

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, 15 April, 1985.

Time — 8:00 p.m.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY - NATURAL RESOURCES

MR. CHAIRMAN, C. Santos: Committee please come to order. By agreement, this committee will now be dealing with the Estimates of the Department of Natural Resources and we shall begin with a statement from the Minister responsible for the department.

HON. S. USKIW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In opening this discussion of the Natural Resources Estimates, I note that this is the first time I have had the opportunity or responsibility for this department, so far for only a short while. But it has only been long enough to appreciate one of the important things that I'm sure members will concur in, the importance of the staff that we have around us and indeed the quality of that staff. We certainly have a good number of personnel in this department with a lot of good credentials that hopefully provide the necessary input to the Ministry. I intend to, of course, depend on them for assistance throughout the review process today and indeed in the course of the Estimates review.

This is also a good occasion to note that two well-known and well-appreciated senior staff members resigned during the year - Arne Barr and Bill Newton. They made a substantial contribution to the Government of Manitoba over several decades, and no doubt are going to be missed. I'm sure all members of the committee would concur in that sentiment.

I hope that this will be the year which will be remembered as one in which some important steps took place in terms of heritage improvement and preservation. We celebrate our 25th Parks Anniversary and expect to formally add Atikaki Wilderness Park to the parks system. I look forward to the passage of The Manitoba Habitat Corporation Act in this Session. In a matter of days, I believe, I shall be able to announce the completion of an agreement with Ducks Unlimited about the preservation of our major marshes.

There are related new thrusts in the department of which I'll mention two only at this point. The agreement with Canada on forest renewal is being implemented with vigour. It is worthwhile to visit the nursery facilities at Clearwater and Hadashville to see the effect of this arrangement. Secondly, I have good hopes that the new Conservation Districts Commission will give strong impetus to soil and water conservation through local initiatives in conservation districts.

It is unfortunate that economic conditions are such that we cannot commit enough funds to the problems of agricultural drainage, construction and maintenance to meet the needs which are widespread throughout the province. I hope we prioritize reasonably well and that maintenance of the existing plant, in particular, will accelerate as the economy improves. I must say,

however, that I am looking to the department to avoid an approach which addresses the simple and fastest dumping of water off agricultural land. I want staff to be persuasive in the creation of new conservation districts where there is opportunity to address the problems of a watershed through local co-operation. We need an environmental approach which seeks ways to slow down run-off and erosion, deals with best on-farm cultural practices and increases habitat and ground cover. I heard, recently, about the joint provincial-PFRA study of the potential for controlling water in the headwaters of streams originating on the escarpment. This seems to me to have the promise of a modification of the ditching solution in some parts of the province particularly susceptible to flooding.

I have asked for a review of the parks policy this year. The fact is that the revenue to cost ratio does not improve, and the question is the degree to which Manitobans wish to see the system subsidized. Perhaps there is no easy answer to this question. The one certainty is that we must have no deterioration in quality.

Preserving the present quality in all fields of resource management owes much to the officer in the field. It is pretty tough to enforce the rules in the face of the few who are more sophisticated, more daring and determined to break the law. I think the officers manage to do most of their tasks through discussion and persuasion - and should be congratulated on their attitude. There are some legitimate grievances on the part of the public, but by and large, heavy-handed enforcement is not used unless the situation patently warrants. In my view, this is the way we should continue to approach the resource management, always keeping in mind that poaching and unentitled, unrestrained resource depletion takes years to offset. It particularly disadvantages Manitobans who depend on legitimate harvest.

I believe I should influence the department more strongly in the direction of communication and education about our resources. You will see more in the future of the kind of initiative that with Education we are taking in the "Kids and Trees" program, in the kind of co-operation which the 25th Parks Anniversary is focusing.

Any estimates process tends to skim rapidly over some of the foundation programming in a department. We respond to an enormous number of public enquiries about skunks and skinks, eagles and sparrows, seasons, fires, roads, kinds of fish and kinds of trees, insects, viruses, ice, snow, water and weather. With such a variety, a sensitive administrative back-up is essential. Surveys provide the platform on which all land allocation rests and lands monitor its use. It is, perhaps, a measure of the service staff provide in these sectors that I expect, as usual, a swift passage of their Estimates for this year.

I now wish to turn to the Estimates document beginning with the Summary on Page 113.

You will note the organization of the Department of Natural Resources has not been changed in any

dramatic way over the past year nor do we contemplate major changes in 1985-86. I shall refer to fine tuning as necessary when we reach the pertinent allocation of resources.

Overall Expenditure Allocation: As noted, my few weeks of direct acquaintance with Natural Resources has surprised me with the variety of the Department's activities and the issues, problems - even accolades - perceived in one way or another by every Manitoban. I do not regard the funds or staff allocated to us to be large for the task - I must, however, acknowledge the fact that in constrained times, I must bend to priorities but fight very strongly to preserve a stable base in each sector for which we are responsible. This is not easy because of the difficulties in assessing aesthetic values - in Parks, Wildlife, Ecological Reserves, for example, and the approaching end of the useful life of some plant - some provincial drains and bridges are the prime examples here.

The summary on Page 113 of the "Main Estimates of Expenditure" indicates that Operating Expenditures have been held to a 1 percent increase over the previous year. Capital Expenditures, however, are expected to rise by 35 percent over 1984-85. You will not be able to derive these percentages accurately from Page 113. I have included Natural Resources allocations of \$49,500 Operating and \$900,000 Capital from the Enabling Fund on Page 135.

You will see reductions and new initiatives as we progress. Overall, staffing levels required to operate existing programs are down by 41, but new jobs and initiatives require nine new staff for a net reduction of 30.39 staff years. This has been done through redeployment, attrition or by utilizing vacancies.

On the Capital side, \$1.54 million is included for Valley Town Dykes which had been funded from the Jobs Fund in 1984-85. There is also an increase of \$1.67 million, under the Value-Added Crops Production Agreement with Canada, to complete projects before termination.

On the reduction side, I want to go over a number of them just to acquaint you with where the reductions might be found. We have Hunter Safety Training slated for a movement from the department to hunter groups. We expect to save about \$20,000 in that area. Birds Hill Nursery will be closed, saving of 4.26 staff years and \$104,000.00. Head Office staff for Regional Services will be reduced by four staff years. Field staff in lower priority areas in Regional Services is a reduction of four staff years. Elimination of the Well Drilling Program save three staff years and \$124,500.00. Late opening and early closing of some campgrounds will save 14.38 staff years and \$310,800.00. Conversion of campsites from transient to seasonal will save 2.40 staff years and \$60,000.00. Reduction in Administrative Support in the Surveys and Mapping Branch saves two staff years and \$50,000.00. Reduction and provision of mapping services to other government agencies and departments saves three staff years and \$109,000.

In New Initiatives, we have a number of items that I would like to mention:

Canada-Manitoba Agri-Food Agreement - an amount of \$300,000 has been provided for planning, analysis and district organization as well as an amount of \$250,000 for the Pasquia Polder III construction component, total amount of \$550,000 in 1985-86.

Park 25th Anniversary Celebration - an amount of \$40,000 has been provided. The department is also soliciting responses and funding for projects from private groups and individuals.

Youth Tree Planting Program - an amount of \$67,000 has been committed to this program. It will provide "hands-on" participation in reforestation and beautification.

Indian Land Claims Section - two staff years and \$42,000 will be required for the creation of this section.

Value-Added Crops Production Agreement - an amount of \$4,070,000 has been provided under the capital program for completion of projects under the Value-Added agreement.

Those are the deletions and additions, and I suggest to members of the committee that this is a year where we have had to make some very tough trade-off decisions and I think this statement suggests that.

Mr. Chairman, those are my comments.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. The Chair now calls upon the leading critic from the opposition to make his reply, if he so wishes.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, I would like to take the opportunity to welcome the Minister in his new portfolio. This Minister has had the opportunity over many years in government to have had the responsibility for various departments, so I don't consider him a rookie Minister, maybe in this department but not certainly with his experience. So I am looking forward to the challenge of going through the Estimates with him.

I have to indicate that, during the course of the year, most of my planning was done in the direction of the Minister that was the previous Minister of Natural Resources. When the change took place, it didn't necessarily take the wind out of my sails but it did change my approach somewhat. I want to compliment to some degree the change that has taken place, because I certainly did not agree in many respects with the direction that the previous Minister was taking with the Department of Natural Resources because of many of the things that have happened.

We had things running on an ongoing basis with not many new initiatives. A lot of words were spoken, but I don't know whether we really moved precisely forward in too many areas. Knowing in my mind at least the direction that the previous Minister was going, I would like to pursue the Estimates here in a manner that that would show the direction this Minister is going to be going.

I think if he is relatively forthright in his answers, and I believe he will be, then I believe it will be an educational program certainly for myself and my colleagues as well as maybe for the Minister since he has not been on this department that long. I don't profess to have all the answers, but we certainly have views that we would like to express and pursue.

Specifically, we would like to, and this is not necessarily in any order, Mr. Chairman, to the Minister, but in the area of water resources, for example. The Minister indicated the concern about not having additional funding available maybe, and this is an area where I think there has to be some consideration given

in the future. Our building program in terms of capital projects, whether it's drains or dams, things of this nature, have not moved forward that dramatically over the past years.

Last year, when we looked at the Estimates, the only drainage projects that were under consideration were projects that were involved with the Federal Government on a cost-shared basis. I hope that the Minister somewhere along the line, within the next while, will forward his capital projects so that myself and my colleagues can have a look at the capital projects that will be undertaken this year.

I think this department is one of the most important departments that we have in government. Natural Resources, I think, affects all people of Manitoba dramatically, whether it is in the Water Resource end of it, the Wildlife Resource, Forestry, whatever it may be, and I feel very concerned that we do not necessarily put it on a hold pattern because there are many initiatives that have been taken over the many years that have built the base over this province in terms of drains, dams, that have served purposes both for agricultural as well as recreational and somehow we seem to be getting away from that. There are not that many major new initiatives undertaken.

Also, one thing that we plan to be discussing is this Minister's position on the Garrison aspect of it, and this is a matter of interest, maybe. I received a document the other day set out by Wilfred Chislett - I don't know whether the Minister has had the opportunity to maybe get that document, if not, maybe he can avail himself of it and maybe give some comments on that aspect of it later on some time.

The other aspect is, Mr. Chairman, I had the opportunity to be a guest speaker at a function in North Dakota over the weekend, and the one message that has been coming back from our neighbours to the south is the seeming lack of communication between our province and the state of North Dakota, and I'm not just talking about Garrison, I'm talking about mini-projects that I think affect both our province as well as the State of North Dakota. Because of the fact that there is a line drawn separating two countries does not necessarily mean that the rivers and the lakes or the general atmosphere does not affect both countries as such.

The one thing that was made very clear to me was that there has been a lack of involvement and communication with our people to the south, especially in the area of the Souris River Development Program. Our people to the south are pleading for some kind of a communication aspect which has not been there. In fact, there has been some bad press and relationships developing because there has not been a direct contact. I would like to suggest to this Minister that he make an effort to maybe get involved with the people there, because there is a communication organization set up between the Premier of Saskatchewan and the Governor of North Dakota in terms of the development along the Souris River. Major monies are being spent there between Saskatchewan and North Dakota, and we have virtually no idea and no input into the matter, and I believe an invitation has been extended to Manitoba over the past while and has again been extended. Meetings are forthcoming and I would hope that somewhere along the line this is the plea that people

from there indicate that we get together. We need not necessarily agree with all the things and I think that is a natural aspect of it, but I think that it is only right and natural that one should listen to the other side of the story so that there could be development taking place that would be beneficial to both sides.

The other aspects that we will be raising during the Estimates is the aspect of the wildlife end of it, and we have various concerns. In my opinion, there has not been much happening. We realize full well that we've had a dramatic year in terms of Wildlife Emergency Feed Program, and we want to get into the details of that as to how it has been run, what has happened and whether there are other ways of approaching it for the future, whether there should be a way of building up through the hunting licences, whether there should be a pool set up where the people that enjoy the hunting aspects of it and the wildlife that we start building up a pool as a reserve so that, if this happens again, it can be clicked into place a little sooner.

I want to compliment many of the people of Manitoba that have made a valiant effort in the past winter in terms of feeding wildlife. I think the Manitoba Wildlife Federation needs a bouquet as well in terms of the effort that they have put forward. I don't know exactly, we'll pursue this a little further when we get to it, the involvement of the Manitoba Government in terms of the role that they have played.

Last year, I raised the aspect of poaching, the various aspects of it. The Native hunting issue has always been a very emotional one, as well as poaching in general. The concern that I am raising with the Minister right now is that, when we look at the Estimates in terms of the increase in Executive Support, and whether there has been any increase in the C.O. aspect of it, the conservation officers that actually are out in the field doing the work.

So these are areas that we want to go into much more detail as we go along the line. The other end of it is, I don't know to what extent the Minister's department has been involved in the wildlife associations that we have throughout the province who are very keenly concerned about what is happening.

Other areas are the hunting regulations, the changes of the regulations. There was criticism last year in terms of changes that took place at a most inopportune time for many of our lodge operators, etc. We want to delve into that.

One other aspect that has just started to surface and is creating a lot of concern is the fishing industry, both commercially and the sport fishing end of it. I would like to pursue the matter of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Board, whether that program is functioning. I fully realize that it is a federal program but, at the same time, the province has some obligations in there. I would like to delve into that to some degree.

Of course a thing that I'm sure is very close to this Minister's heart, seeing he represents the Constituency of Lac du Bonnet, is the live bait aspect of it which has been sort of brewing for awhile. I'm sure he must have some views on that. We would like to also pursue the experimental aspect of the use of 3-inch nets in the south basin of Lake Manitoba for the catching of perch.

Concerns that we would be pursuing a little further are the increase in the fishing licences, what effect that

additional increase - is that money going to be used for the stocking of fish, or where are the funds going on that?

In the area of parks, I am very concerned and would certainly like to pursue with this Minister the new approach that apparently is being taken by the department in terms of tendering certain public parks and roadside parks to the private sector for the maintenance and operations. We want to pursue that aspect of it in terms of what criteria are being used and exactly how this Minister and the department intend to pursue that. I'm not arguing against that. We would just like to see exactly what approach is being taken, which areas are being affected, because a lot of individuals have been calling and wondering exactly what's happening to the areas where they have cottages.

I'll use an example, the Moose Lake Park in the southeast part of the province and so there's concern that we'd like to cover in that area as well. The Minister in his opening statement makes reference to the Atikaki Park and the designation of that, and whether that is going to be done on the same basis as the Lake Mantario area where mechanical use is not allowed in the area and where there are further designations that the Minister wants to pursue, and I think as we go through some of these things in discussion along with my colleagues, we will have a better idea exactly what course this Minister intends to take.

In the aspect of Forestry - unfortunately I don't have a copy of the report that came out which indicated that Manitoba only replants approximately 11 percent of the harvest that is taken in our forests and we certainly want to have a good look at that. We also want to raise our concerns with the Minister regarding the Dutch elm disease. What is this Minister's approach? How does he plan to deal with it? Are there alternatives that we can look at? Maybe, Mr. Chairman, to the Minister, I missed it but I couldn't see any aspect of that in the Estimates here and certainly, that is an issue is vital to Manitobans and certainly to the City of Winnipeg.

So, Mr. Chairman, the Minister asked whether it was possible to pass these Estimates tonight and I would just like to say that I think we should take a little bit more time on it than just passing it today. I'm sure that he's looking forward to some of the line-by-line discussion so that we can get an insight as to the direction that this Minister plans to take. I think if the Minister will be, as I indicated before, open in how he views some of these things then I think his concern as well as mine will be to do the best we can for the Department of Natural Resources in terms of enhancing our natural resources so that we can make the maximum utilization out of it for all of the people of Manitoba, that we do not necessarily look at it in terms of total control and restriction, but rather make maximum use of it so that each and every aspect of our province can be involved in this thing.

With those remarks, Mr. Chairman, I've just flagged some of the issues that we want to go into in more detail and I know that I don't have that many of my colleagues here at the present time, but there are many who have concerns that they want to raise, because it affects all people in the rural areas of Manitoba and the impact is something that affects all people of Manitoba, including urban ones. I would like to leave

it at that, Mr. Chairman, and I look forward to the debate with the Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN: At this point in time the Chair now invites the administrative staff of the department to kindly take their respective places.

Referring to the first item relating to the Minister's salary, we shall start Committee deliberation on Item 1.(b)(1) Administration and Finance, Executive Support Salaries and 1.(b)(2) Other Expenditures.

The Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Yes, Mr. Chairman, before we proceed, if the Minister wants to introduce his staff, that would be fine. After that, I would like to raise a question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, my Deputy Minister, Nick Carter, of course needs no introduction having been here for some period of years.

Bill Podolski, of course, has been around for some period of time in government in one department or another - in this one, I forget how long - originally from Treasury Board away back when. Derek Doyle, of course, is next to Mr. Carter and next to Derek is Dale Stewart and Mr. Wong - I believe that's right. Ed Wong is the Director of Resources and the other two are ADMs. Pretty fair golfers? You know them better than I do, obviously. I have to admit that I'm still getting to know and to meet some staff so if I don't know them all it's because I haven't been able to meet them all.

There are others in the back of the room who could be introduced if you so wish. Everyone must know Tom Weber back there, head of Water Control; Peter Lockett, Director of Finance, and Garry Stesky, Budget Officer for the department. I think that's all of our staff.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This is one of the areas under 1.(b)(1) where my major concerns start and I want to indicate to the Minister that I do not necessarily intend to ask how much staffing is done all over the place and I don't want to pursue that end of it; but this is the one area where I want to raise a question of increase of, I believe, \$73,000 in salary in the Executive Support Staff and maybe we can get some of the staffing views and concerns out of the way at this stage of the game. I want to raise the question as to why there has been that kind of increase; and I would like to know what the status of the COs generally that has taken place over the past year when we have a dramatic increase in administrative staff of it, whether there has been any increase or decrease in the status of the COs.

HON. S. USKIW: Yes, on the executive support staff we have a total of eight. The increase in dollar amounts is in the area of salary adjustments, \$24,000; salary for clerical, term time transferred, \$7,700; salary for a skidder operator, departmental time under the Forest Renewal Northern Unit, \$12,000 and then we have an engineering aide, a vacant position transferred . . .

The transfer is from funds within the department plus supplemental funds to accommodate contract with individuals who has been seconded to the Civil Service Commission. That's one area of responsibility that's out of this department but we're still paying the salary. Transfer of staff, irrespective funds for administrative support, for Deputy Minister's office from Engineering and Construction Branch, shows an offsetting reduction. This position replaced secretarial position transferred to the Parks Branch. It's \$71,800 in total.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: I mentioned \$73,000, Mr. Chairman. I got a little confused with the explanation of a skidder involved in there and stuff of that nature. I wonder if the Minister could maybe lay it out in sort of a layman's terms. He has the figures there, maybe he could just explain, because \$73,000 is a major increase really in that aspect of it when we look at what happened in the rest of the Estimates in terms of staffing.

HON. S. USKIW: Well, the major bulk here is in the position that we are still retaining but the person is seconded to the Civil Service Commission. So that results in \$37,800 just in that one area of it, of the 71,000.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: How about that skidder aspect of it? Could the Minister maybe clarify that?

HON. S. USKIW: I am told it was just a position transferred in to give the dollars without the person. It's a vacant position; it's an engineering aide vacant position transferred from engineering and construction in order to get the dollars . . .

A MEMBER: But you haven't got the person.

HON. S. USKIW: That's right, yes, to get the dollars into the administrative section, into the executive section.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Well, just for further clarification, does that mean that the Minister has a position vacant there, that if he wants to put somebody in that position, that he has that money for utilization?

HON. S. USKIW: No, that money is being utilized and the increase results from the fact that we had a vacant position in another area, and the funds for that position have been transferred to this area to allow us for the increase.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Could the Minister then maybe initially now give us a status of the COs. Mr. Chairman, maybe that isn't on a line-by-line basis but under this aspect of it, I want to know the direction that the Minister is going with his conservation officers in the field, whether there has been any change in that direction, whether there is an increase, a decrease in terms of the people that we have working in the field.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, there is a total reduction of four COs in the field.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: The Minister is telling us that there is a reduction of four COs in the field at a time when

we have major concerns about the poaching aspect and just the fact that it has not surfaced maybe in the last little while, it's certainly very high in many people's minds.

Can the Minister maybe explain the justification of a decrease in that aspect of it because I know for a fact that there was a position that was being advertised and then during the course of the advertising all of a sudden the decision was made not to pursue with that after the applications came in.

I just wonder if the Minister can give us some rationale as to why we have, in a very dramatic aspect of it, where there has been a lot of public pressure in terms of concern about poaching and the administration in the field, why there would be a reduction of four people and why the vacancy that was advertised for was cancelled.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I want to correct my statement. We are down by two COs and two support staff rather than four COs for a total of four in that particular section.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: What I am trying to get at, and I am fully cognizant of the fact that money is a problem, but certainly when we look at the enforcement and administration aspect of it, the people in the field, that is where most of the pressure really takes place when we have a dramatic increase in the administrative end of it. How come that we have to delete at the CO level, which is the grassroots where most of the action and the concerns take place? That is something that creates the biggest reflection in the minds of people when this happens.

Is this in keeping with what this Minister plans to do? Is he planning to continue on that route, or is he planning to maybe be conscientious of the fact that a concern is there about the field administration end of it and whether he will try and reverse that trend?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I think that it's probably worth mentioning to the members that these Estimates that are here have been put together by another Minister and, therefore, I am not certain as to all of the reasoning behind all of the decisions. I am here to defend them nonetheless.

The obvious decision with respect to cutting down the size of the department or holding the level of increase down has to do with the overall restraint exercise throughout government that we have had to put in place over the last number of years, and certainly this past year, in order that government could live within half-a-billion dollars of deficit financing. That's really what it is all about, Mr. Chairman. It has to do with tough measures that are required throughout the whole system of government to hold the line on spending.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I can fully appreciate that. I suppose the fact that we are maybe dealing with the Estimates that some other Minister has forwarded here - we will probably be hearing that most of the time - that is why I indicated in my opening remarks that I would like to see the direction and I would want to hear from this Minister which direction he plans to take.

We knew the direction that the other Minister was taking and it certainly did not agree with the way I viewed things. That's why I raise the question, is that the direction that this Minister is going to be taking as well, that in view of the financial restraints that this government feels to put on certain departments, that this should be one of the departments that a senior Minister within Cabinet, if this is the direction that he plans to pursue, or whether he is going to use his seniority, as I know that he can, and then push for a change in direction that I think is very necessary in this department, or is this Minister just going to move along the same direction as the previous Minister has outlined in the Estimates.

That is basically what I am asking now and I think it will give us a clear indication as to which way this Minister is going to move with his department, whether it's going to be different than the previous Minister or whether he is going to pursue that same course of action because I can indicate to him right now if he is planning to pursue the same course of action as the previous Minister did, we will be having some pretty active discussion here in some of these things.

So I would like to know what has happened in this aspect of it right here with the increase in administrative staff and the decrease in the COs, whether this Minister is going to pursue that course of action or whether his thinking is that he will try and reverse that kind of a trend.

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, I think I did mention in the introductory remarks that we were down some 30-odd staff overall in the department through redeployment and retirements.

The question of where we go from here, of course, is something that I don't think should be answered now during these Estimates. I think that will evolve over a period of months, and I think I would be irresponsible in telling the Member for Emerson just what my plans will be for next year. I think before that is decided upon, I have to have an opportunity to interface with a whole host of people in the community in order to get a feel for where the public opinion lies, where the pressures are, where the needs are and, of course, measure that within the lights that I possess with respect to where the department should be going, or against that in any event. I have particular preferences but I have to recognize that we have to work within fiscal limitations that are set down by us collectively.

Once that decision is made, we are sort of locked in and each department has to share in that responsibility, each ministry does. Government is not a one-man show. It is a collective decision-making process and to that extent we have to live with the decisions that are made. In buoyant economic times, it's not always a problem, departments were able to expand, promote ministerial pet projects, if you like, from time to time, and were able to respond to community requests in a major way. That is not possible in times of revenue shortfalls and so all departments of government and in particular this last Budget round, if you like, these Estimates reflect that. They had to go through very onerous exercises in order to arrive at the numbers that we have arrived at, the principle being that we did not want to move our deficit figure

any higher than it is, and consequently it's a question of where you trim back and each one has to take some responsibility.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Well, Mr. Chairman, I could certainly give all kinds of suggestions to this Minister and to his Cabinet in terms of the directions where you could cut and where you could maybe expand, and I would like to see monies expanded in this area.

The Minister is telling me, and I take exception to that, when he tells me that he cannot necessarily - he has directions that he would like to move - he cannot necessarily give them to us because of the monetary restrictions that he's under. That is not good enough for me because I feel that this Minister, if he has directions that he's planning to move in, that is what we're discussing, the Estimates of the coming year. If he has areas, I can appreciate the fact if there are monetary restrictions that would not allow him to do all these things, but at least that is what I'd like to establish under this portion here - which direction this Minister is planning to move.

That is why I raise the area of the COs. Is he supportive of the direction that it is going, he is satisfied in the coming year with the kind of monetary funds that he has available, that things are moving in that direction, as he would like to see them? I'm not going to be critical if he says, well, I'd like to move in this direction but there aren't funds. I can accept that. But this business of saying, well, I can't tell you which direction I want to, I know where I'm going, or would like to go, but I can't tell you where I'm going. I think that is what we want to find out here, and it's going to make it, I think, a lot easier on all of us if we have an idea which direction this Minister is going, the policies, the directions that he wants to go at.

With the previous Minister, after three years, we had a good idea, and I indicated before I was not happy with that direction. This Minister can indicate which direction he wants to go. Even if there aren't funds, I can accept the fact that he's looking in that direction at least. But this business of saying, well, I know where I want to go, but the money won't allow me to.

Then I want to debate with him the aspect of why the money isn't there, because a government that is spending all kinds of money advertising - spending many millions of dollars, all their various promotions. I see signs are up all over the place. There is TV and radio and paper advertising like crazy. If he wants to know where to cut money, I can certainly give him advice in that respect. But, you know, that is the choice of the government, but I still want to get back to this Minister to indicate what direction is he planning to go with the aspect of enforcement COs, and we'll pursue that aspect of it all the way through the Estimates a little bit. I want to know where this Minister is going now, not where the other one was planning to go.

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, I think we are dealing with Estimates that have already been prepared, and therefore, we have to respond accordingly. Where the future takes us is, of course, another crystal ball.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Where do you want to take us?

HON. S. USKIW: The Member for Emerson did indicate that it took him three years to find out where my

predecessor was heading. That gives me at least two more years.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: No, not so.

HON. S. USKIW: But I will tell him this much, and that is that about 12 months from now, I think the Member for Emerson will have a better idea, as I will, because I don't believe that a new Minister has all the answers. I think they have all the answers on Day One, and then, as they meet with the public, they find out they're not so sure about them. It's going to take at least a year of interfacing with various groups that have an interest in this department to determine just where the priorities lie for the next set of Estimates, and I think I would be irresponsible to try to predetermine that today. I do have to defend these Estimates, however.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Minnedosa.

MR. D. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to talk about conservation officers just momentarily, and while we're on it, it may preclude some debate when we get maybe under the section that might cover them a little easier.

There is an old saying, Mr. Chairman, that taking your wife to a convention is like going hunting with a game warden. I take my wife to conventions, and I hunt with conservation officers and members of our local police force. But, I hunt pretty extensively in my area, and I guess, I would say it's seven or eight years since I've been checked by a conservation officer. It used to be fairly frequent, but it's seven or eight years since I've been checked in the field.

There are four conservation officers in the area from Amaranth to the Saskatchewan border. They are responsible for the fishing regulations on Lake Manitoba, for all of the game regulations throughout that whole area. I don't know how many thousand square miles there are, but I know there are 26 conservation officers in Riding Mountain National Park - the Federal Riding Mountain National Park.

Your department lost a very dedicated, knowledgeable and good man from the branch to Ducks Unlimited not too long ago simply because he felt he couldn't do his job. It was just physically impossible for him to try and cover the territory and do a decent job. He was just frustrated because it was too big a territory and he was just unable to do it.

So that is an area that, while I know some fellows are nervous if there are too many conservation officers around, but it's physically impossible for those four men to cover that piece of territory that they have, and that department just has to be beefed up if they're going to do a job that conservation officers are supposed to do in that area. So that's an area I think the Minister can take a long look at because there is poaching going on in that area as there are in other areas, maybe ours isn't as bad. But there is no possible way that the four officers covering that territory can do anything about it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Virden.

MR. H. GRAHAM: The Minister announced, I think, under this Executive Support Item 1.(b), there is some

70,000-plus increase in salaries there. I believe the Minister indicated that there were - was it, 2 SMYs were transferred to the Civil Service Commission?

HON. S. USKIW: One.

MR. H. GRAHAM: One. One was transferred . . .

HON. S. USKIW: Seconded.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Seconded. Well, when a person is seconded, doesn't the responsibility for the salary go with that too?

HON. S. USKIW: No, Mr. Chairman. Usually a secondment means that a person is moved but the home department continues to pay the salary.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Well, Mr. Chairman, I just took a quick look back at the Civil Service appropriations for this year and there are expanded salaries in every branch there. Can the Minister tell us why they would want to second a member or another person to their department? It looks as though they have made provision for increases in staff there. There doesn't seem to be any decrease there that would require them to second people.

HON. S. USKIW: Just to remind members what I did say earlier, and that is that dollars were transferred from other parts of the department in order to accommodate increases in this section and in other sections. We made some deletions and some additions within a 1 percent increase in operating costs year-over-year. So the dollar figures are static. It's just that we have moved some dollars around from one area to another within the department. These are not additional expenditures. They are contained within the parameters of that 1 percent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(b)(1) - the Member for Virden.

MR. H. GRAHAM: I would just like the Minister then to tell us for Salaries, we're dealing with eight positions. Is that right?

HON. S. USKIW: That is correct.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Eight positions. Now one of those is a skidder operator who isn't on staff. It's a vacancy.

HON. S. USKIW: That's a skidder operator that was transferred, or a position that's transferred . . .

MR. H. GRAHAM: Transferred in.

HON. S. USKIW: . . . from forestry in the Northern unit to this appropriation in the amount of \$12,000, not a full staff person.

MR. H. GRAHAM: That's \$12,000 has been transferred in.

HON. S. USKIW: That's right.

MR. H. GRAHAM: But it is not going to be used? In other words, this is padding.

HON. S. USKIW: It's going to be used here, but not in the other sector that it was transferred from.

MR. H. GRAHAM: So you're using that 12,000 to divide between the other seven because, while it's a position, there is no one there. So we're going to have a \$70,000 increase for seven positions. That looks like a \$10,000 increase average per person.

HON. S. USKIW: There are a total of eight positions.

MR. H. GRAHAM: No, but one is vacant. It's a skidder operator.

HON. S. USKIW: In this appropriation, there are none vacant.

MR. H. GRAHAM: There are none vacant now. So the skidder operator isn't there at all.

HON. S. USKIW: Most of that money has been used for that person that was seconded to the Civil Service Commission. So it's dollars drawn from other staff appropriations in other parts of the department into this section, and then \$37,000 of it is really to cover the salary of a person that is housed here but seconded to the Civil Service Commission.

MR. H. GRAHAM: So 37,000, one staff drawing 37,000

HON. S. USKIW: 37.8 to be precise.

MR. H. GRAHAM: 37.8, you have lost, and you have gained 12 from a skidder operator that has been . . .

HON. S. USKIW: We've gained a total of \$71,800 from other appropriations transferred to this one out of which we have lost 37.8 through the secondment.

MR. H. GRAHAM: That money is going to be used entirely to provide salaries for eight people?

HON. S. USKIW: That's correct.

MR. H. GRAHAM: It sounds like a pretty healthy increase when we understood there was no increase in the settlement this year. It doesn't sound right. We understand that the Civil Service MGEA agreement provides for no increase in salaries.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, there is an increase of one staff, year-over-year, in this appropriation because of that secondment. It's not an additional 70,000 for existing staff. It is 70,000 with one additional staff plus incremental increases for the balance.

MR. H. GRAHAM: It still doesn't add up.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Gladstone.

MRS. C. OLESON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Later on under the Wildlife Section, I wanted to discuss elk

damage. I wonder if the Minister could, before we meet next, supply me with figures on succeeding elk counts.

I'm looking, for instance, at Page 21 of that five-year report to the Legislature on Wildlife which was put out in '82. It says, for instance, that in Spruce Woods Park area, there are 750 elk. Then in the annual report, it says that wasn't counted this year because of weather, but I understand from talking to people in the area that there was a survey done this spring and they came up with 289 elk. Now somewhere, especially when this says that the herds are projected to increase, there's something wrong somewhere.

How often are they counted? And could I have a breakdown of it for next time we meet?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, we can get the breakdown and the answer for that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(b)(1) - the Member for Virden.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask another question of the Minister. Of the eight positions who are Executive Support and, I would presume, Executive Support means they're very close to the Minister, of those eight positions, how many are covered by Manitoba Government Employee Association contract?

HON. S. USKIW: None at all that I'm aware of.

MR. H. GRAHAM: So they are all contracted people?

HON. S. USKIW: Well I don't know if they're contracted. They're staff. They are within the excluded group, but they're not contracted people.

MR. H. GRAHAM: None of them are Civil Service positions? I would imagine they're all executive assistants.

HON. S. USKIW: I am advised that they are civil servants, but they are excluded from the bargaining unit. That's correct. They have special status in the Minister's office.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions?
The Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, as we go through the various categories or headings here, we'll be raising many questions regarding exactly what's happening, the direction that the Minister is planning to go. I suppose that his support staff will be around anyway because, normally under the Executive Support is where the planning and the direction that the department is going is basically discussed. Aside from the report that the Minister read which did not really illustrate that many specific directions - it was a type of very general statement - I wonder if the Minister could indicate directions that he's planning to go as we start into each category, for example, Regional Services and we have Engineering/Construction, Water Resources, **whether** he can sort of outline exactly what is being **proposed** in those areas. Then we can get into some of the detail of that.

I suppose that his staff will still be around so that we can cover those individual items because, normally under the Executive Support, the planning aspect which is the next category, Research and Planning, we would like to establish the planning and direction, as I indicated before, that we're going. It's difficult. We can do this on an ongoing basis now and cover the whole waterfront, or we can do it as we come to each category. We'll do it whichever way the Minister likes, because I know many of my colleagues have specific concerns because it affects, I think, all the rural ridings including the Minister's himself in terms of many aspects of it.

So we can use whatever approach he wants, unless he wants to elaborate on some of the directions he is planning to move generally.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I think the better procedure would be that we go through these items and when we get to one that the member is particularly interested in, then he can put the question as to the direction of the department and we would respond at that time. Otherwise, we're going to be over the waterfront many, many times on each item. Unless he wants a very simple description of each of these items as we go along and then deal with the major ones separately.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: What I would prefer to do, Mr. Chairman, is when we get to the beginning of a certain category, the Minister can then give us a direction and then we can pursue it that way.

The other question that one of my colleagues was interested in is where does the Dutch elm disease, under what category does that come? Normally there's been a category in here and maybe I missed it, but would that come under Forestry? It's a relatively major concern and a major item and there doesn't appear to be any appropriation for that.

HON. S. USKIW: Yes, you'll find that under Forestry, Page 121 under 7.(e) Forest Protection.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Gladstone.

MRS. C. OLESON: Just another one to ask about to talk about later - under what heading is the Hunter Safety Training that you mentioned in our opening remarks?

HON. S. USKIW: Yes, Mr. Chairman, that would be found on Page 116 under Regional Services (a) Other Expenditures.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(b)(1)—pass; 1.(b)(2)—pass; 1.(c)(1) Research and Planning, Salaries, 1.(c)(2) Other Expenditures.

The Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Just before we leave that, on the Research aspect of it, can the Minister maybe give us a bit of background as to what categories come under Research?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the Research activity, Research and Planning has to do with the

interdepartmental planning process as an example, Environmental Assessment Review Process, Periphery Planning for Northern Communities, Municipal and Planning District, Planning Processes, and so on. Also, this section administers The Ecological Reserves Act.

The Department of Planning Documents and Strategies related to conflicting land uses in the area of recreation, Crown lands, sub-division reviews, ecological reserves, and other site-specific proposals.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: The Minister is bringing forward a bill and because we haven't seen the bill yet and because we're dealing with it now, is there possibly some information that the Minister can forward at this stage of the game?

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't think it would be proper for us to talk about a bill that is yet to be introduced, in the Estimates review process.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Well, if this is the section that is doing that kind of work, then maybe we should leave this section and move on and come back and deal with it once we see the bill because we might have various concerns that we want to raise at that time. If there's no information coming forward, obviously, the Minister has indicated that this is an area that has done the planning on that bill and we don't know when that bill is going to be introduced, can the Minister give us some indication whether that bill is coming forward? We're asked to approve funding for this aspect, that is, presenting the bill, knowing full well we can debate that bill when it comes forward, but maybe there's some background information that he can give us.

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm sure the member is having fun with me. We have an Ecological Reserves Act now, as I understand it. The bill merely amends the present act, so there's no relevance with respect to the coming bill and these Estimates. There's no connection between the two, other than that it may expand or reduce the activity. Really, we can't speculate on legislation yet to be introduced. We'll have a different debate altogether.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(c)(1)—pass; 1.(c)(2)—pass; 1.(d)(1) Communications, Salaries; 1.(d)(2) Other Expenditures - The Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. W. MCKENZIE: How many staff SMYs have you got in Research and Planning?

HON. S. USKIW: We have a total of 12 staff in that division.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(d)(1) Communications, Salaries; 1.(d)(2) Other Expenditures - the Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, the Communications aspect of it - could the Minister elaborate on that? Is this the advertising of hunting regulations, fishing regulations? Is this the category that comes under?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I guess what I should do is cover the whole range of items under Communications.

Communications advises on and co-ordinates Communication programs to identify public needs and provide information to the public about resource policies and programs. Activities of Communication Branch include under Administration: develop, implement and monitor communication strategy for the department; design, develop and evaluate Communication program for a specific resource activities; administer the publications, films, displays, lending service - whatever that means; provide administrative support for the branch; Electronic Media: develop and provide radio and film services to meet departmental communication needs; under Publications: plan, write and distribute printed materials; Design and Production: to design and print product signing displays; Education and Communication: ensure resource enquiries from the public are answered alerting the department to emerging trends and developing problems and analyze departmental needs for resource information in Manitoba schools; recommending and implementing programs to satisfy those needs.

That's the full range of the Communications activity.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: I compliment the Minister and his staff for that range that he indicated and they're only spending \$195,000 aside from staff. That's a tremendous achievement, I suppose. Is this the Communications aspect of it that would have flagged the concern about the wildlife disaster that was facing us in terms of feed shortage? It would come under Wildlife?

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(d)(1)—pass; 1.(d)(2)—pass; 1.(e)(1) Financial Services, Salaries—pass; 1.(e)(2) Other Expenditures—pass; 1.(f)(1) Personal Services, Salaries; 1.(f)(2) Other Expenditures - the Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Yes, could the Minister just maybe clarify under Administration and Finance when we look at the total salaries paid there, how much staff is involved in this category totally under Administration and Finance? For example, under Financial Services, we have \$683,000 - I don't want each individual category. Just on the total section that we're dealing with, how much staff is involved in this?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, our staff will compile that for the honourable member and get it back to him.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(f)(1)—pass; 1.(f)(2)—pass; 1.(g)(1) Computer Services, Salaries; 1.(g)(2) Other Expenditures - the Member for Virden.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under Computer Services, I imagine this item here is just for the administration of the Computer Services, is that right?

HON. S. USKIW: Yes, that is correct.

MR. H. GRAHAM: In the field of computerization, to what extent is the computer being used by the department? Is it being used in the mapping; is it being used in keeping census and making forecasts in, say,

the fish population? Is the department completely computerized?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, as the member would probably be aware, the computerization of departments throughout government is a long-standing process, started away back, and we're not yet to the point where we have caught up with the need. In this particular department we're involved with micro-computers in wildlife, in fisheries area. In the forestry area they use computer services for tree inventory, and in the water resources, for flood forecasting and things of that nature.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Is it being used in planning?

HON. S. USKIW: Yes, the Research and Planning Branch utilizes the computer service.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(g)(1)—pass; 1.(g)(2)—pass.
1.(h)(1) Administrative Services, Salaries; 1.(h)(2) Other Expenditures.
1.(h)(1)—pass; 1.(h)(2)—pass.
1.(j)(1) Internal Audit, Salaries; 1.(j)(2) Other Expenditures - the Honourable Minister.

HON. S. USKIW: Yes, in answer to the question from the Honourable Member for Emerson, there's 104 staff in those components.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(j)(1)—pass; 1.(j)(2)—pass.
Since we have to skip the Minister's Salary, we have no resolution on this item.

Going on, Item No. 2, Regional Services, 2.(a)(1) Salaries; 2.(a)(2) Other Expenditures; 2.(a)(3) Problem Wildlife Control - the Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: I would assume that this is the area where the COs' responsibility is involved.

HON. S. USKIW: That is correct, Mr. Chairman.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Can the Minister indicate how many COs we have on staff at the present time?

HON. S. USKIW: 140 positions and 7 vacancies, Mr. Chairman - of those are 7 vacancies.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: The reduction that the Minister indicated of two COs, that has nothing to do with the vacancies. That is just a reduction that has taken place in this aspect of it?

HON. S. USKIW: That is correct, Mr. Chairman.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Is it the intention of the Minister to fill these seven vacancies that are there at the present time?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, that would be our expectation, yes.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: How soon could we anticipate that these positions will be tendered, because I find it actually odd that there should be seven vacancies at a time when there's a lot of pressure on, and many areas

complain that there's not enough people in the field that are administrating the responsibilities of a CO. Can the Minister maybe explain why there are seven vacancies to begin with?

The concern I have is we have many of our young people, on their own initiative, go and take courses to get into this aspect of it, which is, I think, an appealing field of work to get into and, as I indicated, go to considerable expense and then look around to try and get into this field of work and here we find we have seven vacancies. It makes me a little nervous, Mr. Minister, that we have seven vacancies there and there's no move afoot.

Maybe now the Minister can explain why that position that was being advertised - I believe it was only one position that was being advertised - and then it was withdrawn, what the rationale is for that? If the money is being expropriated for this kind of position, why do we have seven vacancies and why was that one position withdrawn after it was advertised?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, my understanding is that we have bulletined for all of them and we have received applications for all the positions. We will be soon making a decision with respect to them.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Can the Minister maybe just clarify that a little further? When were these positions advertised? Because I know from personal experience, people have phoned that are awaiting the advertising of these positions and have been looking at it for a long time. Has this just happened recently, because I was not aware that these positions have been advertised? If the Minister could give me more details as to exactly what's happening, because at a time when everybody is concerned about employment, seven jobs of this nature would make quite an impact. Maybe I have just missed it, but I certainly haven't heard any indication from anybody that these positions have been advertised.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I believe we advertised for a position some months ago, to which we got a number of responses and from that response list we will be selecting all of the seven people.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Well then . . .

HON. S. USKIW: There were 110 by the way, Mr. Chairman. There were 110 applications in total.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Okay, maybe just to get it clear in my mind. I was under the impression that one position was being advertised some time ago and then the position was not filled. Now the Minister indicates, based on the applications they have from that, that they will now be filling seven positions - based on the applications they got for that one position at that time? I find that sort of strange that one position was advertised, 110 applications came forward, then it was indicated to everybody that the position was not going to be filled and now, without re-advertising the fact that these positions will be filled, applications will be taken from the 110 that came in and those seven positions filled? Am I assuming that's the procedure?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, at the time that we advertised for the one position we did indicate that all the subsequent positions will be drawn from the eligibility list established by that first advertisement or the first process on the one position. So that out of the 110 that came in we established an eligibility list and we'll be selecting from that list.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Of those 110 people that made the application, have they been informed that this is the procedure, because when that position was advertised, they were then notified that the position was withdrawn, would not be filled, and do these people now know, because I would expect that the majority of those that applied are scrambling like crazy to get into some kind of job along these lines, that have the training.

Now the Minister tells me, well, they'll take those 110 applications, make a short list of it and then will be filling seven positions. How many of these 110 applicants know that this is the procedure that's taking place?

HON. S. USKIW: I don't believe any of them really know whether they have an opportunity, based on that original advertisement, but we have the list and we'll be contacting those based on the eligibility list for the filling of those seven positions.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I'm not very happy with that kind of approach. Here we advertise a position, have 110 applications. Everyone gets notified that the position has been withdrawn and obviously, many disappointed individuals scrambled around looking around for occupation of whatever nature they could find - preferably along the line that they had training for because I would assume that the majority of the 110 had training along these lines - and here the Minister is telling me that we'll now fill seven positions, based on the applications that we had.

I have some difficulty with that because invariably the fact that the position was withdrawn sent everybody scurrying to look for different areas. Now the Minister is going to prepare a short list and is going to start contacting, saying we now have a position open for you; and half of them, I would assume the most aggressive and the ones that we probably would have liked to fill these positions, will have scrambled and got positions elsewhere. So what is this, a matter of elimination now? You're picked and oh, I have a job. Well then, fine, you're out of it. I have difficulty with the approach on this thing.

What I would have liked to see or what I would have expected to see is that the Minister would say, we have seven positions available and outline the job requirement and then, as applications come in, you can make up your list and let them know where they're at. I think this is not a fair way of doing it, in my mind.

The other thing I'd want to know is when is this taking place? Is there a deadline now or is it still at the discretion of the Minister and his staff to see, well, we'll fill one maybe next month and one the month after, or what is the procedure here? I want more definite information on this, Mr. Chairman.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that the procedure is not new. It's been with us for a number of years.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Does that make it right?

HON. S. USKIW: I don't know if there's anything wrong with it. We did advertise for those positions, or for one, the result of which we have 110 applications and . . .

MR. A. DRIEDGER: You withdrew the application.

HON. S. USKIW: Yes, that's correct, but we still have the applicants.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Is this the normal procedure?

HON. S. USKIW: I don't see anything wrong with it; I don't know if that's normal or not.

Correction, Mr. Chairman. We did not withdraw; we just didn't make a decision with respect to that position.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: But applicants were informed that the position will not be filled at this time.

HON. S. USKIW: I'm advised not, Mr. Chairman.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Well then I will have to check my information, Mr. Minister, but I was informed that people were informed that the position was not going to be filled at this stage of the game. This is months ago; I don't know how many months. Can the Minister maybe indicate when that position was actually advertised?

HON. S. USKIW: Yes, in October of 1984.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: And there were seven vacancies at that time already?

HON. S. USKIW: Not very likely, probably three or four at that time.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: When is the time that the Minister now expects to fill these seven positions?

HON. S. USKIW: Likely half of them fairly soon and probably all of them by the end of the summer.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, in an area where there has been major major concern and we have seven vacancies, we have 110 applications, a position that was advertised in October of 1984. Can the Minister explain why he would be dragging his feet in an area of major concern, in the enforcement aspect of it, with COs, why he would fill some of the positions, the seven vacancies that he has, "some of them soon and the rest maybe by the end of this summer."

Has this to do with the monetary end of it, that we're approving funds here these seven and then we're going to drag it over half the year so that basically only part of them will be employed. I have difficulty with this and I'll belabour it until I feel comfortable with the situation.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that there are some internal transfers, either requested or recommended, within the staff complement that we now have; and once that is sorted out we will be able to decide the disposition of the vacancies, so we don't

want to pre-empt the transfer opportunities at the present time.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Can the Minister clarify that procedure he's talking about, within department transfers?

HON. S. USKIW: Within that particular group, people moving from one region to another or being transferred from one region to another, which will result in a job opportunity, perhaps in a different spot than what would be the case if you were to employ them or fill the seven positions all at one time now.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: With this process of having had vacancies for a long period of time, is this not an ongoing thing, in terms of filling these positions or is there not a concern about filling these positions, because we're talking of, there used to be three or four openings and now there's seven openings and now we're going to start the process of with in-house transfers, stuff of that nature, and by the time that all gets sorted out we could be through the middle of the summer. I feel that the Minister's department is a little lax in this aspect of how we're filling these positions.

I have no concern what happens under the aspect of the administrative end of it, whether you have in-house transfers and vacancies there; I never raised the question there. I raised the question here because this is an area where there has been major concern and here, all of a sudden, we're playing loosey-goosey with this game and I just don't accept that aspect of it. I would like something more specific. When can these positions be expected to be filled?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I can be very specific. The logic for not filling the positions till now is because of last fiscal year's freeze on filling of positions which ended at the end of the fiscal year; so therefore the departments were not allowed to fill their positions up until April 1.

We now have an opening of that. There is no freeze on the filling of those positions; we will now proceed to fill them. We will also do so in light of the transfers that are being either requested or recommended within the department with respect to existing staff. So that all of that process has to take place before we finalize the filling of those positions.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Coming back to the 110 applications that we have . . .

HON. S. USKIW: It's only a week since the end of the fiscal year, Albert.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: We could go back and then deal with the fact why was there a freeze on to begin with in the area of major concern, when obviously there wasn't a freeze on other aspects of this. Coming back to the 110 applicants, is there some kind of way that they can be informed that there's now a possibility or are we going to do the hunt and peck system and if one that we choose is not going to be able to accept the position, then we go to the next one, or what is going to be the process now because we're now talking

over six months down the road since the applications were made.

I find this process rather unusual.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, what is going to take place is that the department is going to contact the 110 people who have indicated an interest, to determine whether that interest is still there and if it is, then of course, a selection will be made based on eligibility from that list.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Okay then a further question. Is this process of transfers and bidding - whatever the case may be that takes place - what is the time frame that the Minister is looking at in this area? This business of filling three maybe within a couple of months, and then maybe three or four by the end of the summer, you know I'd like to have a more definite time frame if it's possible to establish that.

HON. S. USKIW: I'm advised that we expect to have three of those positions filled by about June. The others will be subsequent to that.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: If it would be subsequent to that, I suppose we're back to where the Minister said it could be the end of this summer. By that time more vacancies arrive, etc., so I suppose, in a very important aspect of the enforcement end of it - you know where there's been a lot of pressure in that end of it and we've cut down two COs to begin with, plus we have seven vacancies that we actually have - is this the direction the Minister has planned to go, that we'll be having a slowing and dragging of this whole aspect of it, or are we going to take and look at stepping up the aspect of enforcement in the future?

All I'm trying to establish in my mind, Mr. Chairman, is how does the Minister feel about this? Are we looking at beefing up our enforcement aspect of it at a time when there are major concerns about poaching, or where are we going with this thing in the Minister's mind?

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, out of a complement of 140 positions, seven is not a great number, of which three are going to be filled within the next month-and-one-half. So therefore, I'm not sure what the member is exercised about. That leaves another four. For whatever time it takes to sort that out, it's a very small percentage of the total.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I'll tell the Minister why I'm exercised. I don't like the trend that's taking place at a time when we're talking of trying to control. In the past years, when we've been going through the Estimates with the Minister of Natural Resources, it was always a major thing about the poaching aspect of it and the enforcement end of it, and here the department seems to be going in the wrong direction. We certainly have no problem beefing up all kinds of other areas in terms of that and this is the most important aspect of it, the enforcement end of it.

You can pass all the regulations that the Minister wants and there's many been passed - about wearing the blaze emblem or its square footage in the back

and not hunting on private property, we pass regulations endlessly. In the meantime on the enforcement end of it, we are going in the reverse and it makes it very difficult for our enforcement officers in the field to try and keep up with all the regulations and enforce them.

If the Minister feels that I'm making light of this matter or making too much of it, let him get out to some of his departments and check the ratio of the complaints that they're having for nightlighting and the poaching that is taking place. It is virtually impossible for them to follow all these aspects up.

The other problem that we have - and while we're on this area here we'll spend some time on this - is that many of our enforcement officers have a dilemma because they don't have proper equipment in many cases. There are poachers nowadays that have all kinds of sophisticated equipment that put our COs at a disadvantage. That is why I'm raising the aspect of - you know we're playing loosey-goosey with the hiring end of it - and what is four out of 140? It makes a big difference out there, because our enforcement, our COs are covering dramatic areas.

The other thing I want to raise with this Minister is the timetable that these men operate out in the field, because I'd much rather see our COs, our officers in the field, operate on their own timetable to some degree, because the poachers don't necessarily operate on a nine-to-five basis. That is a problem that has developed, Mr. Chairman, because our people are working on a time basis to some degree, and what happens, they can't follow-up all these calls that are taking place.

If that is the trend that this government wants to make, I want to make a suggestion to this Minister, that maybe he should consider getting the wildlife associations involved. We have many good wildlife associations throughout the province that are concerned about what happens to our wildlife. Maybe we can utilize them and work out a program that they can get involved in, because there's no way with 140 officers in the field that they're going to be able to control the aspect of poaching, which is a major and dramatic thing. If we can't hire more staff - if it's a monetary thing - why not involve some of our people in the wildlife associations in terms of being watchdogs out there.

We have the same thing, for example, the RCMP are having a crime watch, where they go into communities and promote the idea that if you see anything unusual, report it. They set up certain individuals so that it gets screened, so our people don't necessarily have to chase their butts off running on wild goose chases. But certainly maybe something along those lines could be worked out so that we involve other people, so that our COs have a little better chance to cover that, because I think our officers in the field are very sincere. I think they're running their butts off and they're being hampered by regulations to some degree. I think that they should be given a freer rein, that they operate evening hours, whenever they feel they have to operate, instead of running around during the day, when there isn't that much action going on. I just raise some of these concerns because it is a major area of concern and we have discussed this almost every year already in terms of the problems that we have of enforcement.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Gladstone.

MRS. C. OLESON: Mr. Chairman, in the opening remarks, the Minister mentioned hunter safety training is being shifted from the department to hunter groups. Could he elaborate on that please and let us know just how he is planning to deal with that?

HON. S. USKIW: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that the \$20,000 reduction is, of course, a reduction for us in that there's no offsetting expenditure, but that we will have to rely on voluntary effort on the part of hunting associations to pick up on that end of it and we will be encouraging that process.

MRS. C. OLESON: Well, hunters presently - I'm not just certain of the regulations - but do they not have to go through training in order to get a hunting licence?

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, that has to do with hunter safety per se, yes. Each individual, I believe, has to have a safety certificate, yes. In terms of general safety programming, we're going to ask the voluntary efforts on the part of the hunters, their associations to undertake that responsibility.

MRS. C. OLESON: Like wildlife associations and so forth? Okay, thanks.

HON. S. USKIW: Yes, I just wanted to respond to the Member for Emerson with respect to the problem that he poses. He is absolutely right when he suggests that it's a problem that can't be solved with the kinds of staff complement that we have and have had for a good number of years.

On the other hand, there's really no end to that argument. I don't foresee a time in the near future when we will ever have enough staff to deal with the illegal hunting, if you like, that occurs throughout the province. I think it's almost an impossible task to police. There's no doubt that there may have to be other methods that we have to consider in dealing with that issue. We have met with various organizations that have expressed those concerns and, indeed, will be reviewing options in that area. I don't think that there is a ready answer by simply saying we have to staff up more. I don't think that'll do it without having to staff up dramatically more.

I might point out also to the member that during peak seasons, we do add staff to our normal staff, but these are hourly people for that specific purpose, so that we do enlarge the size of our police force, if you like, in the field at the critical time. It's not just 140 full-time people that we rely on.

So, in terms of the vacancies that are there now, if you added the additional hourly staff to the 140, it further diminishes the importance of seven vacancies, although I don't want to minimize it. It really is a small part of the whole package.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. W. McKENZIE: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister how much money he's got in here for the control of beavers in Riding Mountain National Park, Duck Mountain Provincial Park — (Interjection) — What's the population?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, that program is a federal-provincial program and it's about \$60,000, of which we spent about half.

MR. W. McKENZIE: What's the staff show as the beaver population around the stretch of the Riding Mountain National Park, for example? Is it up or down?

HON. S. USKIW: I'm told that there's real logic to this thing. The population is up, because the price of pelts is down. We just have to reverse that and we'll have our problem solved.

MR. W. McKENZIE: How can I tell the people that live on the periphery of the Riding Mountain National Park, how do they deal with beavers this year? Same as last year?

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, just to give the member an example. Last year, we removed in excess of 600 beaver in Manitoba through the program, so that gives him an idea of what the problem is.

MR. W. McKENZIE: So, they'd phone the conservation officer and it just moves from there.

Can I ask the Minister then about the Nykyforak farm north of Roblin which has seen about 50 years of beavers making dams at the Duck Mountain Provincial Park, floods the man, and he's maybe suing the government now. It's gone on for years and years and he gets water on his land about six inches of water there, and his crop's flooded. It's gone on and on. I wonder is it resolved. — (Interjection) — Nykyforak - William Nykyforak.

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, the information that I have is that it's a municipal drain that's involved and therein lies the responsibility at the local level.

MR. W. McKENZIE: I've heard that before too. What causes the waters, the beavers in the park change the course of the water from the natural drain and it fills the culverts up and floods the farm. It just goes around and around. It's not resolved then?

Can I ask the Minister, it talks about services at the community level about why we don't get the showers at Assessippi Provincial Park. I think it's three years in a row now that I'm waiting and waiting. I was there the other day, there's no showers, and it's a busy place.

HON. S. USKIW: I'm advised that they are in the program this year, Mr. Chairman.

MR. W. McKENZIE: How about Child's Lake? Is there a hotel going in there?

HON. S. USKIW: A what?

MR. W. McKENZIE: A motel, hotel.

HON. S. USKIW: I'm advised that the developer withdrew his proposal.

MR. W. McKENZIE: Then the other one was hydro services at Blue Lake?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, it would be better for us if could deal with those matters when we're into the

Parks section. I would have the relevant information, hopefully, at that time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Yes, I'd like to pursue this wildlife control aspect a little further.

Over the years, we've had discussion and we've had resolutions in this House regarding the nightlighting aspect of it. We were informed that there was an educational program or a program afoot to try and discuss the problem. One of the things that has always come to the fore dramatically in some areas is that people seem to feel that the rights of the Native people to unlimited hunting and nightlighting is creating the major problem. I'm not necessarily saying that is the case, but it has certainly always been put in their shoes and I think that probably the nightlighting aspect of it affects more than just the Native people.

The previous Minister indicated that they were working in conjunction with the Native people in terms of trying to resolve that aspect of it. I wonder if the Minister could give us an update as to how that program is coming along and whether there's an improvement in that situation?

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, just for the member's benefit, year-over-year increase of problems in the area of illegal hunting, if you like, is up by about 6 percent year-over-year, '84 over '83. We had 830 incidents in '84, of which 520 have been concluded — (Interjection) — well, prosecuted and concluded, one way or the other. I don't know whether they were successful prosecutions; 129 are still pending and 181 were simple warnings, but it does represent a 6 percent increase year-over-year. Of that number, 18 percent is nightlighting.

MR. H. GRAHAM: That's one in five.

HON. S. USKIW: Yes, that's right, a pretty high percentage.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: This co-operative approach that was being promoted last year, can the Minister give us an update as to whether there's progress in that direction with regard to — I think the Minister indicated that they were consulting with the Native people about the possibility of abolishing the nightlighting and restricted hunting for the Native people, that they were in discussions with these people to see whether there could be sort of a common understanding or agreement on that aspect of it. Can the Minister indicate whether progress is being made in that direction?

HON. S. USKIW: According to what I have before me here, there has been some improvement but by and large it's a pretty difficult area. We've had some co-operation.

Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the member would like to raise that issue again when we get to Wildlife and perhaps we'll have more information at that time.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Fine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Virden.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to deal with Item (a) (3) Problem Wildlife Control.

I presume, under that, you're talking about unwanted bears in parks and probably polar bears in Churchill and maybe rabbits, skunks and a few other things. Is that correct?

HON. S. USKIW: Yes, essentially it's beaver and black bear control are the two main areas of activity there.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Does this also include polar bear control in the Churchill area?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, we have a special Polar Bear Alert Program for that area.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Does it come under this appropriation or is it under another . . .

HON. S. USKIW: Under the appropriate region, the Northern region.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, under what region would you deal with the problem of rabid skunks? Under this particular appropriation?

HON. S. USKIW: It would be in every region. It's right across the province so we deal with that issue in every region; so all of our regions are equipped for that.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Can the Minister indicate whether the problem of rabid skunks is increasing or whether it seems to be declining?

HON. S. USKIW: We'll have to get that information, Mr. Chairman.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, I think it might come under this program because, when you're dealing with regions, I fail to see any urban region in here. I'd like to ask the Minister a few questions about the abnormally high deer population within the boundaries of the City of Winnipeg; and I would consider that to be a problem in wildlife control.

Perhaps the Minister can indicate to the committee what the intentions are of his department, dealing with the alarming increase of deer population within the urban area.

HON. S. USKIW: I again would ask that the member defer that till we get to wildlife.

MR. H. GRAHAM: They aren't a problem then; they're not a problem, wildlife?

HON. S. USKIW: They're a problem, but we can deal with them under the Wildlife section of the department when we should have more information and staff here for that purpose.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Then I guess that brings us down to bears in parks. The Minister indicated that this was the proper area where we should deal with unwanted bears in parks. Could the Minister indicate whether

that problem is a relatively stable one or is it on the increase?

HON. S. USKIW: Yes, the staff advise that with increased hunting, there has been some reduction of the bear problem. It's relatively stable.

MR. H. GRAHAM: That's a welcome sign.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Minnedosa.

MR. D. BLAKE: We're getting near the closing hour, Mr. Chairman. I thought I might have a solution for the Minister on some of the problems that have been raised here because beaver apparently are a problem and the black bears have been on the increase until they relax the hunting regulations.

There are problems with bait stations in some areas. They tell me that a skinned beaver, hung properly far enough out on the branch that the bear can't reach it, is an excellent bear bait, because when the sun hits it there's enough grease there that it drips on the ground and creates the scent and that way you get rid of the beaver, to get the bait to start with, and you'll more than likely get a bear at the same time; so this would probably solve half of our problems if we can just use beaver for bear bait instead of using those old dead calves.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Emerson has a suggestion?

MR. A. DRIEDGER: No. Mr. Chairman, we want to make sure that we don't necessarily repeat all these things because here we have why we got into the problem of wildlife control and we also have the section of Wildlife where I think probably so that we don't overlap too much; but because the COs' responsibilities and wildlife sort of go hand in hand, I have no difficulty in passing certain portions providing that we don't necessarily get cut off to go back to some of these things because they're so inter-related; the same thing with Forestry, because we have the amalgamated staff, of our COs that are responsible for Forestry as well as Wildlife, etc.

As long as we have a bit of mutual understanding with the Chairman that he says, well, we passed that and we can't go back to that, because we can take and hang up everything here and make sure we cover it so that if we don't have an area to cover it there that we . . . I'm just trying to make a point because many of these areas are inter-related, I don't want to necessarily get hung up and do the repetition in Wildlife, but because it is inter-related and we want to cover the areas and responsibilities of the COs, just so I'm making my point clear . . .

HON. S. USKIW: I want to ensure the Member for Emerson that he should recall that I'm the most flexible and therefore I will not raise a point of order if he wishes to go back on one or two items, even though we had passed by them - unless the Chair wants to.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Reasonable people come to reasonable understanding and we can pass the three items now.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: I had assumed that until we had a little incident the other day and that's why I wanted to clarify this to a point here because I didn't think that was necessarily the case and I want to clear the air before we get to that point.

Just the fact, Mr. Chairman, that possibly when we get to the region aspect of it we can cover whole areas of that and maybe at the beginning of these things we can cover a lot of these and, with the agreement of the committee, I'd like to leave it at this now, and then we'll take it up when our next opportunity comes along, and based on the way things go, we can cover large areas without getting hung up too much on detail on some of these things.

HON. S. USKIW: I think we should call it 10:00 o'clock, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Committee rise.

SUPPLY - HEALTH

MR. CHAIRMAN, P. EYLER: Committee come to order. We are considering the Estimates of the Department of Health.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before beginning, I would like to direct the members' attention to the gallery where we have 24 members of the 1st Crestview Scouts under the direction of Mr. Munnoch. They are from the constituency of the Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

On behalf of all members I would like to welcome you to the Legislature tonight.

2.(g) Continuing Care - the Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, could the Minister indicate, in terms of home care attendants, what sort of a recruiting process the department has to assure that the supply of home care workers is sufficient to meet demands, in cases of urgent need, that there's a backup to cover home care workers who might be ill, etc., etc.?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, as far as recruiting, we follow the usual procedure of trying to get the best people that we can. We're interested in references also, depending what is needed at the time.

The training program that we have has been somewhat delayed as a result of personnel changes that we've had and the need to devote management time to maintaining and improving the services. Lately the department is having discussions with the Independent Living Resource Centre to see if that could be of some help with the training of this personnel. It depends where - in some areas I guess we have enough; in certain areas, especially in rural areas at times it is a little more difficult to get all the qualified help that we want.

MR. D. ORCHARD: So the recruiting program, if I understand what the Minister is saying, has been somewhat delayed lately?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The training.

MR. D. ORCHARD: The training program has been somewhat delayed. Is that causing any staffing problems in the delivery of the program?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Well, it's pretty difficult to say if that has caused problems because there has not been any training, except there's always been in-house training and that continues. This is another training that we've had and discussed with these groups, so you don't miss something that you haven't got as much. I don't think that in the history of this continuing care business that we've had this outside training. This is something that we're looking at and that has been delayed for the reason that I gave, but there's always been in-house training.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Well, Mr. Chairman, an individual using the services of this, as we've discussed over the last couple of days, has apparently run into a problem recently again of no backup and illness of one of the attendants - because she has two per day - and apparently that problem has surfaced again and she has been working with some of the personnel in the department, I think has had fairly extensive correspondence back and forth about the department's ability to provide backup personnel in the event of illness or whatever of one of the three, I believe, attendants that served this individual on a regular basis.

Apparently this is something that's happening this week, right now, and if that was going to be a problem, I wonder if the Minister might be able to try to find some kind of a solution that would help in the immediate term.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I think it would be naive and certainly misleading to try to say that there are never any problems. I think that we've tried to keep this to the minimum. The orderly service that we have has been improved but this is something that has a high priority, to be able to fill these emergency needs. If there's nothing that can be done, we've been getting in touch with the Police Department in real emergencies if for the time being there's nobody at all. We've called the police only twice in the last eight months.

Now, the person in question has been in contact, I'm told, today or yesterday with Miss Thompson who's in charge of the program and we're looking at the concern. I think that so far we've been fairly successful in taking care of the emergency case. Of course, that's going to happen and this is already under investigation to see what can be done, if it could be improved.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I note in the bottom line of this appropriation that there is a Recoverable from Canada, \$3,311,500.00. I wonder if the Minister might indicate why the Federal Government participates in continuing care and directly provides money to it.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Have you got any other questions? I'll bank the questions. No?

During the past three years or so the Federal Government, on a formula, has been sharing in the

cost of homemaking - homemaking only, not the other services - for elderly people on a certain formula. This has been going on for about three years now, but only for homemaking.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Now the Minister indicates on a certain formula. Is there assistance - is the financial resource that the Federal Government is putting up to assist in the homemaking delivery program targeted to any particular area or to any particular group of Manitobans, or is that universal help to apply for the homemaking people, period, or is it targeted to one area of the province?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: It's universal, but only for the senior citizens.

MR. D. ORCHARD: And if you were to break out homemaking as a specific expenditure, presumably out of the \$21,700 that you've got budgeted for this year, what would be the dollars that homemaking specifically would consume of that total Home Care Assistance budget?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: We'll get the honourable member and members of the committee the total amount that he wants and the total amount spent on homemaking, and then we could make the calculation of how much of that the feds are paying. We haven't got it at this time.

MR. D. ORCHARD: That would be fine, if he could provide that either later on this evening or else tomorrow.

Did the Federal Government contribute the expected \$2.5 million towards homemaking, as was in last year's Estimates? Was that contribution made entirely?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: We'll make sure to get all that information about the recovery from Canada and last year's actual also.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(g)(1)—pass; 2.(g)(2)—pass; 2.(g)(3)—pass; 2.(g)(4)—pass.

2.(h) Medical Equipment and Supplies, (1) Salaries - the Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Estimates provide a small explanation of the purpose of this appropriation, but I wonder if the Minister might be able to expand on what this branch of his department does, the target population that they provide service to and details of the general activity in Medical Equipment and Supplies.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: We start by cutting down the cost that we have for - the home care equipment is \$240,000, standard wheelchair \$146; motorized wheelchairs 118.9 - there's a bit of an increase there; ostomy supplies, 475 from 358; respiratory support system, 80.9; intrauterine contraception device - that's in the doctor's office and so on - \$112,000; medical supplies, 630 from 430; warehouse and delivering - general office, 196.

There's all kinds of equipment. It could be bedroom furniture, such as hospital beds, over-bed tables,

bathroom and toilet aids such as suction bath stools, commode chairs, and raised toilet seats; support and mobility aids such as walkers; respiratory equipment such as oxygen regulators for home oxygen therapy; mechanical percussion for the treatment of cystic fibrosis; mechanical speech aids; and stimulators for the relief of pain. It's the number you want, of all these things? The number or just in general, the . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: Just general.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I think I've covered most of the main things.

MR. D. ORCHARD: To what client population - if that's the right phraseology to use - who can come here for a supply of some of the devices and aids that the Minister has indicated? Is it only the medical profession, only the department? Who can come here and receive these kinds of equipment supplies?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Pretty well all equipment that we have that I mentioned, if they're referred by a doctor or it could in a home. Of course, hospitals have all the facilities. For instance, the general home care equipment, as of December 31st of the year finishing the calendar year, there was 20,500; mechanical speech aids, 106; percussors, there were 75; nerve stimulators, 80; wheelchairs - just a minute I'll get that - there's mechanized, motorized wheelchairs. The wheelchairs, on loan there's 4,185, in stock, 274 - that's the standard wheelchair - total 459; the motorized on loan, 196, in stock, 20 - for a total of 216.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Then I take it that if a Manitoban has a particular medical problem, either temporary or in some cases permanent, and required a walker, a wheel chair, etc., etc., that those items could be obtained through this branch on the recommendation of a medical doctor, and I would presume, since there are no recoveries here, that this equipment is supplied to those patients on a doctor's recommendation at no cost to the patient?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, there's no cost to the patient at all. I think that where there's cost there's still some rental of some equipment by the Red Cross. It's not - I don't want to mislead - it's the doctors but also the home care and the regional staff also, or you might hear from people directly.

Now in some - for instance, the motorized wheel chair, there's a committee that looks at need and assess priority because we wouldn't have enough for everybody at this stage. Now in 1985-86 we'll buy 20 more motorized wheel chairs to add to the stock at \$3,000 each; and 200 standard wheel chairs at approximately \$500.00.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Now, obviously, those kinds of purchases would make up presumably the bulk of the Other Expenditures. It would seem to me that this division would probably have a pretty fair inventory of medical equipment and supplies. Has the Minister got a figure on the value of the inventory carried by this branch?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: There's approximately \$750,000 worth of inventory at this time, but I haven't got the breakdown.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Surely there must be more than \$750,000 of inventory. There was \$1.6 million spent last year, possibly not all on inventory, but the program has been in existence for quite a little while. For instance, as long back as the fiscal year 1980-81, there was \$700,000 worth of supplies. There must be a more sizable inventory of medical equipment than \$750,000.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: If there's any confusion I think that when we talk about inventory this is what we have in hand. Once it's issued, it's gone. Most of the time it's going to be used or it's not going to be of any use for anybody else in many instances. Most of it is long-term patients and they keep it. So we're talking about what we have on hand to provide the services, not what has been issued.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Just so I understand correctly then, this division would supply equipment more to chronic care and elderly than it would to, let's say if I broke my leg and needed a wheelchair, I would not get my wheelchair here then?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The Red Cross is also involved in that. For the short term, it's the Red Cross mostly and we're involved more in long-stay patients, which normally might be older and probably will be older. But in the example that you gave, that would be the Red Cross for short term.

MR. D. ORCHARD: There is indicated in the Minister's staffing summary 19 staff for this year. Are all of the 19 positions filled at present and if any are vacant, how many? If any are filled on an acting basis, how many are filled on an acting basis, if any?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: They're all full-time permanent, there's no vacancies. There's one director; one administrative officer; one operations manager; two shipper receivers; six clerical; equipment technicians, eight, six in Winnipeg, one in Brandon and one in Dauphin.

MR. D. ORCHARD: In terms of the delivery, presumably not all patients could pick up their supplies from wherever the warehouse is. Do you have delivery vehicles or do you use private sector or for hire delivery services?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: We use both. There's some owned by the branch and others, if need be, we will go to the commercial delivery.

The equipment technician, and so on, I guess that would be also the same number of trucks. There's be six in Winnipeg, one in Brandon, one in Dauphin that the branch has. If need be, they complement that with the private sector.

MR. D. ORCHARD: So, there's eight vehicles - six in Winnipeg, one in Brandon, one in Dauphin - delivering medical equipment and supplies throughout the

province. Is that all those delivery vehicles do or do they tie into some other departmental function and provide delivery services elsewhere in the department?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: It's all for equipment, not necessarily just for delivery. It might be for installation and repairs and so on, but it's all in regards to the equipment.

MR. D. ORCHARD: They work exclusively for Medical Equipment and Supplies and for nowhere else? The Minister indicates that's correct.

The external agencies that are funded under Line 3, what external agencies are funded with the approximate half-million dollars that are budgeted for his year?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The Canadian Red Cross Society and the Society for Crippled Children and Adults of Manitoba, that's it.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Now, both of those organizations presumably would be also supplying some of the similar aids, such as wheelchairs and walkers, that the Ministers indicates this division is capable of supplying directly. Do the agencies obtain equipment from this group for redistribution - Red Cross, Crippled Children's Society - or do they maintain their own inventory of equipment and supplies?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The Red Cross which provides the sick room and equipment loans services for short term people get their own; and the Society for Crippled Children and Adults, which also take care of maintenance and repair of the wheelchairs, we provide the wheelchairs.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, this would seem to be an area that quite possibly will grow over the next number of years, and being centrally located may make access in parts of rural Manitoba not as easy as, for instance, it would be for residents in Winnipeg. Now, just listening to different ads and perusing different papers and periodicals, that sort of thing, it would seem as if this area of geriatric supplies, I guess in a lot of ways, is one where there is more and more private sector participation in making those supplies available.

Would this be an area where the Minister might be able to find a more efficient and effective delivery service by tying into some of the private sector supply availability that is in the market now and may well be growing into the market, because the provision of services to the elderly is, I think, probably a growing market and will probably be entered into by more and more firms with more and more competition? Could the Minister see a private sector joint program, possibly co-insured or something like that, to provide a selection - quite frankly, an alternate supply, for these materials?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I would see that a little more if it's a co-insured program. This is complete, universal and complete. All coverage is done and there is no charge at all to the patient. I don't think we've seen that yet in this increase. It's possible. I guess I would be guided on this just on the question of getting the best deal, because we have to watch every dollar. That's

the only thing that we would do. If there was a suggestion by somebody that they could do it cheaper, we certainly would look at it.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Well, I suppose that might be - it's hard to say whether that could be proved. We're looking at a staff budget of approaching half-a-million dollars, \$470,000, and the government does have tied up, or invested would be a better word, a substantial amount of money in equipment that's sitting out there. Now, presumably one of the advantages the government may have over an individual private sector entrant into this field would be on sheer volume of purchase. Theoretically, the government could achieve a better purchasing arrangement and a more economic purchasing arrangement, but I think to keep suppliers sharp more than one buyer is often needed. I doubt if too many other organizations in the Province of Manitoba, other than the Department of Health, would be buying the numbers of motorized wheelchairs and other wheelchairs, walkers, and that type of equipment. If some need for competition was there, it may well demonstrate that a private sector deliverer of service might be able to provide service, particularly outside the City of Winnipeg, maybe as economically or more economically than what the department can when they have to maintain a warehouse specifically dedicated, presumably, or at least some storage specifically dedicated to this equipment, and certainly have a maintenance and delivery staff. It might be an area that does need some perusal by the private sector.

Mr. Chairman, are the operations in this division, with equipment and no doubt patient records, etc., where they have equipment out on loan for varying lengths to individual Manitobans, is this operation computerized and how recently has it been computerized?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, the person that has been mentioned on a number of occasions today again, some of these people have been trying to convince us to get away from the free enterprising system, that they weren't delivering the service. As far as I am concerned, I certainly have no ideological hangup or anything like that. I think it would be very difficult, if not impossible, for a private firm with a profit motive and so on, like my honourable friend mentioned certainly not having access to the same purchase. The bulk purchase that we do would be difficult in the urban areas.

I certainly feel that it could be possible that we find ourselves in a different situation in the rural areas. It might be that in certain places that we could, providing the service doesn't suffer, provide the service in certain parts of the rural areas, because there wouldn't be that much purchase or loan, and it might be, instead of keeping regular staff, that's possible and we certainly would be ready to look at that.

MR. D. ORCHARD: On the computer end?

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(h)(1) - the Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I asked the Minister if this division was computerized and if so, how recently?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: It will be by the end of the year.

MR. D. ORCHARD: What sort of a system is the division contemplating, Mr. Chairman?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: It's on-site, independent computer run by the staff just for that branch.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Is it in place and operational at the present time?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Seventy-five percent.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Which 75 percent, 75 complete or 75 percent not complete?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Complete.

MR. D. ORCHARD: And how long has the computer system been in place then?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The system was first introduced last May and the two supplies program has been ready for the past six to eight months.

MR. D. ORCHARD: The computer equipment has been installed since last May and what has been ready for six to eight months? The program?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The ostomy and medical supply program.

MR. D. ORCHARD: If the system has been in place since last May, that's ten months, say, and the Minister says it's 75 percent operational, have there been problems in getting it operational? Have there been problems with implementing it? What were the costs of the computer program? Were they within budget, because obviously when they put it in last May, they had a budget struck, were the costs within budget? Have there been any cost overruns in installing the computer system? Was the delay from last May until now in having the system only 75 percent in place contemplated, or does it represent an operational problem of installing the computer system?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: As far as staying within budget, I'm trying to get this information. The problems were not any greater or lesser than the usual programs when you convert from the manual to the computers. The time is that programs are brought in on different things, like I say, ostomy and medical supplies, and then it could be wheelchairs and other things, eventually - that's what I say when there is 75 percent.

As far as to see if we had an overrun, we are trying to get that information.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I wonder if the Minister might also have the staff determine what was the budgeted cost of this computerization?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: We did not have an overrun last year. Last year the cost was \$42,000 for the last fiscal year and we're adding another 10 or 11, the cost will be about \$53,000 this year. That's when it's all complete.

MR. D. ORCHARD: 2.(h)(1)—pass; 2.(h)(2)—pass; 2.(h)(3)—pass.

2.(j) Dental Services - the Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, the Minister is proposing an additional two staff for this fiscal year. I have a couple of questions. Of the current staff of 87, are they all filled or if there are vacancies, how many? The two additional staff that the Minister is putting on staff, what will their positions be? Is there a specialty the Minister is looking for?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Actually, Mr. Chairman, these two, there hasn't been any change. There were two vacant positions - I think there's 11 vacant positions now - two were taken to work at the time, the staff I'm talking about, the staff year, on the Diabetes Program and now those two positions have been returned, so we're back to what we had before the 89. Out of that there are 11 vacant positions at this time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(j)(1) - the Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I'm just trying to read the Minister's notes here. The Minister is indicating that there are 11 vacancies right now presumably out of the 87. The request is for two additional staff, 89. Do I understand the Minister correctly in saying that those two were temporarily seconded to the Diabetes Education Program and are now coming back, so that it will be 11 vacancies out of 89? Is it this section's intention to fill those 11 vacancies this year, or are they basically staff that aren't possibly going to be needed for delivery of the program this year?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: A lot depends on the future of this program. There has been some concern as my honourable friend knows. We were to start the program both in Winnipeg and Brandon; that didn't materialize. We are looking at this program and at new programs also, and there should be an announcement fairly soon. In the meantime, of course, if these positions are needed, then we intend to fill them. There's been a temporary setback and that's being looked at, at this time.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, there is in excess of \$1.5 million lower request this year in Other Expenditures over last year. First of all, could the Minister indicate whether the \$4,551,000 budgeted last year was expended and if not, roughly how much short was the expenditure from the budgeted amount and why the \$1.5 million or a little better than \$1.5 million lower budget figure for this coming year?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, during the first two years of this term in office, there has been discussions with the dental profession and things were progressing quite well. If you remember since that program started, there has been a program that the New Democratic Party favoured, the one that we started, and it was using dental nurses quite a bit and we had sent some dental nurses to Saskatchewan for an education during the term of office of my honourable friend, the former government. Things were changed

quite a bit and the Dental Association, dental profession, things were being switched and transferred. In the areas that were added, the school divisions that were added, all went through the Dental Association.

As I say, three years ago, the first meeting that I held with the Dental Association, I guess they were expecting that we would reverse the situation again and go back to the dental nurses, the original program that we had brought in. I thought that this was dangerous. If there was a change every time there was a change of government, that wouldn't do. I explored with them the possibility of developing a program that we would call the Manitoba Program or would use both the dental nurses and the dentists.

The discussions went very well; everything was progressing quite well. We at one time felt that maybe we should divide that by age, that we would use dental nurses for a certain age and then there'd be more with the Dental Association or another age bracket. We were discouraged from doing that by the Dental Association who felt that it would cause complications.

Then of course we wanted to create a real competition between the two groups, it was felt then - at their recommendation - that we would go in different areas. We decided that to compare that we would have to have some programs delivered by either group in all the areas, that is urban and rural. That money, of course, was in there to deliver these programs. Things were progressing; I announced it in the House. Of course, you have to remember it's a voluntary program. I announced in the House that we would go ahead and proceed with all the remaining districts. That was Thompson, Portage, six rural school divisions, Winnipeg and Brandon and I think we bent over backwards to work with the Dental Association.

The rural area went to - I think they were divided equally. Thompson and Portage and all of Winnipeg was going to be delivered by the Dental Association and the only program that we can compare it with would have been in Brandon. Unfortunately I guess - and I'm not going to go into details at this time - the executive of the association could not deliver Brandon. People in Brandon were not too happy with their association and so on, so they refused to take it. They lobbied and we couldn't deliver to Brandon, so we suspended it and we're looking at the situation again in Brandon. Winnipeg has been suspended for the time being; and that is the reason we're not filling all these positions right away and more of that money is not being spent.

We're also looking at other parts of the program to see if the program should be modified. There are new methods that have been brought to our attention and we're looking at that at this time and we should, I would hope in the not too distant future, announce where we'll go with that program.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister has the information available as to what level of expenditure was achieved last year of the \$4.5 million; and then, a natural question, if I understand his partial answer to it, was that it was not expended entirely because the program was delayed in Winnipeg and Brandon.

The second question that I have is, does this year's estimate of \$2.963 million offer sufficient budgetary

authority to introduce the program into Brandon and Winnipeg should the current disagreement be resolved?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The last question first - no, of course there's not enough money to deliver and the understanding was that we would have to go back with the proposal to Cabinet and whatever is decided, because we have no idea of what would be needed - we would have to make provision at that time.

I think this would help explain it. The staff turnover and classification change account for 67.5 of the 139.5 difference. The remaining \$72,000 was transferred from Operating Expenditures to re-establish two positions, redirected during '84-'85. The Operating Expenditures - the total difference here is \$1,588,400 and includes \$72,000 I've just mentioned. Another 16.4 was transferred to External Agencies from the Swampy Cree Tribal Council. The remaining \$1.5 million were the funds that were to be utilized for the delivery of the program in the City of Winnipeg. These funds have been redirected elsewhere for other programs.

External Agencies - the difference is 16.4 and as I've just mentioned that's for the Swampy Cree Tribal Council. We'll be giving them an annual grant, by the way. So does the Federal Government, although their share is about 116.8.

In other words, I'm suggesting that the money, we would come back to when we get to Mental Health. I would give you that information then.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, is the Minister indicating that his staff tonight does not have an estimate of how much it would cost to provide the program in Brandon and Winnipeg, should the dispute be resolved? That includes Brandon? You just mentioned Winnipeg when you mentioned . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Brandon and Winnipeg.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Can the Minister indicate, like you've mentioned, there are 11 staff vacancies out of the 87 last year and you're bringing back two. Is there presumption that the 11 vacancies will be filled if you resolve the program delivery problems in Brandon and Winnipeg and, if you don't, the staff . . . ?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: It might be, Mr. Chairman, that we'll need a lot more than 11 for that program, so right now because of the setback, there's no movement to fill the vacancies. It might be that as we will need funds when we proceed, we might have to provide for added staff also and we could have some dental nurses graduating from Saskatchewan also in a few months and that would be - I think there are 10 that will be graduating.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, can the Minister indicate the most recent figures he has, in terms of the cost per eligible child in the government-run Dental Nurse Program?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I'll give the honourable member the cost per treated, not by eligible, which doesn't change that much. It's 98 through the government program and approximately 96 from the doctors.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Then the program as delivered by the dentists is certainly comparable and is somewhat less in cost than the in-house program, if I follow the Minister's answer correctly. Is that a correct assumption to make?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: This is one of the reasons why we wanted to bring the two programs in different areas. We're not really comparing the same thing. This is the cost for the program that is being delivered but we haven't got sufficient information and uniformity, and so on, to be making a direct comparison between the two. This was an agreement that had been reached with the Dental Association also and there has not been a new agreement reached so far.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Is the Minister indicating then that the government does not know what it costs to deliver the dental health program or the dental treatment program to Manitoba students when the service is provided by the dentists and not the children's nurses?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I'm certainly not indicating that; I gave you that already; I told you it's 98 and 96. What I said was that we didn't have enough information to make an equal comparison. For instance, the government is handling all the remote areas which adds to the costs, that's what I mean. There's not enough information yet to make the comparison. This is why we felt that we would have a good comparison; that was mentioned to the Dental Association also and we were going to look at it. This is one thing that we welcome and that they welcome.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the Minister indicates that that was one of the major concerns in negotiating the Brandon program delivered by dental nurses and Winnipeg being delivered by the dentists themselves and the information would have been beneficial to the Minister and beneficial, no doubt, to the professional association of the dentists.

It seems to me that in these discussions, there was one group of people that notably were left out: that is the school board in Brandon and the parents and children in Brandon. And rightly or wrongly, when the Minister announced the program, sufficient concern was expressed by the Brandon School Board that they elected further study and attempted to have further discussions with the Minister to see if they could avail themselves of the same opportunity that the City of Winnipeg was having, in that the program would be delivered by the private dentists. Now the Minister, for various reasons, I think to put it as nicely as I can, got his back up and said, no, we're not going to do that. We're not going to change our minds in terms of the delivery of the program in Brandon, because this is what we've negotiated; this is what we'll deliver.

Now you see, I was part of the government that brought in the option to offer the private dental service in this program. — (Interjection) — Well, Mr. Chairman, the Minister says we didn't bring in an option. The private sector dentists were invited to participate and they, through the years they were there, indicated they could provide the service as effectively and as cost-efficiently as the in-house dental nurse could. And I

guess maybe I look at the program from a different perspective possibly than the Minister might, because the Minister represents an urban seat. In rural Manitoba, I can remember in my childhood days we drove, I guess it would be 35 or 40 miles for me to go to a dentist, and I have to say that the first dentist I went to was the only one in the area and the work was not good, but it was the only game in town. We then were able to go to a community that was closer and received somewhat more satisfactory work.

Now, one of the major concerns that communities had with the advent of this program, particularly some of the smaller communities, is that it could take away some of the private dentists' practice, and a lot of rural communities have, over the last decade, managed to attract dentists into their community. They want to keep them there. They want them there to provide services beyond the school age. They - and when I say "they" I am saying people in the community, parents, business people, farmers - all saw a value to having the dentists' practice enhanced in some of these rural communities and they made the persuasive argument to us and they indicated they could deliver the program as cheaply and, quite frankly, they did that. Comparisons are there. — (Interjection) — The Minister says we don't know, but any numbers I've seen from the Dental Association - I don't think the Minister's disputed them - they are comparable, they are indeed lower than the Dental Nurse Program.

We thought that there was room for both programs and indeed some school divisions in rural Manitoba have dentists and some have nurses. The one I'm in right now, the one my children are in, have dental nurses. The one to the south has their program delivered by the private sector dentists. But we introduced that option so that we wouldn't see dentists driven out of rural Manitoba. The option to have dentists deliver the program was one to ensure that we would not have communities and people in southern Manitoba and other parts of rural Manitoba driving 30, 50, 60 miles again for dental care. The program has proved that it can work in the hands of the private dentists, cost effective, etc., etc., and has in some communities, allowed them to bring in new dentists, which is good for everyone else in the community.

Now in the case of Brandon - I've had some discussions with people in Brandon and that was entirely their concern. One of their concerns was that if we bring in the Dental Nurse Program into Brandon, that will certainly represent a loss in opportunity for our existing dentist base and the City of Brandon has worked very hard to make sure that Brandon is a reasonably attractive place for dentists to practise.

That's why they did not accept the Minister's proposition with open arms, and they have gone so far and the Minister has seen it, because the school board was nervous about the decision they were making - and they were nervous because the Minister said, well, if you don't take my program you're not going to get any program - and that put an extreme amount of pressure on the school board. They don't want to have parents blaming the school board for the lack of a program that they could have for their children, and that was quite effective pressure that the Minister put on by saying to them well if you don't take my program, there's no program. He added additional pressure to

the Brandon School Board by saying that if we don't offer the program in Brandon as I want it to be offered, then we're not going to offer it in Winnipeg. He carried that through - there is no program in Winnipeg.

But, the school board did not relent to that kind of pressure and they did a survey of the parents to make sure that the parents were behind them in their efforts to obtain what they believed was a better delivery of student dental health care, better from the standpoint that there probably isn't a great deal of difference in terms of the program as it's delivered to the students, but they were looking at the community effect and they deemed it important that if they had the option, and it wasn't costing the government any more money to deliver it to through the private dentist, that the community of Brandon would be better served and may indeed be able to attract more dentists which would provide a better level of service to all Brandon and surrounding area.

So, they took a student survey, and the Minister has seen this because it was sent to his attention, where out of the survey there was something like 3 percent of those respondents that had no choice and 65.66 percent of the respondents voted for the dental program as offered by the private dentists and 31.36 opted for the Dental Nurse Program. Now, that's a 2-1 margin in favour of the program being delivered by the private dentists.

I might say it's interesting to note that that 2-1 margin exists despite the threat that if they don't take the Dental Nurse Program they get nothing. I suggest that shows a pretty strong community commitment to have the Minister take a look at changing his priorities in allowing a change in program delivery and allowing the program to be offered by the dentists in Brandon. The Minister indicates that they're looking at this and they may have a decision. I'm not certain what his reference tonight when I inquired about the staff was, that possibly they may need even more than the 11 vacancies and have to go for more staff, or whether that means the Minister is contemplating offering the service in Winnipeg by the dental nurses, I don't know. Only the Minister can answer that.

Mr. Chairman, it would make some sense, and I'll give the Minister some credit for indicating he wants this comparison to make sure that it's even-stein, so that we can adequately compare the program as delivered by the dentists versus the program as delivered by the dental nurses. I'll give him some credit in that he may have difficulty doing that because dental nurses handle the remote communities.

There is even going to be a disparity between Brandon and Winnipeg, so if one wished to have a good comparison, maybe he could separate out a Winnipeg school division and offer the program there with the dental nurses and offer another school division in Winnipeg through the private sector, and then he would be within the City of Winnipeg and he could have his comparison on the program delivery. That would serve his purpose of offering the department the opportunity to do a very comparable, theoretically, comparison of the cost of delivery of each type of program, dental nurse versus private dentist. It would especially serve the purpose of meeting and allaying some of the very real concerns that the citizens of Brandon have in terms of desiring the program delivered by the dentists. As

I say, and I think the figures are demonstrative of the will that's in Brandon, parents expressed a desire in a 2-1 ratio for the program being delivered by the dentists despite the very obvious threat or concern expressed by the Minister that if they don't take it through the dental nurses there won't be a program.

So, I simply ask the Minister would he not take very seriously into consideration the suggestions I've made tonight and if he needs his comparison, arrange to have that done within the City of Winnipeg and allow Brandon and its citizens to undertake the kind of student dental program that they obviously desire in significant numbers to warrant the Minister's reconsideration of the situation?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I feel that the honourable member has misrepresented, maybe not purposely, but misrepresented the situation. Maybe because he ignores some of the goings-on - well, I can't apply motive.

Let me say this, that I will try and resist the temptation to start an argument on this, because I don't think it wouldn't serve any purpose at all. If my honourable friend wants to see the difference that there was between the two parties, and there's no doubt that there were differences, then I think that we've had many many debates in this House on this situation.

Now, the program brought in by the dental nurses as we brought in, that is what offered the people of Manitoba at the time. There's only one program. There was no complaint at all. It worked very well. It worked in other jurisdiction and it worked at saving the cost.

When we were replaced by the Conservative Party in government, they chose to change the things. People that had been promised different, made certain commitments like dental nurses, that wasn't always kept and these people were chased away. The doctor that we had running the programs, supposed to run the whole program, was one of the better known and most qualified persons in Canada. He still is. He's in demand all over. He left in frustration because these programs controlled by the government were being practically sabotaged. In other words, it's no secret and let's call a spade a spade, the government of the time wanted to transfer everything to the dental profession, which was their right. There was a battle. It was our right to bring the programs that we did; it was our right to favour that program and it was the right of the Conservative Party when they became government to bring in the program that they wanted.

The situation was though that at that time, and I think that's where there's a bit of unfairness, and it was obvious that the Dental Association figured, oh gosh, there's another election, there's a change of government, and we've lost the whole ball game. Now, as I said, I could not see this thing going on that everytime there was a change of government you change, nobody would benefit by that. One program was sabotaged while the other one was going and then probably the same thing could have happened with the change of government, except reverse the two groups.

You're told many times that you don't discuss things and you don't bring anybody into your confidence, or that you don't try to get information from the professionals and from those that are delivering the

services; well we did just that. We dealt with the executives, thinking that they had the authority to deal with us and to negotiate and to have a program.

The first thing that was said was there is no point, let us forget the whole thing. Most of our people, to be honest with you, Mr. Chairman, and the members of this Committee, still felt that the dental program would be just as good and would, when all the information and everything was in place, that it certainly would be less costly, and of course the Dental Association felt that was not the case. So we agreed and there was an agreement between the department and myself, representing the government, and the Dental Association to try and negotiate together to see if we could have a program that would be truly a Manitoba program where we would use the dentists and also the dental nurses to work together on that.

Now there were different suggestions made. There were suggestions to take them by age; the Dental Association didn't go along with that. There was a suggestion of dividing the school divisions or the City of Winnipeg, as was mentioned, as was suggested to me; the Dental Association didn't want that.

If it's not obvious that I bent over backwards to try to work with the dental profession and I think if they're honest - and I have no reason to think that they're not - that the members of the executive that deal with us will recognize that, and will also recognize that everything was done above board. I had to go to Cabinet, the same as they had to go to their members, and I wonder if we would have made an agreement and then if Cabinet would have refused to go along with the agreement that I'd developed, and if we say, well we're not going to have it and then come back, I wonder how many people would have been yelling in this House tonight.

Now the situation that we tried by age, we tried by school divisions, we tried everything; that didn't work, and we didn't argue with them. It was understood that we would both accept the programs until we made a comparison. We were going to look at standards. We were wanted a fair comparison, not a comparison that one program was on its knees while the other one was giving all the preference. I don't say this in a critical manner, but with the change in government, they were changing the direction of the program, but it was agreed between the two groups that we would try to make a comparison that we weren't going to put all our eggs in one basket in case it didn't work, and especially when you've got the situation of how costly Medicare could be, and that we would keep everybody honest. It could be that you ended up with a program delivered by both, with the comparison of keeping both honest; or that you ended up that it was so obvious - and that's why I say there's no point in arguing the merit of the programs - because I stated at the time, I gave my word that we would look at the result, try to keep an open mind, look at the results and then look at the standards and look at the cost when we could compare apples and apples and oranges and oranges and then we would decide. That was accepted by the Dental Association.

Now if you think this is not fair, when we gave them half the six rural districts, that's completely half and they had more than half to start with of what was already covered; and then we gave them, in the urban site,

Thompson, Portage la Prairie and Winnipeg, and we announced that and they started in some of their areas. We certainly would have done something differently if we would have realized they couldn't deliver and I don't fault that executive at all.

The thing is, all we were getting - and if that's not fair - that they were getting Winnipeg, Thompson and Portage and we were going to get Brandon to make the comparison. Then it's obvious, it became a political thing; the dentists out there lobbied, which is their right. They were not satisfied with their association. Their association couldn't do anything; they couldn't do their work and they went out and there was very little interest, it seems to me, in Brandon at the time. I don't think that the school divisions can dictate to a government how to deliver health. I think if it's a voluntary program, they can say, we'll take it or we won't, but it was also voluntary by all individuals and everywhere we brought either program, it went well. The first initial program went very well. There were no complaints and so on.

So the situation is, we had obligations. We did, as I say, train some nurses, just enough to keep certain districts, to make the comparison, not to let it fall and then just have no competition at all. I'm told that certain people are always talking about how great competition is. That was a fair competition. It was agreed by both, except they couldn't deliver; it's as simple as that, through no fault of theirs. There was an organization in Brandon and it couldn't be done, so that was suspended.

There is no way that we could say, go ahead. After we surrendered, we made a deal and we delivered in Portage, Thompson and Winnipeg and then all of a sudden they couldn't deliver in Thompson, because that's not what we negotiated at all, that would have been surrendering, that would have been going on just one area, no comparison either for standards or anything else or costs - especially costs, because the standards were certainly as good, one program or the other.

I think it is unfair to try to give the impression that, fine, that it was because my back was up and I didn't want it because that is what I wanted in Brandon and I was acting like a dictator. I think that's most unfair. It was an agreement that we all agreed with and, if anything, certainly favours the Dental Association.

Look at the population. We suggested that they divide Winnipeg and we were told, no, that wouldn't work, they would prefer the other way. We suggested that maybe they would go by age. They didn't like that at all. We went along with pretty well everything they said, except saying, here, you have the whole program, and that was accepted from Day One. So I think that we changed. We were probably expected to go back to the original program, because there was a battle between the two parties and I said there's not much point. We can argue that. All we have to do is read Hansard in the last three or four years - not the last three or four years, but the other term, and there were quite some debates; but we had agreed to keep this open to reserve a decision, to try to keep an open mind and made the comparison.

For some reason beyond their control, the Dental Association could not deliver, and it's as simple as that.

MR. D. ORCHARD: The Minister indicates that it was a decision made by us based on some commitments

or whatever. I have no idea whether that is a correct assumption he's making, but I do know, Mr. Chairman, that it was considered by many rural members of the Lyon Government that the option would be beneficial to have a Children's Dental Health Program delivered by private sector dentists in our communities because the Dental Association told us, told the Lyon administration, as they no doubt told the Schreyer administration that, given the opportunity, they could deliver the program as economically as the Dental Nurse Program would deliver the program.

I wasn't here during the Schreyer years; I wasn't here prior to 1977, but I don't think there's any question that that was not within the philosophical bent of the Schreyer administration to allow the dentists to move in and provide a parallel service or a service to certain school divisions and the dental nurses would provide it to others. Their intention I think, quite fairly, was to bring the children's dental program to the Province of Manitoba, using the dental nurses and using the dental nurses only.

Our perspective, given that the Dental Association indicated they could deliver the program for at least the cost that was anticipated in the Dental Nurse Program, to us as rural members, the additional advantage of maintaining a service that many communities worked hard to acquire in the first place and don't want to lose in the second place in rural Manitoba communities, namely, a resident dentist, that had just made very good sense to us as rural members of the Progressive Conservative Government of 1977-81.

But if the costs weren't going to be higher, if indeed they were going to be the same or possibly less, which has been the case, there should be no reason why government - if they were wishing to expand children's dental services - not use and strengthen the dental profession in rural Manitoba. That argument, to me, made eminent good sense. It made good sense to the Member for Minnedosa; it made good sense to a number of our rural colleagues, and I suppose that's a perspective that the Schreyer Administration did not have because they didn't have very many seats outside of the two major centres in Northern Manitoba and didn't maybe have the appreciation of how difficult it was to maintain a dentist in the Morden, the Winkler, the Brandon, the Boissevain areas, etc., etc.

Now, Mr. Chairman, the Minister has indicated that his discussions with the Dental Association were legion; that he tried his best; that he bent over backwards. I can see where there would be problems with the one proposal where dental nurses provide the service up to one age level and then after that you have the private dentists take it over. Because let's face it, if you are going with the Dental Nurse Program, you must establish a facility in the school, and if you've undertaken that capital cost in a school, it would seem to me to be less than efficient if you only provided for half the students, if you had an artificial cutoff at a given age, and after that age the students would go outside of the school and get their dental services with a private dentist. I would think that would probably be the most inefficient way to deliver the program.

But, Mr. Chairman, the Minister had said that they made the proposition of dividing a couple of school divisions out of the City of Winnipeg and that wasn't

necessarily accepted by the Dental Association. Now I don't know how representative the Dental Association that he was negotiating with is in rural Manitoba. I don't know how many Brandon dentists, for instance, were on that negotiating committee. But, you know, this Minister's renowned for being a tough negotiator, a scrapper for what he believes in, a guy that can get things done and he can use his persuasive powers.

I think it makes eminent good sense that if he wants his comparison, if that's why he wants to have one community - in this case his desire is Brandon - to be delivered by dental nurses, and Winnipeg have the private dentists deliver the system - if that comparison is a legitimate goal to provide you with the numbers you want, this Minister, who is reputed to be a tough negotiator, surely could have made a little tougher stand and said that's the way we're going to go.

I'm sure that if this Minister had undertaken some negotiation - because bear in mind, this is the government with the Premier that is always talking about how it listens to Manitobans; it consults with Manitobans; it wants to talk to Manitobans; it wants to offer programs that Manitobans desire and will be happy with. Above all, the Premier says, this is a government that cares.

Well, there wasn't too much care for the people in Brandon and their desires in the introduction of this program, because I don't think they were consulted at all and they were presented with a fait accompli and I don't accept the Minister's rationale that the Dental Association couldn't deliver. That's his interpretation of what had happened, but I fault the Minister in terms of, if he really needed his comparison, he could have been a tougher negotiator. He could have lived up to this reputation he has and insisted that if we're going to have a legitimate comparison, let's do it in the City of Winnipeg and let's take some school divisions, put the dental nurses in one and the private dentists in another. It could have been done, but the Minister, for some reason, didn't want to.

I suppose speculation is something that we can do at the best of times. I think the Minister is privately delighted that this dispute has flared up because it's given him an excuse, No. 1, to blame on the Brandon School Board the lack of delivery of children's dental service in Brandon as well as Winnipeg, and the parents have attempted to be - their opinion has attempted to be sought by the school board, but the Minister of Health says, well, I don't really care what the survey says. They can survey all they want. It doesn't matter what the parents want, what the people want. It's what I want that's going to be important.

His own Premier indicated that there's a possibility that the Minister of Health should have maybe gone to Brandon to explain the program, but he didn't. He attempted to rely on the usual tactic that you take it my way or you don't get it, but unfortunately and fortunately, the people in Brandon, the school board and the parents in Brandon did not succumb to that kind of treatment. They have said that we wish to have our opinion known to the Minister of Health and our opinion is that for the good of the community, the community at large, we would prefer to have the same children's dental program as is offered to our sister city, the City of Winnipeg. You know you have to appreciate that sometimes the people in Brandon and

in the Westman region and Brandon, in particular I guess, sort of get this concrete barrier mentality that Winnipeg always gets what they want with governments and that they are always left picking up the scraps and not having access to the same kind of services that Winnipeg has.

Now this Minister of Health has an ideal opportunity on this dental program to demonstrate to the people of Manitoba that that is not true; that Brandon indeed counts; that the people in Brandon are worthy of the attention of this government and this Minister of Health. This Minister of Health could demonstrate to the people of Brandon that indeed the Pawley Administration is an administration that cares; that the Pawley Administration listens to people. He could demonstrate that in this program, because if the Minister of Health reversed his position and allowed the program in Brandon to be delivered by the dentists, he would find himself favourably received by 65.66 percent of the parents who responded to the survey, the school board survey.

Now, you know, in a community where there are two seats in jeopardy for the New Democratic Party in the next election, that seems like pretty good odds to me. But I get a little concerned that this Minister has been around too long, not used to anybody challenging his authority, challenging his decision, and I have a notion this Minister may well forge right ahead and say, well, to hell with Brandon, because he's essentially said that, and that their survey won't help; it won't change his mind; it won't do anything to demonstrate who's right and who's wrong. But he has an opportunity here to show himself as a man who can admit that he's maybe made an error; maybe he's moved a little too quickly; that maybe he didn't consult with the people out there; that maybe he didn't work with the school board, because the school board, incidentally, tells me that they've got quite a crowding problem out there in their schools and even finding that the physical space for the in-house Dental Nurse Program is going to cause them some problems. That's aside. I'm sure they could work that out if the Dental Nurse Program was the one that was going in.

This Minister appears as if he's stuck on his way and it appears as if he won't listen to the people in Brandon, even though that, as I say, 65.66 percent of the parents who responded say they want the dental program delivered by the dentists. So, Mr. Chairman, I simply say to the Minister tonight that if he wanted to be the tough negotiator that he's renowned to be, he could go back and sit down with the Dental Association he's been negotiating with and say, look fellows and gals, here's the problem; I think Brandon has a legitimate concern. They believe that the program should be delivered by private dentists so that the Community of Brandon maintains their numbers and possibly increases the numbers of private dentists practicing in Brandon to serve the Westman region. I think they've got a good point. I think that Brandon should get the program delivered by the dentists and not the dental nurses and, to accomplish our comparison, then we have to come back and take a look at the City of Winnipeg. We've got to find a school division of similar student count which is what the Brandon — (Interjection) — about 8,000 or 9,000. He could find a school division with 8,000 or 9,000 and — (Interjection)

— Mr. Chairman, you know, the Minister of Labour doesn't even understand what the issue is and he's sitting in his seat chattering away about something he doesn't know about — (Interjection) —

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please, order please. Order please.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I really appreciate that the Minister for Labour who has been listening to this debate considers the opinion of 65.66 percent of parents surveyed in Brandon as drivel, that the opinion of two-thirds of the parents with students in the Brandon Division, that their opinion is drivel. — (Interjection) — Mr. Chairman, . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, he says . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please.

MR. D. ORCHARD: . . . that he's been listening to me and what we're saying is drivel.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please, order please. Order please.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Well, you know the people in Brandon, once again, have it confirmed by the Minister of Labour that these . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please.

MR. D. ORCHARD: . . . city people, these city MLAs, like the Minister of Labour, plain and simple don't understand rural Manitoba and Brandon. This Minister of Labour has demonstrated that in spades.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I just want to get back to some of the advice because you know the Minister of Health said that he wants these Estimates to be positive. He wants to have some positive suggestions, and tonight I'm giving him a very positive suggestion. Don't be so stubborn. All you have to do is say maybe I moved a little bit too fast. You just have to admit that maybe the people out there, the real people out there, maybe they're right for a change and I'm not always right. That's all the Minister of Health has to just slightly reconsider because I can assure you that the people of Brandon feel fairly strongly about this.

The Minister, as I've said before, this is the third time I've given him the credit of being this tough negotiator, could arrange for a school division in the City of Winnipeg with some 9,000 to 10,000 students, to give him his comparison by delivering the dental program in a school division in Winnipeg with 9,000 to 10,000 students through the Dental Nurse Program, and he would have himself very good statistics to compare. It would give him his nice delivered cost per student which would be comparable. He wouldn't be able to worry about whether these figures that the Dental Association have, which is delivering in a number of divergent school divisions are correct, he'd have his numbers. He'd have them better than his comparison of the City of Winnipeg versus the City of Brandon, because he'd have his

comparison right within the City of Winnipeg. To me, that makes sense. It makes sense. It doesn't cost the government any money. This is one of those suggestions that we can make on this side of the House that doesn't cost the government five cents. As a matter of fact, given the lowered cost of delivery through the dentists could save him some money.

MR. H. ENNS: It may keep the Psychiatric Nursing School in Portage open with the savings here.

MR. D. ORCHARD: It's possible. Mr. Chairman, I simply ask the Minister to give Brandon the consideration they deserve, to listen to what they're saying, to listen to what the school board is saying, to listen, more importantly, to what the people are saying. He may just lean over a couple of chairs and talk to the Member for Brandon East and he'd probably get the same advice from him. I'm not sure about the Member for Brandon West. I ask the Minister before he makes his final decision, would he reconsider his position and offer the Dental Program in Brandon through the dentists?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, there's not much point. I don't know why I keep on with this debate when somebody doesn't want to listen to understand there's not much you can do. You know, you're damned if you do and you're damned if you don't. I'm told that I will not talk to anybody, that I will not negotiate with anybody or that then I want my own way. If there ever is an example, probably the exception in my career - the honourable friend should at least give me credit for it - because this is once that we could have gone with a program that was proven very successful. We could have done with that. I said no we'll go along because it is not doing the rest of the people of Manitoba any good to change every time there's a change of government, any time at all. So, what are we going to do? We're going to work together.

To say that all of a sudden the moments are paraded, that I didn't want Winnipeg to be. Tomorrow he'll argue well all the time you were trying to sabotage the doctor's program and you want the nurse's. I had nothing to do with choosing Winnipeg. It was a negotiation. He was talking hard-nosed negotiating. It wasn't that type of negotiating. It was getting together to try to do something and we agreed. I did not choose the dentist that I was going to discuss with. I went with the Association. That is the name of the game. That's why you have associations to speak for their membership. I believe that. I went along with that. They acted in good faith and so did I and so did staff.

We told them there were two or three givens, first of all, that had to be the standards, of course, and the utilization was important, the standard utilization - nothing else. We were ready to look at anything to help the dentists in the rural area and we did that in the years that I introduced the program. It was a good program and it's worked well all over the place. All of a sudden, we said all right we're going to compare that. We're going to take a certain age and you don't have to have the equipment that won't, Sir. There's different schools. There's primary schools. There's secondary schools and you could go ahead and take all the one school. They said no that's not the best

way. We would like to take somebody and follow it through and make decent comparisons. Okay, maybe you've got a point. We surrender on that. That's what they want. This is hard-nosed negotiating. He says okay that's what you want.

We said all right then we'll take an area and we'll split, like in Winnipeg and Brandon we'll split and say, oh no you can't do that. That's not going to work. Well, it's going to be more costly and so on because you are going to have displaced people and you're going to have one program on one side of the street by the dentist and the other side of the street by somebody else; it's not going to work. Okay, what do you want? They didn't want that. If you think that's hard negotiating, boy, I'm a failure. If I can negotiate and trade off Winnipeg, Thompson, and Portage la Prairie for Brandon with a . . . of something I supposedly favour, well, there's something wrong with that kind of an approach.

A MEMBER: Where did you go wrong?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I don't know where I went wrong. I guess I listened to my honourable friend, I must have.

We did everything to try to arrive at a consensus, at a program that then we could have compared and there was no hang-up, ideological hang-up and that was understood, that we were going to compare the utilization, the standard and the cost. And when I say that we haven't got sufficient information to make a comparison, that's exactly true.

There is no doubt that in the Schreyer years we wanted only one program, no doubt about that at all and we argued with one - we didn't want any other program. There is also no doubt that when we were succeeded by the Conservatives, they wanted to change that program and they sabotaged that program. It's easy for a group to say we will do it for so much. — (Interjection) — Just a minute. It's easy to say we will do it for so much and then make a comparison immediately. I read a letter here that seemed to indicate go easy until we get rid of the dental nurses, until it's transferred to us, and then when we have the clean field, when we got rid of the competition - you hear of the sales they have at Safeway and the other stores when they take a loss to get rid of the opposition, then they have a monopoly. You say that this doesn't cost anything to the people of Manitoba? It costs an awful lot of money.

We make no apology for saying that we have to use our people - the people that are delivering the health services - wisely. And if there are certain things that could be done that you don't have to be over-trained to be a dentist, then it's natural it's going to be less costly. There is no way in the world that anybody is convinced that if they had the whole program that it would be less costly.

First of all, there is the North and there is the remote areas, and there is these areas. There was a lot of flexibility, but my honourable friend should at least give me the credit to say fine, they had a program that they pushed, they argued like a son of a gun in here in opposition, they opposed our program - that's true - but then when we came back in power we said, let's

get together, let's bury this nonsense, and let's work for a program for Manitoba that won't be a program of doctors against dental nurses. And it is a proven program. Dentists have been around. They've had task forces that look at it, the dental program has worked. Not one doctor was moved out of anywhere where we had dental nurses, not one in rural Manitoba - and we were only in rural Manitoba.

Before this term there was nothing in one city, nothing in Thompson, nothing in Portage, nothing in Brandon, nothing in Winnipeg and that was a very very successful program and we were complimented when we started this program. We had no complaints at any time.

Now the point is, is it unfair to say we made a deal? The deal has to go through. You can't just agree with somebody, especially when they have the choice and in effect that's what happened. I was accused by some of our people that figured, well, what are you doing there, calling the shot. I just wanted to be able to make comparisons in costs, in standards, and utilization. They agreed. We said, all right you don't have to go to the schools, but you'll have to deliver the utilization, if not, which they assured me they could do - I took their word - I said all right, you prove to me; they accepted the challenge and if they did, they were going to say okay, we'll go to the schools, but we'll try your system now. We're ready to do that.

So how could we be faulted today to say that we're not negotiating, that we're not talking with somebody? Now my honourable friend is saying, in effect, forget the negotiating, the talk that you had with the Dental Association representing the 10 dentists and give into Brandon. Give into Brandon - we've already told them they could go in different areas. What comparison would that be? And I say to him again, we suggested that we divided the school division in the city and they didn't think that was acceptable.

Furthermore, let me tell you we're reviewing the whole program. It might be that we're not hitting it politically. It's quite a program. But it might be that we're not hitting the target that we want or it might be that there should be some changes and, in fact, tomorrow or the next day I'm meeting with a dentist from Saskatchewan, a consultant that will make a presentation. We met with somebody from the United States a couple of days ago and we're looking at the whole program. I haven't terminated any negotiations with the dentists, unfortunately, and there's no other way to say it. They could not deliver. I'm not blaming them. I think that they were surprised, and you are right, I never would have gone that route had I not - for sure that was a mistake on my part. It was bad that I put all my eggs in one basket and relied on the fact that we would have an agreement. That was a mistake and I should have known better. I should have kept doors open; I should have taken my precautions because it didn't work and then it set us back and it is unfortunate.

So the situation is that I have the responsibility towards nurses that are being trained. What am I going to do with them? Especially when it is proven that some of the work they do, they have better success than the dental profession, and I hasten to say that this is not a knock on the dental profession at all, it is just that I certainly would like to have a shot or to have somebody take blood, I'll go to a nurse before a doctor any day of the week because they do it so much. They do it

repeatedly and they're more adapted to it than somebody that does it less often and they could be specialists on that, even though they might have way less education and know less about certain things. But for what they were doing, they did it well.

You probably have in your possession a survey, a study made by all deans of dentistry - all dentists - not one single dental nurse. — (Interjection) — Yes, you'll have to. Well you'll remember that one, I think I sent it to you.

So the situation is that when there's an effort, a real, genuine effort to say okay, fine, let's work together, forget this thing, we're in the driver's seat. I could have come in like a gang buster and said fine, this is what we want, this is what we'll do. We didn't do that. I'm accused of doing that often, of being a hard-nosed negotiator. This time we said all right, let's get together and we worked for two full years, two-and-one-half years, and it didn't materialize at the last minute.

There is no way that we could, when we agreed with that, especially when it's a kind of a pilot project where we were going to determine - and if they could prove, with some safety guide in there, because you know there's nothing like competition - I hear that every day from the people across from me. We're the ones that don't want competition. We're the ones that want to control everything. Remember that. — (Interjection) — No, you're getting a bit mixed up. You're supposed to encourage competition and this is what we're suggesting this time and I'm being faulted for that. As I say, I damned if I do and I'm damned if I don't.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I don't think the Minister indicated when his decision will be made in terms of the program. Will it be made in time for delivery of service in the next school year, starting September 1st? And prior to making his decision, is it the Minister's intention to meet with the school board and parents in Brandon?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I met with the school board in Brandon already.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Was that meeting in Brandon?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No, it was my office here. I don't know what difference it makes.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I'm sorry the Minister thinks the matter might be funny, but in October 1, 1984, the Brandon Sun has an article on it and it said, "Premier Pawley admitted the province could have done a better selling job on the school-based program, by having Mr. Desjardins come to Brandon and explain the plan." I was wondering maybe if you were following up on your Premier's statement he made in Brandon that you had indeed gone out there and met with the school board and the parents?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The situation is this, with the agreement that we had, we felt that this would be sold by the dentists and I think they couldn't foresee that a group of them would rebel against them being organized and this is what happened. They were beat by their own people. **They have** to recognize that now.

No, this was a pilot project, and this is not a new program. This is a program that was very successful, but I did meet with the school division at their request.

There was very little interest by the people of Brandon. I received very little - you can talk about percentage, you can talk about all the organization and all the lobbying and everything they did, and they didn't succeed very much. That was supposed to be quite an issue for the school board. Look at the school board election, I think there was about 11 percent that went to vote.

MR. D. ORCHARD: So then, I take it from the Minister's answer that he's not going to follow the advice of the Premier and go to Brandon and meet with the group involved and explain the program. I take it that he's not going to do that before he makes his decision. Is that a fair assumption?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: You know, Don, you can take what you want, I couldn't care less. The situation is that what the Premier was talking about, I would think he is absolutely right, that we shouldn't have taken for granted that because we made an arrangement with the dentists, it was to go through. It's a little late now, isn't it?

MR. D. ORCHARD: On the contrary, Mr. Chairman. I don't think it's too late when you haven't made the decision. If you went out to Brandon you might avoid making the mistake that your colleague, the Minister of Community Services, made, because she went out to Portage to talk about the School of Psychiatric Nursing and came back saying, well, you know, there's questions we have to have answered here, maybe we're going to have to delay the decision.

It would be very beneficial for this Minister to get out to Brandon and meet with the school board there and the parents, and find out. Mr. Chairman, all I'm saying is that the Minister's leader, the Premier of this province, said that it would have been no doubt better if the Minister of Health had gone out to Brandon and met with the people and explained the program. Better from two standpoints I suggest, because I suspect the Premier is saying that it would have been better in that the Minister would have got his way possibly. I suggest better from the standpoint that you might learn something about some of the concerns in rural Manitoba, and it would be more favourably disposed to having a dentist deliver the program in Brandon. It's as simple as that.

If you're afraid of finding out that kind of information, well, that's fine. Just tell that to the people of Brandon, that you don't want to meet with them, explain it to them and hear what they have to say.

Mr. Chairman, can I ask the Minister where the \$1.5 million that was budgeted last year, and I believe he indicated was transferred out to another section, could the Minister indicate where that \$1.5 million in Other Expenditures for fiscal year '84-85 indeed ended up.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I already told my honourable friend that I would explain this when we get to Mental Health.

MR. D. ORCHARD: So then the Minister is indicating that the \$1.5 million that was transferred out is

somewhere in the Mental Health directorate. Is that what he's saying to me tonight?

Mr. Chairman, could the Minister indicate under what section of Mental Health that I can mark \$1.5 million so I can ask him about it?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Probably around Community Mental Health, but I'll probably have a statement under Regional Mental Health also. I'll have a statement to make at that time.

MR. D. ORCHARD: So then before we leave this item, and I almost hate to ask the Minister to answer this, but could I solicit from him once again a commitment that he will meet with the people in Brandon, as his Premier has suggested, before he makes his decision on which system to deliver in Brandon. Would he at least give us that commitment this evening, not for ourselves, not for any member of this Chamber, but for the people of Brandon? Could he meet with them to discuss the program and hopefully listen to them as to their concerns, their ideas and their future direction, that they are concerned about and have come to the conclusion will be better addressed via the delivery of the Children's Dental Health Program through the private dentists?

Mr. Chairman, before we pass this item, I guess the record has to show that the Minister does not want to go out to Brandon to meet with the people.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: You asked me three times and I answered you three times.

MR. D. ORCHARD: And you're not going to go out to Brandon, is that what you're answering?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: That's your words.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Well, I mean that is my word, that's what I'm getting from the Minister, that he doesn't want to talk to the people of Brandon about this program.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No, my honourable friend, frustrated lawyer, that he thinks he's going to ask me that, to answer a question yes or no. I explained the whole setup, the whole thing and the way it went; if he doesn't understand it, he never will.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, the Minister may find at some point in time in his political career that the people do indeed understand, and they understand when a Minister gets his back up and get bullheaded and won't listen to the people when they are asking for a very legitimate program delivery in their community. They've got a classic example of that kind of stubbornness and bullheadedness in this Minister of Health in this program.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: After 25 years, I think I'm going to have as much experience as you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, D. Scott: Item (j) Dental Services—pass; (j)(1)—pass; (j)(2)—pass; (j)(3)—pass. Ten o'clock?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Committee rise, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Committee rise.

IN SESSION

MR. D. SCOTT: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has considered certain Resolutions, directs me to report progress and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for St. Johns, that the Report of the Committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER, P. EYLER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I move, seconded by the Minister of Municipal Affairs, that the House do now adjourn.

MOTION presented and carried and the House accordingly adjourned and will stand adjourned until 2:00 p.m. tomorrow (Tuesday).