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PROCEEDINGS

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Second Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

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ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, 26 April, 1983.

Time — 8:00 p.m.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY - HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

MR. CHAIRMAN, C. Santos: The committee will please come to order. The Member for Radisson was in the middle of his remarks when we adjourned for the Private Members' Hour.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, on point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Point of order, please?

MR. D. ORCHARD: The Member for Radisson was talking about noise pollution and I wonder if that wouldn't be more appropriately addressed to the Minister of Environment?

MR. G. LECUYER: On that same point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Radisson.

MR. G. LECUYER: I imagine the point of order made by the Member for Pembina was not a serious one, so I presume you are indicating that I should proceed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, we are proceeding on serious business.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, that was an impartial remark.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Radisson.

MR. G. LECUYER: Mr. Chairman, I think it's a very serious matter that I was bringing up and I have to take it as a serious matter judging from the number of complaints by letter and by telephone received in this regard. I presume that some members of the opposition in the past, I presume the member who now is the Member for Niakwa must have heard some of the similar complaints when he was representing the constituency that I now represent.

The matter dates way back, as I indicated, and I want to for the record indicate that I raised this matter on September 9, 1982, in a letter to the Minister of the Environment, copy to the Minister of Highways, drawing attention to this matter and having myself apprised of the fact that the complaints were substantial in that the noise level that the people from Windsor Park, adjoining Lagimodiere Blvd., have to endure, especially in summer, is something that we would not want to beset on anyone.

The problem is that there seems to be no alternative. The environment is not in a position to compel any other level of government or any other branch of

government to intervene in this regard, because it does not control traffic and it appears that the only two solutions, either by building a sound barrier - and I believe that falls under the jurisdiction of the City of Winnipeg - at a substantial cost, and I think that matter has been looked into and shelved.

The other alternative is to complete the Perimeter Highway. Now, in this regard, the Minister has indicated - and I am fully aware - that the funds are not there to undertake such a venture, it would appear. On the other hand, I would like to know, Mr. Minister, if the land that would be required to complete the Perimeter Highway is now owned by the province?

HON. S. USKIW: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I believe it's entirely under provincial ownership at the present time.

MR. G. LECUYER: Secondly, I'd like to know if the plans or the designs for the completion of the Perimeter Highway are completed?

HON. S. USKIW: I'm sorry, I was consulting with my staff.

MR. G. LECUYER: What I was asking, Mr. Minister, was how far are we with the plans or designs of that portion of the Perimeter Highway?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, that particular route is at the stage of land acquisition and not beyond. We have not designed a highway system to date to complete that Perimeter.

MR. G. LECUYER: Well, it worries me a great deal that we're that far from ever completing this highway, because it does appear that we're a long way from correcting the problem. As I indicated before, noise levels were monitored in March of 1981 and were determined to be over 13 decibels during the daytime and up to 17 decibels over the acceptable limit during nighttime, so you can imagine what it's like to be living there during summertime when people try to keep a window open to get some fresh air. It is an absolute continuous flow of diesel trucks, large transfer trucks flowing on that road all night - absolutely all night.

The paper which I have received from Environmental Management on September 28, 1982, agrees with that and I quote from it. It says, "The sound levels exceeded this department's guidelines - maximum acceptable for a residential area - by as much as 13 decibels during daytime period and 18 decibels during nighttime period. Trucks were observed operating in the Symington Yards, but the primary noise source was traffic along Lagimodiere Boulevard, especially trucks." And it went on to say, "The department presently has no legislative authority to regulate traffic noise. Service is provided to citizens by performing monitoring." And that is, it seems, as far as the Department of Environment is able to go in this regard.

Following this, I did meet with some officials of the Clean Environment and they, in turn, met with

representatives of the Department of Highways at the provincial level, and the Streets and Transportation Branch of the City of Winnipeg. It indicates in there, "The representatives of the City of Winnipeg agreed that the noise from traffic on Lagimodiere Boulevard created excessive noise in the Windsor Park residential area."

So this was the conclusion arrived at when the meeting was held between Environmental Management Division and the Highways and Transportation Branch, as well as the Streets and Transportation Division of the City of Winnipeg. As I stated earlier on today, the people who live there are in a terrible bind, because it seems that nothing can be done to control the noise except rerouting the traffic. The problem is, right now, there is nowhere to reroute it. I simply want to put this on the record, the fact that the concern is a major one and I would hope that sooner than later, we will address this problem.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the member has indicated the environmental problem on that strip which is well known to the department; it certainly is to myself. In dealing with it though, there are a number of questions that arise. One is that even if we were to have the completion of the north Perimeter, we would not eliminate the noise from Lagimodiere unless, of course, the trucks were denied the use of that strip for through-traffic purposes. That's something that the City of Winnipeg would probably make the decision on. The traffic may still go through that area unless they were not allowed to use that route.

The City and the Department of Highways have agreed on one conclusion at this point in time and that is that from a traffic volume point of view, they don't believe that we are at the stage yet where we must complete the north Perimeter. From an environmental point of view, it's quite a separate question. I suppose it's a question of how much weight you attach to that issue and the price tag that goes with it.

MR. G. LECUYER: I don't know when the last studies were made to determine the traffic volume on Lagimodiere. Anybody that lives near there or ever tries to get on Lagimodiere from any one of the streets of Windsor Park will find himself usually having to wait approximately five minutes to get an opening to get on that highway. If that's not a densely trafficked road, I don't know. I haven't seen very many others as densely trafficked.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You should see Manila.

MR. G. LECUYER: The point I wish to make, of course, is that traffic is not only just automobiles that live in that area. I am referring to, basically, the transport trucks that use that. The City, of course, is in a position to be able to zone it to prevent trucking on that road, but I suppose it can't do that either because there is no other route that they can use at the moment.

Am I correct, Mr. Minister, in assuming that at least at one end of that Perimeter, if it were to be completed, the overpass is to some extent complete on Lagimodiere? They would be using the overpass that presently exists there. Of course, it would require some

modification, because right now it is not intended as a follow-through. I don't know if that overpass structure is also completed on the No. 1 Highway though.

HON. S. USKIW: The interchange at 59 and Lagimodiere is half-completed. The other problem area is the intersection at No. 15 Highway, which would require a major interchange as I . . .

MR. G. LECUYER: Yes, I suppose that is correct. I was forgetting that particular highway in the set-up and I imagine that would represent substantial cost; but if I heard the Minister correctly this afternoon, it seems to me they indicated that the interchange at the No. 1 and the highway at the intersection near St. Annes there represents \$8 million, if I heard correctly, which is in the process of being completed. I heard the Member for Pembina this afternoon say, well, we built a road there because it was essential due to the volume of traffic and for the safety of people using the highway.

I do believe the same can be said about that strip of Lagimodiere and if we need any proof of that we can also go back, and we all know the number of accidents that did occur at the intersection of Lagimodiere, especially at Dugald Road in past years. That, to a certain extent, Mr. Minister, has been corrected by lights that were set up there. But when we installed lights there, we also forced all these trucks to stop; and every time they start again in the middle of the night, that also creates a further excess of noise. As I say, to correct part of the problem, we have created also another problem. We've increased the noise level.

I know there is no easy answer to that because the costs, as you have pointed out, are substantial, but I would hope that somewhere along the line we will complete the highway because it would be of use not only for trucking, firms that are now using Lagimodiere, but also for the well-being of residents that live all alone and for the safety, as well, of these people.

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate what the member is suggesting and it's the kind of undertaking that could not be completed in one year even if it were to be undertaken. It would be a three or four year venture, I would think. I suppose what the member is suggesting is that we begin the process; that's the message I'm getting. I hope I'm reading him correctly. I would think that we would want to have the City of Winnipeg endorse whatever decision is made in that sense. We have always attempted to work with the City of Winnipeg with respect to the Perimeter Highway, as I understand it, and access from the highway system into the City of Winnipeg.

It doesn't, though, detract from the fact that even if the highway were there, the noise problem the member alludes to would only be altered by designating truck routes by the City of Winnipeg. Just the provision of the north Perimeter wouldn't eliminate that problem. It might reduce the volume of traffic, but unless the city was prepared to restrict traffic in that area, truck traffic, then the noise level may not be reduced in any event.

MR. G. LECUYER: Okay, my final comment, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I just want to make it clear that

that is exactly what I'm saying - I would like the process started as sooner than later in this regard and that is why I'm drawing attention to this particular concern.

Secondly, I agree that the traffic would continue on that road and there would remain noise, but the main culprit now is not the automobiles that are using that stretch of highway, it's the trucks. If there were an alternative route the City then, I assume, would prevent trucks from using that highway. If it didn't, the pressure of the citizens living in the area would quickly get them to do so. I think that the noise problem would be, to a large extent, solved if there was this other route.

HON. S. USKIW: I'm led to believe, Mr. Chairman, that the figure I gave earlier was probably excessive. It might be more in the order of \$20 million or \$25 million.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. C. MANNES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to ask the Minister some questions regarding Highway 75 and the proposed route between P.R. 429, which is the St. Adolphe turnoff, to 305 which is the east-west road through St. Agathe. I understand there were a number of alternatives, firstly, that were considered in twinning Highway 75 through that stretch.

I would ask the Minister if he could tell me what the cost comparison was between the proposed route, which happens to be on the east side of the existing highway, as compared to a twinning that would lie to the west, but still on the east side of the railway track.

HON. S. USKIW: The information the staff has given me is that the figure 1.7 million would be the difference in costs. That is the west-side location over the east-side location.

MR. C. MANNES: Well, Mr. Minister, I'd like a further breakdown of that figure, not in detail, but I'd like a better understanding of that difference because I'm aware of the fact that certainly there need to be fewer homes and yards that would be disturbed on the west side. The total distance, particularly in the minds of the Glenlea residents, would be somewhat half a mile shorter, and I'm wondering what other factors outweigh those apparent cost savings, were that road to be on the west side.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the department advises that there would be much more disruption on the west side as compared to the east side. In particular, it would involve the radio tower, which is a big item. I think that's a million-dollar item, if I'm not mistaken, and I believe four additional buildings over what we have to contend with on the east side.

MR. C. MANNES: Well, first of all I'd like to question the radio tower. Are they CJOB? No. What towers are these specifically?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, it's the CKY Radio Transmitter Building. It's not the tower, it's the building.

MR. C. MANNES: Mr. Chairman, I'm wondering if the Minister then can tell me whether one of the

alternatives considered was a twinning knot within the normal distance of the existing road would indeed, further west, a twinning that would perhaps be on the other side of the CKY structure and indeed on the other side of some of the existing farm yards and buildings that are presently located immediately west of the present highway.

HON. S. USKIW: Yes, to meet highway standards, the idea of splitting a four-lane system into two two-lane roads half a mile apart, is expensive and not recommended for safety reasons and others. It would really mean having to relocate both sets of lanes to the west of the existing location, which would be more expensive.

MR. C. MANNES: Certainly I can understand the necessity of a much higher cost if you relocated both lanes, but why would both necessarily have to be relocated? Certainly, there are a number of instances in the United States, and I think even Highway No. 1 East, where indeed there is a considerable distance between the lanes.

HON. S. USKIW: That's the problem of controlling any private land between two roadways and the accessibility to any particular parcels between which causes a hazard, and it is a problem of traffic turning in the wrong direction whenever you have a split system, and where you have residences in the area that becomes a real problem.

MR. C. MANNES: Well, Mr. Chairman, then I take it that the consideration of ruling out that specific potential type of system was done so, mainly because of safety and not because of cost. Would there have been a cost saving, setting aside the consideration of private land being set in-between; and secondly, some of the safety concerns? Would there have been a safety or a cost saving if indeed the new laneage had been put immediately east of the railway track?

HON. S. USKIW: I'm advised that notwithstanding the safety factors, the alternate route would still be more costly than the present location.

MR. C. MANNES: I suppose then that's the specific problem that I have and indeed the residents of Glenlea have. They do not understand why, when indeed that distance would be shorter; in effect, it would not involve touching any farmsteads. Why would that be more costly?

HON. S. USKIW: One of the reasons for the greater expenditure of dollars is that you would then have to add additional service road mileage in that area. You would just not be building the two lanes of expressway, you'd be building the service road as well, additional service roads. You'd be putting them on the insides. The services roads would also be built on the inside of the two lanes going each direction.

MR. C. MANNES: Pardon my lack of understanding in this area, but is that a necessary requirement for every mile of twin-laning? Do you require an immediate service road on either side?

HON. S. USKIW: All of the expressways that we build very severely limit direct access. Therefore, in exchange for direct access, we have to provide service road facilities for local traffic, so it's an unavoidable aspect of an expressway system.

MR. C. MANNES: Mr. Minister, I find that somewhat difficult to accept in this case, because on one side there could very well indeed be a railway track which would act as almost a natural barrier. With a few crossings removed, indeed, I would say that the number of points at which flows would come in laterally could be reduced to a very minimum and that there are no buildings or no farm sites. There are no towns to service along that four- or five-mile stretch from St. Adophe to Ste. Agathe. I again wonder the necessity for having service roads on both sides.

HON. S. USKIW: That alternative, Mr. Chairman, is indicated to be 40 percent more expensive.

MR. C. MANNES: Because of the requirement of really one additional service road for that length, or two additional, then what would be the cost if those two additional service roads were not built? Then what would be the cost of placing that new twinning of highway immediately adjacent to the railway track where the additional two service roads were not built? Would there be a cost saving then?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, logically there would be, but we can't design an expressway in that way. There has to be a service road capability. Otherwise, you would be denying access to property.

MR. C. MANNES: I once did have a detailed map in front of me, but I have been led to believe by many of the property owners in that area that because it's all their land between the two roads and that because there are no east-west laterals required to service any area, that one access to their farmable property would certainly be sufficient. They again would question the requirement for service roads within that area but, nevertheless, the Minister may wish to comment on that particular assertion of mine and the people of Glenlea.

I would ask a further question. When was the final decision made to adopt the proposed route?

HON. S. USKIW: After a considerable amount of discussion with the people in the area and a personal visit to the area.

MR. C. MANNES: I would ask the Minister then, did he make that decision or was it made, you know, by the other administration? What time frame? How many months ago was that decision made?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I believe it was sometime in the early part of the winter or before winter set in. Yes, there was no snow on the ground when I was out there.

We had a number of delegations. I went out to take a look at the area, I went on a tour of the area; almost was convinced that the residents were right when I

toured the area. We came back and we took out the drawings and the alternatives and the costs associated with each, and decided that the present route is the one that we must take.

MR. C. MANNES: Is that decision irrevocable, or how much money has been spent today in the design of that particular proposal?

HON. S. USKIW: I suppose what is revocable is the fact that we don't have to build a highway. That's about what is revocable. Once we have made some decisions on the standards and location, we either proceed or we don't proceed.

MR. C. MANNES: A four-lane highway to St. Adophe?

HON. S. USKIW: That's right, and it does raise that question. It wouldn't make sense to have a four-lane stretch for five miles ending at the St. Adolphe intersection. In fact, that indeed would be a waste of public funds in my opinion, if that's where we would terminate, but we have gone through the proper process. We have listened to the people that had views other than ours, and have concluded that we must proceed with the course that we are now following. I don't know what else can change that opinion, but I think we have given them an awful lot of time on that.

MR. C. MANNES: I would ask the Minister what consideration was given to the Town of Glenlea specifically; the fact that running another lane would virtually remove that hamlet from the face of the map. I am wondering what consideration was given; whether indeed the Minister met with specific individuals or indeed did he attempt to meet with a larger group of spokespeople who would have been taking into account not their own interests - and I know the Minister met with individuals who were prepared to consider only their own interests - but did the department at all meet with a larger group of people who would have been concerned with the community as a whole?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, with the present plan, we are buying two homes less than we would with the plan that the member is suggesting. That is, the westerly location would require us to buy three homes rather than one. The implement dealer would have to be taken out regardless of which plan we adopt, so that it doesn't help the member's cause. You'd better count your blessings.

MR. C. MANNES: Certainly, that's right. Given the consideration that the only alternative is that indeed the twinning of the highway be in immediate adjacency to the existing highway. Given that fact, I can see the argument. I suppose I am not totally convinced that that highway shouldn't be branching off right at the present location at which it had ended last year, at 429, and begin to hug the railway line.

Has any consideration or any design work been completed at all for the stretch beyond 305, and again, I'm thinking specifically in the Union Point area, where indeed the highway seems to virtually be on top of the railway and there doesn't appear to be an awful lot of

room for lateral movement either way, certainly none to the west, or in between the existing highway and the railway?

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, our plans at the present time are within that area that ends at Ste. Agathe. Some preliminary planning or study work has been done beyond that, and one of the questions that comes up is whether it wouldn't be more prudent to shift the railway line over somewhat as opposed to altering the location of the highway.

MR. C. MANNES: Well, I'm glad to hear that is being at least considered. Conceptually, it was my understanding that the railway just has upgraded over the last couple of years and I'm glad to hear the Minister saying that the opportunity wasn't missed at that time and therefore consideration would not be given to considering requesting the CN, or through some joint agreement, to change the course of the track somewhat.

I would like to ask a specific question regarding the water control structure within St. Norbert under Highway 75. I know the Minister has indicated that it's a decision made by the City of Winnipeg because it falls within the city limits. I want to be absolutely assured, however, now that the Minister of Natural Resources is here, that indeed the Minister is accurate when he says to me that the City of Winnipeg has total control of the size of that water structure. — (Interjection) — Okay, the Minister says he didn't say that. Specifically, who has control of the size of that water structure in the sense of the volume of water it delivers to the Red River?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I think, just so that we're not confused, I think I indicated to the member that the section of highway in question was indeed a city street and, therefore, we as the Highways Department had no jurisdiction. I would like to think I'm right when I say that Water Resources plays a major role in any level of government with respect to structures over waterways and that's probably the case there.

MR. C. MANNES: Well, I'm glad to hear that and I don't know if this is the appropriate time or not, but I see where there is a water control structure built into the Capital Spending Estimates. Am I right in assuming that it would be a structure required for the additional two lanes to cross the La Salle River right within St. Norbert?

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure of any connection to the twinning of Highway 75.

MR. C. MANNES: Well, that's fine. I'll ask the question then a little bit more specifically. Is there any design work being done at all at this time for Highway 75, the additional two lanes, where it is crossing the La Salle River within the St. Norbert area?

HON. S. USKIW: I'm sorry, I missed that last question but I wanted to add one more comment and that is, the department is looking at that section of street as potentially being part of Highway 75 up to the Perimeter. If, indeed, we might be able to negotiate an agreement

with the City of Winnipeg - and I have just signed a letter to that effect today which has not yet gone out in the mail - if there are some trade-offs with the City of Winnipeg that we might enter into an agreement on, that might be the property of the Highways Department. That's subject to whatever the City of Winnipeg wishes to agree to.

MR. C. MANNES: Well, thank you. I'm not overly concerned with the configuration of the road network through there that would produce a four-lane highway. I suppose my main concern is that the Minister and his department does not accept as is given, the volume flow that is being offered within the existing structure in St. Norbert.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister indicated that has nothing to do with his department, so that will be out of order.

The Member for Morris.

MR. C. MANNES: Well, obviously the Minister can tell that I am very concerned about this and maybe he can tell me specifically what department I can go to, to again question the design of the water control system under the new twinning of Highway 75.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, there is no doubt that the City Waterworks Department must be involved. I would like to think I'm right in saying that there may be provincial involvement, but I'm not certain of that.

I don't know whether The Winnipeg Act provides for exclusive jurisdiction on waterways within the boundaries or whether they must link up with the provincial system. I would think it links up to the provincial system, therefore it would involve provincial engineering expertise and that would be the Water Resources Branch of the Department of Natural Resources.

MR. C. MANNES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I'll accept that. It seems to me that - and I can be wrong - that I posed that question to the Minister of Natural Resources last year and I've been given the answer every time I've asked the question that indeed it's the City of Winnipeg's responsibility. I can't accept that totally, so I will pose the same question again to the Minister of Natural Resources during his Estimates. Thank you.

HON. S. USKIW: Just one slight correction. I meant to say the City Engineering Department. I don't think they have a Water Control Department in the City of Winnipeg.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: On a point of order. If we're discussing the - what's the name of your river there? - the La Salle River, that's under provincial jurisdiction; that's a provincial waterway. So my understanding of it, anything that is planned and designed though is with the advice of our honourable friend at the end of the table.

HON. S. USKIW: We just said that.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Right. But, Mr. Minister, I question whether you would allow any structure to go on a connecting road system that was not adequate and although we don't want to mix departments, there is a certain responsibility of the Department of Highways and Transportation in this matter.

HON. S. USKIW: Well, no, Mr. Chairman. The City of Winnipeg who must plan their streets and roads program has to link up with the Department of Water Resources in order to determine the specifications for CFS capacity or whatever, with the culverts or bridges that are installed. I'm sure that is the direct linkage with the Provincial Government, through the Water Resources Branch. The Highways Department has nothing to do with it since we have no jurisdiction in that area.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Assiniboia.

MR. R. NORDMAN: Mr. Chairman, through you to the Minister, we have discussed this prior to now but I still have the concern over the proposed Headingley bypass — (Interjection) — Well, good, we're on good terms to start off with, in other words.

In the Budget, do you have a specific amount of money budgeted for that particular item?

HON. S. USKIW: Yes, we have some money for land acquisition in the Estimates this year.

MR. R. NORDMAN: Well, in a time of constraints such as we are feeling right now would it not be, could we not have some room for thought in here of abandoning this particular project? The citizenry and the business people in the immediate area are bitterly opposed to this change, and some steps were taken to lower the speed limit, and better lighting was provided at strategic locations along the highway as well as asphaltting of some of the shoulders in strategic areas.

On top of that the City of Winnipeg Police Department has been doing a very diligent job of patrolling that area — (Interjection) — No, not me, no, no. But I know they're there, I certainly know they're there.

Due to the fact that the accident rate has been greatly reduced, I'm just wondering if we couldn't give serious consideration to abandoning this particular plan, or are we in a position that we have too much invested in it now to go back?

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, the amount of money we have in the Estimates is quite small and it is not intended that we simply buy up the property. We will only buy where we feel we must buy; where property is either going to be developed or there's some pressure upon us to make a decision. But we have a very small amount in the Estimates for that purpose and it is related to future need.

The solution that the member is proposing, of course, does not resolve the long-term needs of that particular part of Trans-Canada Highway. It may suffice for a short period, but our buying program is based on the long term and we probably will not be building it for a good number of years. In the meantime, we are making sure that we have right-of-way at what we would consider

relatively good value, rather than excessive costing for property after it was developed which would be the case if we didn't acquire it now.

MR. R. NORDMAN: I do have here a series of letters and petitions from the residents of Headingley and the surrounding area, people who are going to be directly affected by this proposed bypass, and I imagine the Minister has also received them. I know that the former Minister of Highways, in the previous government, he has received some; I have received them; the Leader of the Opposition has received them.

You know, there's no mistaking the attitude that prevails in the vicinity. I didn't particularly want to go back into the history of it but originally, when this problem presented itself there was a rash of accidents on that strip. I don't care how good a highway you've got, if the nut behind the wheel is the one that is to blame for the accident. You know, I don't know what else we can do. You could give them a four-lane divided highway and the same people behind the wheel would still have an accident. I don't know that we can blame ourselves for those fatalities that happen, but I would just like the Minister to give serious consideration to abandoning that project.

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, I would like to deal with that expression that the member uses - the "nut behind the wheel" - but which wheel? So often you drive on a congested route where there are no passing lanes and you may have to drive for 10 miles without an opportunity to pass a vehicle because the nut behind the wheel is in front of you, you see.

MR. R. NORDMAN: You've got a point.

HON. S. USKIW: So you have mental fatigue; you have driving fatigue; you feel very uncomfortable about the fact that you can't meet your deadline for your appointment or your meeting, or just getting home, or whatever it is, you're frustrated, and you venture out when it's not safe to do so. That is the human nature of things behind the wheel. So it depends who the nut is and which one.

There's no answer to that other than to build safer highways. When you have traffic that is that congested, then you have to look at building better highways for that particular area and that's what four-laning is all about. It's to allow that person that wants to move along to be able to do so without having one vehicle holding up a whole line of traffic for miles and miles.

MR. R. NORDMAN: Yet, Mr. Chairman, that strip of highway is four lane although it isn't separated, divided.

HON. S. USKIW: Well, that's the other problem, you see, when you have an undivided four-lane highway that has the density of traffic that we are looking at there. No. 9 to Selkirk is another good example. They are what I call death strips. It's inevitable that people will get killed on it by the fact that there is no median protection for people either walking as pedestrians, or making left-turn lanes or whatever it is, the chances of an accident there are just that much greater. It's just a congestion problem and we have to deal with it in a modern way.

MR. R. NORDMAN: One more thing then, Mr. Chairman. Would the Minister then please make an effort to meet with these people in the Headingley area, and lay it on to them as you have laid it on to me?

HON. S. USKIW: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. R. NORDMAN: Mr. Minister, I don't mean that disparagingly at all.

HON. S. USKIW: I didn't get that comment, and it's perhaps better that I didn't.

The member must know that we have had a consultant working on that project. They're having public meetings. We have met in my office with a number of people from the area. There will be another opportunity after we have the final report put together, and in the next month or two that's going to take place.

Now there's no urgency in the sense that nothing is happening anyway. We're not proceeding to construct the expressway there at the moment. There is ample time for all of the opinions to be heard and whatever their value is, of course, will be taken into account and whatever modifications are made along the way.

MR. R. NORDMAN: Mr. Chairman, to the Minister, this has been going on now for several years. It's been hanging on and hanging on, the uncertainty of it, the rumours that fly around, and all I'm asking is that they hear it from the Minister.

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, I think they have had an opportunity to do that. I think we've responded to mail. We've had meetings in my office. I don't know what else I can do until that final report is ready.

MR. R. NORDMAN: Well, after we have the final report.

HON. S. USKIW: When we have that there will be an opportunity for them to discuss it.

MR. R. NORDMAN: Very fine, thank you very much.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand that you're dealing with the acquisition and purchase of right-of-way.

HON. S. USKIW: Planning and Design.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're on Item No. 3.(a).

MR. J. DOWNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister, I'm sure by now has received just a short letter from me, in which I have indicated my feelings toward the highway program, particularly dealing with my constituency in the southwest corner of the province. It would appear, Mr. Chairman, that there is a complete lack of either understanding or ability by this Minister and by this government to comprehend what is going on in that particular area.

I would like to point out, Mr. Chairman, through you to the Minister, and I'm sure that he is well aware of the fact that he has had petitions or resolutions, as

recently as last week, from the Municipality of Pipestone, which I have a copy of, requesting the upgrading of 256, which is between Reston and Sinclair, Cromer, the route in which a lot of the oil from the Waskada oil field comes from.

As well, there have been numerous letters and requests, not only from me but from the residents of the Waskada area, dealing with Highway No. 452, which is the road directly north of Waskada; Highway 251, which is the link between Waskada; and 83; and as well, 251 and Lyleton. That, Mr. Chairman, is the area which we see a lot of heavy traffic, not only the oil well traffic dealing with the product of the production - the crude oil - but as well, the heavy equipment that is being brought in to serve that community.

I want to deal specifically with the road directly north of Waskada. Mr. Chairman, there is a danger there for school buses. There is a danger there for the normal traffic that is carried on that highway because of the dust factor, which a year ago, there was a request put forward to the Minister to do something about it.

As well, the tremendous amount of weight that is now going over that road all the way up to No. 3, over to 83, which is now currently being hammered pretty badly with the weight. Just to bring it into the kind of terms that the average citizen would understand, out of that one oil company alone, out of the Omega field at Waskada, it is my understanding that there is one semi-load of oil every hour going up that highway. That's 452 to No. 3, up 83 to 256, and on to the dump at Cromer, the oil dump. That is two loads or two trucks every hour - one going up and one coming back. That's from one oil field alone. That's not considering the development that's taking place in the Coulter area and, as well, the Lyleton area, which is again coming onstream and a lot of oil is coming out of that area.

Mr. Chairman, the point I'm trying to make, that if this government, if the Department of Highways does not start to deal with it immediately and start to acquire and to upgrade the roads that are serving that new development in Manitoba, we are going to have roads that are in a condition that are going to be hard to salvage. You can't pound roads down and allow them to deteriorate and not even pay attention to them.

I, Mr. Chairman, cannot find one dollar that's allocated to that area. If the Minister of Highways would take into account with his colleagues the amount of revenue, No. 1, that the oil trucks are paying in licences; No. 2, the revenue that the province is getting directly from the taxes on that oil; the taxes that the landowners are paying in income tax to provide their share of the wealth. There's a multitude of income that's coming from that area and not one nickel for the constituency of Arthur, not one nickel, recognizing the fact that's where a tremendous amount of income comes from.

On the other side, Mr. Chairman, we get a little tired of the fact that we have to build, help pay for winter roads to deal with the forest industry, another natural resource which I have no problem with, but year after year we have to go in there and do that. We've never really complained about it. The development of our Hydro projects, Mr. Chairman, we've gone in and spent millions of dollars to build highways for Hydro. There hasn't been any complaints from my constituents of Arthur, Mr. Chairman, but tonight I am sitting here looking at a map that hasn't even had one nickel spent

back in that area to help pay for the kind of road loss that is taking place.

Mr. Chairman, I also feel very strongly that there is a danger for the school children on particularly Highway No. 452, north of Waskada, where we see a lot of children going home on school buses, the dust factor, the crowding of big trucks. There has to be a major development take place with the highway program there, Mr. Chairman, and it should start now, because if we allow it to continue to deteriorate, then we, in fact, are going to be playing catch-up. In that time, Mr. Chairman, we could see the loss of children through accidents; we could see loss of wheels off of vehicles because of the holes that are now being put in place; the breakage of windshields with these big trucks travelling on these roads. Mr. Chairman, I think we've got a very short shift from this particular Minister of Highways. I would like to be corrected. I hope I am wrong, Mr. Chairman; that what I am reading is wrong.

The Member for Inkster indicates that all this take place since they took office. Mr. Chairman, we did have some highway programs taking place in the southwest area and I can name them for him if he likes, but the mainstream of oil in the oil production has come on within the last year and one-half since this government's been in office.

I, Mr. Chairman, again go back to the fact, and I want the Minister to tell me if I'm wrong or if I'm not, that he has received a resolution from the Municipality of Pipestone wanting the upgrading of 256; that he hasn't, in fact, received requests from the people of Waskada and that area to upgrade the highway north of Waskada; that he hasn't received requests from the Town of Melita to do something with Highway 83, which is depleting at a tremendously rapid rate; as well as a resolution or a petition from the southwest corner of the people of Lyleton wanting No. 251 upgraded.

Mr. Chairman, there are people sitting there who are pleading for some attention to be paid to them in highway construction and acquisitions and there is nothing happening. I'm saying as a taxpayer, and people in that area who pay their fair share of taxes, at least give them the assurance tonight that he will put in place - and I think the Minister could do himself political good; I think he could do the province some good and I hope he's listening - a special team of highway people into that area to make recommendations on what the longer-term road system has to be to serve the oil industry. Because it is not getting smaller, Mr. Chairman; it is getting larger, and we need a special task force of highway people to meet with town people, municipal people in the southwest area, representatives of the RMs and those towns, to recommend the kind of road system that we need to, in fact, deal with the economic resource development that is taking place.

Mr. Chairman, if we don't deal with it, as I indicated, we will be playing catch-up road work and it doesn't work. In the long run, it costs us a lot more money than we're ever going to have to - should be paying. I again go back to the revenue that is being paid into the province from that area and it can't be ignored, Mr. Chairman.

Another couple of points that I want to make when I have the floor, Mr. Chairman, and that is some time ago the Minister assured me, a year ago, that before a bypass was put in the Town of Oak Lake, or by the

Town of Oak Lake on No. 1 Highway, that he would have a meeting with the local residents and give them an opportunity to have input where that road is going to go. Did that happen, Mr. Chairman, and where is the bypass going to go by Oak Lake? Is it going to go on the north side? Is one two-lane going to continue through the Town of Oak Lake and one to the north, or where precisely is that bypass going to go, because I do see it is in the acquisition of property? Mr. Chairman, I'll stop and let the Minister answer at this point.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I don't fault the Member for Arthur for making those comments. I have been making those for years, and so it's difficult for me to argue with him. Since the Province of Manitoba took over the main market roads in 1965, we have not yet got to the stage where we have converted those roads into reasonable P.R. standards. We still have 4,000 out of 7,000 miles to do. Now that's a long way to go and it is going to take another couple of decades or more. We've been at it now for almost two decades, and we haven't gone very far. It doesn't seem to matter which government is in power, we don't do much by way of catch-up. We have a hard time to keep going what we have.

MR. H. ENNS: Oh no, that's because you fellows interrupt us every once in a while.

HON. S. USKIW: I think it is probably productive to point out - you know, the member talks about 256 where a lot of work has been done in the last four year and he wants it to continue, and I don't fault him for it. I would think that if the member looked at the traffic count on that highway, on that basis alone we would probably never do anything there, but we recognize that there are other considerations. He has mentioned some of them. But traffic count is an important consideration for people that move around in cars.

In my own backyard, Mr. Chairman, we have Highway 304 running from 59 to Pine Falls with a traffic count of 700 cars a day that hasn't been touched for a decade, has no shoulders, very dangerous curves, a very substandard piece of highway with 700 cars a day using it.

HON. A. MACKLING: What are the numbers down here?

HON. S. USKIW: About 100 or less. No, I don't agree with the Minister of Resources. It doesn't detract from the need because what he is talking about is tonnage movements and that is fair comment, but there is a rationale for both tonnage movement and general traffic. We have many roads in Manitoba that are just crying for attention, much more so than this one, and we have said, no.

Now for the benefit of the Member for Arthur, I would like to tell him that there are things happening on 256. In that oil producing area, we have just agreed, two weeks ago, to extend Highway 41 to 257 in order to facilitate - I'm sorry. The Deputy corrects me - to take over the municipal road which ends up at Highway 41, in other words, from Kirkella down to 256 because of

the oil haul in that area. We have just agreed to do that and I think we have sent a letter indicating that. If we haven't — (Interjection) — yes, we have.

MR. J. DOWNEY: The Member for Virden will be happy.

MR. H. GRAHAM: That's for acquisition of right-of-way, is it?

HON. S. USKIW: No, that's to take over the road from municipal status to provincial status because of the oil haul in that area. I guess that is in the constituency of the Member for Virden. I'm not certain.

Further down, Mr. Chairman, we have been in discussions with the R.M.'s with respect to 256 and with respect to relocation to straighten out some of 256 before we do a rebuilding. That is under way. We have not yet formally taken over the new route, but we are negotiating with them to move 256 over to the west, from the area just south of Cromer down towards St. Claire, so that we don't have that jog in that road. I believe there is a resolution asking for that and we have concurred with that.

So, you know, we are making some moves. They are not all big dollar moves, but they're all in the right direction, so the spirit is there, Mr. Chairman.

With respect to 452 from Waskada north, I took a tour of that area, in fact, that whole area last year, and I had agreed that 452 should be done. It was to be done, but we decided that was one that had to be chopped out when we lost some \$20 million of program value. That's one that had to bite the dust this year, Mr. Chairman, amongst a number of others, but it was my opinion that it should have been done, and it had to be put on the shelf.

Now just while I'm on that one, I want to remind the Member for Arthur whether he can recall who was the Minister when that highway was rebuilt from Waskada north. It wasn't anyone in the last four years, I am told. It was rebuilt during the Burtniak years. Now what the member wants is a little bit of hard surface on it and I don't fault him for that either, but we are just a little short of money this year. So we'll have to be a little more patient on that one, although I concur that there is a need there.

With respect to Trans-Canada Highway, we have concluded what is considered to be a satisfactory agreement with the Oak Lake community as to the location. There have been meetings between the officials of the department and the local citizens, community, and there seems to be a fairly wide consensus as to the location that has now been agreed upon. We are going to proceed on that basis, and that is to the north of Oak Lake.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: I want to pursue one other suggestion that I had and I would hope that the Minister would be somewhat interested in it and proceed to consider it. Whether it was a Progressive Conservative Government that did some roadwork in our area, whether it was a prior Minister who did some, I believe that all governments, regardless of their political stripe, have a responsibility to, in fact, put roads in places for

the people of the Province of Manitoba and not strictly on a political basis.

Will the Minister of Highways consider establishing of - because I have some difficulties just leaving this decision totally to the engineers of the Department of Highways, because I have seen highways built in area that I sometimes would question as the member representing that constituency, as I'm sure other members of other constituencies would have difficulties in seeing justifications for those roads - a local committee of R.M.s and towns that are in that area, resource-producing area, where in fact they could sit down through a task force approach and do some local prioritization on the kind of road development that should be done in that area, not leave it totally in the hands of the engineers, not leave it totally in the hands of the partisanship approach by either of the political parties, but have more local input, because the Minister indicates that it was a political decision by his colleagues, he wanted the road built north of Waskada.

I hope they appreciate the fact that there could be some school children that bite the dust in that area if, in fact, it isn't dealt with, because to see that road at 4:00 in the afternoon with semis' tailgate to front bumper, Mr. Chairman, with the dust as high as the hydro wires and not able to see what is coming one way or the other, both big trucks meeting and school buses on that road, is not a situation that I want to be responsible for as an MLA. I know this Minister of Highways, as well, does not want to be the Minister responsible if a tragic accident were to take place, and I'm not trying to paint a hand-wringing situation that may or may not happen. The potential hazard is there and I want to make it very clear on this record that I have put it here with that concern in mind because it is, in fact, a matter of dealing with heavy truck transportation, school buses, and normal traffic that the farm community would use it for enroute between Waskada and No. 3 Highway. It is not just a matter of the weight; it is a matter of the danger factor.

Dealing with Highway 256, and the Minister refers to a count of - and I'm talking particularly between the Reston portion of 256, No. 2 Highway and Cromer, and I do appreciate the Minister has made some attempt to straighten it out - Mr. Chairman, I have to again bring to the attention of the committee, I would question the Department of Highways' statistics or traffic count, when I know for sure that there are at least 50 big trucks daily in a 24-hour period going up loaded and coming back empty - 50 trucks. That is not considering the fact that there is a lot of grain hauled on that particular route; that there is a lot of traffic moving between the Town of Cromer and Reston. It's a trading centre. I would challenge any Minister or any member of his department to go out and sit on that road, because he's got some hundreds of staff that are going to be maintained on unemployment this year without a job to do because of the cutback of some \$20 million. There are many people in his department that should have nothing else to do but go and sit on an approach and count the traffic physically. They have no other job to do, Mr. Chairman. You know, it may take quite a few of them. If there are 10 trucks, they may need 10 people to count them, but he's going to have them, Mr. Chairman. That's one each.

But I challenge the Department of Highways and this Minister and this government to come up and prove

that there aren't more than 100 vehicles a day on that particular section of road. I would bet, Mr. Chairman, there are 100 big trucks, excluding all the other traffic that takes place. Mr. Chairman, they may be able to put their highway counters on the road. I remember as a schoolboy we used to increase the traffic count for them quite readily, so the whole question of traffic count could vary.

Mr. Chairman, the Minister has put his points on the record, but I again ask him specifically, would he consider the establishment of a local task force of people because if he remembers correctly, the Minister of Economic Development and some of his other colleagues had a big meeting in Melita, a big meeting in Waskada, telling the people what the oil industry was going to do for them. Now, what is the government going to do for the oil industry to serve that community, precisely dealing with roads? If he could see fit to invite the mayors and the reeves of some of those communities to put on a committee of road recommendations, to sit down with his engineers and come up with some possible solutions, then I think he would gain a lot more marks than he is at this particular time. Granted, I don't suppose there would be many political marks in that area for him if that's what he's after, but at least I think he would do the industry that's paying a pretty big portion of some of their bills now in both highway licences and big trucks, as well as the revenue taxes that are coming from the province.

You know, getting back to the staff of the Department of Highways, when the oil industry started to take off down there, there was no shortage of government inspectors there stopping trucks. It was not uncommon to continually see the flashing lights of the Department of Highways stopping, checking licences, and well they should - I think that's their job - but I think in return, Mr. Chairman, for the licences that the people are paying they should get some roads to drive on.

I'll let the Minister answer on my suggestion of a local task force to make recommendations on the upgrading of those roads, Mr. Chairman.

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, I think we pretty well have all of the mechanism that is necessary to respond positively to that specific suggestion; would result in the springing up of hundreds of such task forces throughout the province promoting their local issues, and we do have some of them. We have the 250 Association. There is always that kind of thing under way somewhere and we've responded to them. — (Interjection) — Yes, 355; 83; Yellowhead. We have all kinds of those and we just don't have enough money to be able to respond to them the way we would like to. To set up another one isn't going to change the numbers in this year's Estimates, and we have had discussions and communications from municipal people in that area, which is the normal way of communication on these kinds of issues, and I'm not unaware of the need, Mr. Chairman.

To be more precise about the traffic counts, I have to admit that I used my memory bank when I talked about 256, but I also have to admit that there are variations on a stretch of road, depending on what happens in a particular local situation. Where the oil fields are producing, naturally there will be sections of

that road that are much more densely travelled, if you like, than other sections of the same highway and that has to be looked at. That is a small point, but I'm prepared to bring to the committee when it next meets our traffic count assessments for that area, if the member wishes. I should have had it handy here in any event. I don't think I can say very much except that we are limited this year because of the funds that we must work with and until that changes, you know, we are not going to be able to do too much.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I have one other area that I want to ask the Minister about and that's on the Treesbank ferry, the bridge that has been requested on 340 over the Assiniboine River, at what particular stage is the acquisition of property to build the bridge or to proceed with that particular project?

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't know what the figure is; maybe the staff can help me with the figure on it. The recollection is that that's about a million-dollar question and the people that live in that area — (Interjection) —

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please.

HON. S. USKIW: The utilization factor notwithstanding would be fairly light and there are other ways of getting around the area and I find it difficult to allocate \$1 million dollars to an area like that when we're so short of funds.

Mr. Chairman, just to complete that statement, that is just for the bridge. There would be many additional dollars spent for approaches and roadway connections and so on. So we're talking about a lot of money for an area that is very much of a low density, low population.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, in concluding my comments, I have no choice but to communicate to the constituency of Arthur and those people who have for the last year, been expecting the positive response to this government. I appreciate the fact that the Minister of Highways is somewhat overridden by some of his colleagues, such as the Minister of Natural Resources or individuals who do not appreciate the kind of economic activity; that he's overridden by some of the individuals in taking money for northern roads, Mr. Chairman, where there is no attention paid to the safety of the children who travel on those same kinds of roads and any consideration given to the safety factor that I am concerned about.

All I can say, Mr. Chairman, is that this government under the premiership of Howard Pawley is proving to be the kind of non-caring, misdirected government that the people in that area suspect that he is. The Minister of Highways, I can appreciate the difficulty he has, but I can assure him that he can take a message to his Premier that if he ever comes through that area again without having some response to the people who have waited for him to produce something that would give them some kind of feeling that at least they were a part of Manitoba - but that isn't apparent, Mr. Chairman.

There is no move by this Premier who toured through that whole area, wringing his hands and all he came

up with, Mr. Chairman, was that he thought that the priority item was that there were so many people came to see him, having coffee, that they had a problem with foreign ownership of land in the constituency of Arthur. Well, if he missed the point, Mr. Chairman, of the concerns of the people of southwest and he communicates to those people, or tries to come through that area again without paying attention to their concerns, then I have to say that he is a bigger disappointment than they now think. — (Interjection) — That's right. The Member for Lakeside make it very plain - more arenas in Winnipeg and less roads for the oil-producing areas.

I regret very much, because I had thought, Mr. Chairman, that this government was fair, that it treated people equally and fairly, but they're proving today that those people who pay the bills can go plumb to the dickens, that they're going to siphon those funds off and put them into areas of their own political concern. I would hope that the Premier will make a tour through that constituency again sometime in the near future. I would hope he would take a tour through that constituency to hear first-hand and to see the difficulties he's putting that industry through as well as the danger - and this point I want to make and the Premier, I hope, is told this or reads it - he's allowing, the danger that he's putting those children to and the dust conditions on that road particularly north of Waskada, he's had warnings for the last year-and-a-half, and if there is a major or a disastrous accident takes place in that area, this Premier has to wear that for the rest of his life.

Mr. Chairman, we pray to God that it doesn't happen but I want to make sure that I'm giving this government, this Premier, lots of warning that if it does, that he will be the one that will be sorry for it and the people will never forget him for it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I know what the member is saying, but he is overdramatizing a bit. I can point to numerous locations where that argument can be applied, toured every district - well I have to apologize, I haven't toured one and that's District 12 - but all of the other ones I have covered so far. I have been shown sites, river crossings by antiquated bridges, now one-laners, where that case can be made, that, yes, if there's ever a head-on collision or a death here or whatever, someone should pay the price.

I have one of those in my own constituency. I want to invite the Member for Arthur down there for a fishing retreat one day at his leisure and have him cross a long bridge over the Winnipeg River, which was a converted railroad bridge, into a highway bridge. One has to be awfully careful when one is crossing that if one is meeting another vehicle, to avoid collision. The price tag on that one is in the millions of dollars if we were to replace it - \$10 million I'm told - and we keep looking at it and we keep putting it on the shelf, Mr. Chairman, because of the price tag.

So the Member for Arthur is not alone in feeling that way. I've been feeling that way for years and still do and I happen to have charge of the program and I still find it difficult to allocate \$10 million to the Winnipeg River bridge. So that is a problem, but we have to live with those realities.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I didn't mean to overdramatize it and the Minister does make a case

that I certainly can't hold anybody responsible when an accident takes place. But I want to make it very clear that there aren't 50 semitrailers hauling oil or going empty over that bridge daily as there is on that road north of Waskada, and that's the main point that I want to make. There is a pretty major difference to the two cases and I want that to be on the record as well.

I just wanted that picture to be drawn and if I have overdramatized it, then I have. — (Interjection) — I won't withdraw it, Mr. Chairman, but I do want this Minister of Highways to take to his Premier the very fact that he did tour that constituency, he did say that he was on a fact-finding mission. He found out a few facts but he seems to have priorities elsewhere that he's dealing with and is literally telling us that we really don't matter in this provincial society. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Virden.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's very interesting to go through the various road programs but I understand we're on Planning and Design and I would like to get back to that subject and offer the Minister some of the concerns that I have in the Planning section and possibly try and save him some money.

I refer, Mr. Chairman, in particular, to plans that the Minister must have in his department for the Yellowhead Highway, No. 16. No. 16 is rapidly becoming the second Trans-Canada Highway in Western Canada. It's a highway, that each year the use is increasing steadily. The use is changing mainly to one of heavy traffic and we are having a problem on the Yellowhead now with heavy traffic, where there are a lot large trucks, heavily laden, that are using that highway and I have to give the truckers a great deal of credit, because they are very courteous drivers. If a truck is traveling at 45 miles an hour and there is a lot of traffic piled up behind, and because it's only a two-lane highway, they will pull over on the shoulder to allow traffic to pass. But there's a very real danger when they pull onto the shoulder to allow traffic to pass, because the shoulders are gravel and large heavy trucks will throw a lot of stones up. So if there's traffic behind, there's a great deal of reluctance to pass when they pull over on the shoulder because of the flying stones that come up from the truck, when they have given them the courtesy of the centre of the road to get past.

I was wondering if the Minister has given any consideration to the paving of shoulders on the Yellowhead Highway. I suggested to him as a cost-saving measure, we are now approaching position where there are sections of the Yellowhead today, which according to the standards used by the department, qualify it for twinning, and the cost of twinning that highway is exorbitant. I would suggest to the Minister that the department look seriously at the alternative of paving the shoulders rather than twinning the highway. It would allow for substantial increase in the use of that highway without undue hazard to the traffic, and it would be a cost-saving measure over the other alternative, which is twinning the highway. I would appreciate the Minister's interest or his comments in that possibility.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, maybe this is the appropriate time to mention to the Member for Virden

and members of the committee that at last we have, for the first time, completed the paving of our Trunk Highway System - the last few miles of the Trunk Highway System in Manitoba was completed last year and that was up on No. 20. Up until this point in time, we never had all of our trunk highways paved, so it is, I guess, a milestone, if you like.

With respect to the Yellowhead, I think we all recognize that it needs tremendous amount of improvements and they are under way, have been under way now for some years. It's a very important section between Neepawa and Minnedosa, I believe, that has to be looked at. I don't know whether we can argue that we can speed that process up, given the constraints that we have to work under, but we recognize that the need is there.

We have been paving a three-foot strip on each side, additional to the regular lane width on the Yellowhead, in order to allow a better passing situation. The cost of going the full amount is horrendous. It's almost like a four-lane highway system, because you have to put your strength on full width when you do that, if you at all expect to use the shoulders for that purpose. We just don't see that we can afford that. It's a very expensive proposition and it seems that there are higher priorities at the present time. It may be something that one might consider in the future, but I would think we would even have to widen further if we were to pave shoulders, there would have to be further widening in order to accommodate a paved shoulder. So we're looking at very big dollars there, Mr. Chairman. I'm not saying it wouldn't be desirable, but awfully expensive and our priorities just wouldn't permit for that at the present time.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm trying to save the Minister dollars, not have him spend more. I think that perhaps it's time his department takes a good hard look at the standards they are setting for the building and the construction of highways. Because I happen to believe, and I've seen it in other jurisdictions, where they do not have to widen any further to pave the shoulders, where in fact, they have paved the shoulders, and their cost is not that much extra and they have the opportunity, both in Saskatchewan and Alberta, as well as B.C. - B.C. naturally in the mountains, you have a much different program, but in the interior they do have paved shoulders, and their entire grade width is consistent with our grade width. It is not that much wider than what we have at the present time.

So I don't think it is absolutely necessary that we have to have a complete regrading program again, just to pave the shoulders. I think it's entirely possible to put a 10 or a 12 foot shoulder, fully paved on there, that would not be an exorbitant cost and it would give you the increased capacity that the Minister is going to have to look at, because we are reaching maximum densities very rapidly in certain sections of that highway and we have to do something. I'm suggesting to him that he pave the shoulder, rather than go to the expense of twinning.

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't foresee a need for twinning on the Yellowhead for a long, long time and I don't think we can accept - at least not at the present time - the suggestion that is offered.

I want to mention something that might be of interest to members with respect to the traffic density and I'm now going to talk about tonnage traffic. It's a bit of a shocker - I didn't realize that things were that bad, but at the Headingley scale, February of this year over February of last year, we witnessed a 60 percent reduction of truck traffic. That tells us quite a bit about economic conditions. Now, hopefully those will not last, those conditions will not last for too long, but in fact at the moment there is quite a diminishing number of trucks moving throughout the highways in Manitoba, because they don't have the goods to haul.

MR. H. GRAHAM: I should also report to the Minister, although he may have some reports in his office, that we see changing patterns develop in the movement of goods and the pattern that seems to be developing in the potash industry, is a move away from the railways to trucks and a tremendous amount of increase in the trucking of potash through Manitoba that has occurred in the past year. It's a brand new volume of traffic that has not occurred in the past, but it has occurred in the last 12 months, and is still presently occurring. I'm talking about the 50 to 80 trucks per day of potash coming out from Esterhazy, by truck, down - I presume they go south from Brandon, although I'm not too sure where they cross into the States on the Eastern Terminal. But they do use the Yellowhead on the western side of the province and that traffic increase in volume there is tremendous in the last 12 months.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Gladstone.

MRS. C. OLESON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, first of all, would of course, like to comment that I, like some of the other members from southwestern Manitoba, have been disappointed in the plans that were circulated by the Minister as to the work in my constituency, but I can see the reason for it and I will look forward to next year's Estimates, including great things for Gladstone.

In the meantime, I would like to ask the Minister about the Brandon area traffic study. What was the cost of the original tender for that study?

HON. S. USKIW: What study was that?

MRS. C. OLESON: The Brandon area traffic study.

HON. S. USKIW: I would say a good guess would be about one-quarter of a million dollars, give or take \$20,000 one way or the other - probably a little under a quarter-of-a-million.

MRS. C. OLESON: And what was the final cost of the study?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, that's the figure that I'm giving the member; I don't have the precise amount here. I can get that for her, but it's in that neighborhood, about a quarter-of-a-million.

MRS. C. OLESON: Was that close to what the figure had been provided for that study, the initial cost?

HON. S. USKIW: No. There were two adjustments to the original figure which brought it up to that level. I can't recall what the original figure was.

MRS. C. OLESON: Could you get that information?

HON. S. USKIW: Yes that's readily available.

MRS. C. OLESON: Okay, thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. D. SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First, I think I'd like to commend the Minister first for the courageous approach that he has taken both in the Estimates here and in the preparation of the Estimates for the department . . .

MR. H. ENNS: Suicidal is a better word.

MR. D. SCOTT: . . . in recognizing the difficulties of the cost restraints the province has, and recognizing that in highways, although it's important to maintain highways and maintaining the standards of our highways as best we can, there is a time when we have to look twice at the expansion and upgrading into higher levels, and higher standards in some areas.

In the past, I think we've jumped on a band wagon a bit quick in some of our twinning into four-lane highways. I'd like to know how our standards here, as far as for using the number of the traffic volumes that we use in Manitoba, to justify twinning of a highway, how that would compare with other jurisdictions?

I'm thinking, I guess, in particular that our largest neighbour being that of Ontario, and what kind of tonnage, or what kind of vehicle traffic per hour we use or have used in the past?

HON. S. USKIW: The staff advise me that it's very difficult to draw comparisons because of many variations in circumstances. Population density is one. The southern part of Ontario for example, they don't only four-lane, they multi-lane, 16 lanes, and 12 lanes, 8 lanes, and 6 lanes. So it's very difficult to draw a comparison.

While in northern Ontario you don't see too much of any of that kind of work so, you know, it's hard to draw that comparison.

Saskatchewan has emphasized north-south connections more than Trans-Canada Highway. They are now going back to Trans-Canada Highway as their four-laning priority. So, you know, it's very difficult for us to draw comparisons in that way.

What we do have to keep in mind is the service that a roadway provides. Once traffic starts to back up, and once your accident rates are up and so on, those are the signals that are so visible that one must deal with them.

MR. D. SCOTT: I'm wondering, and this goes back a few years, but what kind of standards would have been used to justify the twinning of a highway and the building of two very expensive overpasses; one over a railway, and another over the Trans-Canada Highway on Highway 12 going into Steinbach?

I just cannot imagine the Province of Ontario investing the \$8 million to \$10 million, which I understand it would cost to finish that road, for servicing that sort of a community. It just wouldn't be in the books at all. I just cannot see them committing that kind of funds.

MR. H. GRAHAM: That services Winnipeg.

MR. H. ENNS: Come on, why didn't you say it? The Mennonites still drive horses and buggies.

HON. S. USKIW: Perhaps, Mr. Chairman, others would want to make a contribution while I recapture my voice.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Well, Mr. Chairman, other than advising the Member for Inkster, of course, that Inkster Boulevard has been doubled lane for many years, I do have a question to Planning and Design.

MR. D. SCOTT: It isn't doubled, it isn't doubled all the way, there's quite a chunk of it that isn't.

MR. H. ENNS: Most of the way.

MR. D. SCOTT: Well.

MR. H. ENNS: But the question I have to Planning and Design, and the Minister may want to take this a notice while he gets the information for the Member for Inkster, that has to do with current departmental planning and design for the extension of Highway 67. I know the Minister, and the department is well aware of that situation. It was an ongoing concern. I know that the Minister will be aware of the buzz words that are used, the south route versus the three mile corner, etc.

HON. S. USKIW: We need your advice, Harry.

MR. H. ENNS: But I would ask the Minister what is the current planning and design for potential extension of Highway 67 in that area of the province? Does it include, for instance, a river crossing?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I would start by responding to the Member for Inkster and indicate to him that traffic buildups are not always consistent. It depends on the locations, it depends on the nature of the highway, whether it's a highway that services a local need as well as a resort need, and therefore at certain periods of the year and certain parts of the week you have extreme density, while in other times you don't have as great a need for that kind of service.

So we have to make some decisions based on what we consider to be the need on its worst condition, if you like. That's more from a safety point of view, and modify somewhat from that position back to measure the actual daily traffic that is local to the area and so on, or if it's traffic that moves from one community to another on a regular basis.

No. 75 Highway is a good example of fairly consistent traffic movements. No. 44 Highway is a highway that peaks on weekends all summer long and severely peaks - there must be 20,000 cars in a day or more, because the average is about 4,000 east of 59 Highway on an annual daily basis. So during that summer period the peak must be very, very high.

The same can be said, well, no, the Highway to Steinbach has more of a level situation in that (a), there's

no railroad in Steinbach, and that's something that ought to be noted. Their only means of transportation is trucks and cars. They don't have a railway line. So their traffic pattern is more consistent than some of the other routes that we talk about.

I don't think that I would want to make the argument that the twinning of No. 12 to Steinbach was a mistake for that very reason. I've travelled that highway many times, and many times I know that I have been frustrated in following a person that had a lot of time and where the traffic oncoming was such that I couldn't get around a slow driver to get on with where I was going, so I have no negative reflections on the decision of the previous administration in that regard. I think the evidence was there and they dealt with it. We will be doing similar things, I'm sure, in other parts of Manitoba.

The program that we have before us is the beginning of that same exercise on Highway 44 to Beausejour, which will take several years to complete, but the beginning is already there for the same reason; the difference there being that we have a massive peak situation during the summer season that simply aggravates a local situation.

I don't know that I can give the kind of answer to the Member for Inkster that he might be looking for. We have to look at statistics; we have to look at accident rates; what do we feel is optimum from the point of view of costs and benefits. That's all I can say in response to his question.

With respect to Highway 67 that the Member for Lakeside raises, I don't know why the Member for Lakeside didn't do it when he was Minister, excepting that he had the same problem that I guess I am having, trying to find a consensus in a community that doesn't want to have a consensus. We have received petitions, several hundred names, suggesting certain locations. We have received other petitions suggesting existing locations. I have given an offer to the R.M. of Rockwood and to the Town of Stonewall.

I want to tell the Member for Lakeside what my preference would be. My own personal preference would be a southern location, but I would like to unload the northern one as a provincial responsibility. I don't think we can afford two access routes into the Town of Stonewall, just simply because of the cost of each. We are looking at millions of dollars, and a mile apart to have two access routes into a small community is not what I would consider wise spending by any department, but certainly not by the Department of Highways.

If the local council would take from our responsibility the existing route under municipal jurisdiction, then I would be inclined to say, yes, let's link up 67 in a straight east-west system which bypasses the Town of Stonewall, marginally speaking, just on the edge of the town, and carries on all the way to Lower Fort Garry. That would make sense. We would have to also make a new connection at No. 7, because I wouldn't want to have the traffic entering No. 7 turning right or left, depending on direction, and then making another turn on 67, east of No. 7. It would create safety problems and, in particular, on an expressway. So if we were to do that, we would have to, in my opinion and I haven't discussed that with - oh yes, we have, very briefly - our engineers, but it would seem to me that we would have to make a new crossing and abandon the old one to tie in the highway from the east of No. 7 to the portion going west of No. 7.

I'm not sure that there is any great need for a connection across the Red River for Highway 67. I don't know where that traffic is going to be going. The traffic volume west of Stonewall is about 100 vehicles a day; east of Stonewall to Winnipeg, only for those three miles, it's about 4,000 a day, I think, between - yes, I think that's right - but it cuts off at No. 7 Highway. There isn't a great deal of movement between the Red River and Stonewall that would warrant that kind of connection at this point in time at least.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hour being 10:00, what is the pleasure of the members of the committee?

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I could just pursue this point to a conclusion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Carry on for awhile.
The Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, aside from that little difference, of course, the Minister says, why didn't I resolve the question when I was a Minister, there is of course the little difference because I have to get elected in that part of the world and so I'm sure the Minister appreciates that is a fundamental difference. However, I appreciate the Minister's comments with respect to his preference with respect to extension of 67. Would the Minister be prepared to put on record that, in fact, from a Planning and Design position - and I say without trying to be cute about it - as I recall, my information in the time that I was in the Minister's position that that in fact was the, if you want to call it, original Planning and Design destination of a future extension of Highway 67.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, that is correct. I don't know what that has to do with the bridge question over the Red River. There is a bridge at Lockport. Highway 67 terminates at Lower Fort Garry, which is about a mile-and-a-half north of Lockport or two miles, somewhere in there. So logically, I guess what the Member for Lakeside is talking about is a future design which would link up 67 directly accessing the Lockport Bridge, or a new bridge that might be built beside the existing one.

That's the question that I am raising with the department. I don't know that we can justify two bridges a half a mile or three-quarters of a mile apart. The need for a new bridge is in the Selkirk community because of the flood problems in the area and because of the tonnage limitations that we must impose on that old Selkirk Bridge in order to give it additional life. The feeling in that area, the feeling of the Selkirk community is that should be a northern location rather than a southern location, and I can understand that from a Chamber of Commerce point of view.

There is a bit of a push for making the Interlake a major route that would connect up with 59 and 44. That would be through the Narrows and across at Selkirk, for example. That makes a lot of sense if you want to talk about another major route, because the 67 route runs parallel to Trans-Canada Highway, just a few miles apart, and I just can't imagine us spending tens of millions of dollars creating a major highway

system so close to Trans-Canada when I think that there is a lot to be offered via the Interlake, Ste. Rose, Dauphin and on.

The Yellowhead already does its work for Neepawa, Gladstone, Minnedosa, Russell, those communities. I think it would be wise to look at Dauphin, Ste. Rose, as to how they fit into the highway pattern and how the public would want to travel as an alternate route somewhat away from Trans-Canada Highway.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Well, Mr. Chairman, allow me to put on the record that I, by and large, intend to support that Minister's remarks that he just made. I'm aware, because I travel that part of the province quite frequently, that the traffic really does diffuse north or south at No. 7, you know, and the justification for continuation of a major program crossing the river so close to parallel bridges, I would have to share the Minister's comments and I'm pleased to hear him state the same.

Allow me then just to come back to the question. No. 1, I'm aware, of course, of fairly substantial costs that the department has incurred in providing the access at what are now called the Northern Road, or the 3-mile corner, in linking, crossing and accessing traffic to the now access road to Stonewall with the new facility, the double-lane No. 7 facility. Can I just leave it at this and that'll be my final comment on this? Will that not necessarily prejudice the department's position in the future in terms of resolving the north-south route question?

There is, I think, a legitimate concern by my taxpayers in the Stonewall area who, after all, see the department expending considerable monies in making that a safe and properly planned and designed access to Stonewall at this time, but that need not be read necessarily as a final and total commitment as to future designation of Highway No. 67, that there is in the department's mind and this government's mind the distinct possibility if, as the Minister says, we clean up our own act in Stonewall, in Rockwood. If we can provide the Minister with the kind of necessary support that favours what I still believe to be - and I think the Minister confirmed to some extent in his own words and he was speaking for the department - a kind of basic favour of the natural southern extension of 67, without implications of future river crossings, but simply allowing it in a properly planned and designed way to meld and meet with No. 7, No. 8 and subsequently No. 9, along with what we call the bog road, the department's position is not prejudiced because of the crossings and infrastructure that you've made at the present northern access to No. 7 Highway.

I appreciate the Minister's comments about provision of two access routes in effect from that eastern portion to the community of Stonewall. I can't leave on the record his comments about serving that small, insignificant community of Stonewall. Stonewall happens to be a thriving, growing centre in the Interlake and I'm sure if I just gave the Minister an opportunity he'll want to correct that.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I want the member to know that I didn't say "small and insignificant."

Stonewall is a very important community, but it is indeed a small community and it doesn't warrant two expensive access routes into that community. We can't afford to give each community such expensive access routes in the multiple and we must choose between one or the other and I'm prepared to make a deal with the local people, Mr. Chairman. But I don't want to get into a speech because the member has the floor.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are we ready to pass 3.(a) and (b)?

HON. S. USKIW: No. The member has the floor.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, just a final note. I read the Minister's comments correctly, then. His preference would be for natural extension on the southern road of No. 67 provided that the communities of Stonewall and Rockwood would co-operate with him in making that possible.

Mr. Chairman, it's hard to record a nod on the public record.

HON. S. USKIW: I haven't got the floor.

MR. H. ENNS: I'm relinquishing the floor.

HON. S. USKIW: The member wants to give me the floor, Mr. Chairman. I tend to think that that is probably a good arrangement, but I have to repeat that the co-operation that the member alludes to has to be the takeover of the existing route. We are not prepared to spend \$2 million or \$3 million on rebuilding the existing route, and another \$2 million or \$3 million to provide a new route. It's just too much money for what is needed there and I believe that the Member for Lakeside agrees with that analysis and I appreciate his support.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 3.(a) and (b) - the Member for Inkster.

MR. D. SCOTT: Mr. Chairman, I just have two short questions to follow up what I was going after before. I'm wondering how much the reduction in a speed limit to 90 kilometres an hour which has been in a couple years now, how much that impacts the problem of having traffic boxed up behind vehicles or with slower moving because it's about six or seven miles an hour different, traffic is about 55 miles an hour in old terms?

HON. S. USKIW: We don't have that information here, but we'll check to see whether we have that so that we have the information when we next meet.

MR. D. SCOTT: I would think that those sorts of reductions should have, or as the speed is reduced, the kind of backlogs on the traffic of people trying to get by, or bottlenecks, I might say, would be reduced. The other thing is, has the department considered at all - as I've seen in some other jurisdictions in driving through - instead of twinning a whole highway where it's not that high a demand area, that they go for 15 miles or so for two lanes, then they go into four lanes for a period of, maybe, three miles or four miles to let the people get by. That way it doesn't gobble up anywhere near as much farmland and it's something I'd like to see protected is to not be taking too much

farmland for our highways and it does not then impede the traffic because no one has got any more than 15 minutes behind someone, if they can't pass and in most instances to be breaking the speed limit if they wanted to pass any way. I know I do usually when I . . .

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I don't look upon four-laning as a major burden that we can't meet, because I look at four-laning in a very limited way. Manitoba's population is not growing at all hardly, it's a static population, therefore, the traffic densities are not building up all over the province. If they are, they're only building up around Winnipeg. There may be a bit of it around Brandon, from Brandon to No. 2 Highway maybe, on No. 10, something like that. There aren't many miles that we're talking about in essence. You know, No. 75 Highway, if we get that done to Morris, Manitoba, that's about as far as we'll go for many years. No. 59 is almost finished; it only needs one more contract and it's finished as far as twinning is concerned. No. 44 is only a 16-mile stretch and that's all we'll be doing there for years and years, but it'll take out that bottleneck. The only long-term one is Trans-Canada and we don't have to push that any faster than we are able to. In fact, we've slowed it down this year. The only other one I can think of is the No. 8 Highway to the beach areas, west of the lake; that is still a problem highway and we will have to do something there. How many miles is it to Winnipeg Beach? From Parkdale, where we are now, it's about 30 miles on No. 8. I don't see this - I believe that by the end of a decade that the four-laning question will be behind us in any event. It's not something that is going to be there forever, unless we have a major population explosion, which I don't foresee in Manitoba. So it's not as if we have a long way to go with it, and we can pace it. Once we complete the critical areas, we can pace the more distant points a bit more.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do the members still want to go on?

MR. D. ORCHARD: Oh sure. We're going to finish this tonight, Mr. Chairman.

HON. S. USKIW: We want to finish this item.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, we want to pass this item, right?

The Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Out of curiosity, could the Minister indicate what the traffic count on the Easterville road is west of P.R. 327?

HON. S. USKIW: I have the figures, Mr. Chairman, but not here. We can get them for him.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I think that would have been . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: They'll be available. 3.(a) . . .

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, while we are on that, perhaps I should respond a little more. The interest of the Easterville road lies in the fact that we will be cutting off about 70 miles of distance between The Pas and

Winnipeg, so that will make quite a difference in traffic patterns once that road is finished. Seventy miles is a considerable saving to a lot of people that commute between or that travel between The Pas and Winnipeg, and Flin Flon, it's that whole area. So it's a significant improvement for those people in that part of Manitoba.

MR. D. ORCHARD: The Minister is correct, and I just want to remind the Minister of significant improvements in other parts of Manitoba that have been neglected.

HON. S. USKIW: Fair comment.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Can the Minister indicate what has happened in the Morden-Winkler corridor? We were planning for the upgrading and four-laning between those two communities because of a significantly high traffic count.

HON. S. USKIW: The planning people tell me that we're at the stage of having a number of plans or options there, but we haven't gone beyond that at this stage.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I would like to volunteer my services at some time in the off-summer to have a look at those plans and critique them along with the Minister in full co-operation.

How are the barriers on the Perimeter. . .

HON. S. USKIW: You gave that position up two years ago.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I am offering my services to help you, not hinder you. How are the barriers on Perimeter Highway working out?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the area in question there has to do with the severity of winter. Since those were built or established on that route, we haven't had winter to speak of, that is with a lot of snow and stormy activity and so on. Otherwise, it appears that they've been well accepted by the public.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Would you suspect they have been well enough accepted to install them between Headingley and the Perimeter?

HON. S. USKIW: I know what the member is leading up to. He's trying to save us a lot of money and that's fair game. The problem is, we have to have turning lanes and just putting up a stone barrier doesn't give us the flexibility that we need for turning lanes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 3.(a) - the Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That, of course, could be worked into turning lanes with a little bit of the engineering ingenuity that we have in the department. I am sure that they can come up with a design there that would work quite nicely and avoid some, I think, \$24 or \$25 million was the last number I took a look at for that 4.5 miles.

P.T.H. 10 south of Brandon, at one time there was some talk about twinning that. I don't see any survey

and design or planning on that. There is an area where some of the hills are the problem.

HON. S. USKIW: That's a section of No. 10, that I am familiar with, Mr. Chairman. I think I alluded to that a moment ago in response to the Member for Inkster. No. 10 is one of them in that Brandon area that would be a candidate for standard service improvement, but I believe the need for it terminates at No. 2 Highway. I believe the traffic count south of No. 2 falls off rather dramatically. No. 2 Highway tends to funnel traffic into No. 10 and into Brandon. So I would think that stretch would be a candidate for major improvement, and we are at the stage of preliminary design on that.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Having driven that section a few times, I find the biggest - probably an improvement that would take you a long way in towards the turn of the century would be a few extra lanes going uphill. That's that hilly stretch, particularly from the north junction of No. 2 into Brandon. Wherever the department has installed that extra passing lane on the upside of one of those hills, it certainly helped a lot of the traffic bottlenecks.

I think that might be a minimal expenditure that could well take you through, because I'm sure the Minister recognizes, as does his staff in Planning and Design, that it takes quite a crystal ball to envision what an investment in highway which, you know, is going to be a 50-year investment, how much of it is going to be required 50 years from now, what our traffic patterns are going to be like. The dramatic drop-off that the Minister alluded to at Headingley, a 60 percent drop-off in truck traffic, certainly we hope is a temporary thing, but there has been a lot of discussion lately about very major improvements in our rail system. I think it's conceivable that rail could take over a lot of the inner-city hauling on a number of things and remove some of the pressure on our highway systems.

Mr. Chairman, I think that is about all the questions I have on that. The only question I would like to finish on is, I see that Planning and Design has lost - what? - 2.79 SMYs. What are those staff that are no longer with Planning and Design?

HON. S. USKIW: Most of that is summer students. They're normally hired for data collection, Mr. Chairman.

MR. D. ORCHARD: The drop in expenditures, is that envisioned to seriously impede the Planning and Design function of the department?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, that is a marginal drop. No doubt that we are slowing down the overall program and this section will feel the impact of that. It will result in, I suppose, what you might call less adequate data in dealing with subdivision applications. That's what this area is involved with.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 3.(a)—pass; 3.(b)—pass.

Resolution 98, Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$1,859,700 for Highways and Transportation for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1984—pass.

Committee rise.

SUPPLY - EDUCATION

MR. CHAIRMAN, P. EYLER: The committee come to order. We are considering the Estimates of the Department of Education, Item 3.(a), Financial Support, School Grants and Other Assistance.

The Member for Kirkfield Park.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Mr. Chairman, going back to the Public Schools Finance Board and the new policy with the \$3 million block funding, I guess you would call it, to the school divisions and the priorities being given to the renovations to divisions, does that mean that the priorities would be given to, say, divisions who have let their schools run down? When I'm saying that, I'm thinking of the school division in my area, which has always had a long-term policy of upgrading no matter what happens with the Public Schools Finance Board, and there's just been an ongoing facility renovation with the division. I just would like that part explained a little bit further, what the plans are in that area.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Education.

HON. M. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, I think that the miscellaneous capital portion of the Public Schools Finance Board task has been what I might call a festering sore for a number of years, where school divisions were required to go through hoops, submitting a lot of information and a lot of requests over what we would consider to be minor, miscellaneous capital items.

Now, there is a difference between major renovation items and the minor, or the miscellaneous capital. So that on the one hand the policy, the three-year capital plan, that is the policy for giving approval to the building of schools also includes major renovation. Any major renovation would fall into that category. The \$3 million is strictly in the area that you would call miscellaneous capital and it is the little things, the minor renovations and repairs that they do around the school all the time just in order to keep it up.

As I said previously they had to submit proposals and have them all viewed and approved, and the Public Schools' Finance Board has come up with a formula and I don't think we have it here before us tonight, but when we deal with the Public Schools' Finance Board under Capital, perhaps if you're interested in having the criteria based on the age and the condition of the schools. They worked it out fairly carefully and made sure that no school divisions would be getting less money than they had received under the old method. I think the major difference is that they get a block sum based on what they're entitled to, a portion of the \$3 million and they then decide where to use the money themselves.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member of Kirkfield Park.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Yes, Mr. Chairman, is the Minister saying that the major renovations then should come under Capital, the explanation for that part of it?

HON. M. HEMPHILL: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, I wanted to discuss with the Minister and the committee I think a matter of some significance.

In this massive expenditure and in this particular resolution that we're discussing is an item, first of all, on the public school system, and secondly, on the private and parochial school system. I would like to discuss both of these matters because I think the two correlate in the sense of, if money is expended in one particular area, it may have an effect on the quality of education in another. I want to in particular point to the specifics here, because it was only a few months ago in February when in a government press release what appears to be an innocuous line from the department was indicated as follows: "Private school support increased from \$435 per full-time equivalent student to \$480 effective January 1, 1983." Mr. Chairman, this is, in fact, the first time that a New Democratic Government has provided additional direct assistance to private and parochial school students. If we go back over this issue - it's been an issue in our province I guess for about the last 90 to 100 years - and those of us who have been around for a while, recall that in the mid 1960s — (Interjection) — Well, I go back to '66. I think the Honourable Member for Wolesey was in high school at that time. A mother with two kids in high school . . .

Mr. Chairman, if we go back over this issue without tracing it historically over the past century, there was, in fact, a new development, a significant development in the 1960s, when the Roblin administration brought in what was called "shared services," and this seemed to be a solution to a very complex problem. When the Schreyer administration followed, the policy of shared services continued and there was, in fact, some enrichment and some extension of this particular program, so that one might say, I think correctly, that there was indirect aid being given under the Schreyer administration. But when the Lyon Government took over in 1977, without any reference to this question during the election campaign, they all of a sudden decided to provide direct aid to private and parochial schools. Our government, the Pawley administration, came into office and in the first year made no change in the existing policy, but this year has decided to increase the amount of aid by 10 percent.

Mr. Chairman, my concern is that this could be, in fact, the thin edge of the wedge that leads to a full 100 percent government public funding of private and parochial schools. Because once the course or the direction is set, and once the policy is continued - and this may be an aberration or an exception - but if the policy persists, then I think it could, in fact, lead to complete funding of private and parochial schools and to the eventual establishment of a separate school system at the expense of the public school system.

Mr. Chairman, I come here tonight to defend the public school system of our province, and I am concerned about the fact that whereas there are problems in the private and parochial school system, which is drawn to the attention of members at this particular time, that monies that are siphoned off or

transferred to the private and parochial schools will only weaken the program and the policies of the public school system. We all know that the public school system is under pressure. We all know that the public school system is under attack. We all recognize that the public school system is under stress from declining enrolments, from school closings and from cutbacks. We all know that heyday and the great day and the time when money seemed to be unlimited in terms of providing what is needed for the public school system, we know that period - I guess the golden age which was somewhere in the 1960s when my colleague, the Member for Concordia, and I were first elected to this chamber, and through the 1970s - we now know that there are in fact some severe pressures, financial, and limitations on the public school system.

So, there is kind of a double attack; namely, there are the normal criticisms and the normal weaknesses and the normal limitations of the public school system compounded by financial and fiscal restraints and now compounded by an ever growing, ever increasing number of private and parochial schools.

Mr. Chairman, we're talking here about an amount of \$3 million that the Conservatives provided annually. They started out in their administration under the Honourable Keith Cosens with a grant of \$200 or so per student and then doubled it to some \$435 and now the government has decided to increase that amount by 10 percent, an additional \$300,000.00. So we now have an amount of \$3,300,000 provided by the Pawley administration. If that money were given to public schools in Manitoba, it could certainly save a series of programs that are now being eliminated; that could be continued. It could, in fact, allow us to implement new programs and improve the public school system, which is our responsibility; but the problem is, of course, that when one begins to transfer monies across to a competitive system, that the net result may be the transference of students to another system.

My argument, Mr. Chairman, is that although organizations and individuals and churches have the right to establish private and parochial schools and parents have the right to send their children to such schools, the taxpayers should only be required to support the public school system. Private and parochial supporters have an obligation to support the system of their choice.

Mr. Chairman, when we look at the papers, I mean we see nothing but the problems of declining enrolments. I've had this issue, I face this issue in my own riding. It's a particular problem of the inner core of the City of Winnipeg and we know that it not only extends from the elementary schools, but goes on right through junior high, high school and to the post-secondary level, because there's only so much money for education. Every dollar taken out of the amount allocated to the public school system can only be at the expense of people in the public school system, whether they are in kindergarden or whether they are in postgraduate training. The entire range and panoply is in fact affected.

I would like to also mention, Mr. Speaker, the Minister has made some other enrichments. I won't explain all of these, she's more than capable of doing that. I know she also provided a new system of giving grants to private schools, which she indicated in a letter, in

October that there's going to be a new payment system which would be of an additional value of some \$179,000 just simply in the manner in which cheques are written and payments are made. Then there are all kinds of linguistic support programs and so on that are provided by the department.

But here is my concern, and it's not only in quality, which is really what counts, but it's in the quantity and in the raw numbers and the raw figures where my concern is, because we hear people everyday saying we're concerned about the fact that the quality of education in the public school system is slipping. Well, of course, we've heard this since the dawn of history. But, you know, we hear this and we hear parents saying that they are taking their children out because they want this type of a moral education, or they want a stricter discipline, or they want this, or they want that, etc. We hear it both ways. We also know that the public school system has a lot of advantages, and a lot of programs, and a lot of variation, and a lot of facilities and equipment, and so on which are not available in the private and parochial school system, although they can often be accessed through the program of shared services.

Mr. Chairman, let me just read some numbers to you as an example to show the trends that are going on in our province that I think have to be drawn to the attention of all the legislators and have to be a serious concern of all members of this particular Legislature.

You know, the private and parochial school system, and I don't know why this happened, but in the early 60s to the early 70s, there was a decline in their enrolment. I don't know why that happened. I don't know the explanation for it. I only know that the numbers went down, but starting in 1973 to the present, I believe in every single year, the numbers have gone up and the number of schools has significantly increased.

Let me just give you an example. In 1973, there were 7,073 students in private schools in the province and there were 39 schools. Those numbers then started to rise. So that, for example in 1978, there were 8,345 students, which would be about a 20 percent increase, and there were 56 schools, which would be, I suppose, about a 40 percent to 50 percent increase, going right on to 1982 when you have 9,263 students which is up 30 percent in that 10-year period, and you have 79 schools. So there is a tremendous increase in the number of schools. My information is that there are a lot of new small schools that are springing up all throughout the province, particularly in the rural area. I don't have the numbers for this and I know I have a list somewhere of these schools, but that is the information that I have. There is quite a development in terms of new private and/or parochial schools throughout the province. So what's the picture, Mr. Chairman? In the last decade, a significant increase in the number of students, 30 percent, and a doubling, 100 percent increase in the number of schools.

Now let's look at the public school system. As my colleague from Concordia says, it's going down and all of us are aware of that. So what do we have? In 1973, you have, in the Manitoba Department of Education's Annual Report, 234,000 students. If you look about five years later, you have about 215,000 students. Then if you take the 1982 figures, you are down to 200,000. What do we observe there? Well

probably about a 15 percent decline in the enrolment in the public school system.

Now, you know, if we want to just talk logically and push these arrows and push these numbers, I suppose one might draw the conclusion that eventually the two systems will be about equal in terms of number. Well, that, of course, is not going to happen either ever or for a very long time, but those are the trends. Namely, the trends are No. 1, a decline in the number of students enrolled in our public system; and a significant increase in the number of students attending private and parochial schools.

Now, when you start throwing dollars at those two numbers, it means that eventually you will put less money into the public school system and more money into the private and parochial school system. Of course, there are those people who will tell you that the two should be equally funded; there are those who argue that private and parochial school parents should get their tax money or full grants or whatever.

All of us, Mr. Chairman, are being subjected to letter writing campaigns and petitions and meetings and so on. We all have received correspondence at this time of year from parents, school boards, individuals, and so on, who say - and of course they have been saying this for a long time and they'll continue to say it. Mr. Chairman, they have every right to say it. They have every right to defend their position, to make their position, to fight for what they believe in, and to demand what they consider to be 100 percent funding.

What concerns me is that there doesn't seem to be anybody in this Chamber who is speaking out for the other side, and that's one of the reasons I want to make these remarks today in this particular resolution and this particular department. I hear the voices who are saying, give us more money, and I don't hear enough. I don't mean to criticize the Minister here because the Minister is defending the public school system all the time, but I'm saying in terms of other members in the Chamber and so on. I hear the voice of the Member for St. Norbert who is saying that there should be significant increases in funding and who was quoted not too long ago at a particular debate - I'm looking at the Free Press here, I think, February 8, 1983, who says - "If the Tories had been elected in 1981, they would have increased funding to private schools on a formula basis." Well, why didn't they say that in the election campaign? Why didn't they say that in 1977? Why isn't that incorporated into their particular platform?

Mr. Chairman, we had a debate in this Chamber a long time ago; I guess it must have been in the early '70s. We had a resolution put in this particular House. In that particular resolution, I don't know about everybody on that side, but I know that the Member for Sturgeon Creek voted against that resolution, which seemed to be leading to aid to private and parochial schools and he nods in agreement that he did. The Member for Fort Garry opposed that particular resolution. The Member for Lakeside opposed it. The Member for Virden opposed it. The Member for Minnedosa opposed it and the Member for Roblin-Russell. Those are only of those who are still here.

Now, there may be some that I've left out because I think the vote was about 18-1 on the Conservative side with only the Honourable Sid Spivak perhaps voting

the other way. Well, somebody voted 18-1 on the other side of the issue, but there is only one particular person who did so, Mr. Chairman, and I, myself, voted with those members against that particular resolution. There were four or five Cabinet Ministers who did so. There are another six or seven back benchers on this particular side who did so.

So, Mr. Chairman, I will simply make one more particular comment and then wait to hear any response from the other side and then I may add a few more remarks. I think it is fair to say that the teachers of this province, and I'm now thinking of the public school teachers in particular, and MAST, and I think the Minister who was at one time the president of the Manitoba Association of School Trustees or for a number of years, their official positions are opposed to aid to private and parochial schools because of their concern for the public school system and because of the fear or the danger of establishing and enriching and encouraging a competitive private and parochial school system.

So, Mr. Chairman, I'll conclude at this time by reading to you the resolution passed by the MAST organization a couple of years ago, 1981, at their convention, because I think they made an excellent statement on this particular matter. It was a formal resolution on grants to private schools, but this is what they said in their book of resolutions. I read from their '81 book of resolutions, Page 8 - "Grants to Private Schools" - "MAST has never had a policy on whether private schools should receive public funds until this year. A resolution was passed at our recent annual meeting, which puts our association on record as being opposed to public funding of private schools. The public school system is required by law to provide education to all children regardless of financial status, race, colour or creed. Trustees are anxious that our public school system be as successful as possible in providing a good education for our children and in meeting their individual needs. This can only be done with proper funding by the government; and if part of the necessary funding is siphoned off to support private schools, the public school system may suffer. The resolution does not suggest that private schools should be eliminated. There may be a need for their existence, but that need should not be because our public schools are not providing an adequate standard of education. If parents wish to send their children to a private school for something which is not available in our public schools, then they must be prepared to pay for it."

Here is their final and concluding sentence, Mr. Chairman, and I think it is a powerful statement indeed - "All available public funding should be used to improve our public schools."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Tuxedo.

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, I'm sure that the Minister has been placed in an embarrassing position by that presentation by her colleague from Elmwood and I'm sure that we'll hear her views on this very shortly. The Member for Elmwood has said a number of things tonight that he somehow feels have to be put on the record and I'm glad he did, because it indicates that there is still a very strong feeling in the New Democratic Party that private and parochial schools

ought not to get public funding. The Member for Dauphin, the Minister of Government Services, nods his agreement with that statement — (Interjection) — Yes. He says there's a strong feeling. The Member for Concordia, of course, was saying "right on" and "yes" all the way through the speech of the Member for Elmwood. I'm sure that members on this side have long been aware of that and those who have their children as students in the private and parochial schools in this province, I think have known that for quite some time.

This statement of the Member for Elmwood will no doubt get some public attention and no doubt result in his having satisfied himself and perhaps those people that he represents, that his statement and his position has been strongly placed on the record.

MR. R. DOERN: He's thinking of the Dow Jones average.

MR. G. FILMON: In any case, I'm glad that he's taken this opportunity, but I must say that I don't agree with his position. I say that as one who isn't in a position of having some preconceived disposition towards private and parochial education. I have to say that it's only very recently that I've had any direct experience with it. I, personally, am a product of the public school system, those members of my immediate family are products of the public school system, and I'm proud of that and I'm happy to say that I never had any objections or concerns about the public school system. It always served me well, I believe - others might argue, but I believe it served me well and I believe that I would always support and uphold its ideals, objectives, and the accomplishments that it can proudly point to.

I would never argue, and I think that the Minister would back me up on this, that in any way we should do anything that would weaken or lessen the impact of public school education in this province, in any way, shape, or form. At the same time, I did indicate that I've had some recent direct experience in that my older son is now in his second year at a private or parochial school in this province and I'm pleased with the results. I'm pleased with the education he's getting. At the same time my three other children have remained or are remaining in the public school sector, so what I am saying is that I believe very strongly that the choice and the option should be there. That this freedom of choice and this opportunity for others to seek an alternative form, provided that it meets the standards and the objectives that are set down by us, by we who are in a position to set the standards for education in this province, I fully support that opportunity for an option and alternative.

I'm very disappointed that the Member for Elmwood's opinion of public school education is so low that he believes that this sort of competition, or this sort of comparison, or this sort of minor minute redirection of funding, could endanger the effectiveness of the public school education system in our province. In fact, I believe that that is a dreadful position for him to be in as a former teacher and educator in the public school system. I believe that he has shown how little respect he has for that system, to believe that it is so weak and so subject to being downgraded by comparison or by competition, that it will ultimately suffer irreparable

harm by the redirecting of a certain amount of funding towards private and parochial schools.

I think that we have to show how small an opinion he has by just saying how much of the funding is being redirected. I believe, and the Minister I'm sure will correct me if I'm wrong, that the amount of this full item that we're talking about, the amount that is currently being directed towards private school funding in this province, is something in the range of \$3 million, give or take a little bit. Three million dollars versus \$677 million of public funding going towards public education in this province.

Now, the fact that he believes that that \$3 million expenditure can set up a circumstance under which private schools can compete and demonstrate that they have a much greater value to the public than does the whole of the public education system in this province, is incredible. I'm ashamed of him for saying that, because I am not a former public school teacher. I am not somebody who has gone through that system and I don't have such a low opinion of public school education in this province as he does, as demonstrated by the statements that he has just made.

He has said that he is very upset and disappointed, and I'm sure that he's making those views known to his caucus, and perhaps his caucus is not listening as carefully as he would desire, for him to have to stand up in this forum and make his views known to others, saying that this is the first time a New Democratic Party Government has acknowledged or given support to private and parochial schools. Well, I accept that because I know that his former Premier, Mr. Schreyer, was a very strong supporter of private and parochial schools. He wasn't a strong enough supporter to impose his will on his caucus and impose his desires on his government, but he gave them some token support, just as many members here give token support to many causes. Members of the government say, well, you know I'm speaking as an individual, not as a government, and, of course, they fail to tell people that speaking as an individual is all well and good, except it doesn't give any real substantial commitment.

The only commitments that can be given is when they speak on behalf of their government and their government has never been put to the test, in terms of its desires and its commitments to private and parochial education in this province, and we'll see at the end of the current study on schools financing in this province, on public schools financing, which includes in this particular case, because it's mandate, as I understand, includes a review of the question of funding of private and parochial schools. We'll see just what commitment they have and maybe the Member for Elmwood will win in his deliberations and his arguments with his caucus and maybe he'll lose, but certainly I think that what he has said tonight discredits public school education in this province, does not support it, does not add to its stature in this community and doesn't give it the credit that it deserves for the job that it's doing.

By virtue of the fact that he fears \$3 million, as opposed to \$677 million, as being enough of an impetus, enough of a thrust, that it will jeopardize the ability of public education to do its work and carry out its mandate in this province. As I say, I think it's an insult and I think it's an insult to all those who are involved in public education in this province.

MR. R. DOERN: You're just a big spender, you don't care about \$3 million.

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, I believe that it's never wrong for anybody to have a comparison, for anybody to have a touchstone, a goal, a milestone against which their opportunity and their ability is compared. I believe that it is no different for public school education in this province to have that yardstick of comparison, that ability to look at what they are doing and to see whether or not it matches what is being done by private school education in this province, particularly when you take a look at the fact that private school education has many hurdles to overcome.

They have to not only convince people that they ought to be good citizens and pay all of their taxes and all their obligations to the government to support public school education, but they have to dig into their pockets and make a commitment to take out of their discretionary income additional funds to pay for their children to go to private schools. They're doing it, and they are doing it to a fairly substantial extent.

Now, of course, the statistics that the Member for Elmwood uses to prove his case really are not ones that ought to be of any concern or consequence to anyone, because while we're talking about numbers in the range of 200,000 and more attending public schools in this province, he is talking about the massive change in 10 years, whereby the number has increased by about 1,200; from 7,000 to 9,200, and that, he makes the big case for, is evidence of the fact that private schools are taking over the province. It's incredible that he would try and misuse those statistics to prove a case - sorry, 2,200; from 7,000 to 9,200. Did I say, 1,200? I accept the correction and the mathematics, but the point is still the same. We are talking about 2,200 versus over 200,000 people attending public schools in this province. For him to be in a position of making that case, I think is absolutely wrong and I don't believe it warrants any more attention than just the time that it took him to say it.

He mentioned the fact that public schools have so many advantages. They can offer a wide variety of course options. They can provide so many more facilities as most of them do. If you have an opportunity to go to public schools in this province and compare them to the facilities that are offered in most private schools, they are far and beyond what is available at private schools in gymnasias, in libraries, in multipurpose rooms and cafeterias and all sorts of facilities that are not available. They offer a wide range of vocational options. They offer, normally, probably double the number of course options in high school. These are even double compared to the really good private schools. They have so many more advantages.

For him to suggest that with all those advantages, public schools can't compete with private schools is unbelievable. I hope that the Minister will make some comments on it, because the comments that were made by the Member for Elmwood just aren't, in any way, of value in my opinion to this whole discussion, this whole deliberation that we are going through.

I think that it shows just what motivates members opposite. When during the course of his conversation, his discussion, the Member for Dauphin said that the

reason that the Tories didn't say anything about their support for private school education during the 1981 election campaign was that there was no votes in it. If that's all that motivates members opposite, if that is the only reason why they want to put this kind of an issue forward or want to support or take a position on this kind of an issue, well, I think that the public should be aware that their only motivation is whether or not there are votes in it. It seems to me that suggests that principle has nothing to do with their decisions and that if the principle is that people ought to have freedom of choice and a breadth of educational opportunity with a wide cross-section of different options, if that means nothing to members opposite, that all that counts is votes, then I think we are in a pretty sad situation, and I'm sure that is the case.

They put their finger up to the wind, they decide where the votes are, and that's how they take a position. I say to you that members on this side were not in that position. Members on this side weighed the alternatives, listened to the reasoned arguments and said whether or not we prefer public schools over private schools, we believe that there are those members of society who have the right to send their children to an alternative form of education with some level of public funding.

Now, that's exactly what we said and we said it by what we did, not by the many promises, those empty promises that were made during the 1981 election campaign by the now Premier and all of his members who said, we will ensure that no person will lose his home or his farm or his business due to high interest rates. What an empty promise! How foolish they are looking. We will turn around the harsh economic circumstances that currently are facing this province and bring us back to good times. How foolish and how empty those promises look, because they were meaningless. But they were made for one reason only; because they were made to garner votes in the same way as members opposite are now saying that the only reason this issue is a factor in their minds is because of votes.

Well, we can see from what's going on in the department, and we can see from actions of the members opposite like the Member for Dauphin, the Minister of Government Services, that for \$18,300, a little pittance that he gave to the Dauphin-Ochre School Division, he bought a lot of votes. That's what is important in his mind, and that's what is important obviously in many of his colleagues' minds; that they will make decisions based on how many votes it buys, rather than whether or not there is a principle involved or whether or not people are entitled to something as citizens of this province in a democratic society.

It seems to me, Mr. Chairman, that this Member for Elmwood is just showing us exactly what members opposite stand for, and he has confirmed in our minds and he will, no doubt, confirm in the minds of people out there who vote in elections just what motivates them and what is important when they make their decisions on how to take a position on an issue. It has nothing to do with principles. It has nothing to do with rights. It has only to do with how many votes they can garner by taking a certain position. It seems to me, Mr. Chairman, that kind of information is very relevant to the discussions we are having now and will be very

relevant when we come forward to argue and place our positions in front of the electorate during the next election campaign.

He talked about members on our side of the House not supporting private school education back a number of years ago when the Schreyer administration put forward something to indicate support for private schools in the province, but it was the then Leader of the party, the then Premier of the party, Mr. Schreyer, who put forth a resolution, not a bill, not a piece of legislation, but a resolution urging that the matter be studied. Why would anybody want to even support that kind of thing?

There are all sorts of studies. The member opposite in introducing his topic listed all the things that had been done with respect to the question of private education in this province. It went back to the Roblin administration. It went back beyond that. So the studies were there, the information was available, the principles were well laid out. The question was whether or not something ought to be done, and when the opportunity was given, our government did it. This Member for Elmwood is now in a position that he disagrees with what was done, and he wants it on the record, and he wants the public to know. He wants the public to know that a New Democratic Government has never supported private school education in the past. Well, he's put it on the record, and I'm sure that the public will be interested in that.

But I say, Mr. Chairman, that there is a great deal more to this question than how many votes one can garner by taking a certain position. And I say, Mr. Chairman, that the matter is one of principle, and whether or not you have children in the private schools of this province, and whether or not you support the principle of private schools in this province, we support the principle that people ought to have an opportunity for different forms, alternative forms of education. They ought to have that freedom of choice and that's why we did what we did and we still stand by it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. R. DOERN: Well, Mr. Chairman, that was an interesting remark. I don't know if the Minister intends to speak now or she's going to speak later.

Mr. Chairman, that was an interesting speech. The member sets up a straw man, he talks about votes, and then he proceeds to knock down the straw man that he's set up. Well, you know, nobody's going to buy that. I mean that's not leadership material. You know, if you're running for Leader on that platform, I think you better back somebody else.

What does the member say? He keeps saying over and over again, what is \$3,300,000.00? He's afraid to quantify his remarks. He's talking in vague generalities. He's not willing to put a dollar sign on it, you know.

We hear a lot of talk from the Conservatives forever about fiscal responsibility. Here the member comes out with generalized statements and he's not willing to quantify his remarks. But I'll tell you in essence what he said, Mr. Chairman; he said over and over and over again, what's 3,300,000.00? It doesn't amount to a hill of beans, Mr. Chairman. He wants people to say that \$3 million bucks doesn't . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please.
The Honourable Member for Tuxedo.

MR. G. FILMON: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. Not once did I say, what's \$3 million. Not once did I ever suggest that \$3 million was not an important sum of money. Not once. The member is putting words in my mouth, and I demand that he retract them or cease on that line of discussion.

MR. R. DOERN: Well, Mr. Chairman, the member said over and over and over again that we should not be concerned with the amount of money, didn't name it because he was afraid to put that number down. You know, C.D. Howe is the one who said "What's a million?" And the member was afraid to put that quantity. He said there's - how many \$100 million did you say?

MR. G. FILMON: \$697 million.

MR. R. DOERN: \$697 million. He said we shouldn't be concerned with the amount of money - I won't say it, because I don't want the member to get upset - but I'll tell you what he said in effect, Mr. Chairman. He said in effect that we should not be concerned with the amount of money being spent and being transferred from the public school system to the private and parochial school system. That amount of money, Mr. Chairman, if he's afraid to say it, I'll say it, it was \$3,300,000.00.

Well, I'll tell you something if the member isn't impressed with that amount, I wonder whether he would be impressed if the money was \$6 million, or \$12 million, or \$25 million, or \$100 million. Would he be impressed with those numbers or it just millions and he cannot recognize, or grasp, or appreciate the magnitude of that amount of money? Is that what your problem is? Because you told us in effect, you said very clearly that we shouldn't be concerned with that amount of money, given the Provincial Budget, it's a drop in the bucket, you know. C.D. Howe, "What's a million?" - C.D. Howe.

The member opposite, well, you know, I'm afraid to say it, I'm afraid to upset him, I'm afraid for him to stand up and say that isn't what I said. But as one who studied philosophy that's what you meant and that is what counts.

You were not impressed, you were not concerned about the amount of money. Well, I'm telling you that \$3,300,000 will buy quite a few things, will buy quite a few programs, will prevent schools from closing, will prevent a lot of things from happening, will allow certain schools and certain programs, and so on, to be implemented in the public school system which would improve it. That is our responsibility. That's what I'm talking about.

You know, I'll try to give the honourable member some further examples there. If he wants to talk some history, we'll talk briefly about the 1981 election, and the position of the Conservative Party which was quiet, don't say anything on any of these things.

I don't know, you see the thing that concerns me, Mr. Chairman, I don't know whether any statements were made by the members opposite in 1977 or whether any assurances were given to the supporters of private

and parochial schools throughout the province. I don't know that. But I have my suspicions as to whether or not certain things were said, because no sooner did they become the government than they delivered on that particular program. So it's be very interesting for members opposite to enlighten us as to whether or not, although they said not a word, not one word about one penny of funding, as soon as they got in they came up with \$200 per student, and then accelerated it to \$435 per student. Then their Member for St. Norbert, who's running up and down the City of Winnipeg now making statements about how much is going to be done for private and parochial schools, whether he represents the mainstream of Conservative thinking on this particular issue.

Mr. Chairman, I don't know about you, but I had a lot of difficulty trying to understand what the Member for Tuxedo was getting at. You know, he had one leg in each camp, he was defending the public school system; he was defending the private and parochial school system; he was funding both programs. He was — (Interjection) — Well, you know, Mr. Chairman, I'll try to explain that to the honourable member a little later. Mr. Chairman, but I know what his colleague is doing, his colleague from St. Norbert is saying things like this, and here's the headline in the Free Press, February 8, '83, there's the headline, "Larger Increase in Private School Grant Urged." Well, is that your position? Is that going to be the position of the Conservative Party? Have all those members opposite, who for so many years have staunchly defended the public school system, now collapsed? Have they all been struck mute?

You know, it would be interesting to hear what the Member for Sturgeon Creek thinks about this. I don't know if he was a school trustee. He was a school trustee. — (Interjection) — Oh, he wasn't a school trustee. Well, it'd be interesting to hear what he has to say, because he was here in what is now the old days of 10 years ago when this issue was debated. He voted, and I voted with him on that particular issue. It was probably the only time he and I every voted on the same side of an issue, but we were concerned at that time with what might happen if a certain resolution passed and my colleague, the Minister of Corrections, voted with us on that particular issue and the Member for Roblin-Russell, he was with us on that particular issue. So, there are at least a few of us and I don't know how the Member for Concordia voted, but there are at least a few on each side who are still around who still remember and know what the idea was. My colleague and my friend, he voted for the resolution and I don't question his right to vote that way and I don't question his right to think that way and I know that he also gives me the freedom and the liberty to hold a position contrary to this.

MR. P. FOX: I was the Speaker and I couldn't vote.

MR. R. DOERN: Oh, now I know. I couldn't figure out how the Member for Concordia voted, I knew there was a hitch. He was Speaker. We'll never know what went on under that three-cornered hat.

So, Mr. Chairman, I'm simply saying that, you know, this is a point I'm trying to get across to the Member

for Tuxedo. He's not very good in mathematics and he's having a hard time understanding my logic. I have made the point at the beginning about my concern of the thin edge of the wedge, that the amount of money we're talking now could very rapidly accelerate and it's already gone from 200 to 435 in a few years and it's now up to 480. Maybe it'll hit 1,000 or 2,000.

Mr. Chairman, if the dollars are compounded and the number of students accelerates, I don't know why this trend is happening. You know, the honourable member says, I'm not defending or I'm criticizing the public school system. I'm the last person to criticize it; I believe in it.

I also believe in the right of people to have their children attend other schools and the member gives us an illustration. He has four children, three in the public school system, one in a private school. That's fine. That's okay. The question is, who should pay? The question is, how much financial support should go towards the education of those children? If the member now decided to send one of his sons - I don't know how many sons he has - one of his sons to Harvard to study law at God knows how many dollars per year, or if he decided to send his daughter to Switzerland to a finishing school, I can tell you, I would have no enthusiasm whatsoever to provide some of that funding and that's an issue that has been answered in the sense of if your father's a taxpayer, can you send your kids anywhere that you want and have the public purse provide the funds?

Mr. Chairman, I am told that some of the other schools in some of the other provinces are being weakened or are suffering as a result from a dual system. I'm informed that in Saskatchewan and B.C., there is some concern that dollars are being diverted from the public school system to private and parochial schools.

Mr. Chairman, there is only a limited amount of education dollars. There is only so much money available and when you start slicing the pie and when you make the piece bigger, relatively and absolutely, for the private and parochial school system, I believe it is at the expense of the public school system.

So, our goal should be to improve the public school system. That should be our goal, the goal of everybody in this Chamber, and at the very least to maintain the quality of the public school system as it exists today. Nobody here, I know, will argue that we should beggar that system or weaken that system, but I think it's important that we realize that some of the actions we take may inadvertently result in that and that is my concern. If we were to double track or twin or whatever you like, the two systems, then I think there would be some very serious consequences and there are people around who believe that the public school system is under attack from a variety of sources and surely we don't want to, in a time when there is some criticism of the system, and if the honourable member isn't aware of this, let him listen to the hot-line shows, let him listen to the information-radio debates, let him talk to people who have pulled their children out and ask them why, and then see what we should do as a result.

So, the honourable member winds up with a peculiar system. He says, people are taking their children out of the public system and putting them into private and parochial schools and we should follow them with more money. We should throw more money after them. Well,

if you follow that logic enough, you can see what the danger is. You can see that you will have more children in one system and more dollars in that system and there will be then less children and less dollars in the other system.

Here's another concern. The Minister has all kinds of programs of special education that I don't believe - I would like to be corrected if I'm wrong here - but I don't believe that you'll find these programs now in the private and parochial school system. How long will it take? When will it happen that the supporters of these schools will come to the Minister and ask for additional funding over an above for child-guidance systems which they are asking for today, for special grants for handicapped and exceptional children? Maybe they are being given today, I don't know. For bilingual programs, for French language and heritage languages, for additional transportation grants, for industrial and vocational programs, I mean how long will it be? I mean, it could be today; it could be tomorrow. Do you think that this is not going to be asked for? Do you think this is out of the question? Where does it stop? — (Interjection) — Well sure everybody is asking for everything. Sure everybody's going to the government.

Well, now we're getting criticized, the member is saying that we're giving it to them. So, I assume that on this particular issue he stands shoulder to shoulder with me and says, in effect, that there should be no further enrichment of private and parochial school programs, that the responsibility of the people of his riding is to fund the public school system and that those — (Interjection) — sure they do, you're darn right they do. But those who decide or elect to send their kids to private schools should pick up the tab. Does the member agree to that or not?

MR. C. MANNESS: Am I under question?

MR. R. DOERN: Yes, I would like to know what the member thinks on that. If he wants to answer, I'll let him answer right now.

MR. G. FILMON: He's running out of steam.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, the problem is this, that if we ever wind up with a larger system and a lot more students than we have today, and that's the trend. It's only 3,300,000 now, but what happens when it's 6 million or 12 million or 25 million or more? What happens then? You'll have higher costs, you'll have duplicate services, you'll have two systems and you'll have separation, which is something we have tried to avoid all our lives in this province. Some of the darker features of private and parochial school systems in terms of twin systems in other provinces when we've all - people can tell stories about this and about that and so on - one of the advantages and one of the benefits of a public school system is the fact that there is a community of interest and there's sort of a bringing together of people from every walk of life and, I think, a better understanding as well.

Last, but not least, if you have this, you are going to have higher taxes. You want more money to go to private and parochial schools. Say so and tell your

voters and tell the people all across this province if that's your position, that they will have to pay higher taxes as a consequence, and see what the response is, Mr. Chairman, because I am concerned about a larger separate school system in Manitoba.

So I simply say in conclusion to what the member is saying - you know, members went off on some sort of a tangent - he was getting all excited about votes or something. He is saying he stands for principle and some of the members over here stand for votes. Well, it was a very interesting dichotomy in his own mind, but I say that, if - a delusion perhaps would be more accurate - you gave me that \$3.3 million to spend in the public school system, I could save a number of schools.

I could have saved a school in Elmwood, and there are schools in his area, in south Winnipeg, where there is a lot of interest in this particular issue, a lot of study on this particular issue and a lot of people who are trying to save schools. The member knows better than I which of those schools are, and the problems and the immersion questions and the transportation questions and the neighbourhood school questions and the pressure on the Winnipeg School Division and so on.

So let him not belittle the amount of money. We are talking about two points here. We're talking about the principle and what our responsibility is, and we are also talking about a sum of money which could be significantly increased and which could be also an additional burden on the taxpayers of every riding in the Province of Manitoba.

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, let me state clearly for the record because the member has attempted in some way to mislead the committee as to my concern for costs in this whole issue. I want it to be absolutely clear that I am always concerned or impressed, as he said, with any amount of money that is at question. The whole point that I was making with him is that I am not, like he, concerned about a threat to the viability of the public school system by the expenditure of \$3.3 million. That's what I am not concerned about. As compared to 677 million, which is currently being spent out of taxpayers' dollars for public school education in this province, I do not believe that the expenditure of 3.3 million on private education will threaten the viability and the effectiveness of public school education in this province. That is the whole principle of what I am saying.

It has nothing to do with whether or not I am concerned or impressed or worried about the expenditure of \$3.3 million. I am concerned and impressed with the expenditure not only of 3.3 million, of 330,000, of 3,300, of 3 cents, I am concerned about the expenditure under any circumstances at any time; but I am not concerned with the threat to the viability of the public school education system in this province that occurs as a result of the expenditure of 3.3 million on private education. That's the point that I made.

Now the member has chastised me for my inability to deal with math and logic, so let me deal with him in terms of math and logic. He says that the expenditure of \$3.3 million is a drain on the taxpayers of this province. I want to ask him, and the Minister can confirm

whether or not these figures are correct, what the result would be if the 9,263 students that he says are currently in private school education in this province had to be accommodated in the public school education system of this province at the same per pupil cost that currently exists. I will give him the numbers so he can work it out.

There are \$677 million being spent this year in the public school system of this province. He says that the number of students attending the public school system in this province is about 200,000. If you divide the one number into the other, I think it produces the fact that the average per pupil cost is something in the range of \$3,385 per student. Now that's not just out of the Provincial Government Treasury. That's out of the Provincial Government Treasury and the property tax. That amounts to the total of the 677 million being spent for 200,000 students that he has quoted, and that works out to something in the range of \$3,385 per student.

Now, if you multiply the 9,263 students that he has indicated currently attend private schools by that number of 3,385, you arrive at a figure of \$32 million. That's what would be spent today if all of those students were transferred into the public school education system, because the fact of the matter is that the private school people are being given a very small percentage of their total costs for the support of their students. My mathematics could be wrong, but it's a very large number. We are paying a very small portion of their costs and if we were to transfer all of them into the public school system, the costs would be enormous, absolutely enormous, much more of a drain on the taxpayer than currently exists by having them in the situation whereby their parents pay all of their taxes, both property and income taxes to support public school education, and on top of that, pay the majority of their costs for their students, their children to attend private education.

So from a point of view of logic and math, I say that the provincial taxpayer is far better off with those students remaining where they are, getting a very small portion or some portion of their costs paid for at public expense.

I say that it goes beyond that. It goes beyond just the freedom of choice, the freedom of opportunity to decide whether or not they want an alternate form of education. It goes to the circumstances that allow for a comparison, for some competition. I believe that all of us are better because of competition. I believe that businesses become better and stronger because of competition. I believe that political parties become better and stronger because of competition. I believe that education becomes better and stronger when it has competition, somebody that sets a yardstick, a tideline that it must meet.

I am saying that such is the case by allowing the co-existence of private education along with public education with some portion of their costs being attended to and provided for by the public purse. I am saying that the Member for Elmwood is way off base when he talks in terms of the loss and the cost to the public taxpayer, because in fact, it's completely the reverse.

So I don't understand the logic of his argument, that says that we must protect public school education in this province from any standard of comparison, from

any standard of competition, from any opportunity for people to see the value of private school education, because I believe it's completely the reverse.

In fact, public school education will continue to have all the opportunities to grow, develop, and have all of the various options and opportunities that they have to offer students and they will know that they're doing well, because they'll have a standard of comparison. They'll have an opportunity always to be put to the test and always to succeed, hopefully, because we all want the very best standard of public school education that we can afford in this province, and I believe that we'll always strive to maintain that quality as long as we have people interested in furthering the cause of education in this province.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm going to very brief because the Member for Tuxedo has obviously put the Member for Elmwood back in his seat. I don't think he has really any arguments left and it's typical of the Member for Elmwood, when he's cornered, to change the subjects and bring in the dollar figure and accuse the members on this side of believing in the dollar figure and not being concerned about anything else.

To top it all off, the proof of the pudding is that he had to change the subject and he did it by bringing in our leadership campaign, and anything else he can do to defend a weak argument. It's very typical of the Member for Elmwood to stand up in this House and spout off and when he's cornered, get up and try to change the subject and manoeuvre around with it.

The reason I stood up is the Member for Elmwood said that I voted with him, as many other members in this House did, back on a resolution presented by the then Premier of the province. He seems to want to dwell on that, which is something again that he is doing to try and change the subject, because if he'd wanted to discuss it, he might have brought the resolution in with him, and he would have been able to read that the resolution was, "Therefore be it resolved that this House recommends more study," and if he wants to read the whole thing it's right there, but to recommend more study, or that a committee be set up to study aid to private schools with the Province of Manitoba.

Well, Mr. Chairman, back in the days of Duff Roblin, the Conservative Party didn't do a lot more studying, they were the beginning of shared services in this province and I ran for a government that had done that. But I didn't run for a government that said that we wanted to study the subject any longer, and honourable members that voted against that resolution, if they were voting against a board being set up or a group being set up to study it further. There was a Minister in this House who resigned his portfolio to be able to speak and give his opinion on that subject and we did not believe that there was need for more study, we have studied it for 100 years and we are continuing to study it. I will say right now that I believe this Minister sitting right over there has knowledge of the studies that have gone on and is still studying it and watching the situation very carefully. So there's no need for any more study when we have competent people right now looking at it.

So, Mr. Chairman, that is what was voted on back in the days when that resolution came up. I believe it was in '73, I'm not too sure. I believe there was an election right after that and there was no question where our side stood as far as more study was concerned. You didn't have to ask the question about where our side stood on shared services. It was done under Duff Roblin. There's no question today where we stood on some shared services to people who want the choice of sending their children to private schools, because we did extend it when we came to power in 1977. There's no question at all about the feeling on this side of the House. But the honourable member wants to bring it into election campaigns. You see, again, when he does that he tries to change the subject, he tries to divert people from thinking about what the real issue is at the present time. The honourable member just has no way of using his ability, whatever he has, of being able to consider that there are people that want that choice in this province and we, as elected members in this House, are here to see what we can do to accommodate the people of the Province of Manitoba. That's what we were talking about in this room tonight, but this Member for Elmwood, he chooses to bring back old history, does it inaccurately, uses money to change the subject, and I say that, you know there's an old saying, that the fellow that was fighting against the Indian Gurkha, when the fellow chopped his head off, he didn't know his head was taken off until he moved it. Well, in this case, the Honourable Member for Tuxedo took the Member for Elmwood's head off, he didn't have to wait to move it, he knew it and that's why he tried to change the subject during his whole presentation.

MR. R. DOERN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I can't let those two remarks go by. I must say I was most amused by the Member for Tuxedo, who said that competition makes you a better person. Well, you'd better ask Joe Clark about that.

A MEMBER: See, here we go again.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, you better ask the Tory membership about whether they think that the Tory leadership is doing their party any good, and you better ask the Canadian people, whether they think that competition in the Tory Party is doing the party any good. I just say that back to him.

Mr. Chairman, the member put a question to me and I'll answer that question. He said, "What would happen if every person in the private and parochial school system went into the public system?" Well, Mr. Chairman, that is no different than if there was an increase in population. That's no different if young people came back to Manitoba, after the chronic brain drain that's been going on for God knows how many years in this province, it's been talked about since at least the 1950s. If there was an increase in the population of people migrated to Canada, or if the private and parochial schools sent students to the public school system, they would be welcomed with open arms. Space would be found and the money would be

provided. It's the responsibility of the government to provide an education to every young person in the province in the public school system. That is our responsibility and that is our obligation.

Even if that occurred, Mr. Chairman, the member surely isn't going to argue, and I know he isn't - he isn't going to argue that the result would be that nobody would be left in the private and parochial school system, because that just isn't true. That isn't true. Even before shared services, there were thousands of people in the private and parochial school system; with shared services, there were thousands of people in the private and parochial school system; and after that, and with some funding that's being provided, there are still thousands there. There are always people who will make the sacrifice to send their children to parochial schools because of their religious beliefs and because of their belief - and I say belief - that they will get a certain kind of education there that they believe is not obtainable in the public school system. There are people who will send their children to private schools for a variety of reasons regardless of the cost and many of those people, not all of them, but a very high percentage of those people can afford to send their children to private schools and will continue to do so.

MR. G. FILMON: Does that make it right to deny them support?

MR. R. DOERN: So, I simply say in response to his question, the public school system will take in as many students who live in Manitoba as want to attend it and the money will be raised to pay for it. That is the obligation. But I don't believe, Mr. Chairman, on the other hand, that it is the responsibility of this Legislature and the responsibility of the taxpayers of Manitoba to go out and raise money to fund a private and a parochial school system. I don't believe that is our obligation. But I will go out and fight for, and debate and argue for, and defend and raise the funds necessary to provide a first-rate quality education for students in the public school system of our province.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister would like to leave the committee for a couple of minutes, if that is all right with the committee. Do the members wish to continue the debate in her absence?

The Member for Tuxedo.

MR. G. FILMON: With all due respect, I wouldn't want any of these comments that are being made to not be made in the presence of the Minister, so I suggest that we have just a brief respite.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Should we also wait for the Member for Tuxedo?

The Member for Morris.

MR. C. MANNES: Was the Minister wanting to respond or is this the time when I may ask a question?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think we should wait for the Member for Tuxedo.

The Member for Tuxedo.

MR. G. FILMON: I just wondered whether or not the Minister might like to add something to that debate that has just been carried on?

HON. M. HEMPHILL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, both for the opportunity to speak and the few moments to get away. I'm used to speaking when I'm in Estimates, not sitting drinking coffee for a long period of time and I didn't want to appear to be jittery or nervous when I was on my feet responding to the points that were made.

I think this has given me a good opportunity while some people might not on first blush think that it would be a good opportunity to make comments in a couple of areas, not just the question of aid to private schools, but to say a few words that I think are timely and important to say right now about the public school system and about the job that we have to do. I appreciate the points made in that regard by my colleague from Elmwood, because they are points that I am making all the time. I think it's important while we're criticizing and talking about the deficiencies of our public school system - and there certainly are some - and we certainly are under a lot of pressure and increasing demands and a lot of very serious difficult issues.

At the same time, I want to go on record in this House right now, as saying very clearly that the public education system that we have right now is the best, I believe, that we have ever had with all its warts and all of its problems, I really do believe that. There are a number of reasons why it's so much better. You know, we're serving more children than we ever have before. It wasn't very long ago that the large numbers of children that are in our public school system now for whom we are being criticized for not bringing up to the top levels of achievement that other children were performing, would not have even been in the school system before, wouldn't have even existed. They would have been pushed out or they would have dropped out. There were no special programs. There were no special helps. They made it or they didn't in a regular system.

You know, when I graduated, Mr. Chairman, in the late 1950s, which was not the dark ages, and it depends on the age of the people that you're talking to, how they feel about that, but I graduated in the late 1950s and at that time only 11 percent of the people who went to high school graduated. You know, when I learned that, I thought that was absolutely sort of a shocking figure, that in my time when I was graduating, only 11 percent of the people graduated. In the 1960s it went up 33 percent; in 1970s it went up to 75 percent; it's now up over 80 percent. So do you know what that is saying? It is saying that although we're very proud of our education system and we perceive it to be a universal education system, in fact we are just now beginning to achieve universality in our public education system for the first time and I'm very proud of the achievement we've made there.

We're teaching children. I should comment on the quality of teachers. The Member for Elmwood was one who took a lot of studying and a lot of effort to receive his training, and 10 or 15 years ago only about 30 or 35 percent of the teachers had degrees. There was a very small percentage of them and now we're up to - and I don't have all this information with me but my recollection is - about 75 percent or 80 percent of the teachers have degrees and have professional training and many of them have gone into fields of the

specialized areas of professional training, where they are now able to provide programs for children with special needs, and that's very important.

I believe that our children - and I have four and I've put them through the public education system and they've gone to elementary and junior high and senior high. In fact, one of them is participating in a mock parliament at her high school where she is responding to the Speech for the Throne, I believe, tonight. But I have put four children through the public education system and have very strong feelings about how good it is and what a good job it is doing.

Do you know that those children of mine and your children, I believe, are smarter, brighter and more aware and more knowledgeable than we were at the same age. When I think of what I knew and what I thought and my perception of the world and life and knowledge when I graduated from Grade 12, and I see my own kids and I know what they have been taught and their understanding and improved understanding of people even, of the world conditions, and of many things that we never even thought of in our rather narrow world of learning at that time.

So I want to say that the public education system is terribly important. I think it is doing a tremendous job. The Member for Elmwood mentioned the feelings of parents and some of the concern and criticisms that they are levelling against the education system, and they are. You can go back and read statements as far back as Socrates and Plato, and if you read what they are saying about the education system, you would swear to goodness that they were talking about today. They are saying the same things about the kids, these awful kids, you know, I mean when we were young and growing up, we were so well-behaved and we applied ourselves in school and the kids aren't doing that anymore.

So this is something of the centuries where the adults tend to be concerned and raise concerns about where the children are going and the attention and the efforts the children are making in education and the problems related to the education system; but when you talk to parents, and there have been studies done that show this and I find it quite interesting, that when you talk to people and they are responding about their perceptions of the education system in general, they tend to be negative. They tend to say, I don't think it's as good; I don't think it's doing its job. It has got these problems and those problems, but when you talk to those same people about the education that their children are receiving in their school, it changes and they become much more positive. They feel good about it. They think the teachers are good. They think their programs are good, not overall, there are problems; but in their schools and in their school system, they think they are good.

In fact, I consider one of my major responsibilities among many to be one of strengthening of the public education system and to strengthen the support and the understanding of the public for the education system. Because of that, I have done a very great amount of speaking on all educational matters before all groups of all shapes and sizes from both public and community to special educational organizations and institutions on all subjects. When I'm speaking, I always face the issues and the problems related to those areas;

I always speak out strongly and positively about the strength and the tremendous strides that we have made, so that we're not, from our positions of responsibilities, doing anything to unnecessarily undermine the importance and the good work that is being done in the public education system.

So I think it is very important that I go on record at this time as saying that. I also have to say that when I began to receive requests and submissions and proposals from the people in the private school system, I spoke very openly and directly to them as I do to all people that meet with me. I don't have mixed messages or two messages for different groups of people that I meet with. I told them that I could understand their problems and their difficulties but that I had a lot too; that I had the problems that were discussed earlier that related to declining resources, tremendous increased pressures, some loss of confidence in the public school system, and demands for programs and courses that we have; exceeding anything we have ever seen before both in the area of programs and courses and in the areas that the demands and expectations that are being placed on the public school system because of the problems that our society is facing that has caused this tremendous instability in our family units, which then cause pressures on parents which then cause pressures on children which then cause problems for children to have all the opportunities that they need to have to grow and develop to their full extent.

So the demands on us almost seem to be unlimited. We have to try and give them a balance. I did say clearly that I understood their position, but that I was going to be pressed and that my first and major concern for money that was going to be available in these difficult times was going to have to be to strengthen the public school system. I must say also that they understood that; that in each case when I was meeting and talking to them, they understood what I was saying and why.

I think it is important to take just a couple of minutes to talk about the level of support that has been given to the education system during this difficult year by my government, because I am proud of that. I am very proud of the level of support that's been given during a difficult economic year to a service and a system that we give a high priority to. That is the development and growth and teaching of our greatest resource, and that is our young people.

So I want to, I guess, say that - and I recognize the points that the Member for Elmwood was making about the thin edge of the wedge and starting, and I think his major concern is not today, but tomorrow - this government that he is part of, made tremendous effort to provide funds to school divisions and schools that would allow them to maintain programs and services. I can tell you I believe we did that. Without going into a lot of figures of 9.2 percent and offsetting the 1.5 and 10.4 inflation factor and 16 million for supplemental, which I said I wasn't going to do, go into a lot of these figures, but they're endless.

There are five million additional for the Special Needs Program. These were all very important moves. I can honestly say that I do believe that we provided enough money and enough direct provincial support to school divisions this year to maintain programs. Unless there is a very exceptional case, and I will not deny that there

might be one or two in 57 school divisions with the wide variety of factors that affect their funding levels and the level of support they get, that in almost every case I believe that if there are cuts that are being made and programs that are being cut, it is not because of the level of provincial funding that was provided by this government. It is for other reasons, and you would have to look at each school division to determine what those other reasons were.

So I guess I'm saying that I don't think there is a stronger supporter, defender, fighter nor ombudsman for the public education system than I. I do believe that you don't just manage a system that is as important as this one, but that you speak out on educational issues and provide not only overseeing and management, but you provide leadership and direction to such an important system, and I think we are trying to do that.

Now the issue that was raised tonight is clearly a very sensitive issue, very emotional issue, that most people feel strongly about one way or another on all sides, on every side. That there aren't any sort of clear right answers or sort of clear rights or wrongs. I wish that both the world and this issue were that clear. I might just say, to put on the record, that the grant - because I don't think this has been mentioned by anybody in the discussions between the two of you - that the grant is not without conditions. I wouldn't like to leave the suggestion that money is going to private schools just without any conditions at all. There are two very significant requirements that they must go through. One is that they must teach the curriculum, they must teach our approved curriculum and they are evaluated. We do have people who go into every private school and evaluate their capability of teaching curriculum, and they must have certified teachers. In other words, they cannot receive the funds if they have a teacher who has not been certified by the Department of Education. So that those are ways, I suppose, in which we ensure to some degree that where there is any money going from the Provincial Government, that our standards or our conditions - that are very important to us - must be maintained and covered.

I think that one of the concerns raised by the Member for Elmwood was - and I'll go back to it again - the thin edge of the wedge. He's looking at the numbers of increases in schools. I think we went - four schools closed last year and seven schools opened. We went from 74 to 77. I don't think he's as preoccupied with the numbers, 74 or 77, or to tell you the truth, even 3 million, as he is preoccupied or concerned about the whole question and that is an issue that is, and although one of the members opposite suggested, surely to goodness we don't need anymore studies. It is under review from the Educational Finance Review. I do not see the move that was made, which was a fairly minor move - it was an inflation factor increase of 10.4 - as necessarily suggesting or indicating or presuming or pre-determining that this is the beginning of full funding to private schools. I myself was very concerned over any possibility of moving towards the proposals when they were saying they wanted a staged thing that went from \$600 to \$1,000 and eventually to cover the entire cost, or to meet the same costs as were provided by the public school system, I think was the original proposal.

So when you look at the requests and you look at the rather modest move that was made this year, I think that all we can say about this year actually, is that there was a modest move made.

The other two points that the Member for Elmwood mentioned is that there were a couple of other areas where I moved in and I might just touch on them, because there was a reason for it. Their enrolment, and the time in which they receive their money was not being done the same as it was in the public school system. In other words, we calculate our enrolment as of September and we made them calculate their enrolment as of January. We all know that we all lose students over that period of time. Their cash flow did not come to them as quickly as the public school system, so that they were always behind getting grants in the orderly way that they were getting in the public school system.

I must say that I made those two changes and that I made them because I thought they were fair. I thought that if we were providing funds that the - not procedures - but the basis and the criteria upon which we provided to the public school system, that we should be consistent and do the same in these two areas with the private school system.

Let me just see. I have so many little notes that I was writing myself when all of these discussions were going on, that I'm just sort of looking over it to see what it is that I wanted to make sure that I covered. I think that I might just and by commenting again, that the previous decisions that were made were tough, difficult decisions for everybody involved. I expect that even the modest increase was in the same nature and that any other changes or non-changes will be the same. They will be tough, they will be difficult, they will be sensitive, and they will be emotional, and that, I suppose, is one of those things that we are not going to be able to avoid. That the items and the issues are on our plate and we are going to have to deal with them. We're going to have to deal with them as fairly and openly as we possible can.

So that I think we have heard probably reasonably strong statements of feelings on both sides of the issue and that that is an indicator of the kinds of debates and discussions and sort of soul-searching that is going to go on over the next while. I appreciate that there was a wish to put both the matter and the feelings on the table. I think I've made some attempt to both confirm that I take my responsibilities towards the public education system in maintaining it and supporting it as my No. 1 responsibility, and that I will continue to do my best to carry out that responsibility as long as I have it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Tuxedo.

MR. G. FILMON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm glad that the Minister has put some thoughts on the record with respect to quality of education in this province. She also had an opportunity to say some few things about the private school education system. I'm not sure whether the things that she has said will be encouraging to those who support and believe in private school education in this province, but at least some of her thoughts are on the record.

I don't think that there are any of us on this side of the House who would disagree with her that the public school education system in this province is better today than it ever has been. That it provides more opportunities, a greater breadth of knowledge, training and understanding for all of our children, and that is an evolutionary process that has continued over many years, through many educational administrations. Her predecessors can certainly take a great deal of credit in that, not only predecessors of our government but of other governments I'm sure.

I say very sincerely that I'm glad to hear her speak with such commitment about her ties with and her belief in the public school education system, because after all if she doesn't believe in it and support it, who will. So we appreciate that.

I was interested to hear her review of the statistics that brought home to the Minister just how education has progressed over the years. The fact that when she completed high school only 11 percent of those who attended graduated. And how in the '60s that increased to 33 percent, and then in the '70s to 75 percent of those who entered the public school system graduated. I'm wondering if there was any tie or relationship to the fact that the Member for Elmwood left teaching between the '60s and the '70s, and the number jumped from 33 percent to 75 percent. Perhaps it was just coincidental.

She has said that the demands on her resources are unlimited, and that a value judgment has to be made as to where those resources will best be utilized. But I just leave with her the thought that you cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong. I do not believe that the answer in order to strengthen the mainstream of education is to limit your consideration to the majority of those who will partake of education as promised. Because if you adopt that attitude and say that those who are in the minority who prefer the freedom of choice to attend public, private school education in this province, then you also are faced with a similar kind of logic and a similar kind of review when you look at all of those minority interests that are served and have been served in greater and greater quality and to a greater degree over recent times.

I'm thinking in terms of the argument that is similarly placed forward that says, if you didn't divert some of your resources to second language instruction, to immersion training, that you would strengthen the mainstream of education in English language. That's not a position that I take, but I'm saying to you that that's a position that some take.

There are others who say that if you didn't divert some of your resources to special needs training, because after all there are only a small fraction of 1 percent who need that kind of expensive training, that if you didn't divert some of your resources, you'd do a better job with the majority, the mainstream on education. But I don't believe in that, and I'm sure that most members don't believe in that, because you'd then be neglecting the responsibility of us to consider the minority needs and to consider the minority groups and the special interest groups, and all of those who don't fall in the mainstream.

So I say to her that she ought not to be persuaded by that argument that says if you take away some from this special group, regardless of why they're special -

they may only be special because of the considerations and the goals and objectives of the parents involved - but if you divert some of that into the mainstream then you're going to strengthen the mainstream and to heck with those who are in the minority. I say that that's a wrong argument to use. That's not an argument that the rest of us should support. I hope that she'll consider that when she makes her decision.

I say that she ought not to be disconsolate about the fact that most people today have a loss of confidence in the public school education system. I believe that in general is the case with all of our institutions in society. There is a loss of confidence in our religious institutions; there's a loss of confidence in our political institutions; the legislature; the parliaments; all of our governing bodies; in the courts; in all institutions. If you look at that, you'll find that's the case. So don't take that as a criticism or knock on public school education, because we, like you, believe that the public school education system is vital to the future of our society, that it must be strong and it must always maintain our confidence as legislators, and merit our support in every way that we can.

Don't be disconsolate about the fact that statistics or surveys tell you that there is a loss of public confidence in the institution of education in our society, because that is not unusual and that is not a reflection on public school education, because it is getting better, it has gotten better, and it will continue to get better as long as we stand here and argue and debate these issues, as we are in our Legislature, and we reaffirm our confidence in education and its future in society.

I say as well that, we'll talk about funding levels a little later. I had hoped that we would have been talking about it for the last two hours, but the Member for Elmwood I think has put us on to a topic that needed to be discussed and has been given a very thorough airing, but we will talk about funding per se by this Minister and this government and its adequacy.

I don't only want to talk in terms of its adequacy to maintain the levels of education, and the kinds of programming that are available in public schools today. I think we need to talk about the very great concern that we have for the increasing dependency on property taxes to support education in the province. That, too, is a very sensitive and emotional issue, not just the issue that we've been discussing. I think that we want to talk more in that vein as we go along on this particular item and that will cause us to put some other things on the table.

So that wraps up my comments on this area. I know that the Member for Morris has a few questions and remarks to make, but before he does, I wonder if the Minister has those various pages for me that I'd asked for before the supper break. I think I asked for five pages. You have 46 copies of five pages there.

HON. M. HEMPHILL: I think we ran off a few more than were needed, Mr. Chairman. We have the copies available, but there is no sense . . .

MR. G. FILMON: It's going to be important in our discussion to be working from the same set of data.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. C. MANNES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like, with your indulgence, to make a few comments on the quality of education, and I do so only in response to the argument just presented by the Minister. I recognize fully I'm possibly skating on some thin ice, but anyway I'm going to jump into it.

I believe my colleague, the Member for Tuxedo, was correct when he said that all of our institutions are being challenged to some degree. Certainly, public schools are no exception. It's with that thought in mind that I probably will attempt to be a little bit more risky in my comments and say that I suppose I challenge the public school system in some respects and I certainly challenge the argument of the Minister.

I have a feeling that the Minister seems to be using as the basis for her argument and her satisfaction with the public school system some basic figures, statistics, and I must tell her at this point I'm not particularly impressed with the rationale that she uses to support the system which she deems to be quite successful.

She says, indeed, that there was a time, I believe in the late '50s, that only 11 percent of the people graduated and now 80 percent of the people graduate from high school. I can say I recognize what she is saying because certainly, indeed, when I graduated from high school, I believe the percentage had risen somewhat; maybe it was 15 or 18 or 20 percent in the mid-'60s, but that's not the point I'm particularly trying to imply, I might tell my colleague. The point I would like to make in that regard was that although only 5 out of a class of 22 graduated in my particular year, I can tell you that each and every one of the other 17 could fill in very adequately a job employment form. They had a total understanding of grammar and they also had a full feel for basic mathematics.

I would like to say in that regard, even though today I realize Grade 12 is almost a necessity to apply for any job, it wasn't too long ago that Grade 11 or Grade 10 would have sufficed and the education qualities that the people had that had achieved that level was certainly satisfactory for the job market of that day, and I question when the Minister says that 80 percent of the people graduate today, what extra benefit does that have to the whole group of people that are looking for jobs?

Let me continue on, when I try and expand on that theory. The Minister goes on to say that there used to be - and I didn't quite catch the figures - that some 25 percent of the teachers had degrees at one time and that now 80 percent of the teachers have degrees today. Of course, I take it she's using those figures again as support for the evidence that the public school system is a better place today in the sense that it offers a more rounded or more satisfactory type of education. I'm wondering if that's again the measuring stick to use when you attempt to bring forward some type of a judgment regarding the school system, because certainly as I remember coming through grade school and as indeed my parents remind me of the times they came through grade school, when certainly a very small percentage of teachers had degrees, that just as important as the education background was the time and the commitment made to the students as a whole. I don't think that'll ever change. Certainly, that can't ever change regardless of what letters you hang behind your name, and so I'm not particularly impressed with that figure per se, and maybe I'm sounding like a real

old Conservative, but I say that I'm not particularly impressed when you make this argument based on statistics.

What does the Minister for Wolseley ask? Well, I have two degrees behind my name and that maybe suffices the Member for Wolseley or not; I don't know. I didn't realize that was particularly germane to the subject what my specific situation is. — (Interjection) — Well, the Member for Wolseley says that may or may not make me a better MLA and I think that's the point I'm leading to. Specifically, what does the education guarantee us? Does it make us better decision-makers? I think the Minister says that today the children or the graduates of schools are smarter, they're brighter, they're better adjusted. I think those were her words and I, yet, today and through my 16 or 17 years in school, I don't know how you define the word "smart." I don't know how you do it and maybe the Minister of Education can do that. I don't know how you define the word "brighter" and I don't know how you define the words "more intelligent." If the Minister can tell me how she defines them, maybe we're on the same ground and maybe we're not, but the point being I always thought the purpose of education was to make one take into account more factors so they can make better decisions in all walks of life; whether indeed they are a farmer, like myself; indeed, whether they are a school trustee; indeed, whether they're a politician - for the Member for Wolseley. I always thought that was the purpose of education; to make people consider more sources of information and therefore make better decisions.

It's on that basis that I ask the Minister, or I will ask her at the end, where she believes the school system is by definition of the figures she's presented a much better system than it was previously, because I question the decisions that are being made in our society. I guess I'm questioning whether indeed there is a better society out there and I don't know. I'm not saying it isn't, but I don't see where it's radically improved in 15 years because now 80 percent of the people graduate from high school.

In closing, you know, I'd like the Minister to know, I'm not knocking education or advances in education. Believe me, I'm not. I'm a parent and I can tell her that I want every one of my children to take full advantage of every educational opportunity that's afforded to them, but I'm not going to allow myself to be misled or deluded into one second in believing that degrees, those letters you hang behind your name, or that graduation figures makes us a happier society or a smarter one in the sense that we always make better decisions. It's in that type of argument that I have to take exception with the Minister's statistics and, therefore, to her general conclusion that she's totally satisfied with the advances up to this point made in the public school education system.

HON. M. HEMPHILL: Well, Mr. Chairman, I suppose that if I had suggested I was totally satisfied, I would be doing myself out of a job. I mean, if I'm totally satisfied and there's nothing left to do, then why are we here struggling and working so hard? What I did say is that we have made tremendous strides and I do believe that. I didn't say that we don't have any

problems, that we don't have areas in which we need to improve or change, but that I really do believe we have made tremendous strides. I guess these are not just judgment calls, but they had to do with things that are very hard to measure. They had to do with how people feel in their attitudes and their values. They varied from person to person and we are all bringing our own experience, knowledge, attitudes and values to bear on our judgment of a system, I think, called the education system. But there are a couple of specific points I would like to make in response to support, I suppose, my statement that we are doing a better job than we ever have before.

When we look at the factors, we are learning a lot more about how children learn and things that interfere with a child's ability to learn. As I mentioned, especially in this very difficult society, we have a new class of children that is not special needs children but that are called high-risk children. These children are called high-risk, because they have things that have happened to them in large numbers that have an effect, we know, on their ability to learn and grow and develop to their full potential. I want to mention what they are just quickly, because the unemployment is one factor. Transience is another factor. Single parenthood is another factor and, interestingly, there has been a change in the order between transience and single parents; mobility and high transience used to be a heavy factor and it has now been superceded by the single parents who are there in increasingly large numbers.

The last one that is in this group of, I think, it's five factors that we use to identify at-risk children is the education level of their parents. So that where parents have not received an education level or have a low formal education level, it is a factor that seems to affect the abilities of the child to continue to grow and develop and to achieve a higher level of education. So the level of education affects not just that generation or that individual, but the generation to come.

If you want to know what the difference is in opportunities for jobs between people who have gone to school and graduated from high school, gone to college, had training, and gone to university - and I admit that there are larger numbers of them getting degrees and going to school and having difficulty finding jobs. There are increasing numbers of them, but I tell you also that they are not in as large numbers or in as disadvantaged or difficult positions as those who have not had the training and the education at all. If you want to talk about closed doors, then just talk to people who feel they are caught in tremendously limited opportunities because they never went to school, because they didn't get an education or they didn't receive their training opportunities.

When I talk about the kids being bright, I am not just meaning information and statistics and gathering of knowledge, although that certainly is important. I think they are gathering more knowledge on more topics and more pieces of information on more subjects than we were ever exposed to in our lifetime. They are more aware and I think they have a better understanding of people and the world around them. When we think of the things that we have to prepare these kids for and the world that they are going to inherit, I'm sure that if it sometimes frightens us a bit that it really does frighten them, because they are moving into, and we

have the responsibility to help prepare them for the technical revolution that I believe we are on the brink of - and you're not supposed to end a sentence with a preposition. That I remember from my high school days. You're not supposed to end a sentence in a preposition, but those children, our children, are going to have to not only live with, but control and direct and determine what kind of a society and life they are going to have for their children.

One of the major factors that is going to affect that is how they control and manage and deal with and live with the highly sophisticated technological revolution that is on our doorstep. Are they going to become extensions of the machines, or are they going to recognize that they are, in fact, simple tools? They are just tools, and if they are not used for the purposes not just of efficiency and production, but to improve the quality of life for the people in the world, then they are not, I think to my mind, being used effectively.

The children now have to deal with what we call our shrinking world community. In our time, we knew very little about the world outside perhaps our own neighbourhood or our own country, and this is going to be an issue that they cannot ignore. Although we have been, they are not going to be able to.

They are faced with a world that they believe could blow up tomorrow, and they believe that. It is shocking and frightening to me to hear my children - and I know I'm not the only parent that hears this - admit that they are not sure and they think there is a strong possibility that they may not live long enough to marry and raise a family themselves. They think that is a strong possibility. That is a reality of their world.

So, you know, when we talk about knowledge and "smart" and "bright" and those kinds of adjectives about our children and the students that we have preparing in the education system, and we look at those issues that we have to prepare them for, I can tell you that I think they know more. They are more understanding and better prepared than we could possibly be, not as well prepared as they might need to be, but we are doing our best and what we are doing is not bad.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Morris.

MR. C. MANNES: Mr. Chairman, I'll only make two brief comments in rebuttal, and I would hope that they would support my previous argument. I take them out of the response that the Minister has just offered.

She indicated that attempts are being made now to classify, and I believe you used the word at-risk children into some five categories. I hope it supports the argument I am trying to make, because society through the ages has always had at-risk children, however you want to define them. Indeed, the whole rural population at one time, when we were basically a rural population and you had families of 11 and you had the mother or the father die unexpectedly for whatever reason, and when you had outbreaks of disease come and wipe out families, and you had to travel four or five miles by way of horse and sleigh and you almost froze to death, those were at-risk situations also. I don't care what age you are in, whether it's 50 years before this or it is 2,000 years beyond this, the realities of the

situation are there will always be at-risk children. You can put them into five categories, you can put them into 50 categories, and nothing will ever change, not one thing, because it is the realities of the day, and that's the point I'm trying to make. Unless you can deal specifically with every situation, what is any different today than it was 30 or 40 years ago?

And the Minister says, well, our children are more aware. They're asking the question, are they even going to exist in 20 years? Sure they are, because that's the reality of today's life and I have total confidence that we will exist 40 or 50 years from now. We'll move through this period, but 100 years from now, the children of that day may be asking the very same question about a whole new threat to their existence or their children's existence.

Now, moving on specifically to the other argument, the Minister says that indeed those that do not achieve, do not have the credits, Grade 12 graduation, the degrees, are the disadvantaged and I don't argue that. But I ask her, what will the argument be when everybody has a Grade 12 education? What then will be the criteria for deciding who receives the jobs and do do not? Because there will be one, and that's a certainty, and I want to know then what that criteria will be.

HON. M. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, the member opposite is getting into questions that are extremely difficult to answer with statistical or straight information, because they — (Interjection) — Pardon?

MR. C. MANNESS: That was my argument in the first place.

HON. M. HEMPHILL: . . . because they are judgment calls and because people have varying attitudes and perceptions about how well our education system is doing. I respect his opinion, although I disagree with it, and do not want to just spout statistics and information about numbers of children being retained in school, to suggest that we're doing a very good job. But I do want to say that the point that he is focusing on, he is laying at the door of the education system, as many people are laying the problems and the issues of the day at the door of the education system.

Give me a moment to address this. He's talking about when they've all got degrees and they've all got Grade 12, how are we going to decide on jobs? The fact is, that we have a very big job to do in the education, the teaching, and the learning of our children, and that when we do that, we are being asked more and more by today's society to take on other additional responsibilities. The education system is doing that to a large degree and to the degree it can, because we're the places in these institutions that have children, and that's the place where the services to children should be delivered. I really do believe that.

So I'm prepared to look at and accept an expanded role in responsibilities and pressures and demands on

the education system other than what you might call the traditional straight educating of their children, but we cannot accept the responsibility for everything that happens in the society, including the tremendous economic pressures or difficulties, including other outside pressures on both society and the education system. It's our job to do the job that we have to the best of our ability, with the resources that we have, so that at least the problems that we're living with are not added to, unnecessarily, by an inadequate or poor or under-financed, uncaring, unresponsive education system. We can't do it all.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Tuxedo.

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, I'm prepared to move that committee rise, but I just wonder, in reviewing the information the Minister has given me, there was some particular information that I was looking for that was covered under Pages 17, 18 - I don't believe I asked for 19. I'm not sure if I asked for 17 and 18, or 18 and 19, but I certainly do need 19 if I didn't. Now that I see it, there's a whole continuation of the same sort of spread-sheet calculation that goes on to 20 and 21, so it actually goes from 17 to 21.

HON. M. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, I believe this is - I'm having a little bit of trouble with the 17s, 18s, and 19s, without seeing — (Interjection) — No, I think that . . .

MR. G. FILMON: I'll just bring it over so that they understand it's . . .

HON. M. HEMPHILL: Okay. I think we have a response. There is some information that you have asked for, that the total package of information that you have there is not available until June, but we have some information without the total expansion and we can explain to you which of those there are.

MR. G. FILMON: Well, okay. Basically, I'm wanting to look at, on a per division basis, the Education Support Program, and as much as possible, the other support grants on a per division basis. So that includes eligible expenditures, supplement equalization, supplement and a few other of these special grants. I believe that should be information that's available at this point in time.

HON. M. HEMPHILL: I wonder if the member would agree to just get together with staff for a minute at the end, with the information that we have, your points, and we can quickly cover what's available to date and what we can provide for you?

MR. G. FILMON: Committee rise.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Committee rise.