'm ahead of the game. Maybe I should quit while I'm ahead of the game, Mr. Chairman.

I want to ask the Minister if The Clean Environment Commission Report has been tabled yet in the House, and if not, when can we expect it?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, no it has not and I'm advised that it will be about three weeks before it's available.

MR. JENKINS: Well, Mr. Chairman, that is unfortunate because it does make it difficult for us to examine what The Clean Environment Commission has been doing. (Interjection)— No, I just asked that because I know we probably will be coming to that.

What I want to ask the Minister now is: The Environmental Management Services which we are under now, does it set the standards for the allowable installation — or this may come under Health, I'm not sure, but it may be that it's one of those things that overlaps from one department to another — in rural areas, cottage areas, of septic fields, septic tanks? There are new types of fields that are advertised that are on the market today, which make extensive claims that no fields are required, an aerating system which seems to be able to put a lower amount of pollutants into the environment then what some municipal sewage services do. Now, I don't know how true these claims are. I'm not sure just which heading this would be under. Would it be under the present one? Is there any research done into the claims, and again it comes into the other part of the department that the Minister is responsible for, which is Consumer Services, because these are being sold to people for potential installation in areas. I know that they have to have clearance from the Health Department, but what I really want to know from the Minister is this: Is there any research done on it provincially or is there any research done on it at a Federal level to make sure that what is being advertised and what we

are approving as the Environmental Management Services, that these things actually live up to the billing that is being put forward?

MR. FILMON: There is a great deal of research being done on these throughout the North American Continent, Mr. Chairman. These are covered under regulations under the Clean Environment Act and we have as good standards as any that are available in North America on this.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Do we have access to studies that have been done by the American Government, the Canadian Government? I quite realize that we don't have the resources, perhaps, to do that, but if I was, say personally, wishing to install one of these items, where would I go as a citizen? I'm not talking as a legislator to find out what would be the best type of system to put in place to make sure that I was not creating a pollutant in the environment.

MR. FILMON: If the honourable member were installing a septic unit, it would have to be registered with this department and would be inspected by a public health inspector.

MR. JENKINS: Well, I realize that, Mr. Chairman, but if I wanted to find out which was the best system to put in; now there are the straight septic tank fields, I know that there are holding tanks, there are ones that they call jet aeration systems. Now if I wanted to find out as a potential installer of one of these things where would be my best — and I don't want to go to the manufacturer because after all he's going to tell me his product A is far better than product B or product C, but that's only natural because he's trying to sell his type of product. What I want to find out, if I wanted to install one of these, where would I be able to find out which was the least potential as an environment hazard or an environment pollutant?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, our department establishes standards on installations of this nature and will provide advice as to the various types available and to their advantages and disadvantages and which might provide the best pollution control, but they wouldn't get into the level of recommending a particular unit or a brand because of the problems that leads to.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, I don't want the Minister to misunderstand me. I didn't want him to say that product A was better than product B. I was talking about different types and if the Commission or the Environmental Services could provide that sort of information I would be very appreciative of it.

MR. FILMON: We would do that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1) — pass — the Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, just earlier this evening we were talking about — I inadvertently used the word "regulation" dealing with a certain charge and the Minister corrected me by saying it

was an order that we were talking about earlier. I'd like the Minister to inform us what assessment process he now has in his department as to the environmental assessment; what process is there for the assessments?

MR. FILMON: The process is that we assign a professionally qualified environmental officer to evaluate proposals and that officer can call on any expert advice in arriving at his recommendation to the Commission. The Commission considers that advice and they can either accept the advice of the consultants on behalf of the proponent or they can call further independent expert advisers prior to making their orders.

MR. CHERNIACK: Could the Minister clarify the extent to which this process includes consultation with industry and pre-clearance which would be prior to any, as I understand, the problems raised with the Clean Environment Commission?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, there is no statutory requirement for an industry to apply for pre-clearance prior to an installation, but of course, if their installation results in environmental damage, the consequences of that can be very very costly for them to have to abide by a Clean Environment order after the fact after they've completed an installation. So in general terms, most industries if not all, take the step of coming to the Environmental Management Division, finding out what their advice and recommendations are and then endeavouring to comply with it prior to any installation and even going before the Clean Environment Commission for an order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. BRIAN CORRIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I wanted to spend a moment dealing with the question of environmental impact statements. I think this has been discussed in different contexts at different times in this Assembly. I can think notably at least of two debates that took place with respect to a section of The City of Winnipeg Act that was introduced I think in 1973 and removed in 1976 or 1977 by the former government.

In broader terms, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the Minister whether there are any comparable provisions to that, that exists in The Environmental Protection Act of the Federal Government of the United States. There is, as I understand it, a federal law in the United States of America that requires that every major undertaking which may have environmentally hazardous consequences be assessed for potential environmental impacts. As I understand it in the brief reading I've done on the subject, there are numerous regulations and guidelines that have been prepared and adopted in order to affect the process of preparation of such reports. I'm wondering whether there is any comparable legislation in Manitoba and if so, where it might be found and what sort of provisions we might find in comparable Manitoba legislation.

MR. FILMON: The environmental assessment review process is under current consideration within our

department. It would be in effect a pre-clearance type of thing as the ERA is as opposed to the Clean Environment Commission which issues orders after the fact and everybody must comply of course with it, but it's a question of after the installation is complete.

MR. CORRIN: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to encourage the government to look into this matter. I'd like to speak affirmatively of the concept. I believe that there is a place for such legislation and that it has a very real value. I think that we all recognize that as a result of the scope of current technology and the magnitude of projects that are undertaken by I guess most especially by governments, and I'm thinking now of things like the Mandan Project, which apparently is now caught up on this very subject. The Mandan Project, the Western Power Grid, the Hydro projects such as the South Indian Lake Generating Stations and dam facilities, one could go on and on; in the urban context, projects such as the Sherbrook-McGregor Overpass and so on.

In the context of this, Mr. Chairman, I think that it is timely that governments give consideration to sober second thought, governed by the process of environmental impact review. It seems to me that as a legislator, I am more than willing to concede that I have very limited access to scientific resources and to independent assessment material that would assist me in evaluating the costs and benefits of any given public work. So I would certainly stand today speaking in support in principle of this sort of legislation in Manitoba. I guess I'm a bit surprised to hear that there is no such legislation in Manitoba. Frankly, I thought that somewhere there would be some sort of similar provision in some piece of legislation that would give effect to this purpose I am discussing.

I am wondering, if there is no such legislation, whether the Minister could tell me how the department, how the government in the consideration of its own capital works Estimates, affects its deliberations on this important subject. In other words, how does the government determine whether any given project it may be considering will affect the environment? What sort of evaluative process is there in order to take into account potential risks to the environment?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, for all public projects there is that processing in effect. The environmental assessment and review process is required under public projects and would be somewhat along the lines of what the member is referring to in The Environmental Review Act in the United States. What I was saying was that there is consideration being given as well to any projects, not just public projects.

MR. CORRIN: I suppose the first question that flows from that, Mr. Chairman, is with respect to whether or not the government has formalized guidelines in writing that it could present to the House in order that we all be apprised of the sort of review, the review parameters, that are imposed on government planners. I would certainly, for one, be interested in knowing what sort of guidelines do exist in order that I could give consideration to their adequacy. I would be pleased to hear from the Minister in that respect.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, it's an inter-disciplinary approach that was formulated by the

former government and we are carrying it on as Cabinet policy. As the member probably is aware it varies from project to project, depending on the type of expertise that is needed to be brought to bear on an individual project to determine what the potential concerns or hazards or considerations might be in evaluating it.

MR. CORRIN: Mr. Chairman, as I'm sure the Minister will appreciate, not himself being a member of the Assembly during the term of the former government's tenure, I was not a member of that government and am really not privy to what sort of guidelines the former Schreyer government imposed. I would appreciate it if he could enlighten me as to what sort of guidelines were imposed then. I presume from time-to-time they would be reviewed anyway. I find it hard to believe that they would be, some four years after the end of that government's term, still extant and as they were, unamended, but I would like to know what sort of guidelines were formulated and how they would work, how they would come into play with respect to a particular project. I might suggest that the Minister might refer to something like the Western Power Grid, or the Mandan Line or any one of a number, I suppose, of Hydro projects that are being considered; major highway projects, major bridge projects. Certainly I suppose the examples would be numerous, but any one of those would do. I'd like to have something more explicit and concrete in order to facilitate our understanding of how the matter is governed and how it is approached by the government.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, I think, very wisely, the previous government did not set any firm guidelines. The guidelines varied from project to project depending on what the considerations are, what the potential risks are and what the potential pollution to the environment is, as a result of the project. The guidelines are formulated by an inter-disciplinary committee that reviews all aspects of the project and sets the guidelines for the study, given the information that it is determined is necessary in order to provide a thorough and extensive environmental assessment review.

MR. CORRIN: Yes, in this regard, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to know who sits on the Inter-Disciplinary Committee, whether there's political input; in other words, whether members of the Legislative Assembly are participants in its deliberations or whether the Committee's membership is constituted solely of administrative personnel. If so, I would like to know, just by job description not by name, what sort of people would be involved in that process and who the members might be? I'll give the Minister an opportunity to consult, I know that's a technical matter.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, there's no political involvement, it's all administrative. Each department nominates persons who have the required expertise for the particular project. If there's a potential for damage to fisheries, for instance, then the Natural Resources Department would nominate who had expertise in that area.

MR. CORRIN: I see. Mr. Chairman, I would wonder, since obviously this approach is in fact conceptually

quite close to the EPA regulation that I was discussing before, I'm wondering whether or not this particular body has established by way of precedent any sort of established body of knowledge, whether they have accumulated over the years in some consolidated form a record of their deliberations and decisions that people could have access to. I'm not suggesting, Mr. Chairman, I'm not about to try and debate freedom of information on this subject, what I'm trying to debate and discuss is whether or not the governing body, the regulatory body, the Inter-Disciplinary Committee is maintaining records and precedents and accumulating background data that could be useful by way of assistance to members of the House or members of a government that wanted to enact similar provisions to The Environmental Protection Act I've referred to in the United States. I know that there is in the United States under the — I think it's something like the Environmental Protection Branch, which is a federal governmental agency, there are literally at this point I think hundreds, if not thousands, of case dossiers which are now acting as forms of precedent, which are virtually guidelines that provide parameters to the Environmental Protection people when they are doing and dealing with various project proposals. So I'm wondering whether in Manitoba we're following that sort of course of action and whether we are similarly compiling a compendium of precedent and case history.

MR. FILMON: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CORRIN: Mr. Chairman, in this regard I can say that speaking from a personal point of view that I'm pleased to hear that. I think that's prudent and I think that it would be very useful to a government that had decided to enact this sort of legislation.

In discussing this the Minister said that the matter is under advisement, that it is being given a review, and I was wondering whether the Minister can indicate at what stage the evaluation or review now is. Can we have some idea of when we might expect a decision in this regard and what . . . I suppose I'd also like to know what alternative forms are being considered? I've suggested the model used in the United States which is legislative. I'm not sure that's the only form.

As I understand the legislative model in the United States, Mr. Chairman, there is a branch that is authorized, as a matter of fact delegated responsibility and authority to make an independent investigative review into any project which falls into the terms of reference of the legislation, so that this particular regulatory agency or review body has considerable authority. It is an investigative tribunal unto itself, but it also has as an accessory resource to itself various branches, which have certain specialized resource people seconded to them. So that you have people who are specialists for instances in water pollution, air pollution, I suppose we could go on and on — all the various things that modern science is dealing with. These people can literally independently examine all facets of a particular issue. It is what they deem to be relevant that in the long term and the long run is in fact analyzed and assessed.

Now that to me seems to be a reasonable approach, but not necessarily the only approach. I

was wondering whether the Minister knew whether this or any other approaches were being assessed as to their relative viability. I'll wait for the answer before I go on, Mr. Chairman.

MR. FILMON: Basically the approach that is followed currently under provincial projects is the same. I can say that with respect to an overall environmental assessment review act for the province that there are three other provincial jurisdictions in Canada who currently have such an Act. My understanding is they're all less than two years old and we are combining our thoughts on the process with the experience and the information that we have available to us from the other provinces that have enacted their acts within the last short while and with a view to what is being done in the EPA in the States. So we're using that, it's at the senior levels of review at the moment and would expect that there could be something in the not too distant future.

MR. CORRIN: Now I'm wondering, Mr. Chairman, as to what limits the Minister and the government would want imposed.

There have been lengthy debates on what sort of restrictions should be imposed on a government attempting to follow its committed mandate and accomplish certain public works projects. There's been considerable debate and discussion not only in Canada but elsewhere. There are a lot of people who feel that there should be fewer restrictions on government simply because of the nature of government. They say that government is a duly and democratically elected body, therefore expresses the will and wishes of the people and therefore, I suppose, according to some brand of logic and perhaps a good one. They should not be restricted in their deliberations or their course of action; that's one school of thought. So there's one school of thought that thinks that government should be a special exception if this sort of legislation is imposed. Some of those people feel that the private sector's activity should be closely monitored and reviewed but not the public sectors; you have that group. I'm wondering and, Mr. Chairman, I want to indicate that I respect that group. I respect that group's opinion because I see some room for mischief, some potential mischief in the proximity of a review branch of an environmental review agency and government. You know, I see a number of potential hazards and I can see how government could be very hard, for instance, on the private sector, and very easy on itself because the government in effect controls the appointments of those who do the regulating. So I can well understand how people could be sceptical and even somewhat cynical at government having this sort of regulatory authority.

I was saying, as a matter of fact, a moment ago, I suppose that there are people in this province who are at this very moment wondering about the affect of the American legislation on our power sales and obviously even though the Government of Nebraska has made a certain decision, they have determined that it's in the best interests of the people of Nebraska that they exchange hydro power with Manitoba, there are now people in the community who are calling on the Environmental Protection Resources of the United States to buffer them from

what they perceive, as the potentially hazardous effects, or detrimental effects of this particular project. So, as I understand it from the information I have received, it is possible that this project is going to be in suspension for some time. As a matter of fact somebody was saying that if The Environmental Protection Act wouldn't suitably protect them, then they would have to explore the matter in the courts. They would have to go, sort of, to the next level of appeal.

Well, Mr. Chairman, the Government of Nebraska has said it's good for the people, the Government of Nebraska is duly elected. We have a perplexing quandry and I'm saying that if the Government of Manitoba is considering following the initiative of the two or three jurisdictions in Canada who have introduced this legislation in the past couple of years, then we too may be facing this dilemma and if it is a dilemma, I think it's premature in the course of our determinations in this discussion to suggest that this is a dilemma but I think that we can recognize that there are potential difficulties and potential hazards and potential contradictions, seemingly, as I said, the potential vitiation or nullification of the democratic electoral person.

So I'm wondering, in that sort of perspective, how the government feels; does the government feel that they want a regulatory authority that will be the final arbiter, that will be the final determinant of these issues, of these matters? Or does the government feel that they would prefer that such a body be advisory, simply reporting to Cabinet, or whatever, in order that they would conduct matters of environment management independently. You know, that to me is a major question. I think that's a question which will confront any government that tries to deal with this problem. I know enough about the people in this side and that side, I think, to know that this question could indeed cross political lines. This is not something that one has a philosophical bias on the basis of one's Social Democratic background or one's Conservative background. So I'm wondering how the Minister would see this matter preceeding, what sort of progress he would see taking place? Where does he believe the power should lie? Does he believe the power should lie as we so often hear, Mr. Chairman, with the people, or does he believe that the power should lie with an advisory body, that I suppose some would argue would protect the people from the people they elect to protect them. So, Mr. Chairman, I think that's the real question. I think if we're going to deal with the issue that's the basis from which we have to work, where does true authority and power lie in the system and how does the Minister conceive this?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, the member has very well announced the alternatives that will be addressed when that policy decision is made by the government. I can say to him in respect to the earlier part of his commentary that obviously the government does not see giving the public sector an easier rider because it has already self imposed that kind of process on itself and it's now a question of implementing an Act, whether or not you implement an Act that would broaden it to include every type of project that might come forward.

MR. CORRIN: Mr. Chairman, I must say that I take exception to the Minister's comment that the

government has already imposed regulations on itself. He suggests I think by implication that the government is being hard on itself and that the government wouldn't adopt less stringent standards with respect to the private sector. Now, Mr. Chairman, I can't agree because the government hasn't, first of all, placed itself in a subsidiary or secondary role to any particular regulatory authority. The government hasn't recognized that any authority should have responsibility which supersedes its own and I think that's a point which should be made, Mr. Chairman. At this point, the government is following guidelines which essentially allows it to reflect on, possibly criticism or on the benefits, the costs and benefits that are proposed by the Interdisciplinary Committee, but it's not bound by that decision, Mr. Chairman.

So, Mr. Chairman, I don't regard that as being any sort of harsh discipline. I don't regard that as being demonstrative of this government's willingness, or for that matter, the last government's willingness, if that was the former policy, this government's willingness to take a more subsidiary or reduced role in this regard. It seems to me that this government's position is that in the final analysis it will be the judge of what is best for the people and if it hurts people in the course of doing that, well, that I suppose then, is a liability. (Interjection)— Well, one of the member's opposite suggests that that's why they are elected. Well, if you were following this debate, as a matter of the fact, the Minister just acknowledged that there is a credible school of thought that is concerned about whether or not government is able and qualified to govern itself. It recognizes the government's ability to deal with people and associations at arm's length and certainly recognizes the ability, for instance, of the government to regulate where it wishes the private sector but thinks that there is essentially a conflict of interest when the government attempts to assess the detrimental effects of its own policies when it comes to environmental management matters.

Recently in this country we had what I'm sure will rank for all time, possibly, as the most comprehensive and pervasive environmental impact assessment on record probably anywhere, and that was the Berger Pipeline Inquiry and I'm sure, as we all know, Mr. Chairman, in the course of that inquiry, Mr. Justice Berger reviewed, I think, virtually every facet, every facet and possible impact that could have an adverse affect on the environment and the economy of the northern communities affected. Mr. Chairman, I think probably most of us applauded the role of the Berger Inquiry Commission. I think most of us probably, if we were to bare our souls, congratulated the Federal Government for undertaking that sort of comprehensive review and I think most of us felt that was a fairly rational and fairly sound approach to that sort of government decision-making responsibility.

As I said before and I recognize that we're being repetitive but I think it's important that we give consideration to it here. How much are we willing to gamble on transitory government's decisions because, Mr. Chairman, the reality is, that governments of course, are only representative of a slice of time. I think that we'll all admit that we are subject to fallibility; we are only human beings after

all. We are only as good in any event as the best advice we get and as we all know that advice varies from time to time and place to place. So I think that it's arguable that governments should not have absolute authority with respect to these technical, complicated, complex sorts of issue determinations.

I travelled this fall, Mr. Chairman, to a community I had never visited before, Cross Lake, Manitoba, and in going up there I spent about a day meeting with various people, people who I think were very involved in that particular community, from all walks of life, people who obviously had played a very meaningful role in the community and knew of its history and I think had a great deal of concern for its future. And, Mr. Chairman, we discussed the effects of the hydro flooding, the effects of The South Indian Lake Flooding Project and, Mr. Chairman, I can tell you I think we'll all recognize that it's not a topic that is politically advantageous to pursue from my point of view. But, I think we'll all recognize, at least those of us who have been to South Indian Lake and Cross Lake, will recognize that experts can be wrong. You know, Mr. Chairman, I'm not an authority and I don't pretend to know a lot about Hydro projects or northern environment or the nature of the northern ecology but, Mr. Chairman, I saw some pretty alarming things.

For instance, Mr. Chairman, I spoke to a gentleman who had built three docks; he has a very small fishing business, if you could call it that. He has, I think, it looked like about a 16, 17 or 18 foot aluminum boat; he has a couple of motors. He has some nets which he keeps in marvelously good repair, all of it, and which he takes a great deal of pride in and, Mr. Chairman, he showed me the three docks he'd built in the year since the flooding. Mr. Chairman, the reason he built three docks was because each year after the flooding had taken place and I should remind members who aren't familiar with Cross Lake that Cross Lake is sort of on the down side. It's on the side where the water level was reduced. When they built up the water level on the other side of the dam, they reduced the Cross Lake's water level. Well each year, Mr. Chairman, in the pursuit of his business he had built a dock so he could moor his boat and he could prepare himself to go out fishing. And damn it, Mr. Chairman, each spring the water levels varied and each year the dock that he built was rendered useless and each succeeding year he built another one, and each succeeding year he filed another claim with Hydro under the Northern Flood Agreement. All three claims, Mr. Chairman, are under review.

Mr. Chairman, I was interested because I went down. He told me, and as a matter of fact the Mayor of Cross Lake, Mr. McLeod, confirmed this in our discussions, that the Hydro people are up there trying to get the right to build a weir. They want to build a weir, I can't describe it, I don't know the area well enough, but it's down the way. They want to build a weir in order that they can do some sort of detailed annual control of the Cross Lake level. They agree that it's getting more expensive to build this fellow docks or to pay for the docks he's built and compensate him for it, and compensate him also for his lack of business. You can't do much fishing if you can't tie up your boat. He's showing me that sometimes he comes out in the morning, and this

was confirmed by a variety of people, he wasn't the only one who presented this particular grievance. There are people who will say that the water levels go down in such a dramatic fluctuating manner that they will come out in the morning to get in their boats and they'll find their boats dry-docked, sitting on the shore, so that day you're out of luck, there's no fishing that day. I suppose that's probably not true, I'm sure they probably pick the boats up and carry them to the water, they're not that big.

But nevertheless, Mr. Chairman, it's an obvious upset and it's certainly not in keeping with what the experts told us. The experts told us that we could control it, that we could manage the environment, that the technical wherewithal was now in place to regulate the water levels day to day; well it's not true. So now, Mr. Chairman, they're trying to do the fine tuning. Mr. Chairman, I must say the people at Cross Lake are not willing, they may have since I was there, but when I was there they refused to sign the agreement with the Hydro. They refused to sign the agreement that would . . .

A MEMBER: That's not true.

MR. CORRIN: I said, Mr. Chairman, that they may have done it since I left, but at the time I was there Hydro had been negotiating with them for several months unsuccessfully.

In any event, Mr. Chairman, we have a situation that I think demonstrates the inability of technical experts. We relied on them, Mr. Chairman; I'm not suggesting that we relied on them in bad faith or with any malintent. I think we did so on an honourable basis, and I'm sure they were dealing ethically with us. I think everybody was up and up and above board; everybody was doing their best to resolve a difficult situation and make a difficult decision, but nevertheless, Mr. Chairman, they were wrong.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I said before I'm not sure that any regulatory agency would do a better job. I'm the first to admit that if we put a regulatory agency in power, and we said that a regulatory agency should have power even over the government and should be able to review the projects proposed by government, I'm not sure that the regulatory agency, even with all the experts would do a better job. That, Mr. Chairman, is a conundrum and I'm willing to admit that it's a very difficult problem.

But I think, Mr. Chairman, that you have to come down on one side or the other and that is going to be the difficult decision for government to make. You either decide that government will have the final responsibility and I think that's probably in the best traditions of parliamentary democracy, Mr. Chairman, and you say I will make the decision and that's my responsibility to be shouldered, it's my burden to take to the people. Mr. Chairman, you take that position or, Mr. Chairman, you take the other position and say I'm going to delegate my authority to a higher authority, another body that is appointed by me, and sometimes which admittedly the elected official could control by appointment, you could appoint your friends. You can do it that way.

So, Mr. Chairman, we have a very complex issue. The one thing I know, Mr. Chairman, is that it is in the best interests of the public and I suppose this is the only thing I think I know for sure, is that it's in

the best interests of the public that all this material, all these reports, be made public so that anyone in the public domain who feels that a particular project may not be in the best interests of society or a segment of society, because we always have to be considerate of those who are going to be impacted most directly. It's no use if we're talking about the Cross Lake problem, we have to think about that fisherman and his three docks and his never-ending water levels.

Another fellow, I should say, because I really felt compassion for several of the people — there was another man, Mr. Chairman, he was 58 years old, he spoke to us through interpreters, I believe he spoke Cree. He told us about the time it took him now to do his trap line — I think it is the time just before the freeze-up, either just before or just after, I'm not sure, but it is a time when he normally uses his boat or used his boat. Now, Mr. Chairman, he tells us because of the reduction in water levels and because of his inability to pick up his boat and carry it from lake to lake or river to river, what used to take him

MR. CHAIRMAN: Two minutes.

MR. CORRIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What used to take him a few days, now is a job that takes him several weeks. Apparently he's also had to invest in more boats, he's had to buy boats which he puts at various points on the course of his route so that he can go from one portage to the next. So here's a fellow that has trapped and I'm sure he's a very able trapper; he seemed to be a most knowledgeable man; I enjoyed his company, Mr. Chairman, whose trapped for 30 something years since he was a boy.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The Honourable Minister of Agriculture on a point of order.

HON. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur): We have sat here and listened to the Member for Wellington or wherever it is go all over the waterfront; he's talking about trapping. I think we're debating the Estimates of the Environment and I would appreciate it if we could get on with doing those Estimates instead of him wandering all over the Department of Natural Resources and every other department.

MR. CORRIN: Mr. Chairman, on that point of order if I may speak to it. I appreciate I'm making reference to water, but we must appreciate that part of our natural environment is water. I know that there was a pun implicit in going on the waterfront, but, Mr. Chairman, it may not be a problem to us living as we do in the south, but I can tell you if you're an elderly trapper living on subsistence levels and somebody puts you in a position where your trapline that used to be worked in a matter of a couple of weeks is taking you three times as long. Mr. Chairman, I can assure you that it's a major consideration and to be appreciated one has to see it. One has to go up there and talk. Mr. Chairman, that, of course, is one of the fallibilities of government, Mr. Chairman, and this is why I say it's so important this matter be discussed. Because you know, Mr. Chairman, governments are wont, particularly after they've been in office a little while, to make decisions from the seat of their pants. It

gets easier and easier to stay back in the home office where there's no criticism, away from the public and reflect on these problems from afar.

Mr. Chairman, I tell you what I'm saying is that we have to have adequate resources when we regard environmental management problems that will facilitate close scrutiny and examination of these issues. I'm just not satisfied, I appreciate the Minister's . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The honourable member's time is up.

The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. J. WALLY MCKENZIE: Mr. Chairman, I'll not delay the committee as the former member has with a long eulogy and political speech.

I have a couple of questions before we wind down this section of the department. It relates to the empty drink tins or the fruit juice tins that clutter up the countryside, beaches, roadsides, ditches, vacant lots in towns and villages, and even in the city here you come across a vacant lot and you'll find these empty tins in many cases scattered around in the area. I wonder if there's any jurisdiction that has arrived at a solution to the problem. Is there disposable containers that could be replaced. I note the other day now they've changed the returnable price for beer bottles and as I drive back and forth to the city, I notice there's many, many more people picking up the empty beer bottles that have been cluttering up the environment. So I just wonder if the Minister or the Environmental Management staff and his department have looked at the problem, and if in fact maybe there's a solution to it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I think that the word environment, and we had this trouble for some years when I was on that side of the House, is a word which can embody everything. We tried very hard to limit it to what the department was responsible for, namely the contaminants that are put by human beings into the environment, into the land, air or water. On that basis, Mr. Chairman, the raising or lowering of water levels or the changing of the natural environment was not part of the jurisdiction of the department. In that respect I think that what the Member for Wellington is talking about is probably best dealt with in the Department of Natural Resources.

There is a problem, Mr. Chairman, and that is that the changes in water levels at Cross Lake and at other areas were all scheduled and were put into written documents and forwarded to the communities concerned and every single report that was done vis-a-vis the environmental studies and the scientific studies, relative to anything that had to do with the Nelson River Development, were made public, and then after they were made public and given to the communities concerned they were synopsized because it was impossible to read them, and sent to each community in the English rather than scientific language, but we had been very careful to check to see whether the English said the same thing as the scientific. We thought that the information that we sent was correct. If there is

indeed a difference between the occurrences and the information, then whichever Minister now has authority I would like to have it indicated that these differences occurred because we went and spoke to the Cross Lake community. Cross Lake by the way has not changed their water levels through South Indian Lake, it's changed in water levels through Lake Winnipeg Regulation, not through South Indian Lake.

The fact is when you keep the water high in Lake Winnipeg, you reduce the level in Cross Lake. When you release the water from Lake Winnipeg, you raise the water in Cross Lake. We told the communities, I told them personally and I gave them the figures that were presented by the scientists, and by the way every word that was said to them was transcribed and is contained in transcripts. I wanted it that way because I said that if I'm telling you a lie I want it recorded and I want it to be able to come back to us. There was a document published called Lake Winnipeg Regulation by the department, sent to the community so that they would know what would happen. But we also put a caveat on it because it's impossible, nobody can tell what will actually happen; all you can tell people is what would happen if the water would normally be at 714, then under Lake Winnipeg Regulation it might be at 713.9. If the water was normally 717 under Lake Winnipeg Regulation, it would be under 715. Conversely if it was normally at Cross Lake at 712, it could be at 714 or if it was normally at 708, it could be at 706.

All of those figures were recorded, given to the communities, sent to them, and not only were they sent to them but we went out and gave them verbatim and transcribed in a document which is available and on the record what was said. I would be interested, Mr. Chairman, because I would not want to be engaged in misleading anybody and it was for that reason that it was recorded so that there would be no question as to what was said in the future. If there is indeed a change between what was said that was going to happen and what did happen, I think the communities have a very legitimate complaint but I'd like to know what it is. I would not like to know that a boat was on dry land because boats would be on dry land, both under natural conditions and under regulated conditions which were indicated. That was part of the regulation program.

If we have mislead people which I hope we haven't but it certainly is possible that could happen then I would like to know what has happened since that information was given, Mr. Chairman, and all we could do was deal with historical levels. What happened since that information was given, is that we had the worst flood in the Province of Manitoba that has ever occurred in the past and therefore that would reflect itself in worse conditions at the high level than ever occurred in the past and we had a worse drought than has been known in recent history and that would reflect on water levels. Those could not be recorded but we told the people that too. We used the words "if Noah's flood came what we are telling you would not be so because only God can tell you what will happen." That's exactly what was said in those words and the people have available to them verbatim not only the reports but the transcripts of the evidence that was given and they

have a perfect right to show the government that they were mislead. I would like to know myself where they have been mislead because I would not want to be the one to mislead people when I am giving them information which is the best available to me.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to confirm the remarks that were made by the Member for Inkster that indeed the concerns about water levels at Cross Lake have to do with the Lake Winnipeg Regulation has nothing to do with South Indian Lake, and in fact what many people don't realize is that the Lake Winnipeg Regulation afforded the opportunity to cut off the flow entirely down the Nelson River. That had happened for a period of time last year as a result of the extreme drought conditions and in fact Cross Lake being merely a widening of the Nelson River, its directly proportionate level is directly proportionate to the flow that's allowed to go through Jenpeg, so that is the situation there.

With respect to the comments of the Member for Roblin, there is a program as he is probably aware, a compulsory program in Alberta that requires a deposit to be paid and repaid when cans, all bottles and containers are picked up and returned. It required the installation or the assembly of depots and it's a matter, I'm advised, that costs over a million dollars a year. It does obviously have some effect if people do collect all of these things that are disposed and wasted here in Manitoba. Here we are working with a program in which the industry has decided that they will keep their non-disposable containers to a certain level. At the present time, 65 percent of the containers in use are returnable; that's a self-imposed regulation that we've discussed with them. The remainder of them are non-returnable and we do have that problem and the Member for Roblin is absolutely correct. It would be a good idea if we could clean it up entirely but there is a cost involved to it and we have to recognize that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1) — pass; (2) — pass; (b) — pass; (c) Divisional Administration, (1) Salaries — pass — the Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. JENKINS: I wonder if the Minister could just give us a brief explanation of the increase here.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, there's an increase of staff complement of one SMY. The general salary increase allocation has increased as well. Of the total attributable, there's \$23,200 attributable to the general salary increase shortfall from last year; \$55,700 is the general salary increase from this year. An additional receptionist in the new laboratory is 11,800; operating costs associated with the Community Relations Program have required an increase of \$22,500; general price increase is \$8,300; word processing equipment, \$5,000; and the governmental vehicle rate increase, \$500.00. That's the entire amount.

MR. JENKINS: What would be the duties of the extra SMY that you're adding this year?

MR. FILMON: It's the receptionist for the new laboratory.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1) — pass; (2) — pass; (c) — pass; (d) Manitoba Environmental Council, (1)

Salaries — pass — the Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I feel impelled although I'm sure nobody else would feel that I should be impelled to say a few words about the Manitoba Environmental Council, particularly as a result of recent events in Ottawa. Mr. Chairman, I take it that the Manitoba Environmental Council which was created as a citizens organization during the previous administration operates now in much the same way as it operated then; namely, that members of the Environmental Council are composed of various groups, individuals, agencies, all of whom have voluntarily agreed to serve and everybody who has agreed to serve has been named to the Council, that the original formation was that everybody who wrote the government and indicated an interest in providing citizen participation into the environment was named as a member to the Environmental Council and this involved a wide range of people, academics, professors, industry representatives, the representative of the mining industry, representatives from the labour groups and what have you. An entire group of people at that time that numbered several hundred and they became the Environmental Council of the Province of Manitoba; that the Environmental Council furthermore chose its own executive, named its own chairman, operated entirely autonomously; that it was funded in a small way by the Government of Manitoba; that the government provided an executive secretary, provided room space, provided certain travel allowances and things of that nature but did not provide a bureaucracy or research people; that the Environmental Council was offered and is still offered I would take it, the right to at any time ask about government programs, to visit the agencies that were providing these programs that were made available, any information or documents which they wanted concerning government activities and I cannot remember a single thing that they would request that was not granted to them; that the Environmental Council chose its own program; that they even chose programs which dealt with urban affairs which we told them we would absolutely not comment or approve of or disapprove, that it was entirely up to them.

We did offer them the indication that it would not help our particular department because we were not involved in the environment but we refused in any way to express approval or disapproval of any program that they wanted to enter into and they carried on their activities in that way; that the Environmental Council was not only not discouraged from but was encouraged to engage in programs which were critical of the government; that at the height of the dispute on South Indian Lake the Environmental Council conducted a one-day rally and on that day decided that the South Indian Lake, the Nelson River Program which had taken 15 years to conceive was a wrong program; that they published their findings; that there was never a word of disapproval of their activities or their actions expressed to them by the government and I take it that is now still the case.

Mr. Chairman, that is I think one would say a very decent way of running a citizens' organization. The person who at that time was so critical and of the autocratic means that the government used and so

vituperative of everything we did and screamed about rights and freedom of information is now a Minister of the Crown. His name is Axworthy and look how he runs his citizens' organization, Mr. Chairman. He names three people, he pays them, he names the officers and he tells them, don't have any programs which will be of an embarrassment to the government.

Now, Mr. Chairman, it is interesting to look at who calls who autocratic and what happens in actual operation and who talks about freedom of information and who talks about entrenchments of rights and how they behave when they are in government. I think it's more important to see how people behave and what they do rather than what they speak and what legislation they say they are going to pass.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1) — pass; (2) — pass; (d) — pass; (e) Clean Environment Commission, (1) — pass; (2) — pass — the Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. JENKINS: Has there been any additional staff or is this just the annual increments in the Clean Environment Commission?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, there has been no change in staff. The only additional expenses are a total of \$19,600 due to the general salary increase.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1) — pass; (2) — pass; (e) — pass. Resolution No. 39 — pass.

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$6,214,600 for Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Environment, Environmental Management, \$6,214,600 — pass.

Resolution No. 40, Clause 5 — the Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. JENKINS: Mr. Chairman, I just wonder if this would be a good time for the committee to rise, rather than start a new . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I thought we'd complete 5. and 6. and then we would rise.

Committee rise.