

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, 16 April, 1987.

Time — 1:30 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER, Hon. M. Phillips: Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees . . .

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

HON. E. HARPER: I'd like to table the Annual Report for Northern Affairs for the year ending 1985 and '86.

MADAM SPEAKER: I have the pleasure of tabling some reports.

One is the Annual Report on The Election Finances Act 1986; also the Statement of Votes of the Thirty-Third Provincial General Election, March 18, 1986, and the By-Elections, October 2, 1984, Fort Garry and October 1, 1985, Kildonan.

Also The Elections Act Review and Recommendations, October 1986, pursuant to Section 10 (1.1) of The Elections Act.

Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills . . .

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MADAM SPEAKER: Before moving to Oral Questions, I'd like to direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery, where we have 10 students from Grades 10, 11 and 12, from Fort Alexander High School under the direction of Mr. Namath Hussain, and the school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

On behalf of all the members, we welcome you to the Legislature this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Sugar beet industry - tripartite agreement

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. G. FILMON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is for the Premier.

I wonder if the Premier can indicate whether or not he has been informed that, as a result of the stubborn refusal on the part of his NDP Government to sign the Tripartite Stabilization Agreement for sugar beet producers in Manitoba, it will result in the closure of the Manitoba Sugar Refinery. That closure will result in the loss of annual tax revenue to the province of

approximately \$550,000, and an additional loss of tax revenue to the city of over \$150,000, in addition to the losses in tax revenue that we spoke about yesterday from the one contract with a trucking firm that will result in \$200,000 of provincial revenue lost because of their stubborn refusal to sign the Tripartite Stabilization Agreement with Ottawa.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, I thought the Leader of the Opposition would have heard what I thought was a very clear explanation offered yesterday by the Minister of Agriculture.

This government stands prepared to sign an agreement. This government has offered to provide \$315,000 this year, over \$3 million in additional funding to the sugar beet producers over the next 10 years, in order to deal with the sugar beet issue in the Province of Manitoba. But what we reject, and what we will refuse to do, Madam Speaker, is to sign a blank cheque. The Leader of the Opposition is asking the government to sign a blank cheque. We will not sign a blank cheque; we will sign an agreement that is based upon fairness and reasonableness to the sugar beet producers, to the workers, to the businesses affected and as well, Madam Speaker, is in the public interest to all Manitobans, not just to some Manitobans but in the interests of all Manitobans.

Once we have such an agreement in place, this government is quite anxious to be cooperative. No blank cheque, Madam Speaker, an agreement that is reasonable to all parties, yes.

Sugar beet industry - preservation of jobs

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, this Premier was willing to sign a blank cheque for a wealthy Saudi sheik last year.

Madam Speaker, has the Premier, who's playing with the lives and the livelihood of hundreds of Manitobans on this issue of Russian roulette, has the Premier been informed that, as a result of the stubborn refusal of his NDP administration in Manitoba to sign that tripartite agreement that has been agreed to, incidentally, by the sugar beet producers, both in Manitoba and Alberta, by the Province of Alberta, by the Federal Government, that is supported by the Keystone Agricultural Producers and the union at the Manitoba Sugar Refinery; has he been informed that, as a result of the refusal to sign that agreement, in addition to the 93 permanent jobs at Manitoba Sugar, in addition to the 150 part-time jobs at Manitoba Sugar, in addition to the 68 jobs in trucking that will be lost, in addition to the 400 farmers whose livelihood is put in jeopardy, up to 2,000 part-time jobs, temporary part-time jobs, each year in the sugar beet growing industry in the farms of Manitoba will also be lost to the Province of Manitoba?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology.

HON. V. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Leader of the Opposition has raised a whole host of inaccuracies, starting with the numbers involved, starting with the numbers of employees, starting with the position of various people involved but, especially - and I think we should go back to what he said about Alberta. There's a suggestion out there that somehow the Province of Manitoba and the Government of Manitoba can do everything that Alberta can do. We can't, and the reason is very simply that we are not as wealthy a province.

Our Gross Provincial Product on a per person basis, under the Conservatives before us and under us, is less than Alberta. We're coming up a bit but, Madam Speaker, just as an example, they have a Venture Capital Fund of several hundred millions of dollars; we have several millions of dollars. They have funding assistance for business in the tenfold as much as we are able to provide here.

They have different agreements and we had a different agreement, Madam Speaker, with the Federal Government in 1985 than was reached with the Alberta Government, and we expect a different agreement, just as different agreements are expected in different parts of the country, whether it's the Maritimes versus Alberta, or Manitoba versus Alberta. We expect to be treated fairly.

MADAM SPEAKER: May I remind honourable members that question period is not a time for debate?

Sugar beet industry - tripartite agreement

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, in 1980, the Province of Manitoba was willing to put \$40 million into a Drought Relief Program to save the farmers of Manitoba, and we're talking about a government here that's unwilling to sign an agreement for \$300,000 a year.

MADAM SPEAKER: Does the honourable member have a question?

MR. G. FILMON: Yes, Madam Speaker.

Given that the Government of Alberta is today signing the sugar beet agreement, the Tripartite Stabilization Agreement with its producers and the Government of Manitoba - sorry the Government of Canada - given that decisions will have to be made as early as next week by producers as to whether or not they will plant their crops for this year, will this Premier stand up for the workers at the Manitoba Sugar Refinery, for the truckers of Manitoba who depend upon this industry, for the agriculture workers who depend upon this industry, for the farmers of Manitoba who depend upon this industry? Will he stand up for all these people and set aside his partisan differences with Ottawa and enter into a tripartite agreement, as all of the others who have a role to play in this want to see done, and sign

that agreement and take these people's lives out of the economic jeopardy he's put them into, and save their jobs and save the economy of Manitoba?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, first I think when we are dealing with a matter that is one that is under serious consideration by all parties, we should ensure to keep our comments as factual as possible. Certainly when we're talking about the 1980 figures, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition referred to \$40 million in drought assistance . . .

MR. G. FILMON: That's what was put aside. Yes, indeed, that's what was committed.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Thirteen million. I know that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, being part of the government at the time, wanted to bloat those figures up to \$40 million as being available; \$13 million dollars was made available, Madam Speaker. Anybody can inflate figures, if they desire to do so and attempt to design them accordingly.

Madam Speaker, the beet producers in the Province of Manitoba are extremely well subsidized as it is. They've been well subsidized for quite a period of time but, Madam Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition should be aware it was the former Prime Minister of this country, the Right Honourable John Diefenbaker, who launched a federal program in which the Federal Government, because they recognized that sugar was an international trading commodity, they recognized there were international trading implications, established a national program.

What we are faced with at the present time, Madam Speaker, is despite a commitment which dates back to 1985 from the present government, there has been an abandonment of the position which is historic, and I believe economically and in a fair sense correct. A national program, an international trading issue, and it is a responsibility therefore of the Federal Government.

It does not help the cause of the sugar beet farmers in the Province of Manitoba or the businesses or the workers for the Leader of the Opposition not to join, in order to ensure there is a clear message to Ottawa, to the Conservatives in Ottawa, that the program launched by John Diefenbaker should be continued . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please.

Hog Tripartite Agreement - term of and province liability

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Agriculture.

Madam Speaker, in 1985, the Federal Government made amendments to the Agricultural Stabilization Act

relating to commodity stabilization. Following these amendments, the Minister of Agriculture signed a Hog Tripartite Agreement on behalf of Manitoba, Madam Speaker.

I will ask the Minister to inform the House, in this agreement, what was the term of the tripartite agreement in terms of years? Secondly, what is the province's responsibility regarding the deficit at the end of this tripartite agreement, Madam Speaker?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. B. URUSKI: Madam Speaker, the legislation that was passed in Ottawa in 1985, about one month after we signed the agreement dealing with sugar beets, was enabling legislation. It did not, as has been suggested by their federal counterparts, the only thing on the table, the only aspect of support is tripartite. That is false, Madam Speaker, it is not true.

Secondly, Madam Speaker, the Agriculture Ministers of this country signed a national agricultural strategy in which programming for agricultural programs should be regionally sensitive from the stabilization point of view.

So, Madam Speaker, the tripartite plan that we had in hogs, that Manitoba cooperated in, was signed on the basis that provincial producers would have a reduction in the premiums that they paid to a long-term provincial plan which we had set up. Only by reason that producer premiums would decrease by virtue of federal contributions was the reason that we went in, because federal support levels also were below the provincial program. It was on that basis that we signed that program.

But, Madam Speaker, we have not signed the tripartite beef program, nor are we intending to until support levels come close in terms of that program. So those programs are wide open to negotiate, but not be unilaterally imposed, as is being done now by the Federal Government.

Hog Tripartite Agreement

MR. G. FINDLAY: Given that the term of the agreement that the Minister signed was 10 years and the liability for the province at the end of the 10 years is 50-50 with the Federal Government, Madam Speaker, I would ask the Minister: Was he not aware of those conditions when he signed that agreement, because he did not give them in the answer to the first question and, in those terms, then sign a blank cheque on behalf of Manitoba?

HON. B. URUSKI: Madam Speaker, what the honourable member seems to forget is that there was an agreement signed in 1985. He just wants to throw that agreement out the window, Madam Speaker, and we're not prepared to let them.

There was an agreement signed on two fronts, a national sugar sweetener policy beyond the 1985 crop year and, secondly, that there will be no further funding required from Manitoba in 1985. Madam Speaker, what the Conservatives here want to do is to continually apologize for Ottawa. We have always said we're prepared to sign an agreement, but not a blank cheque.

Sugar beet industry - meeting with Minister responsible for Wheat Board

MR. G. FINDLAY: Given that the Province of Alberta is signing a sugar beet tripartite agreement today, Madam Speaker, and that the weather is such that beet growers of Manitoba need to go to the field within a week in order to maximize production, I will ask the Minister if he has discussed, with the Minister who just talked with him, his statement yesterday that the government, this Provincial Government, is willing to negotiate on several issues in search for agreement with the Federal Government. That being the case, Madam Speaker, has the Minister of Agriculture, as he said yesterday, arranged a meeting with the Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board to be held here in Winnipeg this weekend so that this issue can be resolved for the good of the beet growers, the jobs and all members of the Province of Manitoba, Madam Speaker?

HON. B. URUSKI: Madam Speaker, it should be pointed out that not only did I attempt to arrange another meeting with the Federal Minister, I met with him within 10 days after we made our original proposal to them in which they totally rejected our proposal with no counteroffer, as members often on the other side have suggested that there has been one.

I sent a telex yesterday to the Federal Minister of State for the Wheat Board. We have not received a reply to this point in time. We have always been prepared to sit down and discuss this matter, Madam Speaker, but when there is total refusal of any offer that is made, after we had an agreement saying something completely different, I find I have great difficulty with my honourable friend's definition of who is stubborn on this issue.

Madam Speaker, I want to point out to my honourable friend in the hog industry, had we subsidized the hog industry to the extent that the sugar industry has been subsidized, we would have pumped in some \$50 million to \$60 million in the hog industry in comparison to the sugar beet growers, Madam Speaker.

Sugar beet industry - reply to telex to C. Mayer

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Virden with a final supplementary.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I will ask the Minister of Agriculture, has he gotten a reply from that telex which didn't arrive till this morning, Madam Speaker, and is he prepared to involve the sugar beet growers . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. G. FINDLAY: . . . in the meeting this weekend?

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please.

The Honourable Member for Virden to complete his question.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Given that this is a very serious situation, I consider the catcalls on the other side extremely inappropriate, Madam Speaker.

That is why we pursued from this side to be sure that this meeting occurs. We've been after this for many days, Madam Speaker, as the beet growers want it to

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. G. FINDLAY: . . . happen, as the workers want it to . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. G. FINDLAY: . . . sugar beet growers in a meeting to be convened in Winnipeg this weekend, Madam Speaker.

HON. B. URUSKI: Madam Speaker, now we know who is negotiating on behalf of Ottawa. We stand up for Manitoba and Manitoba's workers and farmers. They bend down to Ottawa, Madam Speaker, that group. Now we know the real issue of who is negotiating on behalf of Ottawa, Madam Speaker. There is the mouthpiece, Madam Speaker, on behalf of the apologists of Ottawa.

We have not received a response from the Federal Government. We sent the telex late yesterday afternoon from my office. We have not received a telex. In fact, I asked my staff whether there was any communication back this morning, but obviously my honourable friends

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order.

HON. B. URUSKI: . . . are already negotiating on their behalf.

St. Boniface Hospital - admission policy

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for River East.

-(Interjection)- Order please.

The Honourable Member for River East has the floor to place her question.

MRS. B. MITCHELSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Health.

Can the Minister inform this House whether the St. Boniface Hospital has in place a receiving procedure that would restrict admission of pregnant women when their delivery time occurs?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Madam Speaker, the only admission policy that I know of, the admission policy with all the hospitals, is that they are trying to inform the public as soon as possible when the facilities are

filled. This is something that you can't control. It might be a hospital down the road that is not busy, and I think it's much better to inform the people than wait until they get at every single hospital and send them to the next one.

It's a kind of cooperation with all the hospitals for admitting and discharge that we're trying to set up.

St. Boniface Hospital - expansion of maternity ward

MRS. B. MITCHELSON: My supplementary question is for the same Minister.

When the Seven Oaks Hospital and Concordia Hospital obstetric wards were closed, was the long-range plan for St. Boniface Hospital to expand the labour floor to meet the increased demands that would be placed on it, and when is this going to occur?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Madam Speaker, the increased demand was very small, and the switch to these hospitals, where the people felt the care would be there, because they were ready for any cases at the Health Sciences Centre and St. Boniface, and many people were choosing to go to these hospitals. That resulted in the Seven Oaks Hospital having less than one delivery a day, with an average of about 35, 37 staff to take care of that.

Pregnant women - ensure not at risk

MRS. B. MITCHELSON: My final supplementary, Madam Speaker.

Can the Minister assure this House that pregnant women will not be placed at risk as a result of a cap being put on the number of deliveries at St. Boniface Hospital?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Madam Speaker, I'd like to make sure that I understand this question, because one day they want something; the next day they want something else.

We were told that -(Interjection)- Why don't you keep quiet and listen? Madam Speaker, we were told that we were spending too much money for Home Care just a day or so ago, and that we should stay within our budget. It doesn't matter if somebody needs more care but, if we spend that money we should stay within this budget. Then we're told today that, fine, are you going to spend the money.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please.

The Honourable Member for Pembina on a point of order.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Madam Speaker, on a point of order.

I wouldn't want the Minister of Health to leave on the record an incorrect statement.

MADAM SPEAKER: Does the honourable member have a point of order?

MR. D. ORCHARD: Madam Speaker, the program in Home Care is financially out of control. That's what we want the Minister to straighten up.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please.
The honourable member does not have a point of order.

The Honourable Minister to complete his answer.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, Madam Speaker, the statement was made that the financial situation was out of control, and that is exactly the case that whoever prepared that did not look at the programs at all as an issue.

It's right that the situation - in fact, that's why we asked for the report because we felt that a lot could be desired. We felt that the system should be streamlined, and it will be. This is the same member who was asking last year that we should spend more than \$65,000 on one person for Home Care.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

I remind Honourable Ministers that answers should deal with the matter raised.

Consumers' Association of Canada - funding of

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for River Heights.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

Madam Speaker, the Manitoba Chapter of the Consumers' Association will have to close its door as a result of the withdrawal of federal funds from that most important organization. Has the Minister met with the association and what offers, if any, of alternative funding has he made?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

HON. A. MACKLING: I want to thank the honourable member for the question and confirm that, indeed, I have met with the organization and they pointed out to me that the Federal Government had withdrawn funding. I regret that very much because that organization, being in receipt of funds from both levels of government and other sources, is in a position to be at greater arm's length from government and, from time to time where they deem it appropriate, be critical of both federal consumer legislation and programming and provincial consumer protection, where they deem is necessary. I regret very much that the Federal Government did withdraw that assistance because it's been longstanding for many, many years under previous Federal Governments.

However, I did indicate that our government is not in a position to put up money when the Federal Government withdraws from funding arrangements. We are trying. I indicated that if there was any way I could assist in finding alternative sources of income, I would do that. I made certain suggestions to them. I also indicated that we would endeavour to find any space that might be available, and such is the case in other jurisdictions, that governments assist by providing space. We are looking at that. That hasn't been too successful, but we'll continue to look.

Consumer and Corporate Affairs Dept.- ability to handle calls

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: With a supplementary question to the same Minister.

Madam Speaker, will the Minister's department be able to handle the additional 500 calls per week which the Consumers' Association presently receives, if this association is forced to close their doors?

HON. A. MACKLING: The short answer, Madam Speaker, would be yes, we will have to cope with it. But I would point out that the kind of inquiry that is made to the Consumers' Association is one where there is a request for consumer information that compares products, and our Consumers' Bureau is not mandated to do that kind of work. So it is regrettable that kind of information would not be available to Manitobans.

Consumers' Association of Canada - Provincial Government to fund

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: With a final supplementary to the same Minister, Madam Speaker.

In that the Minister agrees with me that communications is the most important function of this association, will the Minister agree to a reduction of \$12,000 from his Communications budget in order to finance this organization?

HON. A. MACKLING: Madam Speaker, I know that the Federal Government spends a great deal more on communications than we do, and I'm sure that the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs federally - a comparison of his budget with ours, there would be far more latitude in providing some spending. I think that question should be addressed to the Federal Government.

Brandon General Hospital - closure of beds

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'd like to ask a question of the Minister of Health.

Madam Speaker, has the Minister of Health given approval to the decision at the Brandon General Hospital to close 49 beds from June to September of this summer?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Madam Speaker, I'll repeat what I said a couple of times, at least, in this House. There have been discussions with every single urban hospital, including Brandon, in a way to reduce and do away with the deficit of the different hospitals, and they are coming back with proposals. That will be looked at and nothing will be done without the approval of the Commission. This approval will be given only if there are other methods of serving the public. Also if there is any closure of beds and staff being released, it will be done only in an orderly way, and there is a committee of the unions working with the government on this to make sure that is done in an orderly way.

No, there hasn't been a single cutback.

Hospitals - bed closures

MR. D. ORCHARD: Madam Speaker, the residents of Brandon, the users of Brandon General Hospital, would differ on the Minister's last statement.

Madam Speaker, my question to the Minister is, in the orderly cutback of beds in our hospitals, has the Minister given approval or consideration to the cut of 150 beds this summer at the Health Sciences Centre, 100 of those beds to be permanently closed? Has he given consideration to the closure of 28 beds in July, 34 beds in August at Concordia Hospital, which is half their surgical beds? Has he given consideration to the closure of 48 permanent beds at the Victoria Hospital, which is one complete surgical floor? Has he given consideration to the closure of 40 beds at Grace Hospital for this summer as part of his orderly cutback of hospital beds in the Province of Manitoba?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: My honourable friend, as usual, would like to present this to scare the public of Manitoba, and he knows well that we will look at the proposals. We're not looking at giving consideration to anything at this time until we receive the proposals of the hospitals. Then we'll look at it and, I repeat, it'll be done in an orderly way. We will try to do everything we can, even without the help of our honourable friends to see that we conserve and improve the health care system that we have in Manitoba which is still one of the best in the world.

Manitoba Developmental Centre - reporting of deaths

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. M. SMITH: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Last week, I undertook to make available to the House information concerning the reporting of deaths at the Manitoba Developmental Centre. Briefly under Section 6(1)(d) of The Fatality Inquiries Act, the Manitoba Developmental Centre is required to report the death of a resident to a medical examiner. Upon receiving a report, the medical examiner is required to "take charge of the body, inform the police, and make diligent inquiry respecting the cause and manner of the death of the person."

If, after examination of the medical records, the medical examiner determines that the resident died of natural causes under 6(1.2) of the act: "he may determine not to take charge of the body or inform the police or make an inquiry into the death of the person."

In the second instance, when no inquiry is made, the medical examiner is not required to report the death to the Chief Medical Examiner. This was the case in 5 of the 24 deaths at the MDC in 1986. In these cases, the death certificate would be completed and signed by the attending physician. However in each case, Madam Speaker, an autopsy was performed.

Springhill Farms - request of government intervention

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon West.

MR. J. McCRAE: Madam Speaker, I direct my question to the Minister of Labour.

A few days ago, the workers at the Springhill Hog Processing Plant asked the Minister to instruct the Labour Board to appoint a new panel to look into the situation at Springhill Farms. Has the Minister responded to those workers' requests and what was the response?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. A. MACKLING: Madam Speaker, the honourable member continues to suggest that it is incumbent on the government to intervene or interfere in a process, a long-established process, that workers apply to an independent tribunal and that tribunal makes its decision. This Minister will not yield to the inducements opposite to interfere with what is a fair and reasonable process.

Manitoba Labour Board - criteria for appointments to

MR. J. McCRAE: Madam Speaker, the Minister has referred to the Manitoba Labour Board as an independent tribunal. Can the Minister tell us the criteria for appointments to the Labour Board?

HON. A. MACKLING: The honourable member, if he will consult the act, will appreciate the fact that the chairperson of the board solicits names from both the union sector and management sector, forwards those names to government as recommendations for appointment, and that board is comprised of people from both segments, from both management and labour. If the honourable member is questioning the integrity of the members of that board, that is shameful, Madam Speaker.

Manitoba Labour Board - appt. by Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council

MR. J. McCRAE: Madam Speaker, a new question to the Minister.

I had understood that appointments to the board were made by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council on recommendation. Well, are the criteria for appointments to this independent tribunal of the Manitoba Labour Board, are the criteria any different from the criteria used for appointments to the Brandon University Board of Governors? I have in my hand, Madam Speaker, a document, a Cabinet submission respecting Dr. David Stewart. It says: "Dr. David Stewart should be appointed to the Board of Governors of Brandon University." He's a retired physician, he's active in the Doctors for Peace Movement and he's . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please.

The Honourable Minister of Labour is not responsible for the University of Brandon.

The Honourable Member for Ellice.

MR. H. SMITH: Thank you, Madam Speaker.
Madam Speaker . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.
The Honourable Member for Brandon West on a point of order.

MR. J. McCRAE: Madam Speaker, I did not ask the Minister about the responsibilities of the former Minister of Education. I just asked if the criteria are the same as the criteria used for appointments to the Board of Governors for Brandon University. That has nothing to do with the Minister of Education.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour is responsible for appointments to the Labour Board. The Honourable Minister of Labour is not responsible for appointments to any other board.

MR. D. ORCHARD: He's not responsible for any member of Cabinet.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Opposition House Leader.

MR. G. MERCIER: A point of order, Madam Speaker.
The Member for Brandon West asked if the Minister of Labour applied the same criteria as those used for the appointment of the Brandon University Board, and referred to a Cabinet paper and the criteria that was used in that paper. I submit to you, that is completely in order.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon West can rephrase his question. As he originally phrased it, it's my opinion it was out of order.

Manitoba Labour Board - criteria for appointments to

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon West.

MR. J. McCRAE: Madam Speaker, the criterion for appointments to the Board of Governors for Brandon University is membership or support for the New Democratic Party. Is that one of the criteria for appointment to the independent tribunal the Minister refers to, the Manitoba Labour Board?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. A. MACKLING: Madam Speaker, I don't accept the narrow, partisan political premise that's contained in the honourable member's question, but the honourable members opposite have to come to appreciate the fact that at least close to 50 percent of the people in Manitoba are either members of the New Democratic Party or . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please.

That particular paper has not been tabled in the House.

The Honourable Minister of Labour. Are you finished?
The Honourable Member for Ellice then.

MR. H. SMITH: Madam Speaker, I think all of us in this House . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.
Does the Honourable Member for Ellice have a question?

MR. H. SMITH: I only said about four words, Madam Speaker . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. H. SMITH: Yes, I have a question, Madam Speaker, and I'd like to ask . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Good. Place your question.

Consumers' Association - Min. to contact Federal Government

MR. H. SMITH: Madam Speaker, all of us in this House should be concerned about the Consumers' Association cutback by the Federal Government. I'd like to ask the Minister of Consumer Affairs: Is he willing to approach his federal counterpart and register our protest as a government against this cutback that interferes with consumers getting information?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

HON. A. MACKLING: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I want to thank the Honourable Member for Ellice for indicating to me earlier on that he did want to ask me a question about that. I appreciate the concern he has and many Manitobans have that the Federal Government would withdraw from participation in an agency which is a very great help to consumers across this country, consumers who wield a great deal of power and influence. I hope that they will exercise their influence, not only directed toward this government, but directed toward a government that today in the newspaper - and I find it obscene that there's such lavish spending on the Prime Minister's residence and all of his things and they can't spare \$12,000 to continue funding for a consumers' agency.

Group Homes - criteria for placement in

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. A. BROWN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Community Services.

Madam Speaker, I wish to first of all express my deepest sympathy for the Gowler family on the loss of their son.

My question to the Minister is: Is it normal practice to place someone as severely retarded as this person was, who was stated as having the mentality of a one-year-old, into a group home?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, the principle on which people are placed in group homes is whether their needs can be adequately met, and there's a process working with their families and with the providers of care. Great care is taken to see that they are well cared for.

This particular tragic incident has moved us all, and I know the home that is operated by DASCH has been taking it very much to heart and is investigating thoroughly whether there was any additional precaution they could have taken.

Madam Speaker, my deep sympathy goes to the family of Mr. Gowler, and I will be looking closely at the report of the incident.

Mentally retarded - training for volunteers working with

MR. A. BROWN: My question is to the same Minister. We have received reports that persons who help with mentally retarded receive no training or very little training before they are allowed to take charge of a retarded person.

Can the Minister say whether Mitch Gowler had any training whatsoever so that he would know how to cope with a difficult situation?

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, I can't speak as to the specific case. I understand the young man was a student in the Faculty of Social Work and had been volunteering for several years.

Again, I think the incident has raised concern and we intend to look into it. There are many volunteers involved in the enrichment of the program and the support of the program, and I think it behooves all of us to ensure that appropriate supports are there.

Gowler, Mitch - investigation re death of

MR. A. BROWN: My question is to the same Minister. The Minister has ordered an investigation. Will the Minister make the results of that investigation public so that all of us can make certain that an incident like this can be averted the next time?

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, the group DASCH is the group that has the official responsibility, and I think it's to them that the questions should be referred.

My concern is that the policies and programs are as good as they possibly can be. I don't think we'll ever arrive at a situation, Madam Speaker, where we can give 100 percent security, wherever the mentally retarded are cared for, but it's the goal of all of us to bring their care as close as possible to that point.

MDC - release of Ombudsman's Report

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rhineland with a final supplementary.

MR. A. BROWN: Thank you. I have another question to the same Minister.

An incident happened last night where a resident of the MDC wandered into a slough away from the residence and would have drowned if some residents of Portage had not retrieved him. The reason given for this episode was that lack of staff could not keep track of residents who wandered from the MDC. Will the Minister enforce stricter security at the MDC, and will the Minister now make public the Ombudsman's Report on the MDC?

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, I'll take the specific question as notice with regard to the report, the draft report that came to us from the Ombudsman, our comments upon it and a return of that information to the Ombudsman. In fact, I'm making the same comment I made consistently last week and the week before that it is now his report to make public, as he wishes.

MADAM SPEAKER: The time for Oral Questions has expired.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

MADAM SPEAKER: Before moving to Orders of the Day, I would like to take a moment to apologize to the Honourable Member for Ellice for my assumption that he was about to participate in the general racket that was happening at the time, rather than trying to place a question above it.

COMMITTEE CHANGES

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

MR. M. DOLIN: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Member for Elmwood, that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: M. Dolin for the Honourable J. Cowan.

I further move, seconded by the Member for Elmwood, that the Standing Committee on Economic Development be amended as follows: D. Scott for the Hon. L. Harapiak; Hon. A. Mackling for the Hon. H. Harapiak; Hon. L. Evans for the Hon. M. Hemphill.

ORDERS OF THE DAY HOUSE BUSINESS

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. J. COWAN: Madam Speaker, on House Business then, I would like to advise the House that it has been agreed between the Opposition House Leader and myself and the critic and the Minister responsible that the Standing Committee on Economic Development should meet on Tuesday, April 21 at 10:00 a.m. to

consider, first, the Report of the Manitoba Mineral Resources and, if time permits, the Report of the Manitoba Oil and Gas Corporation.

On Thursday, the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources will meet to continue the consideration of the Annual Report of Manitoba Hydro, at 10:00 a.m. as well.

Also, Madam Speaker, . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Madam Speaker, I believe in our discussions the Government House Leader indicated the committee would meet to review ManOil on Tuesday and Hydro on Thursday alone.

HON. J. COWAN: MMR on Tuesday.

MR. G. MERCIER: MMR on Tuesday.

HON. J. COWAN: ManOil if time permits.

MR. G. MERCIER: Is the Government House Leader now adding Economic Development?

HON. J. COWAN: No, I'm sorry. The Manitoba Mineral Resources Corporation normally goes to the Standing Committee on Economic Development, so it will be the Standing Committee on Economic Development that considers that report. Then on Thursday, we will revert back to the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources to consider Hydro.

If there's any difficulty with that, perhaps the Opposition House Leader and I can discuss it during the course of the afternoon and make any changes that are required before the House adjourns this evening.

Madam Speaker, I also understand that there's a predisposition on the part of members, by leave, to forego Private Members' Hour today, and to continue on with the consideration of Estimates until 6:00 p.m.

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Labour, that Madam Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

MOTION presented.

MATTER OF GRIEVANCE

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon West.

MR. J. McCRAE: Madam Speaker, I rise today to present a grievance on behalf of the working people of the Province of Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, in the face of great difficulty imposed upon them by a regime in this province which tends to forget the rights of the average working Manitoban, in the face of that we have a government which steadfastly holds to its position of standing up for the union bosses of this province, standing up for those who support the New Democratic Party, standing up for all those people and not standing up for the

average working man in this province and the average working woman in this province who pay the bills in this province. Those people who are trying to raise families and lead productive and useful lives, those are the people for whom I grieve today, Madam Speaker.

I also grieve on their behalf for the elected representatives that they elect to speak for them on matters of importance. I grieve, because certain elected officials have been accused of interfering with the rights of Manitobans when, in fact, those elected representatives have been intervening as opposed to interfering, intervening in the hope of trying to restore for people in this province their freedom to choose who they want to represent them, their freedom to choose what their future should be and what the future should be for their family and for themselves and for their workplaces. Madam Speaker, I speak today not only on my own behalf as an elected representative but also on behalf of the Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain, the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose, and all honourable members on this side of the House who have been speaking and attempting to bring about justice for working people in this province in the face of very difficult odds.

In the case of the Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain, he has to be subjected to threats that he is acting illegally when he acts on behalf of his constituents. When the Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain attempts to represent his constituents, he is stymied by union bosses who make telephone calls, threatening that the Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain is acting illegally.

The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose and myself have done what we can to speak out, Madam Speaker, for working people in this province, and specifically working people in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose. The workers there overwhelmingly at the Springhill hog processing plant want a say in what their future should be. They want a say in which union should represent them, if indeed they want any union at all. The same goes for the workers at the Sooter Photo plant.

Those people are willing to accept the wish of the majority in their workplace. All they want is a chance to be heard. This Minister of Labour, Madam Speaker, refuses to involve himself, as he is entitled to do. He's refused to involve himself and to stand up for the democratic rights of working people in this province. I say, the Minister of Labour should be ashamed of himself. Honourable members opposite should be ashamed to share the same side of the House with him. That Minister is not doing his job as Minister of Labour. He is not standing up for the rights of working people in this province, and that Minister should resign, Madam Speaker.

The people of the Rural Municipality of Lorne, the people who pay the bills there for work done by their municipal employees, had no opportunity to have any say whatsoever in what the future should be for the working people and for themselves in terms of the taxes they pay, Madam Speaker. Those people were denied the right of freedom of speech under one of the sections of our Manitoba Labour Relations Act, a section that this Minister of Labour refuses to put to the test of Charter of Rights scrutiny, Madam Speaker. Why?

This is the government that says it's in favour of freedoms for people, Charter of Freedoms. This is the

government that says it wants to protect the rights of people as set out in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Why then, Madam Speaker, has the Minister of Labour consistently refused to allow The Manitoba Labour Relations Act to be put to the scrutiny of charter compliance? Why is that? The Minister sits mute, refuses to answer that question. He's done so repeatedly in the question period in this House, Madam Speaker. Who does that Minister stand up for?

Well, Madam Speaker, we already know that Mr. Wilf Hudson is the President of the Manitoba Labour Federation. We know that Mr. Hudson is often seen in the halls of this building. We know that Mr. Hudson contributes generously to the New Democratic Party annually. We know who the Minister of Labour stands up for, Madam Speaker, and I can tell you, it's not for the average working man and woman in this province.

The Minister stood today in question period, Madam Speaker, and proudly announced that the Labour Board members are chosen as a result of a solicitation by the Chairman of the Labour Board for names from, and he said, union and management sectors.

Madam Speaker, I think, if nothing else, we've demonstrated in the last few weeks that unions don't always speak for what's best for the working man in this province or anywhere else. Unions most often do, I concede, but in some cases they don't. What strikes me strangely, Madam Speaker, is that he's proud that union and management sectors are consulted before appointments are made to the Labour Board. What about the average working person in this province? Is that person consulted?

When I see what happens at the Springhill farm plant, Madam Speaker, I have to wonder. Is the union movement always working for the best interests of the worker in this province? And if the answer to that is no, Madam Speaker, then perhaps the Minister of Labour should be not quite so satisfied that only the union and management sectors are being consulted with respect to these appointments.

Maybe that plant worker out there, maybe someone at Springhill Farms, maybe someone at Great-West Life, maybe someone in some other workplace should be consulted. Some working man or woman in this province should be consulted.

Madam Speaker, the Union of Manitoba Municipalities is concerned about The Manitoba Labour Relations Act; the City of Brandon is concerned about The Manitoba Labour Relations Act. On February 3, 1986, Madam Speaker, as a result of the turmoil this government put our city through with respect to labour problems at the T. Eaton Company in Brandon, the Council of the City of Brandon passed a resolution. I admit it wasn't unanimous. There were two members at least on that council who did not wish to pass that resolution. One of them was Ross Martin and another one was Arnold Grambo, and I'll refer to those gentlemen later in my talk today if I have an opportunity.

Those two gentlemen did not support that resolution, but the resolution passed by the City of Brandon, unanimously except for those members and perhaps one other. I can't remember offhand, but the resolution was that this government should re-examine its first-contract legislation and other aspects of The Manitoba Labour Relations Act.

The Minister of Labour responded to the Mayor of Brandon in a single-spaced, three-page letter, Madam

Speaker, lauding the labour relations in this province, and talking about how wonderful our Manitoba Labour Relations Act is and how it protects the working people in our society. But not once in that letter did he use the word "Eaton's" except to refer to the Eaton's down east, never mind Eaton's in Brandon.

We in the City of Brandon, Madam Speaker, were concerned about what will happen to our downtown which, as you know from having resided in Brandon, the downtown of our city is very, very important to our economic life. As our city grows westerly and northerly, there are suburban malls that are cropping up, and those malls are taking away the business from our downtown. So consequently, our city fathers are very concerned about the viability of the downtown.

The Eaton's store, Madam Speaker, was the only full-fledged department store in the whole City of Brandon. The Eaton's store was the anchor store of our downtown. It's what held our downtown together and, Madam Speaker, as a result of the first-contract legislation brought in by this government, the workers there and the union and the management there had a contract thrust on them which was certainly satisfactory to Mr. Bernard Christophe, the President of the Manitoba Food and Commercial Workers Union, certainly satisfactory to him, but Eaton's was operating in a very competitive world.

There were other smaller stores in Brandon closing down because of competition problems. A store at Moose Jaw closed down. So Eaton's response to the first contract imposed by this independent tribunal, the Manitoba Labour Board, was to say, well we'll have to lay off 43 people and we're going to shut down the third floor of our operation and change our store into a bargain-basement-type operation, as opposed to quite a fine department store as it has been for generations in our city.

That was the response of Eaton's, and Bernard Christophe's response was to threaten to sue Eaton's of Canada. At that point, the workers at Eaton's got mad. They said, now hold on here, we have some rights too. We say we want to keep our jobs at Eaton's. We don't want 17 of our full-time people to become part-time people. We think that we can work with Eaton's without having to push them out of business. They said to Bernard Christophe, we're going to sue you, Mr. Christophe, if you don't yield to our demands and back down and allow that first contract to be amended. Mr. Christophe waited and pushed and waited and pulled.

Madam Speaker, an election was on the horizon. Suddenly Bernard Christophe pulled in his horns, Madam Speaker. Bernard Christophe agreed, publicly at least, to amend that first contract so that Eaton's store could retain those 43 employees and put the store back into business.

Madam Speaker, Eaton's wasn't fooling around. I was there one afternoon on the third floor, and I was seeing the workmen tearing down the store operation. They meant business. After Mr. Christophe backed down, Madam Speaker, Eaton's began to restock the third floor. Eaton's rehired or didn't lay off those 43 people.

Madam Speaker, that's the effect of the first-contract legislation, confrontation, and it certainly goes beyond the workplace. Our whole city, our city council, all the people who have shopped downtown for generations,

Madam Speaker, for years, for decades, were upset that we're losing the biggest, I guess, department store in all of Brandon. The whole city was in a turmoil, thanks to the first-contract legislation of this government.

So what's happened since at Eaton's? The Minister tells us, Madam Speaker, that it's the duty of the Minister of Labour to remain aloof and to stay away from these issues. How many members on that side of the House, Madam Speaker, have found themselves in picket lines or perhaps cutting up their credit card when it came to the Eaton's dispute? How many members over there have involved themselves in labour disputes, and they have the gall to tell me that I'm interfering in labour relations in this province?

Well, Madam Speaker, I wonder if the Minister of Labour understands The Manitoba Labour Relations Act well enough to understand that interfering in labour relations is an unfair labour practice. Does the Minister even know that? He appears to be nodding his head, Madam Speaker, so I assume the Minister is accusing me and the Member for Ste. Rose and the Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain of interfering with the rights of workers and thereby committing unfair labour practices. I say, if that's what he wants to do, let him make a charge, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please.

On a point of order, the Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. A. MACKLING: The honourable member is seeking to put on the record some affirmation of support for the nonsense that he's saying, and he alluded to the fact that I appeared to be nodding my head. I am shaking my head in disbelief at what I'm hearing, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister does not have a point of order.

MR. J. McCRAE: Well, Madam Speaker, the Honourable Minister can say that he disbelieves it if he likes but, on the 13th of April in this House, the Honourable Minister of Labour said: "For honourable members to be trying to interfere in that process is offensive. The honourable members are interfering with the rights of workers themselves."

Now, Madam Speaker, did the Minister say that or didn't he say it? Now if he did say that, he's saying inside this House because he hasn't got the courage, I guess, to say it outside this House, he's saying that we honourable members on this side of the House are committing unfair labour practices. If he's saying that, why doesn't he have the guts to make a charge?

I have a reputation too, Madam Speaker. I take offence to being told that I'm committing unfair labour practices. I can take it from Wilf Hudson who, to me, isn't very important, but certainly is to this Minister. I can take it from Bruno Zimmer. When these two gentlemen say that I'm interfering and I'm intimidating workers, I can put up with that. But when an elected member of this House and a representative of Her Majesty in this House makes the charge that I'm committing unfair labour practices, Madam Speaker,

I say let him make a charge. Make it stick, or else say it outside.

I am getting sick and tired, Madam Speaker, of the hatred that I find on the part of honourable members opposite. Their veins flow not with blood, Madam Speaker, but an ugly venom that hurts people in this province, and it's about time it stopped.

Madam Speaker, there is provision in The Labour Act for anyone suggesting that, if anyone else is committing unfair labour practices, to file a written complaint with The Manitoba Labour Board. Madam Speaker, I've heard or seen nothing to that effect with regard to me, the Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain, or the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose, or indeed any other honourable member on this side of the House. If the Minister's got the guts to say in this House that I am guilty of unfair labour practices, let him make a charge and let him prove it. If wants to attempt to prove it, let him start by asking the workers at the Springhill Farms Plant. Let him start by asking the workers at the Sooter Photo plant here in Winnipeg. Let him talk to the workers at Eaton's. Ask the workers in those three workplaces or anywhere else, if they like, where and how has this honourable member intimidated or interfered with the rights of workers in this province.

Madam Speaker, I take sincere offence to that kind of irresponsibility on the part of the Minister of Labour of this province, and he does that - now I heard the Honourable Minister refer to an article in the Brandon Sun. The honourable members should know that, a week or so previous to the editorial he's talking about, the Brandon Sun editorial that day, which the Minister conveniently forgets to mention, that editorial comment was that the workers at Springhill are not being treated fairly. The workers at Springhill are entitled to be heard, and this issue deserves the maximum publicity. Now the Brandon Sun may take issue with the way publicity is generated. That's not my problem.

The other point is that the Brandon Sun is not the people of Brandon, Madam Speaker. The Brandon Sun is a local newspaper and a very fine one. For the most part, I agree with most of the things I read in the Brandon Sun. Obviously I'm not going to agree with the editorial the Minister refers to, but if that's the only case this Minister has, if he wants to take that editorial to the Labour Board and use that as Exhibit 1 in the case against Jim McCrae, the Honourable Member for Brandon West, the Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain, and the Member for Ste. Rose, if he wants to use that as Exhibit 1 in the case against us for interfering with the rights of workers, let him do it, Madam Speaker.

I'd be delighted to defend myself, because I've got 140 witnesses at Springhill Farms. I've got 106 witnesses, or 104 witnesses at Sooter Photo. If you want to find four witnesses like the kind who showed up on Friday at a press conference to complain of intimidation and coercion on the other side of the fence, let them come forward too. But above all, let this Minister do his job, let him do his job and see that a vote is held among the workers in those plants so that democracy can live in this province.

Madam Speaker, we on this side sent out questionnaires recently and it's comical to see some of the responses that came back. One of them that springs to mind is one of our questions in the

questionnaire which was: Do you think the deficit should be reduced? One respondent sent back and said to me, "Of course, it should. What are you - stupid?" That was the response I got.

On another one, Madam Speaker, it wasn't quite so funny. The one that wasn't so funny was the one that said, "The only difference between Manitoba and Russia is that there's more paperwork in Manitoba," Madam Speaker. That's a little upsetting.

Madam Speaker, during the question period today, I brought to the attention of the House a document that has come into my possession. Your Honour was cautious in respect to whether it was a proper question to put in the question period, and we seemed to get that resolved. The question did finally come out.

Madam Speaker, this document is perhaps quite a telling document in terms of the policy of this government respecting appointments to boards. The Minister of Education, last summer, when I was complaining that he was being misled by the board of governors, at that time, Dr. David Stewart was the Deputy Chairman of the Board of Governors and, as far as I know, was the one who was advising the Minister of Education at that time. We all know that the Minister misled this House at that time.

We know it wasn't deliberate, Madam Speaker, because he was misled by certain people in Brandon. Well, if it was Dr. David Stewart, Madam Speaker - it says here, "Dr. David Stewart." This is a Cabinet submission, Department of Education, Brandon University was the subject, background - apparently there are three vacancies on the Board of Governors at the Brandon University. Recommendation: "It is proposed that the following be considered for appointment to fill the vacancy: Dr. David Stewart," and the reasons are given, one of them being that he's a supporter of the NDP - a Cabinet document.

Isn't that interesting, Madam Speaker? The reason I ask that question is because we were told by the Minister of Labour repeatedly that they have a fine board of governors, they're autonomous, they're independent, they look after things the way they're supposed to be done. They don't show any partiality or anything like that.

Well, Madam Speaker, I have here a list of some of the members of the Labour Board. One recently passed away and I don't think I'll refer to that member, but another member of the Labour Board - 1986 donation New Democratic Party, \$357, Madam Speaker. Here's another one, Madam Speaker, donation 1986, \$870.00. Here's another one, Madam Speaker, 1986, \$250 to the New Democratic Party; and another one, \$595 in 1986. Madam Speaker, I'm not referring to 1985 figures or 1984 figures or '83 figures. The Minister tells me that this is an independent tribunal. Well, how independent is it, Madam Speaker, when we go through - and I apologize, the latest listing I have here is for the year ended 1985, and some of these members may be gone now and some replaced but, as I understand it, there are about 24 members of the Manitoba Labour Board.

Here's one, Madam Speaker. - (Interjection)- What did he say? Well, I'm sure glad the Honourable Member for Kildonan isn't in charge because his responses certainly don't take care of the problem either. At no time have I said that the board, Madam Speaker, has acted in a biased way, but I am suggesting that the

law with which the members of the Manitoba Labour Board have to work is certainly slanted against that union sector that the Minister referred to earlier, nothing about worker sector, but union sector; and this Minister and honourable members opposite would do well to start understanding that the union sector does not always have the interests and the well-being of workers at heart.

What is Shirley Carr's position, Madam Speaker, on free trade? Does that help the working people of Manitoba, the position of Wilf Hudson on free trade, does that help the workers of Manitoba? The position of the Honourable Minister of Labour and the First Minister, newly taken on free trade, does that help the working people of this province? Madam Speaker, this man shouldn't be the Minister of Labour if his interests are only to wriggle in and out of the pockets of the union leaders of this province.

A MEMBER: They don't know where to put him anymore.

MR. J. McCRAE: Here's one member of the Labour Board, Madam Speaker, a member of the Manitoba Federation of Labour. Well, isn't it Mr. Hudson, who's the President of the Manitoba Federation of Labour? Two weeks ago, Mr. Hudson and Mr. Zimmer of the United Food and Commercial Workers' Union held a press conference, Madam Speaker, to complain about me and about other honourable members on this side of the Chamber interfering or intimidating workers. Will someone come forward and tell the Labour Board, after the Minister has laid his charge of unfair labour practices against me and my colleagues, after he's done that, what kind of evidence is he going to build for his case, Madam Speaker?

It's an irresponsible Minister who makes that kind of comment in this House and honourable members opposite get involved in making comments like that all too often, and it's time that venom was removed from their bloodstreams, Madam Speaker.

Here's another one, Madam Speaker. President, Manitoba Federation of Labour, 1984-85 - the President of the Manitoba Federation of Labour, 1984-85. Here's another one - Manitoba Food and Commercial Workers' Union. These are members of the Labour Board, Madam Speaker. And another one - Sheet Metalworkers' International Association, international representative for Amalgamated Clothing and Textiles Workers; Winnipeg Labour Council; Winnipeg Union Label League. These are the union sector representatives, but a number of these representatives are the same ones I referred to earlier who donated and contributed so generously to the New Democratic Party. And these are not your average working guys, Madam Speaker. I can't afford to make donations like that, and yet certain union leaders in this province do, so we have to wonder about just whether we make any comments about the members of the Labour Board or not, we certainly can make comments, Madam Speaker, about the law with which they work, the law they apply in trying to apply so-called justice to workers in this province. Madam Speaker, there's got to be some changes.

I dealt a little while ago with the Eaton's situation and the first-contract legislation. Let me talk just for

a minute, Madam Speaker, about the situation at Neepawa.

The workers there sent me a letter, Madam Speaker, just in case honourable members opposite were interested - which I doubt - but because of a technicality, they are now forced to have a union they don't want, the United Food and Commercial Workers' Union. That union will not back off, Madam Speaker; that union knows full well what the wishes of those workers are, but that doesn't matter. They're going to confiscate their hard-earned dollars on their first pay cheque after certification.

Those workers were not against joining the union, Madam Speaker. They would like to be consulted and have a say as to which union it is they join.

A MEMBER: They should have that right.

MR. J. McCRAE: I'm just looking for a letter, Madam Speaker, I received from the workers there. I don't seem to be able to find it at this point. Here it is.

I'd like to read this letter into the record, Madam Speaker, just so the record is clear for honourable members opposite, just about the situation this in-plant union is in. I remind honourable members opposite, this union is not a wealthy union like the United Food and Commercial Workers' Union. Mr. Colin Trigwill is a union representative and he said to the union head for the in-plant union, "We're going to fight you all the way on this. We've got the money and you don't and we're going to win." That's where we're at. We've got the rich and powerful on one side and the average working union on the other side, and that's where we're sitting, Madam Speaker.

Another union representative in the plant, a worker in the plant, on the day of the demonstration a week ago last Friday - that was the day after certification - one of the people representing UFCW came into the coffee area as the rest of the workers were outside picketing and said, "Fire the bastards." Now, Madam Speaker, that hardly strikes me as a good way to represent workers and to look after their needs by asking that they be fired. It doesn't make much sense to me, and maybe that's one of the reasons that most of the workers there don't want that union because they are afraid of the future.

This letter, Madam Speaker, is from the in-plant union, and it's to me:

"Here is the information as requested concerning the steps taken by Springhill Farms Employees Union."

I suggest the Minister of Labour stop chattering long enough to listen to this and he might get an idea, because he doesn't seem to have been listening the evening he met with those workers.

Madam Speaker, I understand the Honourable Member for Kildonan wants to know why the members signed the cards. Ask them, Madam Speaker. They claim that promises were made to them. They claim they were intimidated. So in defense of that, four workers representing UFCW had a press conference last Friday to say, "Oh, we've been intimidated, too."

Madam Speaker, if there are all these complaints of intimidation on both sides, why will that Minister not put the whole thing to a vote so that we know what the situation is? Why will he refuse the workers' request

to have this matter reviewed by another panel of the Labour Board? Why?

I think we know why, Madam Speaker, and we know it's because of the friendship between Mr. Zimmer and the Minister, and the friendship between Mr. Hudson and the Minister. I'm sure the Minister was helpful in helping those two gentlemen put on their press conference. Maybe the Minister can tell me that's not true. If it's not, I'll withdraw that. He sits silently, Madam Speaker.

The letter goes on: "We filed our first application for certification January 28, 1987. The people at the labour board took our application, checked through it and informed us that it was improperly prepared. We had neglected to fill in the constitution, the amount of the membership fees and the dues to be paid."

Technicalities, Madam Speaker, those were technicalities. There's a section of The Labour Act that says, "Technicalities should not prevent anyone from putting forward a bona fide application."

"Also we did not have signed, individual membership cards." Madam Speaker, what they had, being an inexperienced union, they had a petition. The rules call for cards to be signed. Is that not an understandable mistake? I'm sure you would agree with me, Madam Speaker, that is an understandable mistake by an inexperienced union, and I'm sure you'll also agree with me that in a democracy the people have a say, and in a democracy the people should have a right to a vote on an issue like this where there has been such misunderstanding.

The letter goes on, Madam Speaker: "Also we did not have signed, individual membership cards. We had the people sign on one sheet of paper. Our lawyer in Brandon had advised us on this application.

"The labour board instructed us that we had seven working days to file from the date that the UFCW had filed which was January 26/87.

"We took the constitution back to the people and had it accepted again. This time we had the people sign individual cards. We took the application back to the labour board, Wednesday, February 4/87. The people at the labour board said that this application looked to be in order."

Madam Speaker, not long after their application was thrown out and UFCW certified. The letter goes on:

"Included is a copy of the incorrect procedure of signing up that we had used. This was the second time that the people had signed up. The first membership applications were not signed individually and was therefore incorrect. You can see by the dates on this list that people had signed previous to the UFCW application for certification. This list indicates that we were working on our application for certification long before the date the UFCW applied for their certification.

"The UFCW claimed we were not a duly constituted union at the time they applied for certification, so therefore our application should not be considered.

"We feel that the board's ruling was unfair. Perhaps with your help we can persuade the minister of labour to intervene on our behalf."

Madam Speaker, that letter might have been signed by 140 people at the plant, but it was signed by the president and the secretary of the in-plant union.

Those were the same people, Madam Speaker, who demonstrated in Neepawa, the same people who

demonstrated on the steps of the Legislature. Members opposite were not to be seen that night, Madam Speaker. - (Interjection)- 140 out of 160. Those are the same people who had to demonstrate a third time in Neepawa, Madam Speaker, to get their right to have a vote on who should represent them.

Lord knows, Madam Speaker, the people of Manitoba have a right to vote. They have a right to vote on the government they have to look after their needs. Surely, in a workplace, the people there should have a right, also, to a vote.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. J. McCRAE: Madam Speaker, the Minister of Labour will only say what Wilf Hudson allows him to say. That's pretty clear around here.

The United Food and Commercial Workers Union is organizing at the Sooter Photo plant in Winnipeg. Just to get back to Springhill just for a moment, Madam Speaker.

There were 55 percent - and this will answer the Honourable Member for Kildonan's question - 55 percent of the workers at Springhill did sign UFCW cards. As many of them will tell you today, Madam Speaker, that was because they were misled and intimidated as to what would happen if they did or didn't. Eighty-two percent of the workers signed for the in-plant union, the Springhill Employees Union, Madam Speaker. So it is a confusing situation, I must admit.

The Minister of Labour, he won't admit that because his friends have signed up their 55 percent which is all that this Minister's labour law calls for. All that's ever been needed to clear the air is a vote. This Minister can order it; he's got the right to do it. The board can order it; the board has the right to do it. The board can reopen any matter that it wants to according to the law. It won't do it, Madam Speaker.

The Minister says, oh, it's shameful for me to say anything about the board. Well, I can say all I want about the Minister of Labour within parliamentary rules, Madam Speaker, and I will. I'll do my best to see that the workers of this province see the end of that Minister.

They're an oppressive group opposite, Madam Speaker. They're putting constraints on freedom in every kind of respect that I can imagine, and when it hits the working man and woman of this province, Manitoba, we have to say "enough" not only for the Minister of Labour but for everyone on that side who supports the Minister of Labour and who supports trampling on the rights of everyday average working men and women in this province.

There's something wrong with that. There's something wrong with a government that will continue to refuse to act to protect the rights of working people in this province. The people out there are very angry, at Springhill, Madam Speaker. They're very angry with this Minister, with this government, and the regime this government has put into place to deal with labour relations in this province.

The workers at Sooter Photo suffer from a similar situation, Madam Speaker. In that case, there's only one union. Guess which one, Madam Speaker? The United Food and Commercial Workers Union - Bruno

Zimmer again. The workers there claim they have been intimidated. They've been threatened, they claim. They want the board to conduct a vote in their workplace. The numbers are not the same, but I do know that of 130 or so workers or 140, 104 addressed a petition to me. Some of the members of the work force in this petition, I understand, are supportive of the UFCW. Some are not. That's fine. No one is against UFCW if the UFCW is going to operate properly. No one is against not having a union either.

The point is, Madam Speaker, the workers here also would like an opportunity to pass a judgment. I always take the example, Madam Speaker, of a door-to-door salesman. The Minister of Labour is also the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, and I think he would be in charge of legislation dealing with protection for consumers.

If I buy a vacuum cleaner at my door because somebody has pressured me into buying a vacuum cleaner and signing a cheque, and perhaps misrepresented how good that vacuum cleaner is, and I find the vacuum cleaner won't even pick up a few feathers, Madam Speaker, I want my money back. There's protection built into our consumer and corporate law that gives consumers protection from that. There's a cooling-off period. There's a time for people to change their minds.

And there's the other thing about a secret ballot. Nobody can intimidate when you're making a secret ballot. I'm sure there are people who claim they have been intimidated and threatened. They don't want to raise their hand and say, oh, I vote against the UFCW, Madam Speaker. They don't want to do that, because if that union is certified, there are going to be problems for those people ahead because they've been told there are going to be problems.

So I'm telling you, Madam Speaker, a secret vote does not lie, and the workers in those workplaces are entitled to have a say as to who should represent them.

The workers at Sooter sent this petition to me, which I presented to the Labour Board, and I hope the Labour Board will take note of it. These people have been led to believe that they're going to have fines levied against them, that they're going to be fired. They were told things like that, so they tell me, when it came time for organizing and signing the union cards. The petition says that they would like to opt out of the union and not be governed by union policies, such as paying dues and other monies which may cost \$500 or more a year.

Madam Speaker, these people are not wealthy people like the Minister of Labour and his friends. These are working people. If they don't want to put out \$20 or \$25 a month for union dues, for questionable benefit, well then why should they have to? At the very least, they should be entitled to vote as to whether that should be imposed on them.

They don't want to have their individual rights of dealing with their employer taken away from them. They think that's what will happen if the union takes over. They don't want to have fines levied against them. They want to know all the facts from both union and management, so that they can make an informed decision about what's best for their future. There's been lots of talk in the plant and out of the plant. There's been talk in this House, and there's been talk of interference on the part of elected representatives. I

still suggest that the Minister of Labour should, if he means those words, stand up and say them again and then say them outside, that I am committing unfair labour practices, Madam Speaker.

If that Minister will not lay a charge against me and every member on this side of the House, then that Minister should resign from his office. It's an irresponsible person indeed who goes around making statements like that. I don't expect much more from Wilf Hudson and Bruno Zimmer, but I expect more from a member of the Executive Council. If that's the way he is going to besmirch my reputation, then I want some satisfaction. Lay a charge and let's go on with it. Let's go down to the Labour Board and fight her out. Let's do that.

The Minister laughs, Madam Speaker. He thinks it's all right to make ugly accusations like that and to spread venom around about members of the Opposition who are elected to represent people in this province. The Minister certainly questions my motives. He should not be allowed to do that. Let him make a charge. If that Minister has the courage of his convictions, either lay a charge or resign.

COMMITTEE CHANGE

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Emerson has a committee change.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Yes please, Madam Speaker, if I might, because of the late change in the sitting, I'd like to make a committee change. I move, Economic Development: Enns for Ducharme; Derkach for Pankratz.

MATTER OF GRIEVANCE

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. S. ASHTON: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I rise on a grievance, a grievance, Madam Speaker, brought on by what I feel was one of the most incredible speeches I have seen made by a member of this Legislature, incredible because I think it shows truly how desperate the members of the Conservative party are when a member of the Conservative Party has the gall to get up in this Legislature and state that he speaks for working people and his party speaks for working people. Madam Speaker, the people of this province know better.

The people of this province know who those members opposite speak for. They've said so time and time again, Madam Speaker. It's for the rich; it's for big business, but it is not for working people. Come to my riding, Madam Speaker, where there are many working people, and talk to them about the Conservative Party. They will tell you where they feel the loyalties of the Conservative Party lay, and it's not with working people, Madam Speaker. (Interjection)- Madam Speaker, the Member for Brandon West had his opportunity to talk.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please.

The Honourable Member for Brandon West on a point of order.

MR. J. McCRAE: Yes, Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

When the honourable member makes comments in this House about me and other honourable members, I would ask him to withdraw any comments that this honourable member represents the rich and the powerful in this country. As a nine-year union man, Madam Speaker, as a worker for the Manitoba Government, I resent those comments.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

A dispute over the facts is not a point of order.

The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. S. ASHTON: The member may resent those comments but that is the fact of the history of the Conservative Party. If he speaks for working people, he's in the wrong party, Madam Speaker.

MR. G. DUCHARME: What union were you a member of?

MR. S. ASHTON: What union was I a member of, for the Member for Riel.

Madam Speaker, I went through two strikes. I was on strike when I was elected as a member of the Steelworkers Local 6166, and I'm proud of that. Madam Speaker, I'm proud of that, and I'm proud of a system that we've developed in this province that does protect the rights of working people to organize, to unionize, if they so decide, a system that has an impartial labour board which protects those rights. I'm proud of being in a province that does respect those rights. That is why I'm so concerned about what I'm hearing from members opposite.

We saw today, I think, an incredible attack on the integrity of the Labour Board. Does the Member for Brandon West not know, does the Member for Arthur not know what the Labour Board is, who is appointed to it, and how those appointments are made?

The Member for Brandon West, Madam Speaker, attempted by referring . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please.

Could we please conduct the business of the House in an orderly fashion.

MR. S. ASHTON: Madam Speaker, does the Member for Brandon West not know the full composition of the Labour Board? He read through, in typical selective fashion, some of the members of the Labour Board who do, Madam Speaker, happen to represent working people through their unions. Did he read the other members of the Labour Board and the business organizations that they represent? No, Madam Speaker. Did he make clear mention of the fact, Madam Speaker, that we had a Labour Board when they were in office with the same methods of representation that ensured that both labour and management would be represented? Did the Member for Brandon West mention that in debate? No, Madam Speaker, because he only wants to read into the record the kinds of personal attacks we've seen on members of unions

who serve their unions well, vicious personal attacks which I think have no place in this Legislature.

He's done the same thing, Madam Speaker . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon West on a point of order.

MR. J. McCRAE: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The honourable member is saying things that aren't so. I made no personal attacks. I named no names, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: A dispute over the fact is not a point of order.

MR. S. ASHTON: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Let's talk about the attack of the member opposite on first-contract legislation. Does he not understand the background of the first-contract legislation, Madam Speaker, legislation that was brought in to achieve first contracts without strikes? Is he not in favour of that, or would he prefer that those contracts were not settled through that legislation and that there would be long and costly strikes? Is that what he wants for the Province of Manitoba? If that is the case, let him say so. But let him not lead what I think is a very sneaky attack on a fine piece of legislation, because that is all we have seen from that member is sneaky attacks, Madam Speaker, of the type we saw in the first-contract legislation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, C. Santos, in the Chair.)

Let's compare the record in regard to working people. What happened between 1977 and 1981 in regard to the rights of working people in this province, in regard to the labour legislation, Workers Compensation, Workplace Safety and Health? Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, nothing happened, nothing happened whatsoever.

Let's talk about Workers Compensation. I remember full well in 1981, when I was first elected, the degree of frustration in regard to Workers Compensation in this province. Now what had the previous government done? Does anyone recall on that side the Lampe Report? Does anyone recall that? Well it appears, not too many. Some do. Does anyone recall how many of the recommendations of the Lampe Report the Conservatives implemented when they were in government?

A MEMBER: 46 out of 49.

MR. S. ASHTON: Try 2 out of 129 for the Member for Lakeside, 2 out of 129. What a sorry record! What were the two recommendations that they agreed to? The provision of long-distance telephones and the installation of a computer system. My God, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the working people of my riding were saying, thank God for the Conservatives. They've sure got their priorities straight - 2 out of 129.

When we came in, we immediately acted. The Minister of Cooperative Development, the Member for Churchill as Minister responsible for the Compensation Board, brought in the Cooper report, and we acted on 13 out of 15 of the recommendations that were made in response to some very serious charges that have been

made. Since then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we brought in a rehabilitation system, which did not exist when the Conservatives were in office. We acted on all 19 of the recommendations of the report that recommended the establishment of a rehabilitation system in this province. We've reacted time and time again. I'm sure I can state for the record that Conservative members of this House will react once again when the review on compensation that is currently being conducted and is currently being prepared is tabled, because I think we will once again act on behalf of working people in Manitoba.

You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think what typified the Conservative approach in regard to working people was the line of questioning that the Leader of the Opposition got into one day in this House on the Compensation Annual Report. I'm sure all members of this House will remember how he and the critic for Compensation, how they constantly harped on about the unfunded liability for rehabilitation which, as the Minister quite rightly pointed out, is something we're not ashamed of. That's something that's there for the benefit of working people.

But regardless of that, I recall the Leader of the Opposition's response to the Minister responsible for Compensation expressing his concern about injured workers and their families. What did he say, Mr. Deputy Speaker? He said, I'm not talking about injured workers. I'm talking about the deficit. That's what he said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that shows their priorities. When it comes to Compensation, where are their priorities? The injured worker? No, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Deficit, that's all they can think of - deficit, deficit, deficit. They can't even understand the difference when it's a deficit or an unfunded liability. Those are their priorities.

Let's talk about workplace safety and health. I remember from my days at Inco, I remember from talking to people who worked a lot longer at Inco than I had of some of the extreme concerns that existed about workplace safety and health. What happened, Mr. Deputy Speaker? What did the members opposite do when they were in government in 1977-81? Did they bring in changes to workplace, safety and health legislation? Not a chance, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It took the election of a New Democratic Party in government in 1981 to bring in comprehensive amendments to The Workplace Safety and Health Act that included such vital things as the right to refuse unsafe work. What priorities did those show? Once again, that the Tories were not concerned about working people. It was the New Democratic Party that was, not only concerned in words, but action as well.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if we compare the Conservative time in office to the NDP time in office, I think we can show, not in words, but in action the fact that it is only the New Democratic Party that has stood for working people, and it's only the New Democratic Party in this Legislature that has acted on the concerns of working people. The Member for Brandon West can talk all he wants, but no one is going to believe him, given that sorry record that his party has opposite.

Well let's talk, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a little further about what we see going on. What I see, for the Member for Brandon West, is I think echoed in the editorial that he was so sensitive about in the Brandon Sun.

A MEMBER: Why was he sensitive?

MR. S. ASHTON: Why was he sensitive? Well let's look at the headlines, "Stay in the Legislature." This is the Member for Brandon West's home newspaper, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It said, "Stay in the Legislature." It made reference to a meeting that had been held between Springhill farm workers and representatives of the UFCW. It made mention of the fact that the news media people should not have been there. It also said, another of the people who wouldn't have normally been inside those doors was a member of the Legislature.

I continue: "Jim McCrae, the Member for Brandon West, the Labour critic for the Progressive Conservative Opposition, also attended." But what did the Brandon Sun say about it? Well they said quite clearly that the Legislature is where Mr. McCrae should have stayed on Wednesday. "Mr. McCrae is making a mockery of his position as an elected MLA by physically going inside the hall in Neepawa and participating as if he had a direct stake in the battle."

I want to read it again at the suggestion of members here. "Mr. McCrae is making a mockery out of his position as an elected MLA by physically going inside the hall in Neepawa and participating to get a direct stake in the battle." That's what the Brandon Sun says, not what the Minister of Labour says, not what a member of this side of the Legislature says. That's the Brandon Sun.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is the problem. It is not a question, I think, as the member opposite tried to talk about with such great bluster about suggesting he was responsible for unfair labour practices. That's not for members of the Legislature to decide or suggest. That's a question that is decided by the Labour Board. But I think what it shows is how inappropriate his own activities are in this current situation.

Really what the member keeps talking about I think is quite ironic. He suggests that the Minister of Labour is taking sides in this dispute. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is the Member for Brandon West who is taking sides in this dispute, and I would suggest on a broad range of questions. And whose side is that member on? Not the workers, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but on the side of those who would see us go back 10 and 20 and 30 and 40 years in terms of labour legislation, in terms of rights for working people. It's the same type of philosophy we see in the right-to-work movement in the United States.

(Madam Speaker in the Chair.)

I wonder if any members on the other side of the Legislature, the Conservatives, would have the guts to say that's the type of philosophy that they support. I suspect that many of them do. What is the right-to-work group? -(Interjection)- democracy, says the Member for Morris. He thinks the right to work is something equated with democracy. Well the right to work -(Interjection)- liberty, freedom - is the most anti-worker development in the United States in 25 years. Here in the Province of Manitoba in this Legislature, we see their spokespeople. We see them, the Member for Morris, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. We see them stating quite clearly that they equate the right-to-work movement with democracy.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose on a point of order.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Would the member entertain a question when he has finished his remarks?

MR. S. ASHTON: I think it depends, Madam Speaker, on whether I have any time left. I've got a lot that I want to express on this particular matter. I think there's a lot that needs to be put on the record.

As I said, Madam Speaker, they're clearly talking today about supporting right-to-work legislation which takes away the very basis of the right to organize that has been accepted by a broad cross section of society for so many years. It fundamentally attacks the right to organize. Let it be clear on the record that the Member for Morris and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition are clearly in favour of that sort of approach here in Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, I take offence to the comments that the Member for Brandon West is making from his seat about preaching hatred. That member, Madam Speaker, got up on a vitriolic attack on unions and a number of individuals representing those unions for 40 minutes in this Legislature. It was then, Madam Speaker, followed by a five-minute harangue from members from their seats who could not contain themselves. If there is any hatred being spread, Madam Speaker, in this Legislature, it's not from me -(Interjection)- venom.

Well let's look at it, Madam Speaker. We've seen they are in favour of right-to-work legislation. What else would happen under a Conservative Government? What is their true agenda? First contract legislation, that would be gone clearly. They don't like that. The Labour Board, apparently the Member for Brandon West has objections to labour representatives being on the Labour Board. So what's he going to do? Take them all off? Have only the business half of the Labour Board? What happened to having a balanced Labour Board, Madam Speaker? What has happened to the idea of having a balanced Labour Board that has representation from both sides. Well apparently, that is not what the Member for Brandon West wants.

We hear, time and time again, him talking about specific incidents that have taken place, incidents that are before the Labour Board. I would like to know, Madam Speaker, what he is basing his assumptions on. Is he assuming that the working people who were involved in those disputes cannot express their concerns themselves? I think that's what he is doing and that's what I find particularly insulting.

I think the working people who are involved in those disputes have stated their views on both sides of the issue and will continue to do so. It's up to an impartial body, which the Labour Board is quite clearly for anyone who understands how it's appointed. I think it's then up to the Labour Board to decide, and I think it's highly irregular for a member of the Legislature to try and insert himself in the middle of that.

You know, the Member for Brandon West tries to talk about taking sides, as if the Minister of Labour was taking sides on the dispute within Manitoba. He keeps making reference to the Eaton's credit card incident.

I, quite frankly, agree totally with the Member for St. James, the Minister of Labour, when he did tear up

his Eaton's card. I did that during that dispute. I did that because I supported the workers who were on strike in Ontario; and I think the Minister of Labour had every right to make his own personal statement in that regard. It was not an item that was within his jurisdiction. It was not an item that was within his jurisdiction at all.

A MEMBER: And he says he supports workers.

MR. S. ASHTON: And this is the same member opposite who talks about freedom in this House, freedom, and yet he tries to muzzle the Minister of Labour in expressing his view.

Well as I said, Madam Speaker, I take offence to this concerted attack that we're seeing on working people, the suggestion that somehow unions do not represent working people. What nonsense, Madam Speaker.

Does the Member for Brandon West not know how unions are certified? Does the Member for Brandon West not know the number of criteria that have to be met before a bargaining group can be certified? Does the Member for Brandon West not know that those principles that were established in that legislation have been accepted by consecutive governments, including Conservative governments, for many years? Is he now suggesting that we turn that back? Is that also on his agenda? Is that also on his agenda, Madam Speaker?

He talks about labour legislation being slanted in favour of labour. What would he change? What would he change, Madam Speaker?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon West on a point of order.

MR. J. McCRAE: Madam Speaker, I wonder if the honourable member would entertain a question.

MR. S. ASHTON: I believe I already answered that question for the Member for Ste. Rose. I will continue despite the continuous efforts to interrupt me by members opposite who apparently do not like what I have to say.

But I want to say, Madam Speaker, I want the member opposite, if he feels that the present legislation is biased, I want him to say what provisions of the legislation are biased. I want him to say what he would change. We've seen a number of members of his caucus talk about so-called right-to-work legislation as being on their agenda. Is that on his agenda as well? What would he change?

You know, it's very easy for the member opposite to get up and make headlines on this type of an issue, to insert himself in a very sensitive labour matter and, Madam Speaker, I, as someone who has been through two strikes - I went through a strike before I was elected to this Legislature and know some of the psychology that can develop in a labour dispute - I want to say that I wholeheartedly believe in the system that we've established, the Labour Board system.

I believe that it's important to have mechanisms to resolve disputes without the kind of agitation that we've seen from members opposite because that does nothing to assist the situation.

You know, when I was first elected, the first thing I did as a member of the Legislature, in fact even before

I was officially a member of the Legislature, was to contact INCO and steelworkers in Thompson to see if there was any way in which we could get discussions resumed to resolve the strike situation. I want you to know that I'd gone from being on the picket lines to trying to talk to both sides; and the then Minister of Labour, the present Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology, did follow up on that and met both with INCO and representatives of the steel workers and that strike was resolved very shortly thereafter.

I say that, Madam Speaker, because I believe that there has to be a proper system of resolving disputes, not the kind of agitation that we're seeing from the Member for Brandon West. That serves no reason whatsoever. What we need is a system in place that will resolve disputes such as this, and that is what the Labour Board does.

That's what our legislation does in regard to collective bargaining. There are very stringent requirements on both sides, on behalf of the union and on behalf of management, Madam Speaker, as to what is fair labour practice, what is unfair labour practice, how much support a union needs to be certified, voting procedures. I think it's a system that's served us well.

So what is the Member for Brandon West and his Conservative colleagues, what are they placing on the agenda? What is their real agenda, Madam Speaker? We'll look at it. Look at it.

We see today the same sort of tactic that we've seen so many times from members opposite. I've seen it in my own constituency. They conveniently ignore their past record and they conveniently ignore the statements by the Member for Morris and Deputy Leader, which are clearly not in the interests of working people, which are clearly on the sides of those in management that would like to prevent unions from being organized, and there are unfortunately some, although not all. I think some people in management are quite open to unions and to collective bargaining and I think that's positive. We've seen that.

We've seen the true agenda of the Conservative Party, and I think we're going to see it again and again as the next few months come up. We're seeing it on compensation. We're seeing clearly that the members opposite are concerned not about the compensation system and injured workers. We've seen that from their actions in government when they artificially kept premiums down and prevented workers getting the kind of compensation that they required when there was no rehabilitation system, when there were terrible abuses taking place in the Compensation Board as were documented by the Cooper Report. We've seen their past record.

But it's continuing today, and that is why I find it particularly galling, to the Member for Brandon West who talked about the interests of working people, when here is an issue which clearly addresses the concerns of working people - compensation. Where was he when his leader, the Leader of the Opposition, was so clearly putting himself on the side of reducing what he calls the deficit in compensation? Reducing the deficit instead of standing up to the injured workers and their families and addressing their real needs, Madam Speaker. He was nowhere.

So we know where they stood. We know where they're standing, but we keep getting about weekly, I think, new indications of where they would go.

The Member for Portage, in debate on free trade, talked about, oh well, the real reason the New Democrats are against free trade is that somehow society here might follow the society in the United States where there's been less and less unionization and how he criticized that.

Does that mean that he wants that society established here? Is that what he wants? Pure, pure unions? If that's the case, let him say so directly. It was certainly the statement in his speech on free trade. Is that the real agenda of the Conservative Party? Is he only one member who's saying that? Where does the Leader of the Opposition stand on that? Is he in favour of workers having the right to organize collectively under the fair principles that we've established?

Well, a member on this opposite side suggests no. I think there's no evidence to argue to the contrary. I think there's every indication that the members opposite would restrict the right of workers to organize. Let them stand up over the next few years and put their agenda clearly on the record. And if they can somehow explain how tearing apart the Labour Board, an impartial body, which it clearly is, that helps working people, I am waiting to hear it, Madam Speaker.

If they can explain how ignoring the needs of injured workers for four years when they're in government and then opposing now methods that have been put in place to deal with those needs through compensation, if they can say how that helps working people, well, let's hear it right now.

If they can say how ignoring the needs in terms of workplace safety and health, Madam Speaker, for four years, and then waiting for an NDP Government to introduce changes to workplace safety and health, if they can explain how that helps working people, I want to hear it right now.

If they can say to me how their statements about unions and officials who have been elected by the unions that are democratic bodies that represent the workers in the plants of which they're certified, how they somehow do not speak for workers.

When they were elected democratically in an election, just as those members opposite were, if they could suggest how changing that system, not having those representatives somehow is in the interests of working people, I am waiting to hear it.

But you know, Madam Speaker, I know that they don't have any answers to those question I've raised. It's all rhetoric as the Member for The Pas mentions. And you know, we've heard this rhetoric for years and years and years and years. I've been hearing it in my constituency in Thompson for years.

The Conservatives, every election, they try and say, oh, we're on your side, too. We're in favour of the rights of working people.

MR. J. McCRAE: Of course, we are.

MR. S. ASHTON: But when they're in government - "Of course, we are," says the Member for Brandon West. When they're in government, on issue after issue, they ignore the plight of working people and in fact go further, as would those who support the right-to-work legislation, and go totally against the rights of working people in this country.

That is why they've never had any credibility with the working people of this country; that is why, at the present time, they have no credibility with the working people of this country; and that is why, in the future, they will continue to have no credibility with the working people of this country.

The working people of this country will not be fooled by the rhetoric of members of the Legislature of the like of Brandon West, who wants to impose himself on labour disputes wherever he can in this province to gain publicity for his own personal views and the views of his party on labour relations, which I suggest are not in favour of the interests of working people, are totally against the interests of working people.

They won't be fooled by that, Madam Speaker. They know where their party stands. The Conservatives, historically and today, are not supporting the interests of working people. Only the New Democratic Party has historically and only the New Democratic Party will continue to do so in the future.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Is the member prepared to answer a question at this point?

Can he make it very clear how he can say it is undemocratic for the majority of the workers to be opposed to the union that is being foisted upon them and not have the right to have a vote?

MR. S. ASHTON: I think, Madam Speaker, the member is alluding to a specific situation, the Springhill situation.

I want to say that unlike the Member for Brandon West, I will not involve myself in the details of that dispute. I believe cards were signed for the UFCW; there were workers who were suggesting that is no longer a valid representation of the interests of workers. That's what we have Labour Boards for, impartial Labour Boards, to decide questions such as that. We don't need those discussions in this Legislature. That's not fair to anyone, including the workers in that plant.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon West with a question?

MR. J. McCRAE: Yes, does the honourable member have a little more time left, Madam Speaker?

MADAM SPEAKER: Yes, the honourable member has more time.

MR. J. McCRAE: Good.

Madam Speaker, the Honourable Member for Thompson spoke in glowing terms about the first-contract legislation, about the fact that freedom of speech is denied in our Manitoba Labour Relations Act, about the fact that our certification and decertification provisions are second to none, and about the successor rights provisions being very good for workers in this province.

Now, Madam Speaker, the Labour Management Review Committee has been set up to review legislation that comes forward, and that committee is charged

with the responsibility of passing judgment on legislation that comes to this House.

Have those provisions received the approval of the Labour Management Review Committee?

MR. S. ASHTON: Madam Speaker, a number of those items would predate the process that was set up in terms of that. Many of those items have been in the case, in terms of labour legislation in Canada, for nearly 30 and 40 years, so I don't know what the member is referring to.

If he is somehow suggesting that the approval of that body should be required for all legislation that goes ahead, I think he would find that there would be no legislation whatsoever on either side. Governments have to make those decisions.

But I think in matters regarding certification, which is the matter I was referring to in the previous question, that is best dealt with by the Labour Board, outside of the political arena, outside of partisan politics, outside of grandstanding, in an unbiased forum with labour and management representatives who can deal with the facts and be fair to all sides, including both management and the workers.

So as I said, in the answer to the previous question from the Member for Ste. Rose, that's where disputes such as this lie, with the Labour Board.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the Honourable Member for Burrows in the Chair for the Department of Agriculture, and the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet in the Chair for the Department of Health.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY - HEALTH

MR. CHAIRMAN, C. Baker: Committee, come to order.
The Member for River Heights.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I might just ask a question which is not on this line, but we'll be on it later on, just for clarification.

I'll give this to the Minister. This is information that the Research and Planning Directorate have put out. It's November 1985; it's on . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sorry, Don. Did you want to give it to him?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I'm just reading it now.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I just want to ask if this information could be updated for the committee. The last year is 1984-85. It's on Mental Health Services in Manitoba. If that could be updated prior to us getting into the Mental Health line, it would facilitate debate.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister? His answer is yes.
The Member for River Heights.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask some very specific questions about the Manitoba Continuing Care services available in Manitoba.

As I understand, there are three basic types of workers. There are those who perform an orderly service; those who perform what we could call a homemaking service, which would include cleaning tasks or cooking tasks; and those who provide attendance services, which may include the feeding or basic caring for individuals, such as toileting.

Are those basically the three categories of services offered?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Well, actually, we have the following: home care attendance, home care orderly service, home support workers, licensed practical nurses, registered nurses, resource coordination, training, overnight workers, daily workers, Fokus in The Pas, service coordination and others.

Transportation, that's the same. Of course, there's the Victoria Order of Nurses that we have an agreement with, a contract with, and then there are some therapists. I guess that's about it.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: What are the major centres from where the home care work takes place? For example, I know that there's a major home care centre at the Health Sciences Centre. But does that look after all of Winnipeg or does each hospital have its own home care system?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Of course, you know we have the regional districts and each district has its own, and each hospital also.

We would like to try to see if we can coordinate that also, but it is up to the region and more and more working with the hospitals to try to deinstitutionalize but making sure that there's home care in there.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Of the 29,000 Manitobans who, it's estimated, will receive care, what is the rural-urban mix of that?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: All right, this isn't bad. I've got February '87, actual. There's the rural regions - 6,300, and the Winnipeg total - 10,295, for a total of 16,995. That's the one month of February.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: One of the complaints that I, as an MLA, have received from a number of sources, and I know the Minister has received the same kind of complaint, and that comes from the individuals who perhaps are best described as those who will require home care over a very extended period of time as opposed to those who require it for a week or 10 days following their release from hospital, and that is the need for an appeal procedure whereby instead of taking their complaints to the deliverer of the service, they could in fact take their complaints to an independent board who would evaluate whether they had a justifiable complaint or not.

I know the Minister has turned down that request. Why is the department reluctant to provide these individuals with that kind of an appeal procedure?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: We have suggested and we have accepted an advisory committee, and also we would certainly look favorably, I suppose, if there was an appeal to the Minister or something, if need be, in certain cases.

But we're afraid - I'm being very candid on that. I'm very much afraid of having an independent assessor to say this is what you must have. Then you're going to have more of that. More and more the people want that, I think, since we've had the human rights and so on. They were talking about that in The Mental Health Act also, to say this is what a person is entitled to get. But can you see the danger of that?

Also, we've got the judges running the show now, not the Legislature, and the next time is you are going to have somebody outside who has no responsibility for providing the funds and no one who will decide at what level. In practice, I think it would be terrific, but it would come back to haunt us. They would go to court, we would be in court all the time, and it would be very, very difficult.

I'm ready to explore that with them. We said, well, let's try the voluntary advisory committee and work with you, and they were talking about this was a certain group, like you were saying, mostly the physically handicapped who will be like that for the rest of their lives and they were talking about being on this committee themselves.

You know, when the consumers decide themselves on the appeal, if there is an awful lot of money, it might be great, but then there is the other side of it, and frankly I'm worried that we wouldn't catch up. You know, there seems to be kind of a direction in that. We saw the report that the Minister of Community Services brought in and they suggested so much money. I had the Pascoe Report a few years ago on mental health and everybody was fine, except that Pascoe was talking about \$5 million a year for so many years, and that's very difficult. That's the main reason, rightly or wrongly.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: I think there is a difference between the type of procedure that I would see as valid and the type of thing that you're concerned about, and that is that I would agree with you completely that you can't have the client determining the level of service that client gets. I mean, that's not an appropriate thing, any more than the individual who appeals a UIC judgment has the right to decide what level of service they're going to get from the Unemployment Insurance.

But what they do have is the right to appeal as to whether the judgment has been correctly made with regard to the level of service. In other words, these are the service guidelines, and I don't think that I have been correctly evaluated according to those service guidelines. They haven't the right to change the guidelines and that, it would seem to me, would be an appropriate place for some of the complaints that have been raised with me by a number of individuals about poor orderly care or about the lack of availability of orderlies or the lack or availability of attendants or, one case that I know you're very familiar with in terms of somebody actually having her home, she feels, broken into. That kind of complaint I don't think should go to those individuals to judge, but I think that there is legitimate room here for a group who are not civil

servants and who are not delivering the service either who can say this individual has not received the kind of treatment that we're capable of providing.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: But could you not achieve that by having an advisory committee to do exactly that, a fair advisory committee, but then not take away the responsibility from the elected representative? Because that in itself, we have to accept some of the responsibilities and we can be turfed out of office. But we're the ones who have to raise the funds also. In years like what we're going through now, if you had that in all areas in the schools and, you know, then I would imagine that you could, if you carried that on through all the departments, that would be a great way probably to achieve what I've been trying for a long time to make sure that there is aid to private schools, but you take that away from the politicians. I don't know, and it should be the ones who raise the funds who have that responsibility.

I certainly would be ready to go with an advisory committee. Then in most instances, I certainly would try to go ahead with that decision voluntarily, but at least it's not that added thing that they can take me to court everyday on this, and they're not getting enough. It's the same thing if you put something in the act that a person is entitled to this.

You can do the same thing about Medicare, you can do the same thing about everything else and, if you feel that one time if you haven't got the funds or something, fine, and then it becomes a decision from that board who decides yes, the way you explain it, that yes, they're entitled to three hours, not two hours of orderly service.

So that's the concern that I have.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: As the Minister may be aware, there are a number of hospitals in the United States, and I grant you, private hospitals who do have an individual and sometimes a board or group on staff to whom a patient can in fact go to, to act as an arbitrator, if you will, on their behalf.

In other words, they represent the patients as opposed to the doctors and the medical staff who have a tendency of thinking that they're fully in control and the patient would like to think occasionally that they are in control. That is more of the type of thing that I am thinking of here, that we are dealing with individuals, some of whom are dependent on a daily basis, some on an hourly basis, for care. Some of their complaints are probably totally unjustified. In fact, I've heard more than my fair share of unjustified ones.

Some of them are perhaps legitimate, and I don't get the sense that these people, because of the pressure of delivering the service, that they often get a fair hearing on the human side of their complaints, and that is the kind of focus that I see as this group being able to provide.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I see that going a long way to rectify that if we had, and we've offered that, an advisory committee - a committee that would - you know, just go as far as you can without saying, here, you're going to give them three hours instead of two; this is what we recommend. I would think that in most instances, it would be taken very seriously.

By the way, you can just imagine what my deficit would have been if we had that, if you think it's bad now.

I think that we can achieve that with an advisory committee and then there's the Ombudsman who looks into some of those cases. Maybe the Ombudsman should be enlarged. We're talking about looking after the battered women and the child abuse and soon there'll be the abuse for the elderly and so on. It might be that, but I don't see where it can be done without an advisory committee or a representative of the government and accept the responsibility without having the control to somebody else who doesn't have any worries about raising the funds, doesn't have the worry of prioritizing within the department to start with. Then with all government, and you know everybody has looked, this would be fine and this is what you should have. It would be great on paper. I can't find any arguments against it, but I don't think it would work and I think that we would be in litigation constantly.

We could look at that again but we're ready. Why don't we start with some kind of an advisory committee that would look, independent people who would say, here's our feeling on it? Maybe we could improve the situation with that.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: How many individuals are presently employed to provide home care assistance all the way from attendants to R.N.'s?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The attendants actually - I don't know if I heard you correctly - delivering the service or the assessment also?

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Delivering.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Okay, we have the actual of the project - what do you want? I'll give you project '87-88. Home support workers, 1,734; registered nurses, 297.

MR. D. ORCHARD: How many home support workers again, Sir?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: 1,734; registered nurses, 297; LPN's, 1,494; home care attendants, therapists, 38; volunteers, 920, for a total of 4,633.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Do the home support workers also include the orderlies?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Home care attendants.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: What kind of attrition rate is there in this type of employment? I would suspect it would probably be less with the LPN's and the R.N.'s.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: It would be more, the home support workers, I would imagine, and the volunteers maybe. I'm sure that would be hiring the home support workers.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: I would suspect so, because of lack of skill level required for that particular . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: And that would be retired or older people. It's just to be with the people at night to make sure that everything is all right.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Is there a difficulty in hiring home support workers because of the salary scale?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Well, everything was going fine at one time. You see, I guess this is progress, but it adds to the cost. At one time everything was fine. A lot of people would pick up a few dollars. They were either retired or housewives, or whatever, and there's talk now about unionizing and also there are people who have gone to the Labour Board and there was a decision of the Labour Board and we've had to increase that to be accepted by the Labour Board and we did that.

But now the concern is that these people might unionize and that's going to be very, very difficult because of the situation. Some might stay and sleep there - while they're sleeping and so on. I'm very concerned about that. It's going to be very difficult, and you're not just going to have people who want a few dollars or even company and so on. Then it becomes a very expensive program.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: This may be data that's very difficult to obtain, but is there any indication of how many hospital days have been saved as a result of home care assistance?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: All right, I can give you this. The number admitted to the program, the equivalent level of care would have been - now, people would have been in personal care homes, we were at 23 percent in 1984-85, and it's gone up steadily; it's 31 percent projected in 1987-88. That means that, if we didn't have home care, 31 percent of the people at home care would have to be in a personal care home.

The hospitals, acute or extended, that has increased also and it's 43 percent in 1984-85; it is now 47 percent. Other facilities, I've got 1 percent and no facility equivalent, that's 21 percent. Those might be people who would be at home without proper care probably.

I've got here that 5,480 of the people admitted to home care in 1986-87 would otherwise have been in a hospital if the home care program had not been able to accommodate them. This provided of course for some an earlier discharge from hospitals; for others, prevented hospital admissions.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Mr. Chairman, I'm very supportive of this program because I think that what the Minister has just shown is that he can in fact cut down 5,480 patient days, presumably, because of the service that is being delivered, which is being delivered at in fact less cost than would be delivered if that individual was in the hospital, have we seen a corresponding quid pro quo with the hospitals in their cutting back beds to match the 5,480 days saved by Continuing Care Services?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: This is very hard to say. We haven't seen that yet. That's what we're looking at now. That's what we're looking at when we're talking about people who want a - I can't pronounce that word for love or money - lithotripsy (phonetic). In other words, the people are saying well, you don't have to operate, you don't have to put the people in the hospital. You

just go right through on day surgery and then they're out of the hospital, and we can save beds. And the only way you're going to save anything is if you close the equivalent of beds that you use for these people.

But there are two ways. Closing beds is the next step, but I think that we've shown that if we had not done any of this, we would have had to build more beds. You understand what I mean? So that is a saving of beds in itself. It's beds that we normally, without this, we would have had to build. Now the next step is can we - and that's what we're looking at - can we close certain beds either permanently or for a certain time? That depends not only on this program but very much this program and other programs.

There is no doubt; I know full well - no, I'll leave that. It's another Minister's, so I better not get involved and cause any problems for anybody.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: When you were involved in negotiations with hospitals - and I know this is also into the Health Services Commission, but it bears, I think, in this particular area - and you make more home care services available through Continuing Care, do you at the same time negotiate with that hospital with regard to the closure of X number of beds to equal or become equivalent to the new service level being provided?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I don't think I've done too much of this yet because, you know, as I say, it was a program with growing pains and it was improvement on it, but more and more we will have to do that. I think we will have to do that if we talked about the possibility of these community clinics like I was saying with nurses providing primary care.

And then also, I visualize the possibility, especially if we don't encourage the provision of more community clinics, the home care could even have teams of nurses and teams of doctors who would then actually do home care. It might be that you're better off to see a doctor once a day that could make rounds of certain people. That still would be an awful lot cheaper than being in the institution. Not only that, the patient might prefer that much more than being institutionalized.

We're trying to coordinate that also, and I think I said that before. At one time the feeling was divided. In fact, they were talking about a minister of institutional care and a minister of community care. I figure, well, one better be very strong and the other weak because all hell would break loose and they'd be fighting for the same dollar.

So what we're trying to do is involve the hospitals, and that's the only way if they accept responsibility and the possibility of maybe working in the hospital where the same group in the community, maybe some kind of an umbrella group, would have the responsibility for all services in that community. Therefore, you know, if they could save on something, there would be an inclination to do that, whereas if you're just responsible for the hospital and nothing else, you don't care, it doesn't matter about home care. So I think you're going to see more of that.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: In 1986-87, we, as a government, in the general sense, voted \$23.8 million for home care

assistance. In fact, the department spent \$32.8 million in home care. This year, the government is budgeting for \$33.5 million for home care.

What is the guarantee, if any, that we are not in fact going to spend \$45 million on home care this year?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I'd be dreaming and I'd be absolutely wrong and I'd have egg all over my face if I said that I can guarantee that, especially if you encourage us to provide the leadership, to make some of these changes, and some of these things come in, we don't say, well that's not in there.

There's no doubt, and I accept that we've got to tighten up and have better records and have a better idea of what's going on. As the changes come in, as we change the policy and so on, I think that will happen.

Now I should explain this at this time; I don't know if I have in the past. We have in the deficit that's in the hospitals are stated in my base, and we are saying to the hospitals, let's work together to try to reduce, to go back, or go, because it's not go back but they've never had that, but no deficit funding in two years. Let's do it in an orderly fashion too and if it has to be stretched to be done. But, as we do that, I will have that money to move in the other direction to provide the service and quite a bit of that. Like this year, if it's on target - I don't want to make a commitment - this time it could be \$4.5 million that could be added to home care or to other programs such as that. So it gives us flexibility.

I've asked for this flexibility exactly because of that because we don't know. There could be so many changes. Of course, this is mostly salary, so people working at an increase, if the Labour Board says that's it and if the minimum wage is increased or whatever, and that court decision could change quite a bit. So that would give us a chance to move, in other words, to provide services in the community that would help us again to deinstitutionalize as much as possible.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Mr. Chairman, I find it difficult to justify an increase of really about 2 percent on this budget. When it was 38 percent over what was budgeted last year, why would you come up with a figure of \$33.5 million for home care assistance and put it in the budget Estimates when last year you overspent by 38 percent? Don't you take that into consideration and put that into the mix and say give me another 38 percent?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: That's too easy. I wish I could.

No, it's a guess; there is no doubt. See, normally, you wouldn't be all exercised over this because you wouldn't have had all this information. You'd get it if I'd give it to you, but for years and years we looked at print over print and it would be perfectly acceptable to say you need more. Then, of course, somebody would say, well, did you spend it all or did you overspend? I'm not saying you could not get the information. But now all of a sudden it looks like it's something unusual.

It's the same thing with the hospitals. We always finance it in a way that we look at the deficit. Automatically, we knew that they were going to have some deficits, and I say that I'll be the most surprised person in the world if there's no deficit. Now that's not an official statement of the government - it's mine, with the experience that I have in that.

I guess they're trying to get an even, you know, something, a fair amount. It might be with the understanding that we could be in a deficit in a program like that, the same as the hospitals.

Now, the fact is when we say, well, you didn't really spend that much money. If you're saying about what overspent - actually spent last year what you're asking for, fine, there's not that much increase. But this was something that during the year we certainly spent more than we had last year. It's somewhere around the line. We are giving more service but instead of waiting till we vote this, we did it without - you might say - without the approval, or something, the year before.

I think the ideal thing, you know, and you know how government works. They're not going to pad the deficit, so I didn't say anything else. I said they're not going to pad the deficit. So the situation is that they're not taking consideration, we're making that quite clear, not consideration of any increase in wages and salary and the rest is, you know, you don't know it. Guess it might be, I don't think it will.

And as I say there's that \$4.5 million that could go, we could go in that direction. You know, if I'm saying that we've got to cut down and therefore we've got to do service that will be just as good if not better, but with less money, that is why we are forced pretty well to make sure, and we have to insist that we have good administration. If you're going to criticize me for overspending, certainly you can't have it both ways and then tell me, criticize me again for getting after the hospitals and say, you people be responsible.

I was told that I should fire everybody unless - well, I'm looking at the hospital and I'm saying, all right, stay within your budget. But then I'm told today in the House, well, you're cutting. I'm not cutting, I'm not giving them any more money. In fact, we are. So that is what we're trying to do and they're saying, well all right if you want money, there can't be a bottomless barrel. You've got to get your money from the institution, but it takes time.

And I say, you're going to have deficits and it's going to be very difficult, especially the first few years and that's where I feel that the Federal Government should feel that they have an obligation. If they cut down on that, I don't quarrel with them. I don't agree with them but that's their right. They're saying okay, they don't want any deficit, the same as I'm talking of the hospitals. But I think with the money and the changes that they've made, and after the commitment they've made, they should help us to get this hump money, or this money for the transition. The Minister of Health has agreed to meet with me fairly soon. We've talked about that; they've talked about that and he's given me encouragement, but so far no bucks and I hope can change that.

But we will need, and it's going to be very difficult, we will need money for the transition and that's why I said today and I hope and I'm going to do everything possible to make sure that we do these things in an orderly way. But I've got to aim at closing beds. It's not popular but then we've got to provide the service.

But why shouldn't we close beds? If we needed so many beds to have a kidney stone removed, now if we can do it by the people coming in and walking out at night, well, if you just say, okay, buy this machine, buy this equipment and you don't need the beds, and if

you leave the beds there, well, they're going to be filled by something else, and that's what is building up and building up and sending us away up in the sky that we can't keep up with.

But no, if I'm going to be honest with you, we're going to have a deficit next year. I hope I'm wrong, but on the home care I hope it's a small one.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: The Minister raised transitional funding and there's no question, I don't think, that if we are going to move into new programs for health care, we are going to need very large amounts of transitional funding, because you can't move to a community-based model and away from an acute care model without that up-front money which makes that possible.

Is the Minister negotiating with the Minister responsible for Lotteries, to find some of that transitional money in the Lotteries Foundation?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Well, actually this is happening now. If the government had decided, all right, in so many years, I don't know, five years they're talking about, there will be no more deficit financing.

The Gross National Product of that, with the revenue that we would have and if they said, all right, no deficit in five years, and if we were going to decide that we would keep then just go by the increase in the Gross National Product which would be, I think it's 4.7, I'm not too sure exactly what it is, well, to give you an example what we'd have to do: if we keep on in what we want now, what we think we need to keep on very modestly what we're doing now and then cutting down quite a bit, I'd need a little over 10 percent, about 10 percent, like this here.

So that means that I'd have all the 4.5 percent except half of one percent for all the other departments. Do you understand what I'm saying? In other words, just to give you an idea. And if they said, well, no, you can't have that, you're going to be like everybody else; therefore, you can have only 4.7 percent, or 4.5 whatever it is.

Well, then I would have the equivalent of closing and letting all the staff go in a hospital the size of Victoria Hospital, just to give you an idea what we'd have to do and that's just what we're doing now.

Now if we're going to change, eventually that will stop, or at least we'll plateau or it'll be cheaper than how we're going now. But for that, like you say and like everybody agrees, we would need some money in the transition.

Now I said that in a way we're doing that with Lotteries because we begged and made the same point that I'm making now to my colleagues in Cabinet, they said all right, which normally I wouldn't have had and because of the deficit and because of the taxes to look at, so they put in \$7 million that we got from Lotteries that goes in the Consolidated Fund, and that is part of my \$120 million increase.

So in a roundabout way it would be very very difficult to use that money because the Lottery was introduced first for one year with the understanding put in the Act that it would go for sports, culture and fitness; and that was done for a number of years and it's very hard to take anything away from people. Then when we

reformed the Lottery, when we had the Act that made the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation, I guess, the Act would permit us to put the money in the Consolidated Fund, like some provinces have made.

There's no doubt that the money is doing some work. A lot of people feel that you don't get it and get casino every day and have this kind to pay for health. You know, there is still that feeling - maybe not as bad as it was a few years ago but that's it. They feel that any of these programs you shouldn't use Lotteries, you should use taxes for that.

Now we have done - I won't hide the fact - that as much as possible we've tried to do that because there's been so much revenue coming in, 'way more than anybody had dreamed. We did certainly that if nothing else - it was a success when we said we'll try to maximize the profit without increasing days and that so far.

So the situation is that first of all, I had 750 - did you see this year - 750 or 700-and-something in medical research, but now they said, okay, we take that out of there and you find it in Lotteries. That's not part of that \$7 million that I was talking of borrowing \$9 million, so at least we gave that.

Then you will notice that the line under Sport, that has been transferred. So we're taking that out of that, that we would have to pay for that. Now there's a lot of other things that are being done. We're capping pretty well the same. Okay, that's the maximum; now, it won't keep on forever. That is capped and that money will go to the Consolidated Fund, and that's part of the \$7 million.

Now I don't know what's going to happen in the future. That is being talked about. But remember that there's a lot of people that are planning on this, that you might have to put in the tax before because for years when we had the Lotteries, when I was Minister responsible for Tourism, Recreation, Fitness and Sports, more and more they were saying, oh, send that to the Lotteries. They did the same thing in Culture. So there's a lot of things that had we not had the Lotteries would have to be paid in the line department of Recreation, Fitness, Sports and Culture.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: One of the difficulties that I foresee by taking \$7 million and putting it into general revenues is that it doesn't get targeted for the very kinds of transitional programs that I think you need.

For example, I see taking Lotteries revenues and targeting it where the start-up costs for a day care program for senior citizens, which is a continuing care service that may well need to be done. I know you've already got some going, but you'll probably need more.

What I'm concerned about is that if you put it in consolidated revenues, it gets frittered away into day-to-day service as opposed to that new kind of programming which will require a large chunk of money to begin; and then in fact may trail off in terms of the program money which is required.

The program money should indeed come from the general revenues. That start-up money, that one-time money, I'd like to see more focus placed on that kind of transitional funding.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I guess actually this is being done now with a book entry, if we are sincere, and I

can tell you this year it was very much that. I wanted so much money considering all that, the money that we needed, well I wanted much more than that, of course, but had they not had this money because they would have had to raise the taxes for \$7 million more, and they would have also either that or go in a deficit, and they said all right, and they gave me that \$7 million.

Now, it might be that eventually it might be meaningless. I think I know what you mean and that could be done. I think that we have looked at that, the possibility, and said all right, but earmark it, do like what we did, shift things like we did before on the question of medical research and so on. Do you understand? So it could be that maybe this will come one of these days, but this year with having to be in a position to keep some of these programs and we made that decision that other provinces haven't made, and we said all right, but that means that we will go with a deficit higher than we would like to and we'll have to raise taxes more than we would like to.

So I know, because I was in Cabinet, I know they said, all right, we'll give you this money but we'll have to put some money in the Treasury. Now you were saying that they should have said, okay, the Treasury, but this is earmarked for this and that.

But we hope and I certainly think, and I'm going to keep pressing, that that money that we needed for that has to come from the Federal Government. The Federal Government, in fact we were partners in this thing and they created that and that's the name of the game to try to give kind of an equal uniform service pretty well all across Canada, although it's a responsibility of the provinces.

I don't question the Federal Government who made the decision, you know, we've got a deficit, they're cutting our program. But they are also encouraging and saying you've got to keep this room, you've got to do this. They brought in this new resolution that I don't think they had any business doing that, it's the one that pays the finances. They're not giving you this money but it's costing them billions of dollars that they're going to save, not save, but they're cutting, but they are not giving the same percentage.

I think on that, because it would be a one-shot deal, they did that - probably it was the wrong thing to do - they did that, a special fund years ago to encourage us to build beds, acute beds, and now we're trying to close some of those beds. But if they did that, a certain amount of money for that, I think they have a responsibility to help us in that condition because the provinces don't know what to do. Some of them are trying to get the same thing.

Some are saying okay, you're going to bring utilization fees, you're going to do that, but we're not interested in that too much because that is just shifting, it's not reducing the cost of medical care, it is shifting the responsibility to somebody else. In other words, it's no longer insured, you pay it. And we're saying that the first thing - and I'm not saying that shouldn't be looked at - you can't pay for everything, but the first thing we should do is cut down on the actual cost of health care if at all possible.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: One of the external agencies that you support is the Meals on Wheels of Winnipeg

program. They're a good program. But that is basically based on a means test. If you can afford to pay for the meals, you do so. If you can't afford to pay for the meals, then they are provided for you.

Has there been any consideration given to providing the same kind of means test to home care services?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: That is an agency that does that. Now what we've done, we've given them a grant and there's a certain cost but we help subsidize the meal. I don't know that we, the government, has said we'll pay so much for this person, this person can afford it, we won't pay as much. There has been a grant, and they might be doing that, the agencies.

Certainly, I'm not in a position to announce anything but I know in certain areas - and I would imagine there's a change in policy for this government - but we have looked at the possibility of looking at some kind of a means test. We're looking at that maybe in the future, as I say, without announcing anything, certainly not at this stage, but look at Pharmacare and other programs such as that.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: The reason I raised the program is that in my own experience, having two parents, both of whom had serious disabilities, one a heart condition, one a stroke victim. It wasn't that they couldn't afford to pay for the services. It was they didn't know how to access the services. And they didn't know who they could call or who they could get in touch with, and if they used government-provided services, they were all paid for. They didn't particularly want their services paid for; they felt they could pay for those services themselves.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, I think that's a fact. We are trying to provide the information now mostly through the gerontologist and so on, and no doubt you have seen the book - I think I've passed it around - I don't say it's complete but it gives them an idea where it is.

There is also a Council on Aging that reports and works very closely with the gerontologist, that provides the information to the members, to the community, and also is used as an advisory committee, some of the programs they think of.

I would subscribe to that. I think that is good. I think there are a lot of people - it doesn't necessarily - it's a dangerous thing. When you say somebody is old, right away, it's as if they were penniless, and that's changing more and more.

At one time, the pension wasn't the way it is now but, with the Canadian pension and other pensions now - they're pretty well in everywhere - I think it's going to change more and more. Those pensions are there for what purpose? To help them keep body and soul together and provide the service, but it's not to accumulate and give it to their kids, if they have everything paid. It's the same thing as personal care homes.

It took a while for people to change on that figuring, you know. Politically, it's dangerous. It was said awhile ago that you scare some of the seniors. That could be a temptation also, to capitalize on that. There is no doubt that there are people who certainly can afford to pay for that, especially with the programs that we

are helping out on Pharmacare and some of those programs, and especially if you're going to have hospitalization and Medicare. I think you're right. I think that more and more we'll have to look at that.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: If an individual gets in touch with the Home Care Service Program at their hospital and if it is identified that, no, there is not a service that can be provided by Home Care - in other words, they don't qualify for Home Care assistance - is any referral then done for that individual to a gerontologist or to a private agency that indeed might be able to meet their needs?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I'm sorry that the gerontologist is not here. I know that we fund and we work with different agencies and councils. I think there's much more of that being done. Then the program that I announced to try to keep the people in their homes as long as possible, some of the service, I think some of that. But really to what extent or to know exactly how that's done, I'll have to try to get back to you.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: That's fine. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I was able to announce all kinds of government policies when there was nobody to take me to task, but Len came in and I have to be careful. We're really fixing Brandon, let me tell you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it the committee's wish to pass . . .

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: I think Mr. Orchard has a question.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I think I have two questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.
The Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, the question of guidelines came up earlier in discussion this afternoon, in terms of an advocacy group that would review to see whether an individual on Home Care was properly assessed and received the proper amount of care.

Can the Minister indicate whether there are guidelines in place and whether they're evenly applied across the province in all the regions?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: As evenly as we can, realizing that some of them are judgment calls, and it's not the same person who does all the assessment and also the staff who might be available or not available in different areas. Yes, the guidelines that would be given to these people would certainly be the same for those who are doing the assessment.

MR. D. ORCHARD: So then a central advisory board, as you're suggesting, would then have a reasonable assurance of, no matter where the individual is complaining, whether it be Norman region or the central region of Winnipeg, of being compared apples for apples, that the criterion aren't different, significantly different.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, the concern that I would see, the problem would be the same that exists now with, let's say, the lack of doctors in the rural areas at certain times. It could be that, if you can't find the staff, it could be a little difficult, but that would not be because of the program or the funding. It would be to get the proper people, a housekeeper for instance or a therapist for instance, in certain areas. Yes, they would be entitled to the same, providing we can provide the service.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, then since the Home Care budget went significantly over budget last year, have new criteria for admission to or continuation on the Home Care Program been put in place in the last couple or three months?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: As I say, we're reviewing the whole thing to make some changes in there. I'll check to see if there's been any direction given to change the - I think that money has been used, not to change the guidelines so much, as to get more people, let's say, out of hospitals and so on, on the service. Now I don't want this to sound as if I'm contradicting myself, and this was an answer pretty well going on with a solution that you made earlier when you said, fine, everybody favours this program, but then you've got to be a little tough. That could be done, that the guidelines could even be reduced, made maybe a little tougher.

MR. D. ORCHARD: That's what I'm getting at.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: We could do that but still spend more money, because then we would enlarge the program for other areas to get people out of institutions. Do you understand what I'm saying? But instead of people who are there now, instead of saying you're getting three hours of an orderly for the week, you might get two-and-a-half or something, so that doesn't mean we're going to be more liberal with that. I would hope that we will be able to accommodate more people and people we weren't accommodating before, like I said, maybe with a team of doctors, a team of nurses to provide some service for people who normally would have to be in the institutions.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, one of the difficulties that I have in coming to grips with the direction of the program here is there are several areas that all impact at once.

First of all, we've got . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Excuse me, I didn't hear you the last time. Several areas what?

MR. D. ORCHARD: There's a whole series of areas that impact on this program all at once. First of all, I don't know whether you've got current figures in front of you but, in effect, we may have to wait till the Hospital line before you have these figures, but we've got a number of panelled senior citizens who are in hospitals waiting for personal care home placement. In addition, you've got a number of OCC. Now I think those are over cost care people on the Home Care Program,

many of whom should either be in a personal care home or an extended hospital bed.

You're indicating that hospital bed closure is the way to tighten down and make sure that we can contain costs. I see a very massive problem approaching as you do that. I'll just lay it out for you; you can see it already. You've got a number of already beds in hospitals occupied by panelled patients, and it can range from 10 percent to 20 percent of the actual capacity of a hospital. Those are the beds, I suggest, that are most likely to end up being closed.

Now if you close the hospital bed and you release those panelled patients who are already in the hospitals and put them in the community on Home Care Program, some of the numbers I see indicate that you're going to end up spending more on the Home Care Program, with your guidelines on the limit on overcost care, than you would in a personal care home setting. Unfortunately, I'm beginning to think it gets us down to the circumstance where we're probably short of, if we're short of anything in this province, of Level 3 and 4 personal care home beds in the Province of Manitoba, because it doesn't work. You've got sixty-some over-cost patients right now in home care. I don't know how many patients you've got in the hospitals who are panelled and waiting for personal care home placement. All of those are going to, as you close beds, impact on the home care system, with no place to go. You can talk about hump funding to get you transitional funding, if you will, but you still have to have a place for them to go because keeping them in their homes, at some point in time on these over-cost cases, is more expensive than the institutional setting of the personal care home. So I guess we'll debate this when we hit personal care home and hospital lines, because it's not anything that you're going to be able to do and contain costs.

Now maybe the Minister might want to comment, and then I can get onto my . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Okay, the situation is that we start at the top of the acute care beds, and that is why you have to be very careful not to start building more acute care beds. But you're not going to have your final result and then you go do the same thing all the way down. The next step down is personal care homes, and we're looking at that too, but mostly with the acute care beds.

Now, let's say that we say we don't need all these acute care beds. You see, not long ago, they were saying build or give us more acute care, or not build, but get these people who are panelled for personal care homes out of there and it will give us more beds. Okay well now, if we're going to close beds, there's less rush of doing it - right? - because you don't close the bed, but you say, okay those are beds instead of building.

In other words, if we go and build a personal care bed right away and if we close these beds, we've got empty beds and we build others, if that is decided. So it is not a sin to use some of those beds. I'm just giving you a scenario; I'm not saying that this is the situation now. It is not a sin or bad management to say, all right, we'll allow some of those personal care beds - some of them.

I want my friend to make sure that I don't think it would be wrong or a bad policy or bad management

if we determine that we don't need beds, so we keep these people in there then. There's no great rush to say get them out and more beds, if it's determined we don't need more acute care beds. In fact, we want to look at that before we decide to build any more personal care beds, because that's the next step, you're right. We'd go to acute beds. Remember that chart I gave you to show you exactly what we want to do? That's exactly what we're doing.

Then the next step would go to personal care beds. Now we're building, we're not stopping the building, but we're looking at that also. We're looking at that because the step is you don't just skip a couple of steps. You don't take somebody who is panelled for a personal care bed who has to be in an institution who is now using an acute care bed and say, here, home care. That would be too costly. You go in personal beds. That's the next step, in most instances.

All right, having done that, then you do the same thing. There are people in personal care beds who shouldn't be there, especially people of a certain age. Again, it's not just that they haven't got the money, but they are lonesome and they want to make sure that they're fed properly and they take their medicine and they want security for those people, and we don't want to encourage that. What kind of a nation are we going to have if we say, okay at a certain age, I'm going to retire. I'm set for life. You know, I'm not going to bother my kids. It's not the same thing that the kids used to take care of them, but it's a different life, different lifestyle and, if they're taken there, they want security.

A lot of times, they're on a waiting list. I don't need it now; I don't want to go now. But just in case, they think they can reserve a bed for whenever they need it, and that's the kind of scare that they have. Now if we can provide the services and all that, there will be that same thing, but we need personal care homes. There are so many communities that are asking for the same thing, so the step then would be from acute care in certain ways to personal care beds, and from personal care beds to guest homes. Guest homes, for instance, I'll tell you now that I'm damn happy that we've got guest homes because, if we didn't have guest homes, I'd have to find many beds for some of these people who are in there. I think we have to recognize that.

So far this has been the private sector, and I'm not suggesting we change that. The private sector has had guest homes, and these are people who normally, some of them, the majority of them don't need to go in a home. It's still a home, it's not an institution. But some of them, no doubt, would have to be in a personal care home.

So the next step then would be to get the people out of those personal care beds. Probably those in the hospital would all be there, most of them would be there, I mean, not just in hospitals but in a personal care home. They've been panelled and that's why they're in the hospital. But some of those are in the personal care home, and we are gradually going away from the hostel type. I think it was a big mistake when this government insured the hostel-type, whatever they brought in, the first province to bring in personal care. Gradually, we're changing that to multipurpose beds and so on, where we can have the responsibility of keeping the sicker people.

Okay, so some of the programs will do away with that. Some of the programs or the programs I was talking about last week where we're saying, okay, in a senior citizen home, we're going to help you finance a type of "Meals on Wheels," meals at a fare and it's very reasonable, because these people are responsible for their meals. But maybe five times a week they'll have a meal or, three times a week, two meals. Another time, it's just to coordinate with the volunteers and help them, maybe have somebody who's going to tell them when to take their medicine. That's a big concern. You know, people forget and you've got to make sure. So those are the services that will go but you know, as I say, we don't just get people out of acute beds and then put them in the community.

Now you were talking about guidelines awhile ago. The guidelines that we have that, under ordinary circumstances, you are not going to pay more to keep a person on home care outside than you would in a personal care home. In other words, if it comes to that part, you say, no, you go in the personal care home.

The exception to that is, if somebody is panelled and they haven't got a home to go to now, if it's a real emergency, no matter what the cost is, you pay the whole shot. Usually, you find beds for them pretty fast because it's pretty costly. Now there are some - I don't know how they qualify for that - who either through a real desire to help themselves to stay in the community - and you know the first one who comes in my mind, because we all know that person. That person costs us a fortune, and that's why I was a little incensed when they were squawking for more. No, I'm not going to involve you in that one. That person always wanted more, but that is a person who is a very independent spirit. She probably would be dead if she had been in a personal care home by now. There is no doubt that her fighting spirit kept her alive. I wish the hell she'd fight with somebody else sometime - that's all - not only with me.

That is an exception. I don't know why this person was allowed, just because it was a special case, let's say, but that person is costing us a lot of money. The policy normally, as I say, would be the exception to that, maybe in a special case, but just for a few days while you're waiting for a placement of those people. The rest, they would have to be in a personal - now we have some cases that cost us a fortune. What is it? -(Interjection)- Zorn. Yes, that's one, but what do we do, we've had more problems with that? It's been managed by the Children's Home of Winnipeg under a contractual arrangement for the past two years. It was the best thing to have him there because then we'd close the whole wing, then we'd save a lot of money there.

The cost of this contract has been \$115 per day with \$13 per day paid by Manitoba Health and \$102, the balance, by the Social Allowance Program. I don't want to elaborate on that. I just want to give you an example of some of the cases that don't seem to fit anywhere and are very costly.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, there are times when I hesitate to let the Minister get free wheeling because although it's . . . well, it's his specialty . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: It gets interesting.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I thought so.

MR. D. ORCHARD: . . . though it's time consuming and we're fighting the clock all the time.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Don, go like this and I'll . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: We've tried that with Madam Speaker time and time again and it does not work.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Oh, well, yes, Madam Speaker.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Are you saying that you are more cooperative with us than Madam Speaker would be, because that's a reflection on Madam Speaker, and we wouldn't want to reflect on Madam Speaker, would we?

A MEMBER: No, you never do.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Absolutely not. Madam Speaker and I are both from the same stomping grounds originally, or close to. I went right and she went wrong.

A MEMBER: She went left, that's all.

MR. D. ORCHARD: No, she just left and then she went wrong.

Are we off track, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Pardon?

MR. D. ORCHARD: Are we off track?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, slightly.

HON. A. MACKLING: Have you ever been on track, Donny?

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, there is the member that one of the noted media people call a member of the walking dead in Premier Pawley's Cabinet, commenting.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: It's a good place to be in. Worrying about health is health.

MR. D. ORCHARD: We could probably spend \$150,000 a year on him and not improve him.

Mr. Chairman, When the 8.164 million of overexpenditure in Continuing Care has been finally all paid out, is there any region in which there was prevalent overexpenditure or is it spread evenly throughout the regions?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: By region, you don't mean programs; you mean different regions of the province?

MR. D. ORCHARD: I'm talking by regional basis, was the Home Care Program overexpended equally in all regions or are there some regions with a higher degree of overexpenditure?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: It's mostly in Winnipeg. What I'm trying to determine now, is it the same ratio as the

rest? In other words, if it was 6,000 or something in the rural, and here I want to see if it's the same.

It's about three-to-two, let's say, in the city compared to the rural, and the rural were pretty well uniform.

MR. D. ORCHARD: You're talking three-to-two urban to rural. Does that mean that in the Winnipeg region, 60 percent of the overexpenditure occurred in the Winnipeg region? Is that what you're saying?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Pretty close to the proportional distribution of patients, which would be roughly that.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, the Minister and I have to . . . I admit I haven't got the press clipping in front of me, but he indicated to the Free Press that basically there was a new management system coming into place. "Desjardins said the department is finalizing an accounting system that will improve management." Mr. Chairman, who is developing that system and when will it be in place?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: What I did say is the same thing that I said in this committee, that we recognize that we would like to be on track more. We would like to be able to have a better idea of what will be spent, and part of that was also the programs and what we were going to do with the program and that it had to be reviewed, that it had growing pains. But I also said that we have been told by systems people and so on that we could improve that, computerize certain things and so on and I said that's our first priority. That's all I'm saying, one of our first priorities. Now that is probably talking too much at this time. Now if we don't get it, you'll know that I lost. But this is one of the things that we're fighting on. I'm certainly not in a position to announce when and if it'll be done.

There is no doubt that in the past there hasn't been the glamorous thing and so on, and maybe it was felt that the administration was always top heavy. There is no doubt that we haven't been too successful there and we're always taking, you know, instead of in the hospitals and things like that, administration had been in Mr. Maynard's shop and so on. We haven't had the staff that we would like to have and you're starting to rethink, you're getting more cases and so on and less people or the same people as you had with half a patient or whatever. Maybe I'm exaggerating some, but that's the point I'm trying to make.

Something that might help also is when we try to coordinate and bring the Commission and the department closely in line and stop duplication and so on, it might be that we will be able to help.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Okay then, let me just understand. Did I understand that you said that Mr. Maynard's shop is the one that is developing the new financial system that you referred to the other day, a new accounting system?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No, I said they're the first ones to suffer at one time when I had to cut down on staff and so on. I think that's one of the reasons that we're worried about the system. All I'm saying, and I'm going to repeat, that the department has a priority to

modernize and improve our system. That's what I said - one of our first priorities.

I also told you that we were finalizing an automated commitment accounting system - is that what you mean? - in association with Community Services that will improve the reliability of the financial records in all areas. That is being done. This system will be tested in one of the Winnipeg regions in the next month or two. That's part of it.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, the bottom line that I'm getting to is you've got, obviously, an identified problem. You don't have your statements that I read and I can read them again and you don't have internal audits that show that your programs are financially out of control, and remedy them without having the people who, and I have to assume and I'm making an assumption here, that Mr. Maynard's shop is the one, I think that's the discussion we got to last week, where he's the ADM and his people are responsible for determining financial control. Any new system that comes in has to be something that they believe will work and then, after you get your new system, you can have the best system in place, but if there isn't (a) the will to use it or (b) the ability to use it, it doesn't solve anything.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Well, let me say from the outset that I do not accept this business, out of control. I don't care - sure, it was in the report - it was one person who said it, apparently, because I've never talked to him or put any pressure, who regretted the term, and again I say, that we're looking at the financial thing. There's problems, but to say out of control is grossly exaggerated and I don't accept that. I don't give a damn who said it.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I'm not going to get into this particular argument . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No, but I want you to know that if we're going to keep on this discussion, I want to say that I don't accept that. That's all.

MR. D. ORCHARD: That's fine. You don't have to accept it because you're the Minister responsible and you have to justify what went on. You're the man at the top. But it isn't one individual that was commented on in the conclusions, the perception of field managers, that's plural. The attitude of senior departmental managers is not conducive to responsible financial management.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: That was also explained and denied, it was one person who came in with that. I'm just telling you the report that I get.

MR. D. ORCHARD: The Minister says the report he gets did XYZ, and it's all been denied and everything is well. Except that everything isn't well because you've got a 33 percent overbudget, which you know I could accept, I could possibly accept some of the Minister's rationale on it, except that the Liberal leader asked some questions earlier on. Can you show that you're actually gaining on the game? No you can't.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, we are.

MR. D. ORCHARD: No, you're not.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, we are.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Because while you're 33 percent overbudget in the last fiscal year in home care, which is to relieve the pressure on hospitals, those same hospitals, and this is not all of them by any means, this is only the major hospitals in Winnipeg and Brandon, are \$20 million overbudget. In other words, over-utilized, I would presume that has to be the case. It's not as if you are under-utilizing the hospitals and have only - okay, I'll put it in as clear a term as possible.

A personal care home runs at 99.9 percent occupancy and a hospital can vary considerably. Let's say that when we went into this fiscal year, '86-87, that your hospitals were running at 85 percent occupancy and I could say that maybe some of your reasonings to justify the 33 percent overexpenditure would be correct if that hospital occupancy rate went down to 83 percent and your budgets went down because you were allowing people out of hospitals and home care was picking up the hospital bed cost and putting it into the community. And you had people that weren't in hospital because home care was keeping them in the community. I could accept some of the arguments you are trying to put forward but neither happened. You had your home care budget 33 percent over; you've got \$20 million overexpenditures in the hospital; you've got both programs going the wrong way.

And that is why, Mr. Chairman, that I am deeply concerned as critic and as a taxpayer and a member of this Legislature that I don't think you're taking seriously some of the management problems you've got because you can put the finest management system in place but if the desire isn't there to clean up that financial accountability problems that were identified by your department, within your department, and if you don't take seriously concerns of staff and you've had them - you've had the complaints - you've had people go to see you and you've not taken them seriously, apparently, because nothing has changed. You've got the same people.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: What people came to see me?

MR. D. ORCHARD: We'll get into that.

Mr. Chairman, I simply point out that you haven't answered the question. Maybe you can. I'm not trying to allege anything with you but you haven't answered who is developing the new system of accountability that you alluded to in your response to the press and No. 2, the same people are going to be controlling the new financial system as controlled the old financial system. Read your report. I just ask you to read your internal audit. Read your own Treasury Board submission because you will find that people there were not familiar with accounting procedure and I say to you, that you've got a dual problem. I think you've got problems in senior management in this division of the department and secondly, I don't know whether it's competence problems in the financial ADM shop, I don't know, but you certainly have to get those people putting whatever system you're going to have on line that's going to prevent this fiasco, training so that your records

are comparable, so that regional records do mean something to the central coordinator of continuing care.

You've got to take hold of this, Mr. Minister, because you can't continue to say continuing care works, 33 percent over budget and still have hospital beds still occupied and no saving there because that presumably is one of the reasons. You said earlier on today that 5,480 people would have been admitted to hospitals that were on home care. That's what you told us just earlier on. Well, the two figures don't mesh. You've got 33 percent overexpenditure and still hospitals in a deficit position.

I suggest that the point made by your reviewers in your department, that the program is financially out of control, doesn't allow you to tell us what you should be able to tell us, that home care saves hospital costs because you can't identify whether the money is being properly spent and administered for. And that is the first and most prime concern you've got to have. And that may mean doing some unpopular things. That may mean you stepping on some toes and maybe it's going to be with some of the old boys' club that you're not familiar with, as members of the old boys' club, as you call them.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: There's an awful lot of truth in what my honourable friend said and I've always admitted that.

Now, let's talk about the report. I said that the report in many ways was factual but the report looked at the financial, not the complexity of the program. Okay, that's one thing. Now, I say and you don't like it, we can argue on that but I will say again, that it was grossly exaggerated when they said it was out of control. The report to me was that, yes, there was unfortunate words that they didn't reflect what they actually wanted to say. It's no use arguing about that, I'm either right or wrong but that's what was reported to me.

Secondly, on this thing I said that we agreed that we have to tighten that up, that we're looking, one of the reasons you say we're not taking it seriously - we are taking it seriously - but we are also looking at the situation, to try to improve the situation in marrying, getting the two, the commission and the department a lot closer together. We are doing that. I am not saying that there's nothing wrong. What I criticize the most, what I objected to is that you try to put the blame on one person and that person has done a damn good job. I know you don't like that, but that person has done a damn good job. She has made changes that we needed that weren't popular with the staff that had been there for a long time, and I'm saying that we are trying to improve.

Secondly, I'm saying that like everything else, I had to go during the Estimates time and get money from the government, from the Cabinet, and it hasn't been easy at the administration for some reason or other, and I said that we had made that our first priority. We are not satisfied; I said that. I said that we're trying to change; we're working with Community Services and we're going to have a project that's going to be tested. I said that we are also trying to improve the situation with the computer and so on.

Now, to come back to that statement. My honourable friend is saying this, you are spending more money in

the hospitals. Okay, then you're spending more money on home care and you are saying that you've reduced the people in the hospitals, who would be in the hospital now because of the money you spend there on Home Care, and if you didn't have that money, they go to Home Care. I'm not saying this was all new. Since we got Home Care we've been keeping people out of hospitals. Then I also give you a litany of reasons of also things that are effective. It's not just 33 percent, period, that you're going to measure, that we should have 33 percent more people. You know the dollar is not the same; the wages are not the same and so on, but the biggest thing that you forget is that you take it that all the money and all the deficit in the hospitals is caused because of patients that they had, of increasing patients and being over used.

That's not the case at all. The case is the way the hospitals, the services, the staff and so on, and the teaching hospitals, that's what it costs. There's no reflection on hospitals at all, on just the patients. Of course you've got a patient, but it is everything else that happens in a hospital. If there's a CAT scan, that you have the same number of hospitals, for instance, the same number of patients in the hospitals a few years ago when you didn't have a CAT scan, when you didn't have all kinds of other things. This is what adds up, not necessarily that they're taking care of more patients.

Secondly, you forgot again - I told you - that there are some hospitals that would have had to be built. With all these things and all the patients and more people who wanted more doctors, normally, so that in itself is saving. The next step I'm talking about is closing beds. I don't want to put words in your mouth. I don't know if you're suggesting that maybe we should look at that, but that's not what's said in the House and that's the next step, but we're not going to close them just in an irresponsible way.

MR. D. ORCHARD: You said it was going to be orderly.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I'll say it in French; then I'll make sure of my words. You won't understand a damn word, but at least now you understand a few.

The situation is this, that as far as we're concerned, we would be building more beds the way we're going on. There would be more and more beds, and you have provinces that have even hired somebody on a 10-year contract to manage a hospital that they don't know if they're going to build now. That is a common thing now. As I say, we are going to, but you're making this a federal case. You're making this as if there's \$8 million lost somewhere or a deficit like some of the cases that wasn't put to good use, and that is not true.

I don't give a damn what's said in that report. I'm telling you that that person was looking at the financial thing and we agree with that, but it is not the only thing concerned. It is the programming in there and I gave you a list of things yesterday or the day before, some of the reasons why this changed, and you're going to see that. I'll give you the same thing when we get to Medicare, I'll give you some of the reasons why we're overspending Medicare probably and in the hospitals.

For years the system was . . . Okay, go ahead.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I was scratching my hand.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I'll respect that. Then I'll go ahead then.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I wouldn't cut you off.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: But I suggest that you do that to remind me. I want to be fair. Now, you threw me off anyway. Go ahead.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, the Minister, like he's saying, "I don't care what's in that report," I know he's not saying that right because he has to care what's in that report. I just want to read just one thing out of here, "The Status of the System. Coordinator of Continuing Care Information System has no authority or control over the records or systems in place in the directorate or in the regions. Amalgamation of the financial status report is based upon figures that cannot be verified centrally within the directorate, e.g., regional commitments (such as case assessments and outstanding invoices). Within the directorate itself, the records were incomplete and the system can be considered most unreliable." - which is where I'm coming from. You know, we don't know the targeting of that money with that kind of an accounting system. That's what I'm saying to you.

Mr. Minister, I'm trying to be as even-handed on this as I can, but until you recognize the difficulty, until you focus, and I believe you've got expertise in Administration and Finance - you got to have. I mean, the branch of the department hasn't existed all that time without having some expertise in it, and I'm not making a personal reflection on Mr. Maynard or anybody, any of the staff, because you seem to think I'm on a witch hunt all the time. But, Mr. Chairman, you've got a serious problem in this department, a very serious problem. You cannot take it lightly. You can't guarantee that all that money - you said to me earlier, on Tuesday, if there's anything illegal going on, I want to know. That was the upshot of some of your comments the other day. If something's fraudulent, I want to know.

If we're down to the stage where before a Minister of this Pawley administration takes action there's got to be something illegal done, that straight mismanagement and incompetence is not something that you get concerned of, as a Minister, then, by golly, we are in sad shape in this province, because you've got a serious problem facing you here. I'm simply telling you you're not going to solve it by putting together a new management system. These people could develop the most perfect one available, but without further training - and I'm laying the lumber on them - they've got to take and make sure the staff know how to use it and know what results are expected. If they don't do it, then maybe you've got to do some changing there too, but first and foremost, you've had this looking at you, with problems, for a year, almost a year now, and those problems are still there. The evidence of them is growing; it's worse; it's not a witch hunt. It's something I'm trying to tell you that you've got to deal with, and you can't deal with it simply by replacing the management system alone.

You've got to take a look at whether you've got appropriate managers in place, and if you satisfy yourself that you have, then we have to accept that;

but if you don't do that, you're not acting responsibly as a Minister.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, let me make it quite clear that I am not saying that everything is fine. I have never said that. I said that, first of all, why did we commission these people on our staff, an internal document, and why did we discuss this with management to look . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: Can I give you the answer?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Why?

MR. D. ORCHARD: Because you were over budget so much it would have to scare the hell out of any manager.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Whatever it is. No, because we knew that we would need more money; we knew that. Let's try to be fair and look at all, not only part of it. Don't try to isolate that and say everything is going wrong. That's the point. First of all, I'm saying that I'm not satisfied. If I'm not satisfied, all right we look at it; we're going to try to correct it; we're going to try to improve the situation. But what I don't like is that we put the blame on one person. That's what I didn't like.

I tried to say this, that there are other factors that have to be taken into consideration before you make a statement. You've got to look at the reason and some are valid reasons why this thing changed and it's pretty hard to get all the information with all these changes. That's one thing. That has to be considered, not exaggerated, that has to be taken into consideration. Another point that I'm trying to make and I think that is important is we, and it's not just the staff - and there well could be some people that are not probably trained with the new methods, all right, we're looking at that.

But first of all I am saying that we have a very much - and we must accept the responsibility for that but I'm telling you how it happened as honestly as I can, that we have a shortage of people that you can't keep on. It's not necessarily incompetent. If you've got, if you're dealing with so many people and then it kept on and because of the difficult time, because of the deficit and so on I say that there's tendency of having it - it's a heck of a lot easier for me to get staff for say, a special program, a glamorous program, and that's normal, not just with this government, with any government, than they get more staff in administration. And I say that, all right, we administer so many more cases and so much more, we give the information, just the information, the extra information that my staff have to get prepared for this thing over last year. And just the extra information that Treasury wants. Every year we want more and we've got to use the same staff.

I accept responsibility but I'm saying, let's not call people incompetent for that. There might be some that are incompetent, and we're going to do the best, and I'm concerned. But I'm not ready to say, well there you go. People are incompetent, and especially zero in on one person. That's the thing that I don't like. That's the thing that I'm arguing with you. Not that we're doing things perfectly, I realize. And we're going to try to improve it.

It's been difficult because the program has changed so fast and I say, please take that into consideration too. Don't overdo it. And no matter what you take into consideration, we are at fault, we've got to tighten up, and I said that. But let's you know, let's not exaggerate that. That's the point.

But if your concern is to say, are we interested, we're very interested and we're going to do everything we can to change things. And we might have, and as I said we made it our first priority to say to Cabinet next year, well you know, this is fine. And we're building a case now to say we were serving so many clients with so many people, now we still have the same amount of people or maybe less, and this is the extra work that we have to do, you know. And it doesn't matter in what area, there's a limit in what people can do, and I think that's a factor also.

Having said all that, fine, it might be, and probably is and I'm ready to accept that. All right, we are doing something wrong and that's what we're going to find out.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, earlier in discussion in answering questions I believe the Member for River Heights indicated that, have you considered the possibility of making the per diems applicable or something like that to home care recipients. In other words have a contribution by the user.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Means test, or utilization fee. Well it means, I know you understand that but a utilization fee is the same amount, we pay so much it's going to . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: You made the analogy of like a Pharmacare program . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: But what the Leader of the Liberal Party was saying it was a means test, in other words paying for those who couldn't afford it, which is not exactly how; I want to make sure I know what you're talking about.

MR. D. ORCHARD: But, you know, because it's not an insured service and never was, home care's a new item. That's possible to do, I believe. I don't think the legislation, the federal legislation or your provincial legislation prevents that. But I would caution you from considering that as an option right now. And it's not an option that by and large that maybe in the long run I might disagree with.

But I really caution you of considering that seriously right now because it, in a way will do what I believe your Finance Minister has done on a global picture. The home care program is no different than the entire provincial budget, it's out of control, financially. Not my words, not anybody else's but in your report. And that's what's happened to the province. And your Finance Minister's response to that was to raise what, \$439 million of new taxes, and basically one of your ways out of this predicament in home care is to raise revenues. For instance with the 61 people that you have on the over cost care, probably you could make a perfectly legitimate case for those people, especially the ones than are on 24 hour a day, seven day a week

to charge the per diem \$17.95 as you do in panelled patients in hospitals and mental institutions and all residents of PCH's, so, you know you could probably make the case there, but I hesitate that it be an option you consider until you resolve the problems that are identified in here in terms of financial control so you know whether you're getting value for dollars expended. And if you are, and you still have financial problems, then bring that back to this committee and we'll debate the merits of it.

I think, by and large, you might find even the public moderately receptive, I wouldn't say wildly enthusiastic. But I wouldn't want this committee considering that to be one of the options you should consider right now until you get your house in order.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I think I understand the suggestion, I don't know if we're talking about the same thing. Now, if we are talking about putting in a utilization fee, in other words, that people would have to pay something like Pharmacare, I could see, if my honourable friend thinks that it's so much out of control, then you want to know what are we charging the people for. That was not the suggestion made, and I don't see where that will change at all. The suggestion was made that there should be a means test, in other words, whatever the cost is the people that can't afford it, the government would pay. In other words, kind of a sliding scale, the people that have the money would be given the thing, I think that was - correct me if I'm wrong - the suggestion that was made, and that, to me - I'm not saying we're going to do it, I'm saying it could be an option right now.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I understood that was the explanation of the option, I simply caution you that isn't an option until you resolve the identified problems here, I don't believe. I don't believe you can ask people to make a contribution until you can come up with a little better internal audit that shows you've got financial controls in place, that you know the spending is going on properly, that's all I'm saying.

Mr. Chairman, I want to ask just another question. In the Treasury Board submission there's a line that says, "Deferral of Continuing Care New Initiative" for \$325,000 saving. What was the nature of that continuing care new initiative? -(Interjection)- I'd lend you my copy but it's the only one I've got.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Well, you should make photostatic copy and make damn sure all the members of the committee have it, what I do, but you've got 'way more than I have. You've got all your spies.

MR. D. ORCHARD: That's what I'm paid to have.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Oh, no, you're not paid to encourage people to break their oath . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: Oh, now, now, now.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Oh, that's not serious? It is. It doesn't bother me that much. It keeps me on my toes a little more, the more you have, but you're encouraging something that shouldn't be done.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Absolutely not.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: And that's why you're aiming at one or two persons because -(Interjection)- yes, you're trying to get people that these people are mad at.

MR. D. ORCHARD: No, Mr. Chairman.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Well, look at this, look at an Oath of Allegiance where they say that they are not going to give any information that they gain through . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: Are you telling me that an Oath of Allegiance should be applied to people . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: People whose noses are out of joint.

MR. D. ORCHARD: No, no, no. The Minister is off on a tangent here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, please . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: Are you saying that the Oath of Allegiance applies so that people should never tell anyone that a program is financially out of control and shouldn't be discussed publicly? Are you saying that that's what you want to keep people quiet from?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: You know that that's not what I'm talking.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Well, that's what you're saying. You can't defend that.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I'm not commenting on the report. I'm commenting on those people that are feeding information and this is what those people do. This is my book - and that I will not, without due authority, in that they have disclosed or make known any matter or thing which comes to my knowledge by reason of my employment in the Government Services of Manitoba, so help me God. And that's exactly what they're doing and that is why you're aiming your criticism at one or two persons because those people are mad at that because their toes were stepped on and they don't want to see the change. It's not the report.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Well, I'm sure the Minister would like to have that as being the focal point of this issue. The issue is that you've got problems within your department and sometimes those have been pointed out to you, sometimes not. When they are, you don't take action and I suppose there must be some frustration.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No, no, just a minute. On a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: That's the second time my honourable friend says . . . I want him to tell me where

I've been approached by staff and told. I want him to tell me when that is the case.

MR. D. ORCHARD: That will be -(Interjection)-

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Well, don't use it until you're ready to disclose it. Don't use it now because that is not true.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, we agreed a little while ago to go line by line in these Estimates, didn't we?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: And don't use it now.

MR. D. ORCHARD: But you're making the point that there is something horrendously wrong about staff, whoever they may well be, making people aware of problems in the department when you can't resolve them internally. That's the problem . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I'm saying that staff had no business. I'm saying that staff, and I read you from the Oath of Allegiance that was brought in long before I was there, and I'm saying that you have encouraged that for years, and that's the only one that I've seen.

Sure, there are slips, there are certain things that are leaked once in a while, but you take pride in that. And you are harassing people in getting that information, seeking and encouraging that information, and I don't know why because most of the information you ask for, I give it to you anyway. I would much sooner that you look at that and not feel obligated to help your sources whose noses are out of joint and who are mad because they don't want to see the change that you're suggesting I make, because they had a cosy little cushy job and they would like to keep it and they don't like to see changes. We've bent over backwards to help those people and I know some of them.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, just let's make sure the Minister, in his reaction this afternoon, doesn't blinder himself to the old boys' club that he's referred to, and make sure that he knows who the old boys' club is. Just make sure you know.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Obviously, I don't know of everybody, but I know . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: Obviously, you should know.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I know . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: Obviously, you should know.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Why don't those people have the guts to come and tell me if there's something wrong - which they should?

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, the Minister can protest, etc., etc., but I'm certainly pleased with the offer he made that if I am interested in obtaining information from him that I approach him directly. I thank him for that.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Did I ever refuse?

MR. D. ORCHARD: Yes.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: What? I'm not saying you're going to automatically get everything.

Is there any Minister that gives you more than I have to the members of this House?

MR. D. ORCHARD: I don't ask you for a great deal. Now, Mr. Chairman . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, I just want to make one request of the two gentlemen right now. Please don't speak until I recognize you because I'm trying to be loose and free here, but I don't want the meeting to get out of hand insofar as the debate is concerned.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Loose and free? Mr. Chairman!

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, my next question was what was the Continuing Care new initiative that was deferred?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I haven't got this now, I don't know.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Then you surely have staff that knows what . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Hey?

MR. D. ORCHARD: Surely, staff must know what Continuing Care new initiative was that was budgeted for \$325,000 that you deferred when you went to Treasury Board.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: We don't know what you're talking about. Why don't you tell us?

MR. D. ORCHARD: You can have a look at this and you can figure it out, okay?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Maybe I'll recognize it, I don't know.

MR. D. ORCHARD: So, Mr. Chairman, this is probably sufficient discussion on this item. If you wish to pass it, you can.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(g)(1)—pass; 2.(g)(2)—pass; 2.(g)(3)—pass; 2.(g)(4)—pass.
2.(h)(1) - the Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Just a couple of quick questions.

In terms of the External Agencies wherein you've got the increase in grants to External Agencies, are these to the wheelchair repair groups and that sort of thing? Is that who the External Agencies funded under this line here?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I have the complete list here.

MR. D. ORCHARD: If it's a long one, maybe just table it and then that will save time because I think we can . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Well, I'll give you the names. It's not that long. I haven't got the amount. I wouldn't give you the amount anyway because we're negotiating with these people.

There's Meals on Wheels of Winnipeg, Youville Foundation . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: No, no, that's not medical equipment. You've got the wrong list. That's Continuing Care.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: There's only two - the Canadian Red Cross Society and the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities.

MR. D. ORCHARD: How does the Red Cross fit in?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The Canadian Red Cross Society provides a sick room-equipment loan service which provides Manitobans with short-term help and equipment for use in the home at no charge to the user. Equipment is loaned for a period of up to three months. The grant is a general purpose grant in support of this service.

The Society for Manitobans with Disabilities has program agents for the province, services the Manitoba Wheelchair Services Program through distribution, inventory control, repairs and maintenance. The wheelchair department under the Society was previously funded through Manitoba Community Services.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I don't have any further questions on medical equipment and supplies.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for River Heights.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Yes, just a couple of very brief ones.

The Red Cross External Agency which funds and which loans this equipment, again I wonder why there isn't a user fee, or is that totally outside of your control?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: That's the same thing as I said earlier when you were talking about the meals, and apparently they have that now. Our grant is only a general purpose grant, so we don't set up the policy. Of course, we can discuss it with them, but this is something that they would decide.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: I just have one other question which I've had raised and I'm sure your staff have had it raised as well, and that has to do with regard to the new respiratory equipment that we're bringing into Manitoba. I gather that there seems to be some problem with this equipment, because of inability to maintain our cold . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Wrong department.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: No, not according to page 49.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll see if he can catch up with you.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: We don't handle the ventilators.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: You don't handle portable respirators? -(Interjection)- I'm talking about a respirator for a person who is in a wheelchair.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: There are special cases who are in hospital care. There are very few of them, and it's the Respiratory Centre at the Health Sciences Centre that handle that. There are very few of them.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: So it actually comes under Manitoba Health Services Commission then?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: It's under the Commission.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Then what kind of respiratory equipment would you be referring to on page 49 of the Supplementary Information for Legislative Review? Perhaps I can clarify. We're referring here to oxygen equipment that would be made available to people on a term basis.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: It's in the home, not . . .

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Pass.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for River East.

MRS. B. MITCHELSON: Mr. Chairman, I just have a couple of questions.

I'd like to ask the Minister what mechanism is in place for recovery of equipment. Say, when someone dies out in the community and there's equipment out there, what mechanism do you have in place for recovery?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: First of all, we get the information from Vital Statistics, the people who have died. That is placed in the computer, and then there are letters that go immediately and then other periodic letters, and then they could follow by other means like a phone call or a visit or whatever.

MRS. B. MITCHELSON: Can I ask then: Is most of the equipment recovered?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: About 95 percent is recovered.

MRS. B. MITCHELSON: One more question, I have to go back to the overtime again here, and I see \$15,000 of overtime in this department. That is quite a considerable amount and, seeing you've budgeted for another \$15,000 next year, I'd like to know if this department is understaffed or overworked?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The overtime is mostly computerizing all the information. That might be done after hours, at times, and mostly emergencies that might happen and people have to be brought in.

MRS. B. MITCHELSON: That's all, thank you.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Pass, Mr. Chairman.

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

Now we're down to Dental Services. Any questions?

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, let's deal with the whole thing, and then we'll pass it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, there are several things that I want to question the Minister on.

First of all, this year to last year, we are looking at a - okay, last year we brought two people on staff in our SY request last year. We approved it up to 90. Now this year, we've seen a decrease of 3 in the adjusted vote, and a further decrease of another 11 down to 76. So there are 14 people, 14 fewer SY's this year over last year. If you're going to maintain even the same level of program, how are you doing that with 14 fewer on staff?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The first three is with efficiency, that we could manage with less people. The next 11 is because we maintained the status quo, and we kept on with the Dental Association rather than the government or Dental Nurses Program.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Okay, let me ask you then, these 11 SY's who you're proposing to drop, they were never filled?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I see. Okay, that explains it.

Now that was my next question. Whereabouts in this allotment - or is it in here? - the payments to the dentists who are providing it through the private sector?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I'm just as puzzled as you are. It is what you will see as social assistance. The Department of Finance is using that and apparently they will change that next year, but that is \$1,634,900.00.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I'm sure the dentists might not be too thrilled in knowing that their services are called social assistance now.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Social assistance - is that in that same book? On page 16, you'll see in your book, page 16, you'll see the definition of social assistance and related costs: fees and service assistance payments, food and shelter allowance, utilities, transportation, health, special needs and whatever. So apparently, they're going to change that next year.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Okay, so it falls under the fees and services definition of that?

Okay, the External Agencies, what External Agencies are funded under Dental Services?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I know Swampy Creek is one of them, and the Churchill Health Centre and St. Amant. That's been there for awhile.

MR. D. ORCHARD: And what you're doing there is you are paying them to acquire their own dental services outside of this program. Is that right?

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HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, special cases.

There is another one. There is the grant for fluoridation of water.

MR. D. ORCHARD: But do you follow my question?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Like St. Amant, where children have their special needs with certain ages . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: And they bring in the people they wish, and we provide the grant. They bring in the people?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: It started with the people who were in St. Amant, and then they had a fantastic dedicated person one time - I'm not saying the others aren't, but you know the one who was there for years. I think he is no longer there. He's an older fellow who was doing a hell of a job.

MR. D. ORCHARD: What's the new requirement to pay Workers Compensation at \$10,300 this year? Why are you, all of a sudden, rolled into that fiasco?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: This is a decision by the Civil Service Commission who has made a requirement that all departments budget, in case there is an accident and so on, and pay these costs to the Workers Compensation.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Okay, so you are newly assessed. You were never assessed before?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Right. That's something we weren't assessed before.

MR. D. ORCHARD: You, of course, know that I have to make the comment. Is this just the beginning of luring brand new people in . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Make it to the right Minister.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Yes, you're right, I certainly will, because here we're getting a new assessment category to try to cover that \$85 million deficit. I mean, if you were required to do it, you can't have any control over it. That's not the bone I have to pick with you.

Mr. Chairman, the last question, maybe the last question on this.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Excuse me, one thing I should point out though, it's \$10,000 out of \$5 million that we're paying for the program. I'm not saying it's not valid, but I just want to make sure that we understand. It's not an exorbitant amount.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I realize, but this is happening through all of Manitoba, that people are getting dragged in and paying more assessment and new assessments to Workers Comp.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: That's ability to pay.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Yes, like government's ability to pay to government.

Mr. Chairman, I presume by the budget, etc., etc., that there will be no school divisions in Brandon or the City of Winnipeg which will receive new services under this.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Well, Brandon has refused it. If you will remember, the situation was . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: We're going to get into a long argument if we . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Well, we can't. I'm talking about fair, honest and aboveboard discussions for three years with the Dental Association, chosen and suggested by the Dental Association. We could have taken the biggest one, but we didn't. That hasn't worked out, which was certainly the right of Brandon people who refused it and they did. Then we didn't go ahead with the Winnipeg, because we wanted to make the comparison.

At one time - I'll be honest with you - we had concerns about that program. We wanted to change it somewhat and then it was felt, well, you know, if we can't make it - because we had, quite honestly and aboveboard, tried to develop a plan with the Dental Association. Now this is one thing, if you'll remember that, when we brought it in, it was supposed to be strictly dental nurses. The Conservative Government came in and they changed it, and pretty well scuttled the dental nurses. Now we had a chance of going back and changing that again.

I feel that I didn't deliver on that. I asked Cabinet that I would like to develop a program without any ideology hangup. We would work for both the nurses and the doctors, and we spent many hours over three years to try to develop a program. We agreed on everything, that we would make the comparison and it would keep both sides honest. We couldn't deliver for some reason in Brandon, as you know, and therefore we didn't go ahead with Winnipeg.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, is the Minister indicating - did I interpret correctly that you are in the process of taking a look at the program and methods of delivery now? Is that under study?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: That threw us back, all of us, because we couldn't make a comparison that was valid. Brandon didn't want it. We didn't go ahead, and we cancelled Winnipeg. It wasn't going to be just one, because we wanted to make the comparison. At one time, we were even thinking of dropping the program or changing the program. We have discussed with the dentists or representations that they made, and we decided to keep the status quo. That's what we're looking at and we'll keep looking at programs with them. But I can't announce anything more than that at this time, because we haven't . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, if I may, I just want to reiterate my support for the inclusion of the private sector dentist, particularly in rural Manitoba because in so many areas it often makes the difference of maintaining a full-time dentist for the population at large, having them out there. If you're going to have a Children's Dental Health Program and your costs are

- any figures I've seen, I haven't seen recent ones. You probably have them. But the costs are at least comparable and, I've been told, even lower under the private sector delivery program per procedure, etc. I'm not getting into that argument with you, but I just simply say that has aided a lot of communities, maybe even some out in the Chairman's area, to maintain dentists for the population at large by having inclusion, and this being 5 percent or 10 percent or whatever percent of their business.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: . . . rural consideration, and that was a presentation of the dentists. That's why we kept on last year, and then we decided to go ahead this year again. But I want to make a point though that, where the nurses were delivering the programs, we've had an increase of dentists also.

MR. D. ORCHARD: That's interesting. But not in your rural communities where they . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Is that right? That's very interesting.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: We can give you the figures. I was surprised at that, because that point was made, and there was more of an increase in that area than the other area.

MR. D. ORCHARD: That's good.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The other Chamber has completed a section, and they want to adjourn early.

MR. D. ORCHARD: We can let them, can't we?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: They want to adjourn?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Early. They want to call it six o'clock.

MR. D. ORCHARD: We could finish this whole section if we took another 10 minutes or so.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But we will be left here all by ourselves.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Why do we have to go?

MR. CLERK, W. Remnant: Well, because you can't be left here. You can't adjourn the House, except at night, and leave one section of the committee hanging out here.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Okay, let's pass this section.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(j)(1)—pass.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: There's one thing I must read. I'm not trying to prolong this because we needed a correction in an answer. This is a correction from the book. Now this is on - what page? - page 51,

Appropriation Number 2(j), Reference No. 9, Dental Health Objectives. I'll read the correction.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I was going to bring this up to you, Mr. Minister, but I thought I'd better not.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Until I read it, I won't know what I'm talking about.

Providental treatment, preventative dental services to 51,000 children in all areas of the province except the Cities of Winnipeg and Brandon. The target population in Portage la Prairie and Thompson is children aged 6 and 10 and, in all of the rural areas, 6 and 14.

"Activity Identification:

Delivery of a full range of dental treatment services either through school-based clinics or private dental offices.

Delivery of fluoride rinse programs (on a weekly basis) throughout all school divisions except Winnipeg,

Delivery of public health education in schools, and pre- and post-natal classes at parent meetings, at centres for the mentally handicapped, at preschool facilities and at senior centres.

Delivery of public water fluoridation programs, respective results, continued improvement and the DMF index, decayed, missing and filled teeth of individuals receiving preventative and treatment services from the program."

MR. D. ORCHARD: Basically the changes that you originally - you said it was for all areas of Manitoba and that just simply wasn't being factual. That's the objective.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Well, it's not in Portage and Brandon, that was your first question.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Okay. That can pass.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(j)2—pass: 2.(j)3—pass.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, in terms of Environmental Health, obviously you've got a change in a managerial position because your budgeted salaries are down significantly. You've got a change in staff here? Mr. Warner's not there anymore?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: An interview is being held. A job offer is out but we don't have anybody as yet.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, just one question on water quality assessments. I've got a certain stance at home and I just want to know where to go and whether you've got the teeth to resolve it. There is pretty strong evidence that an individual's well has been polluted through fertilizer spills. What is happening is that the guy is getting shuffled here, there and everywhere because no one takes the responsibility and says, yes, your well was polluted and therefore someone has to do the cleanup. Is this where I go, or is it still over in Environment? Do you have teeth in

your legislation that someone can make an assessment and say, yes, you've got a pollution problem and you caused it.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I want to make sure because there is some that Environment inspected that I have because it's one of my acts, that I have to make the decision. But I want to make sure here that this inspector and the reporting is through Environmental Health.

MR. D. ORCHARD: All you're doing here then in Environmental Health, as far as water quality goes, is providing regional services the bottle so people can test farm wells, etc. etc.?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Well, the regulations come under The Public Health Act which is my responsibility and we work with the environmental department with that because of the act.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(k)1—pass: 2.(k)2—pass.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, in the interest of speeding right along, there's no big change in what Health Information Resources are doing year over year? There's no internal audit that I should look at showing a massive hemorrhage or anything, Mr. Minister?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: If you find one, let me know so I can get ready.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Pass.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: This next one is the one that I was saying that amount is transferred to Lotteries but they would still have, what we would call . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(n)1—pass: 2.(n)2—pass: 2.(p).

HON. L. DESJARDINS: This is just transferred to Lotteries. I was talking about that yesterday.

MR. D. ORCHARD: That's what I wanted to ask you about, because your little information sheet here indicates that for 1986-87, fiscal year just passed, that your expenditures went from \$787,000 as of December 31 to 0. That means you're funding it the past year out of Lotteries?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Minister, I'm not going to argue with you 12 minutes to six before Good Friday because I want to leave in a Christian way, but that contrasts to an answer you gave because I asked if any programs had been funded last fiscal year out of Lotteries, and I believe the answer I got from you was no.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I might have said that quite inadvertently. At that time last year we intended to go this way and then Cabinet directed that we get the money from Treasury.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Okay. Now, the point I'm going to make and I'll make it in two ways: the Manitoba Health

Research Council, I believe, if you are going to take Lotteries funds - and I'm not convinced that you're doing the right thing here - because what you're doing is you're clouding the deficit and etc., etc., but basically with Health Research. I think if you're going to fund it out of Lotteries, you've got a wealth of money over there, you could have increased the allotment to Health Research because it's not taxed money. That money is sitting over there in a pool right now. You've got about \$20 million sitting over there, No. 1.

No. 2, this means that your deficit will be reduced for the last fiscal year because you're pulling a \$787,000 budget item and you're putting it over to Lotteries wherein the Budget that we adopted and passed said you were going to have it out of taxation revenue. So it is going to be understating the deficit and we'll take that up with your Minister of Finance.

I've no more questions, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for River Heights.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Who makes up the council that decides on these grants and are they all volunteers, and there seems to be no staff people paid there at all?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Oh, there's a report, you were given a report. Let's say this, the only money a few years ago was from the Federal Government, and the Federal Government made a decision to reduce that. Of course, there was more pressure on the provinces. At one time when I was Minister of Health, in the Schreyer years anyway, we started by having - it was supposed to be \$100,000 for two years, no other commitments - \$50,000 to St. Boniface through their dinner that they had when they brought Salk here. That was the announcement that was made, and we've had \$50,000 for the other teaching hospital. I talked to Dean Naimark, who was dean at the time and asked him if we could have somebody look at research, a group, some kind of a foundation or council. Bud Sherman worked with them and then brought in \$200,000.00. When we came in '81 it was \$200,000 - and that is partly in answer to you also, Don - so we improved this and we went to around the 700. Now, the last two or three years that amount stayed the same but it was from my Estimates.

But we also started about two or three years ago, when we reformed Lotteries, we had an umbrella group that was for Lotteries and out of that that council which is named by Order-in-Council, and I'm sure that it is available because there were people who were selected for their expertise and tried to make sure that there was a representative from the groups, and the government is saying that whatever money we have will go through these people. So it has been, 787, but from the day, Don, that we changed Lotteries, it was a million-something for research.

Now some of it, because we have to look at reality, what we had, roughly half of it was for capital, in other words, to finish St. Boniface. Then Health Sciences Centre is getting it when St. Boniface is finished, and then make up the \$2.5 million, but it had to be matched and eventually all that money will go for research. So you would have approximately last year, I think it might

have been - what? - just for the council, not counting the capital which was the same amount.

In '86-87, it was 528 for nine months, and '85-86 was 785.6, around 700-800. That's one that didn't go up all the time because that's only the money from the breakopens sold in hotels. It's roughly another 750 or so. So they are getting - well let's say '85-86, they got 787 plus another 785.6 and then the capital was another 785.6.

MR. D. ORCHARD: So that you're looking at over \$2.1 million then is what you made?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, and then, when that's finished, they get it all. So it's been a big improvement.

MR. D. ORCHARD: So the circumstance this year then will be that they will get \$1.5 million . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: That same amount there from the Lotteries, or whatever it'll bring, approximately 785, plus this amount which will be taken not from that umbrella . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: From other Lotteries revenues.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes.

MR. D. ORCHARD: That's fine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for River Heights.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Just a clarification.

It's just a grant for an external agency, so there is nobody on staff who has to deal with this at all?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Not from our staff?

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Yes.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: 2.(p)—pass.
2.(q) - the Member for River Heights.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Again, my only question there is where is the staff?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: That would be under Regional Operations. This would be the branch.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: 2.(q)—pass.
Section 2 - Community Health Services (Programs)
Resolution 84: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$52,851,700 for Health—pass.
Committee rise.

SUPPLY - AGRICULTURE

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, D. Scott: We are discussing item 2.(a), Manitoba Crop Insurance Corporation still? The Member for Virden.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Mr. Chairman, at the end of the last Session, the Member for Arthur raised a question of

the reinsurance funds in Crop Insurance and the utilization of the reserve account.

I think that we would like to see the Minister explain to us what happens to the premium dollars that go into crop insurance from the producer and from the Federal Government, why the reserve account is set up the way it is. The two reinsurance accounts, one from the Province of Manitoba and one from the Federal Government, give us some explanation as to how they function and why the dollar values are where they're at in the annual report of '85-86.

There will be further questions depending on his answers.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, in response to the Member for Virden's question, there are basically two agreements that are in place. There is the Canada-Manitoba Crop Insurance Agreement which establishes the reinsurance fund nationally, and there is a provincial reinsurance program which is established by agreement between the province and the Corporation.

Mr. Chairman, the Member for Virden, last week or the other day when he was speaking on this issue about reinsurance - I guess he doesn't remember his homework at all when he was suggesting I do my homework. It was he who signed the agreement between the province and the Corporation in 1980, establishing the reinsurance fund under section 14(1).

Section 14(2) of the act states: "The Minister of Finance may, subject to the terms of . . . the reinsurance agreement . . . pay out of the account any amount required to be paid to the . . . Corporation, and the current crop reinsurance agreement between Manitoba and the Manitoba Crop Insurance Corporation was signed June 6, 1980, by none other than the Honourable Member for Arthur in accordance with the act and the reinsurance agreement. The insurance premiums are held by the Minister of Finance in a general account for use by the province, and are payable on demand to the Corporation in accordance with the terms of the reinsurance agreement.

The honourable member should look at the Public Accounts of the province and he would see, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1986, where there is a balance of \$1.854 million in the reinsurance account, which is identical to the amount shown on note 5 in the annual report of the Corporation for the year ending March 31, 1986.

As well, Mr. Chairman, while I'm on my feet, the Honourable Member for Arthur talked about myself doing homework on a number of producers. Had he looked beyond the page that he was quoting from and went to page - I think it was 13 - 31, I'm sorry - 31 of the Corporation, he would have had the entire list of producers and the percent of participation in the program.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, we have it right there - 1985-86, we had 78.2 percent of the farmers participating, and we have just over 14,000 farmers.

The figures that the Minister of Finance used, or the Minister of Agriculture used, in the Budget are totally untrue. They told us that there were some 23,000

farmers going to participate in the education tax refund, 75 percent of the farmers. Now he's saying in his own report that 14,200-and-some farmers make up 78 percent of it. Now there's something strange, Mr. Chairman, something strange for the political purpose of the Minister of Finance trying to leave the impression that there are 23,000 or 25,000 farmers being helped by the Budget of this government in the removal of education taxes off of that percentage.

And then we go to the Crop Insurance Report which points out that there are far less than 20,000 farmers according to their own books, and he stood here in his place the other day and said there were 20,000 farmers. There aren't. There are a lot less than that according to the figures that we have.

So I would say to the Minister that he better start getting his act together, and his Minister of Finance better start getting his act together. But again, Mr. Chairman, it's a selective use of numbers for their political purposes, and he has a right to be turning red just the way he is right now because he has a hard time to be coming forward with any factual information in any area.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Chairman, I want to deal with a call concerning crop insurance yesterday or the day before. I'm glad we were dealing with crop insurance when I received this call, because there's something that is very upsetting with a constituent of mine and, when it was brought to my attention, I was extremely concerned about it.

There is crop insurance for alfalfa seed production. There is also a stipulation that you can get crop insurance if you have 15,000 leaf-cutter bees per acre. Now I don't know how in goodness' sake you get this formula to work, but anyway I'll try and paint the situation so that the Minister understands it and his staff can probably respond.

It cost this constituent of mine \$8 an acre to insure his alfalfa seed production. He doesn't get insurance unless he has 15,000 leaf-cutter bees per acre. Well, due to a poor supply and poor leaf-cutter bees and an inability to buy them anywhere, his actual count is about 5,000 bees per acre.

HON. B. URUSKI: I don't buy that.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Well, the Minister says he doesn't buy that. Well, his agent does.- (Interjection)- Now that's what I want to find out but, first of all, I want to know: Why does it mean that, if you've got leaf-cutter bees of any number, you can get crop insurance on your alfalfa seed production but, if you haven't got any leaf-cutter bees, you can't get any coverage?

HON. B. URUSKI: Absolutely.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Well, the Minister says "absolutely."

A MEMBER: Who counts the bees?

MR. J. DOWNEY: That's right. Well, the Minister doesn't.

I don't take this lightly because I think the press and the public should know that -(Interjection)- Mr. Minister, I would appreciate you listening to this because here's the point.

He hasn't got enough bees per acre so he doesn't get the coverage. But even though he hasn't got the bees, hasn't got the coverage, he's still compelled to pay \$8 an acre to carry crop insurance.

A MEMBER: Oh, oh - ripped off again.

MR. J. DOWNEY: So he is being ripped off. Here the producers of alfalfa seed now in the province are forced to pay \$8 an acre for coverage and haven't got any coverage because they haven't got the number of bees and can't get the number of bees.

So I'm saying, if the Crop Insurance Corporation isn't prepared to give him coverage because he doesn't have enough leaf-cutter bees, then for goodness' sake, don't charge him \$8 an acre coverage. I mean why would you insure your car, your house, if you're not going to get any coverage if something happened to it? Surely, the Minister of Environment can understand that kind of a simple policy.

I ask the Minister of Agriculture: Why would he charge an insurance premium of \$8 per acre on alfalfa seed production when in fact the producer doesn't get any coverage? I think it's absolutely unfair, absolutely a rip-off. Maybe they've had some problems with alfalfa seed production, but I can assure you that the individual I've been talking to has checked all over.

The Minister says that sure, come to the Interlake, you can find all kinds of leaf-cutter bees. Well, how much are they? What does it cost? How do they get them there? Oh, now he doesn't know. Can he document that? Where can he find them for these people?

The other option is, for goodness' sake, don't charge him his \$8 an acre premium or else give him insurance, either one or the other. Why would he be expected to pay insurance if, in fact, he hasn't got any coverage? I mean, is that not - who would ever think that's fair? If the Minister of Agriculture thinks it's fair, then I would hope that he would be able to stand up and explain it.

But I think he's going to have some other questions to answer as far as the numbers of farmers are concerned, but I had to get this question off because the individual called me. He's extremely upset about it, and I don't blame him. He's not the only one. There are quite a few farmers who are in the alfalfa seed production who are being forced to pay premiums, who haven't got any coverage. I would hope the Minister would take corrective action and respond to it. If he knows where there are leaf-cutter bees, then publicly announce where there are and at what cost, so those individuals can get them and get the kind of production they need.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, it seems to me that we've had this debate before.

MR. J. DOWNEY: We haven't had this debate before.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, yes, I believe on leaf-cutter bees and alfalfa, we've had this debate before. I'll have to go back in Hansard. Since I've been here, I think when honourable members opposite don't have anything to raise, they will raise - the Honourable Member for Arthur will, in fact . . .

MR. J. DOWNEY: Seriously, I can give you the guy's name.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, I don't dispute that there may be the odd farmer who complains about the issue that the member raises. I don't want to even lessen the problem. I want to clearly state that, before a contract is signed on alfalfa seed production, Mr. Chairman, the regulations that are there dealing with coverage and within the contract, section 10 of the contract deals with "insurance coverage shall not apply," and clause C indicates: "on losses due to inadequate fertilization of the pedigreed alfalfa seed by alfalfa leaf-cutter bees" - they give the Latin pronunciation of the bee - "when the grower fails to have a minimum of 15,000 alfalfa leaf-cutter bees per acre in shelters, at a minimum density of one shelter for every three acres in the alfalfa field by the 20 percent bloom stage of the alfalfa seed crop." There's more to this question.

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to explain to my honourable friend that, although we on our farm have not personally grown alfalfa seed, we have been involved in bird's-foot trefoil and other legumes. But many of my neighbours are involved in production of alfalfa seed. Historically, and I go back 20-25 years, alfalfa seed production was, I would say, a hit-and-miss situation. In fact, farmers for a number of years attempted to fertilize or pollinate alfalfa production by the use of honey bees.

Maybe the member's not aware that honey bees are -(Interjection)- yes, not as effective, because they get clobbered by the stamen of the alfalfa pod, and are unable to do an effective job of pollination, so that seed production has been hit-and-miss. With the bringing in of leaf-cutter bees into this province, that industry has flourished.

Mr. Chairman, the honourable member talked about whether or not - where can one buy one. There is an association, Mr. Chairman, within the province. There are a lot of these bees being exported out of Canada back to the United States because of Manitoba and Canada being generally disease-free, and so the trade in leaf-cutter bees is almost as significant as the production of alfalfa seed. So obviously, if Manitoba producers can not only produce seed but they can also export leaf-cutter bees, obviously there is a demand. I don't deny that.

Mr. Chairman, before one signs a contract - and I believe, since we've had alfalfa seed production coverage, that requirement has been in place. So when the honourable member says, why charge a premium if I don't have this clause, Mr. Chairman, before one enters into a contract, that is the stipulation. It's not that we went and signed a contract and then included this clause and caught somebody basically off guard with the change in regulation. That's not what happened, Mr. Chairman, as I understand it.

Those terms have been there from Day One and so, unless there's some extenuating circumstance that I am not aware of.- (Interjection)- Well, then there should have been a letter from the honourable gentleman or from the member on his behalf to have us look at the specifics of the situation. Then we could deal with it in a much more precise way in terms of what occurred in that instance.

But in the general terms, the regulations about the coverage is there before you sign the contract, and that's really the issue. Mr. Chairman, were those regulations changed midstream that put this farmer at a disadvantage from other farmers, and/or were those regulations there before the contract was signed and should the farmer have been aware or did we make him aware?

Once we sign a contract, Mr. Chairman, whether or not there's a claim, the premium has to be paid and the coverage is there. If the farmer then does not live up to his end of the bargain and has a loss, Mr. Chairman, and has not lived up to the terms of the agreement, obviously there'll be a dispute, but clearly there should be no claim. If the part of the bargain is that the seed has to be fertilized, there will be no production if there are no bees to do the work.

Many of my friends used to raise alfalfa about 25 miles north of Fisher Branch. They had no bees. They had a difficult time getting into that territory, it was basically trails. Maybe one out of five years, they struck it that they could get a crop of alfalfa seed. But for four years, there was nothing because there was either a small bee crop or very little pollination, and they took their chances. Then when leaf-cutter bees came in, provided there's warmth and that would be the major area where you could lose in terms of making sure that pollination doesn't occur - if we have a cool, wet summer, the bees don't fly and don't pollinate. That's where, even with bees, you could lose your crop or have a lesser crop because of cool, damp weather and the bees would not fly.

But to say that, because I don't have bees and one of the requirements under the contract is to have bees, and you then claim for loss, Mr. Chairman, I don't believe that the Corporation in fact has somehow changed the rules midstream.

Mr. Chairman, in terms of the numbers that the Member for Arthur talks about, the numbers of farmers and that, well this debate kind of reminds me of the debate we've been having with the Conservatives on Autopac. Mr. Chairman, I find it just ludicrous that a group on the other side have accused my colleague of, in fact, covering up losses that occurred while they were in office, as a result of contracts when they were in office. Those deals will be there over 20 years. Mr. Chairman, I find it incredible.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Lakeside on a point of order.

MR. H. ENNS: I would dearly love to use the opportunity that the Minister is now inviting to enter into a debate that would be entirely out of order, a debate with respect to the reinsurance policies of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation. But I would be doing a disservice to the farmers of Manitoba and to the members of this House, this committee, who are here to discuss crop insurance and other farm-related problems.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister on the same point of order.

HON. B. URUSKI: No, Mr. Chairman. I accept the honourable member's comments. I will contain my

remarks to dealing with the numbers question that the Member for Arthur raised.

I want to tell him that, in terms of the statistics of farm numbers and potential farm numbers, will be as varied as the returns filed with the Income Tax Act; Mr. Chairman, will be as varied as Statistics Canada, on which the Corporation bases its projections, and they are projections based on Stats Canada statistics if he looks at the report. So the projections that the Corporation puts in the annual report are on the basis of Stats Canada statistics. I will not even attempt to defend any numbers because they are projections, and they are just that. It depends what numbers you want to utilize. If you want to utilize income tax, you will be in excess of 30,000 in terms of numbers of farmers who filed income tax returns as a farm return, Mr. Chairman. If you want to use some of the projections that the extrapolations that crop insurance uses, Mr. Chairman, they are based on Stats Canada figures. I make no sort of credence on one or the other.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Well, Mr. Chairman, he says we want it one way or the other. I think he's the one who's trying to have it both ways.

I just want to conclude on a couple of questions. I don't want to take a lot more time on it. The Minister says, if he had the name and the specific case about the problem with the alfalfa and the premium, I can give it to him and I'll send it across the way. It's a constituent of mine from Reston. I haven't had time to write him. He's talked to Portage; he's talked to his agent who, by the way, as I understand it, his agent is not unsupportive. It's Portage la Prairie, the head office, that's giving him the problem, and I plead with the Minister.

HON. B. URUSKI: What's the issue?

MR. J. DOWNEY: The issue is that he has to pay a premium. The Minister can say all he likes about entering into a contract. If the man cannot get a supply of leaf-cutter bees - and the Minister said himself that they can't be brought in from the United States, and they can't. If all the leaf-cutter bees are used up within the province, I'm sure the people in the Interlake aren't going to sell off their leaf-cutter bees to drop below 15,000. The point that I'm trying to make is that there is a shortage of leaf-cutter bees for alfalfa seed production in the Province of Manitoba. That's the point. Can he not listen to that kind of a statement, and then substantiate whether I'm right or wrong?

But I'm taking the person's word for it at this point that he is absolutely unable to get the number of bees to qualify for crop insurance. What I'm saying, if there are some circumstances that stop farmers from getting the number of bees and qualifying for insurance - for goodness sake! - look at taking the premium off. That's the point I'm making, and I'll leave it at that. I will send the name over.

On the second point, dealing with numbers of farmers, it appears that the government, for the sake of their Budget and what they're trying to leave the impression with politically through their Budget, there were some 30,000 farmers, which must have come from Statistics Canada - I don't know, he's talking about Statistics Canada.

A MEMBER: Revenue Canada.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Revenue Canada, okay. So he talks about Revenue Canada there but, for the crop insurance purpose, he uses Stats Canada. I question whether Crop Insurance use Stats Canada or not. I think Crop Insurance use their long-term records. There's no source here - it says: "Based on 1981 Statistics Canada estimate of crops." Okay, so it is Stats Canada, it says that on the report.

But he is trying to play games, and that is the point I'm trying to make, Mr. Chairman, and I would suggest that he won't get away with it. But I do want that one issue solved, and I'll send the name of the person over and that will conclude my questions on this issue.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, I will be pleased to look at the situation, but I want to leave it on the record that I don't expect the Corporation, if someone comes in and wants to insure an alfalfa seed production, to be responsible then to find for a farmer a supply of leaf-cutter bees. Mr. Chairman, if in fact someone wanted assistance in terms of doing that, they would contact us and we could see if we could put them into supply.

But I would think that, if one was embarking on commercial seed production and did not have a supply of his own bees, one of the things that he would be doing before he went into a contract would, of course, not only plant his alfalfa seed in the ground but would also secure a supply of bees.

I only say that because I do know the Leaf-cutter Bee Association and farmers in that association have exported, I believe, in the millions of bees outside the Province of Manitoba. As I've indicated earlier, the leaf-cutter bee production for some farmers has become as lucrative as the production of seed and Manitoba has had, I guess, the great fortune to be not totally but virtually disease-free. We've had some disease problems where we've had to eradicate entire flocks of leaf-cutter bees, and that was done with the cooperation of the association. But generally Manitoba has been disease-free, and we've been very fortunate in this area.

But I don't want to leave the impression for my honourable friend that there is something that we will be able to assist. I will take it under notice. The member has provided me with the name of the individual. What we will be doing is asking staff to review that, and I will be responding to him at a later date.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Minnedosa.

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

Just before we leave Crop Insurance, awhile back the Minister and I had considerable debate on the relocation of the Crop Insurance offices from Minnedosa to Neepawa, which is in the constituency of Ste. Rose. He assured me then there were no political motives behind the move, and obviously there weren't because Ste. Rose has now become a Conservative stronghold. I want to ask the Minister if he could tell me what the savings have been by relocating that office?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, I think, during that debate, there was a small saving in terms of dollars.

I don't think the decision totally was made - and I'm going on memory - on the basis of saving a great deal of money. It was not that.- (Interjection)- No, Mr. Chairman, if the member looks at his annual report, on page 34, he will see the agency area that is being served and that's Agency No. 12. If he looks at the way the numbers of clients were derived to form an agency office, our agency office at one time was at the extreme west end of the area. In fact, we were butting right against the Agency Office No. 13. So, the move basically was an attempt to centralize that office to service all the farmers in the Agency Area 12, which went from Glenella pretty well to the lake and the Westbourne Municipality in the east and, of course, in the Neepawa area, it was more central. That was the main reason, Mr. Chairman.

It was not a matter that the Corporation would save thousands of dollars. That was not the move. It was made to centralize the service.

MR. D. BLAKE: Using that criteria, Mr. Chairman, is the Minister contemplating relocating any other Crop Insurance offices?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, I have not received any advice from the Corporation making any recommendations, and I have no knowledge that they would be even considering any moves at the present time, no.- (Interjection)- Pardon me?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Would the Member for Minnedosa, if he has a further question, please take the floor so it can be recorded?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, the member talks about a lot of the other offices and, I think if he's got some further suggestions or even comments that offices are close to one boundary or another, I wish he'd raise it with me because I would be prepared to raise it with the Corporation to justify why one office would be, as he's claiming, not as centrally located as the office was in Area 12.

From my understanding, on the advice from the Corporation - and I've acted on the advice. It was not at my insistence, and I want to tell the honourable member - and I will repeat that and I think I've said it before. It was not at my insistence that office be moved. It was on recommendation of the Corporation to the board of directors, and I accepted that decision.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Virden.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

On precisely that issue, Mr. Minister, if you'll look at the map that you had there on page 34, you will see that District 13 is exactly the same situation where Hamiota is in the southwest corner involving seven municipalities. That was raised to me not too long ago as to whether it was efficient to have it located in that corner. I'm not advocating moving or not moving, but the criteria you used would be exactly parallel in District 13 where Hamiota is in the very southwest corner. I would ask that, if the Corporation was making any plans to move there or had received any input from the area requesting a move, either from his staff or from the

R.M.'s, regional managers, that's exactly this parallel situation.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, one would also have to look at where the distribution of clients is in the other area, not just the centralization of the office, because that is just one aspect of where the client service would be enhanced. I don't receive staff recommendations to me in terms of offices. That goes through the board and the board then comes to myself. That is basically not a ministerial decision. There was ministerial intervention on the basis of the Honourable Member for Minnedosa raising it in this House. I did take an interest in that matter, but normally that has not been my prerogative to deal with those kinds of issues.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Going back to my first question this afternoon on the two reinsurance funds, I would like some explanation as to what I find in the '85 annual report. It says and I read: "On an accrued basis, as at March 31, 1986, the Manitoba Reinsurance Fund is at a deficit of \$1.37 million and the Canada Reinsurance Fund has a balance of surplus of \$24.6 million." I can't understand why they are different if it's premium money that went into the two. Can he explain the difference?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, basically, because of the formula that there is in place between Canada and Manitoba, there is a first layer of 2.5 percent that is paid for by Manitoba before there is a ratio of split between Ottawa and Manitoba from the Federal Reinsurance Fund. Since 1980, the amount of payouts in excess of premiums exceeded the premiums taken in, drawing on the Manitoba fund, which has in fact shown us into a deficit situation, but it hasn't been large enough to draw down the federal fund. So you will show a larger balance at the federal side and a lower balance on the provincial side based on the existing formula.

I'll read this into the record. "Basically when the reserve is depleted, payments are made from the reinsurance funds at the rate of 75 percent from the Canada fund and 25 percent from the Manitoba fund subject to a 2.5 percent deductible of the total liability first coming from the Manitoba Reinsurance Fund. This deductible does not apply if Manitoba has outstanding advances that exceed 16.66 percent of the total liability." That's basically the way the formula works. Now, when it's shown in the book, this is the first year that, because the Corporation has historically reported on a cash basis, we put in the note this year to show what it would be on an accrued basis showing the liabilities that would be outstanding at the front since the time of March 31, 1986, the claims reported but not paid against the fund which would show a net deficit of \$1.3 million.

MR. G. FINDLAY: It would be my general understanding from reading this that the money goes into the reinsurance funds and back out at no interest. The premium money is not lost in any fashion and in the reinsurance fund, what goes into the reinsurance fund, the province is responsible to return exactly that amount of money. Is that a fair statement?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, his analysis of the situation is accurate.

MR. G. FINDLAY: I guess to clear the air completely, would it be possible to supply a balance sheet as to the amount of money going in and out since the inception of the agreement in 1980? I don't ask for it right now, but can it be done next week?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, every year in the annual report from 1980 this would be reported in the same fashion throughout. Is there other information than would be reported in the annual report that the honourable member wants? I'm not clear on that.

MR. G. FINDLAY: What I want is an accounting of the movement of money from the premium money into the reinsurance and back out of the reinsurance in the Corporation so that we can be assured that fair ball is being played here, I guess.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, we will attempt to prepare a schedule. But, Mr. Chairman, let it just be clear that our financial statements are in fact approved and are audited by the Provincial Auditor. So, if we would be doing something different than normal accounting practices, he would be issuing a qualified statement. Let me assure the honourable member that the audits are ongoing as well as annual, and it is only as a result of the audits and the statements that have been approved by the Provincial Auditor are they reported.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Is it possible to give us the balance of those two accounts as of March 31, 1987?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, it appears - and this is an estimate because we are not certain that all the claims are totally accounted for. There may be some variance, but the estimated balance as of March 31, 1987, would be at \$4.63 million balance in the provincial fund - (Interjection) - positive balance, and \$31.533 million in the Canada Reinsurance Fund.

MR. G. FINDLAY: I'd like to ask the Minister, has there been any premium blending going on in the past, or are there any proposals in front of the Corporation to get involved in premium blending between the different regions of the province, involving the 15 districts - I see you leave out No. 13 now, but you have a District 13 - between the southwest area of the province and the Interlake?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, there is premium blending that has occurred. We have attempted to extend premium blending in other areas, as has been done in the Province of Ontario for 25 years. We have resistance presently from the Federal Minister and primarily it's at the bureaucratic level, I would say. I've raised it with the Federal Minister. They have apparently received a report from the Federal Insurance Department as to this whole question. I have asked for that report from them to find out what their difficulty is when in fact for 25 years the Province of Ontario has had only one district under Crop Insurance and

we have not. Mr. Chairman, in terms of districts and blending, there are certain crops under the Corporation that have been historically insured on an all-province basis. But there is no premium blending per se between the Interlake and the southwestern region in terms of any changes that we discussed two years ago.

But clearly, I have approached the Federal Government to look at that question because quite frankly, when we started examining it, there were benefits to just about every area as it relates to hail and all-risk insurance. In areas where all-risk premiums tended to be higher than other areas of the province, the hail premiums tended to be lower. In areas where hail premiums tended to be higher, the all-risk premiums tended to be lower. It just seemed to have worked out that way. In fact, if one was to do some portion of those premiums on an all-province basis, there could be some movement downward for those higher premiums, and of course it might slightly bring up the lower areas and there could be a greater spread of the risk on the entire province. But those issues are at this stage nothing more than discussion areas, and there has been no movement or acquiescence at the federal level to allow us to do and examine what they've allowed Ontario to do for 25 years.

MR. G. FINDLAY: I guess on the basis of hail, you're going to include that in the blending process, the hail and the all risk. Don't you run into a problem - take my area, the western part of the province. If I'm not mistaken, we're about 3.6 or 3.7 percent on hail and the southeastern or southern south-central part of the province is about 1.8 percent, Mr. Minister. Does that not create a position, if you average this all out, that you become very competitive with private insurance in one area and noncompetitive in another? Right now I think we're basically fairly competitive, region by region, with the private hail insurers and you might create a situation there that might be trouble in the future.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, just let me be clear. If I left the impression that we were blending hail with all risk, that's not what I meant.

MR. G. FINDLAY: You said there was a trade off; you didn't want to lose the other.

HON. B. URUSKI: If we were going to do some blending on hail, there would be benefits. If we did some all-province blending, there would be benefits for the areas that had higher hail rates. They would be brought down if we blended them with other areas of the province which had low hail rates. In the same way we would look at all risk, but it was clear to us that the areas that have higher all-risk premiums had lower hail premiums. So that if, in fact, hail premiums were blended and brought up a bit in the areas that had low premiums, the converse could occur in all risk; they could be brought down for all-risk contract holders but there was no intent to blend those two in a blending of premiums because the hail program is a separate program. It is not subsidized by the Federal Government at all and it is totally separate, let me just make that clear.

The all-risk program is the program that has the federal contributions to it. And so there was no intent

to blend those two but it seemed that, when you looked at those two, there could be benefits. If there was going to be some disbenefit on the all risk for an area, there would be a benefit gained on the hail side. And in fact in Southern and Western Manitoba, a lot of the debate that we had when we were introducing the changes was why don't you just allow us to take hail insurance and not all risk, those kinds of comments. So that was part of the debate that occurred, and we said we could have because the hail rates were high; they were higher in some areas. But we have not moved because we have not had concurrence to do any of these changes.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Just a point of clarification.

There's really in my mind two ways you can insure against hail. One is the hail spot loss, which a part of the all risk, if I'm not mistaken; and then the part two hail, which is separate, which isn't subsidized by the Federal Government. But the hail spot loss, as far as I understand it, is subsidized by the federal contribution to premium payment. Therefore, your previous argument about hail insurance not being involved in the blending, technically it is. I guess, further to that, I'd like to have some idea as to where the Corporation is at in terms of carrying on with this analysis of computer models being struck, trials being done. Where are we at in the process?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, I guess I could put it this way. What's the use of beating your head against the brick wall if there is no desire whatsoever at the federal level to consider that proposal? You know, we've raised it, we believe that there is merit, but that's where it stops. In fact, positions of the Federal Government are fairly well entrenched being opposed to looking at that concept. I regret that, because the principle being that, if you can spread the risk over a larger area and a larger number of clientele, the volatility of premiums in the event of a disaster in one area is lessened and then the true principles of insurance really work where in fact you spread the risk.

You know, there's no doubt in my mind that the conditions of growing in the Ottawa area are far different than those in Fort Frances, but yet the premium rates for the same crop on the same soil type in both those two areas would be identical because there's only one insurance program in the Province of Ontario. So the pooling is spread right across the province, and certainly doesn't create the kind of distortions that we have in Southwestern Manitoba and the Interlake area.

The Interlake area, I must say, that is a correctable one with greater improvement in drainage. The southwest area is a much more difficult one. It's a much more difficult one, and so it would be much more beneficial to farmers in the southwestern part of the province if in fact Ottawa would consider this kind of proposal. The Interlake eventually, with the improvement in drainage year by year, that situation lessens because it's been the lack of drainage there that the flooding has occurred and crops were lost. But with the improvement of drainage there, the risk for the Corporation will in fact go down.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Over the years, have there been certain risk areas where the premiums have been more

volatile than others? I think particularly of, well, we'll say the risk area is 9 and 15 in the Interlake area.

Is it because of low numbers of contract holders there? Is that the problem? Basically, is there greater volatility in some regions than others, and is it because of low numbers of contract holders?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, I guess there has been volatility in many areas of the province for different reasons, but I would say the major reason for volatility is the risk. The southwest is primarily drought and drought-related issues, grasshoppers which coincide generally with drought conditions, and the Interlake because of flooding. As well, in terms of the total numbers of participants in the program, the less you have will have an impact on the premiums as well. There is no doubt that the Interlake is one of those areas that has not historically had a great number of participants.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Has there been any consideration given to provincial subsidies in those areas . . . (inaudible)-

HON. B. URUSKI: No, Mr. Chairman. There is no consideration of provincial subsidies into a program. I find the moment you start doing that, then you really are into the adhocing that we got into hay and crop losses due to wetness and those kinds of programs. We have now moved away from that by the very announcement, negotiated announcement, that we had on the increased assistance of 10 percent as a result of a disaster.

MR. G. FINDLAY: What are the procedures used to identify the technically poor farmers, the people who are back for claims quite repeatedly when their district is basically in a non-claim position? How many years can they claim and what are the criteria used to have crop insurance refused to them?

I guess the next question that comes from that, while you're answering, Mr. Minister: Is it possible for people who, because of the guidelines, are refused by a particular crop insurance agent and then can go to another agent and apply and get back into the program?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, the adjustment factor that I provided my honourable friend the other day is one of the factors that is used to identify poorer producers in terms of the coverage. We have the claims and the discount policy, a surcharge policy, that is in place now. You have the case where a claim is filed and a post claim. There is an assessment whether or not there may be uninsured causes assessed against a farmer. When all those factors are considered and it's seen that a farmer in fact really is - one could put it in farmer language - living off crop insurance - I guess that would be the most common term. I don't think you can survive very long on crop insurance. It does provide you assistance in disaster, but then the coverage is so low at that point in time.

There is a review made between the field staff, the agent, our supervisor, and then a recommendation will come to head office which would go to the board for consideration whether or not that individual could have

his or her contract cancelled. But that is a long process and it's considered very seriously and very deeply before that happens. That would occur over a period, I'm sure, of 5 to 10 years before a final decision would in fact be made. Because you've had two or three losses and it's generally weather related, we would not go and say, well you've had too many claims and we're cancelling you out.

So that is a very serious consideration, but the Corporation does do probably anywhere from 5 to 10 a year, probably - less than five a year in this area because it is the most serious and final area that the Corporation does. Rather than kick people out, our goal is to of course attract and cover people to the extent that management is in fact reasonable.

MR. G. FINDLAY: He didn't answer the latter part regarding if a person has land in two risk areas and he gets terminated in one area. Can he still be involved in the crop insurance plan through another agent in another area?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, it is possible that could occur under another name, if one was cancelled out. But generally, every contract is sent into head office for approval regardless of which agent takes it. If the name is identical on the application form and can readily be identified, the Corporation generally would not allow that to occur unless one could show, look, my record here has been quite a bit different than there for whatever reasons. But if it is for generally practised or uninsured causes due to management, chances are that application would be turned down.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. L. DERKACH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A question to the Minister with regard to Crop Insurance.

There are some marginal areas along the south side of Riding Mountain National Park where losses are probably higher than they are in many other regions.

My specific question is whether or not there is a review of those farmers who carry crop insurance after they have had 8 or 10 losses on the same piece of land even though they may farm other areas of land where they haven't had claims, but on a specific parcel of land where they've had more than five losses. Is there any investigation into those situations?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, if my comment that I made to the Honourable Member for Virden stands in terms of management and the process that we go through about reviewing claimants' contracts where there are cases that we might find out and through claims and through information that, for example, there may be severe soil salinity on a particular parcel of land, there are parcels of land which we will not insure where we've had claims and the claims have been consistently there, primarily for either some element deficiency or whatever, high water table or those kinds of considerations. Then we will not even cover the land mass at all for insurance, regardless of the crop, unless it can be shown that the crop can do well in that soil. Then consideration would be given. But given the

normal pattern of, say, cereal crops, and that land should only be into forages and we'd had that experience, we in fact would not insure that parcel. But there's no doubt that we would not have knowledge of every parcel of land in that condition. Now that we are moving into computerization and data base collection on the computer base, one can expect over a number of years that the data base will expand in order to attempt to make those decisions much more timely, but I'm not sure that even that system will be foolproof.

MR. L. DERKACH: Mr. Minister, through the local agents, there is a review of the crop insurance data that a farmer has received by the agent at the end of January, I think, in each area. Surely an agent can pull a file of an individual who has had five claims on a specific piece of land and be able to report that to see whether in fact the claims have been legitimate, or whether in fact seeding dates have been too late and seeding has just been done in order to claim on a perhaps poorer or marginal piece of land.

(Mr. Chairman, C. Santos, in the Chair.)

HON. B. URUSKI: In terms of claims and whatever other pertinent information the agent might have, I'm not sure that the agent would know the seeding dates on every parcel of land in his own area. I don't think that's realistic that he would be able to know that.

But if in fact the claim situation is there, that's the role of the agent to draw that to the attention of head office so that those kinds of checks in fact can be made. During those kinds of issues, if they were raised, the whole question of uninsured causes, of course, on a claims assessment would be looked at and the number of possibilities the Corporation has to assess in terms of increased surcharge or uninsured causes or the coverage adjustment, those three areas would come into play in that assessment.

MR. L. DERKACH: One of the things that irritates farmers most is when they see programs such as crop insurance being abused, and I think that Crop Insurance agents are in a position where they can, in fact, evaluate whether there is at least an indication where there might be some abuse. Because when I go to report my crops or my application form, there is a place where I have to report the seeding date. Later in the year, we report our swathing and combining dates and the yields. Therefore, there is some data kept by the agents and, if they are in fact doing their jobs, they should be able to point out those people who are getting consistent remuneration or support from crop insurance on specific parcels of land. Would you not think so?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, those reports that the member speaks of, I believe, are voluntary reports, and are on the basis of a farmer's willingness to submit that information of those reports. The seeded acreage report is not a voluntary report, but those reports are voluntary reports.

As well, Mr. Chairman, I think if there is a knowledge that someone, for whatever reasons, appears to be abusing the program, I think it's incumbent on all of us to at least be a bit more specific, rather than general,

and specific in the way of either talking to our agent or talking to our supervisors, providing some of that information to them so that they can be alerted to that.

I know the easiest situation to get one into - oh, I know of so and so, and I hear, I guess from my time in this Legislature, with people saying, well I know so and so is in fact abusing and getting so much money out of welfare - that's the most common one - and they're abusing the system. You pin them down to who and what it is and, generally, either they won't tell you, they're not prepared to say, or if they think they know, then you go back and you find there's a doctor's certificate outlining that the individual in fact has been authorized through medical means to be on social allowances and of course you know differently. But I don't want to belittle that. I think it's incumbent on all of us, farmers, politicians, public servants, when information - not general information - but fairly specific information is drawn to our attention or raised with us, we should ask who and what's going on and then be in a position to pass that information on, so in fact it can be checked.

I know that does occur, and I would ask that my honourable friend feel free to either contact myself or the agent in his area or supervisor in the area if those instances occur. We certainly don't want to and don't condone abuses, but we are not infallible in terms of being able to spot every situation.

MR. L. DERKACH: Mr. Minister, I'm not talking about a specific situation. Moreover, I was asking about a policy with regard to a situation or situations that may occur through the province. And I think from your responses, it's very evident that there is some need to in fact improve on the policies that you have in that respect.

A further question, Mr. Minister, and I know you know about this specific situation, and that is the one that was brought to your attention at a meeting in the Angusville area with regard to the farmer who had lost his crop or wasn't able to harvest his crop and had applied for crop insurance and had waited for, well, this was the second year.

You indicated to him that you would take a personal interest in the case and review it and, to date, there seems to be no resolve of the situation. Again I'm going to ask a question on policy, and that is: When a crop is not harvested and there is damage to that crop through the winter by deer, in this specific case, or any wildlife, and that farmer can't get to the field because of snow conditions, is crop insurance denied him because he was not there to inspect the field through the winter and did not take precautions to scare away the wildlife?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure - I recall an issue being raised, and the member will correct me if I'm wrong. The issue that I recall being raised was that there was damage to an over-wintered crop by elk or deer, and that there was no compensation. I'm not sure that the individual had crop insurance because, if he did have crop insurance, regardless of what the damage was in the spring, claim should have been filed before November 30 that there would be crop left out over the winter and then it would be assessed in the spring. That's the normal process but, in the case that

he speaks about, I'd have to check as to - in fact, if I recall, I asked the individual to write the specifics in a letter to me.

I don't think I took them down, other than him raising the question, and that I asked him to draw those specifics to my attention in a letter at that meeting. I can picture where he was sitting; he was sitting to the left of you, I believe. He was kind of in front, but to the left of you towards the outside wall. You were more to the centre. That's right - oh, to the right of you, I'm sorry. Right on. Well, to my left of the honourable member's right in facing him.

I can't remember the name, Mr. Chairman, but I remember the situation. The gentleman, I don't believe, has corresponded with me raising that issue and the honourable member knows him. I would wish that he would, in fact, encourage him to write me that letter so we could examine it, because I don't recall since that meeting whether my office received a letter, and staff would know because generally it would go back to the Corporation for review. So I have not received correspondence from him raising that issue, and I wish that my honourable friend would encourage him to do that so we could examine the specifics of the issue.

MR. L. DERKACH: Well, Mr. Minister, I'm not going to get into a specific case here and I don't think we should. We can certainly address that in a different setting. But my question here is with regard to the policy of your department, the Manitoba Crop Insurance, with respect to animal damage or depredation during the winter to an extent where there is nothing to harvest in the spring. I know that Crop Insurance says, well, if you harvest it in the spring, then we'll assess the damage.

But if there's nothing to harvest in the spring and the farmer goes out there because the wildlife have destroyed the crop, how does he go about getting any compensation?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, in terms of losses in compensation for damage due to big game, the Corporation does not administer the program.

The Corporation responds to Natural Resources and farmers who have been assessed by Natural Resources or who have claims to Natural Resources. All we do is the adjusting and we report to Natural Resources, and that claim is handled through that department.

We do administer the Canada-Manitoba Water Fowl Agreement in terms of damage by ducks and geese, but not big game. Big game, we do the adjustments for Natural Resources but that's the only role that we perform there.

MR. L. DERKACH: Just a final question on this one. I don't want to pursue it any longer.

But if Crop Insurance comes out in the spring and there isn't anything to adjust, in other words the crop has been totally destroyed by wildlife or by animals, then what recourse does the farmer have? Because if a farmer claims that in the fall, if he did a part of the field and he claims he got 30 bushels to the acre, Crop Insurance comes out in the spring, assesses the crop and says, well, it looks by what's left here, you only had a crop of about five bushels to the acre and that's

what they report to Natural Resources who says, well, you didn't have a crop worthwhile saving there, then where does the farmer go to from there?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, I think that question in terms of the timing, we don't have all the - my colleague is not here - details as to the workings of the program.

We would report, I would assume, on what we see and then what we would estimate, no more or no less than that.

I think that question in terms of how the program operates and losses under that program really should be addressed to my colleague, the Minister of Natural Resources, because it is his department that both handles the applications and does the contacting of us. We are basically a service department in terms of doing the adjusting, no more than that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Gladstone.

MRS. C. OLESON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to follow up on the questions of the Member for Roblin-Russell. It's a subject that I had been wanting to raise again.

The cumbersome system that is used for crop damage by deer and elk, last year in the Estimates of the Department of Agriculture, I suggested to the Minister that it would be a very useful exercise if they were to provide the Crop Insurance offices with information as to what became of the claim that went to them and how it was rated and what payment was paid out because, since the farmers claim through the Crop Insurance office, it seems natural to them, of course, to find out about their claim through the Crop Insurance office.

The Minister, I recall he seemed to think it was a good idea last year at the time. I wonder if he has not gotten together with the Natural Resources Branch to sort out some means of this communication because, as it presently stands, the farmers phone the Crop Insurance office and all the Crop Insurance office people can do is give them a phone number to the wildlife office in either Winnipeg or Brandon, I suppose - probably Winnipeg - which seems rather cumbersome because, if they're handling it in the first instance, they should get the information of what happened to the claims.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure that we've addressed it since the last time, the honourable member's question.

I recall our discussion and the points that she made still stand. I don't disagree with her at all that once the farmer receives his slip from wildlife, it comes to our adjuster. We do the adjusting and that is the end of it.

Of course, then the farmer, if he doesn't know what is going on, that's always been the difficulty with the federal-provincial agreements, and I say that in a sense that, for example, under the Water Fowl Agreement, we had to, because it's a moving average over a number of years and if in one year our claims exceed what our allotment is, we have to determine whether we can take monies from future years' claims to make up the

payments, and that holds up, the settlement of the claims. The same would occur in the wild area and, unfortunately, our people who are the first contact in terms of doing the assessment, farmers come to them.

I will ask staff to look at the procedures again with Natural Resources to see whether there can be some streamlining and some information sharing on an ongoing basis, because I believe that the member's suggestions are valid for those farmers who come back to us. We're basically the same - we don't know - and farmers get a bit frustrated on this issue.

I concur with her and we'll have to have a look at that because there's also the issue of - I've had raised with me - the occurrence report issued by a Natural Resources officer on geese, whether there is something incumbent on the Natural Resources officer to advise the farmer to lay a claim with us in the following year and, if he doesn't, there is no claim.

We have to get together on this issue - and I appreciate the honourable member's suggestion - and see if we can work something out on this.

MRS. C. OLESON: Yes, I think the departments need to get together on it because it's a cumbersome system. I think the system presently in use, there are a lot of people who don't even claim because they find it so awkward and the timing and the harvest and so forth of getting a conservation officer out. I think there are a lot of monies that flow for wildlife damage, but there would be a lot more. There are a lot of farmers who are having severe problems with this, and they've thrown up their hands.

The Member for Roblin-Russell raised the point that you have to prove you've tried to keep the deer and the elk out of your land. Well, I find this rather difficult, Mr. Minister. I don't know just what the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Agriculture expect people to do. You cannot guard every field on your farm from wildlife, and I don't know how they're expected to do so. I will be raising this in the Estimates of Natural Resources, but I wanted to make the Minister aware again that it is a cumbersome system, and I think that the farmers are not really being very well served by it at this time.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, I want to indicate to my honourable friend, in the waterfowl area - (Interjection)- wild animals. It may very well be but I just want to indicate that, although there are periodic complaints of the cumbersome system, out of about 500 to 600 claims that we handle annually, there are usually only one or two where there is any kind of a dispute over. That's all.- (Interjection)- Mr. Chairman, the honourable member indicates that there are some people who do not claim.

Mr. Chairman, I would suggest that we do not discourage people from claiming, but clearly there are rules by which we have to abide. We try and administer the rules as fairly as possible, given the nature and the timing generally of harvest. That's been generally the complaint, as to the timing of harvest. With our adjusters, if there is notice given through our agent and there is enough lead time, we generally will attempt to have adjusters available even on weekends to come out and do the adjustment.

As I say, out of 500 to 600 claims under the Waterfowl Agreement, I believe in the last year, I've had only two issues, two basic disputes as to whether there was a lack of information or misunderstanding or something like that, that the claim could not be finalized and harvesting took place, and the Corporation, in fact, could not pay the claim on the basis of the program. So there are relatively few of those problems but I would encourage the honourable member, if she has constituents who may have not claimed in the past for just saying, oh this bureaucratic red tape, that she sit down with the Natural Resources officers and let them go through the procedures so she could be well informed. When she does get a call, she could be in a position to advise her constituents quickly as to the process. That might be helpful for her and her constituents.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Portage.

MR. E. CONNERY: The Minister mentioned the waterfowl damage. What has been the experience this last year on the waterfowl damage? Has there been an increase? Last year we experienced a rather severe year. What was the experience this year with waterfowl? What were the number of claims and the cost of the claims?

HON. B. URUSKI: In terms of the crop years in 1985 and 1986, the crop years were virtually the same, one could say. The payouts were \$1.05 million in '86 and, in '85, were \$1.06 million. The numbers of claims were almost identical, between 500 and 550 claims.

MR. E. CONNERY: Last year, there was a problem with late claims because there wasn't enough money. Is the \$600,000 still the allotment to the waterfowl damage, if I recall right?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, as I indicated earlier, there is a five-year running agreement, and there is a global amount of money that is set aside. All the 1986 claims have now been paid on the basis that the province and Ottawa brought in funding out of the five-year agreement to make sure that those claims are covered.

If the amount of claims, I believe, in future years exceeds the projected agreement over the five-year period, what would occur is that they would be prorated if there was not sufficient funding over the five-year period. That's what would happen. Let's say that we've got a year remaining. I don't know the exact numbers. I'm giving just a guesstimate for my honourable friend. Let's say there was a year remaining in the contract, and we had available funds in the last year of the agreement of \$500,000 or \$1 million worth of claims, and the claims that came in were \$2 million. The maximum amount was \$70 per acre. I'm giving that as an estimate. We then would have to prorate that back since we would not have enough money. We'd have to cut that basically in half. That's what would occur, because it is not a year-by-year agreement. It is a five-year agreement that is signed with a global amount of money over the five years, and that money can be moved from the years that you don't use it or moved

up or, if you've exceeded that amount, they can come from future years. So, it's a moving average on the global amount.

MR. E. CONNERY: Well, I guess my question would be, if it's the same farmers every year and, of course, the last year they don't get as much money, then they're all being treated equally, but likely it's not always the same farmers. So if one area got hit particularly bad on the last year, they would get very little coverage compared to the other farmers the previous four.

You said, you have a global amount of money. When is the ending of the five-year period? What is the global amount of money, and what has been expended at this point?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, the current-five year agreement ends March 31, 1988. I should indicate to my honourable friend that the last two years, the '85 and '86, the figures I gave him were very exceptional in terms of claims, because I will give him the claims for 1983 and 1984. Claims in '83 were \$177,000 and, in '84, were \$98,000.00. So when you look at those two years and compare them to the 1985 and '86 figures, they were almost negligible in terms of the total amount.

The total amount that we have available in the five-year agreement, we don't have that figure. I'll ask staff to provide what would be available in the last year's agreement, because '87 crop year is basically the last year of the agreement. We're into our last year right now.

MR. E. CONNERY: In reading Hansard from last year, my impression was that it was \$600,000.00. That's the impression I got, which would make it \$3 million. So we might have enough for the last year; we might not. So there is a concern. Is the level of coverage remaining at \$75 an acre? That's what it was last year.

HON. B. URUSKI: No, Mr. Chairman. It was \$75 in 1985. It went down to \$71 in '86.

MR. E. CONNERY: Out of curiosity, how did they calculate? Is it the lower grain price, the lower value of the crop?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, that's correct.

MR. E. CONNERY: Was there a change in the maximum compensation per farmer?

HON. B. URUSKI: No, Mr. Chairman. The \$13,000 limit per claimant continues to be the maximum.

MR. E. CONNERY: And what about the eligibility of crops? Is there any change in what crops are eligible to receive compensation? Like, are onions covered?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that there may have been one or two additional crops added. We'll try and get the list of crops that are covered under the program and provide it for my honourable friend. I don't have it with me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Virden.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

What's the Corporation's policy with early hail claims? I'm thinking of hail claims in June before the crop is headed out. Do you adjust the crop at some later stage in the year? Naturally, a crop that is hailed that early probably is going to be delayed in maturity and may then run the high risk of encountering frost damage in September. Is there is an opportunity then for the producer to have his adjustment reopened basis events that happen later on in the summer?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, I'll try and answer the question for my honourable friend.

I'm advised that in cases where there is hail damage and the hail damaged crop is the only crop that freezes in an area later on in the fall, then of course the Corporation would come and assess that loss. However, if frost is general and all crops freeze, even those that were not damaged by hail, then the cause of loss would be an all-risk cause not as a result of a hail loss. So that's the issue there, and I'm sure that's an issue that from time to time would be debated between farmers and the Corporation.

For my honourable friend from Portage, while I'm on my feet, Mr. Chairman, the eligible crops are red spring wheat, amber durham wheat, utility wheat, barley, oats, rapeseed, grain corn, buckwheat, triticale, mixed grain, rye, flax seed, tame mustard, field peas, canary seed, grass and legumes, lentils, faba beans and field beans are generally the crops under the Waterfowl Crop Damage Compensation Program.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Did I understand the Minister to say that you will open up the adjustments in cases where there appears to be frost damage later on in the year?

There will always be grey areas in this situation because you can get a spotty frost that's close to where the guy lives that damages those crops, and the crops that he sowed, basis the day he sowed them, are not damaged.

There is always going to be a grey area, and does the farmer have the opportunity to appeal the process?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, staff advise me that there was one area in the province this year where they re-examined the hail claim. The end result, on examining neighbouring fields that were not hailed, not hail damaged, the production results were virtually identical in terms of production. Therefore, any loss would have been an all-risk loss; that was the determination.

MR. G. FINDLAY: In that assessment, did they determine the seeding dates of the various comparative fields and the relative grade of the crop produced from those fields?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that they're reasonably certain that was a factor and it was considered, but I'm not sure to what extent, unless it was a completely different crop. That would make a difference in the final outcome. When crops of a similar nature were measured that were not hail damaged, the production of those was virtually identical to those by hail damage. Whether or not the seeding date in fact

would have been a great factor - it may have been - I am advised that would have been considered.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Mr. Chairman, in the latter part of my question, I asked if the farmer or farmers in question had an opportunity to appeal the adjustment.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, the role of the tribunal, in terms of determination on disputes, the main role of the tribunal is to deal with disputes on amount, whether it's percentage of loss or basically the amount of loss. That is appealable, basically, at the front end when the loss is in fact determined.

If there is a dispute on the actual amount of loss, I would imagine that consideration would be given to that matter being appealed. That question would have to be examined on its own merits as each case comes up. I'm afraid I may not be able to provide the honourable member with a definitive circumstance for any given case. Each case would have to be considered on its merits, on application to the tribunal, if there was a dispute with the Corporation on the amount of loss, because that's the basic role of the tribunal, not to dispute policy conditions, but to dispute the amount of loss.

MR. G. FINDLAY: If a person is considering going to the appeal tribunal, does he have to apply and can his application be accepted or rejected, or is he automatically going to be given an appearance before the appeal tribunal?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, the process that the Corporation handles at the present time in dealing with appeals, there's an adjustment made. The farmer disagrees with that adjustment; another adjuster comes in and does the readjustment. If there is still disagreement with the second adjustment, the regional supervisor is called in. He does the adjustment and discusses it with the farmer. If there is, at that point in time, still disagreement with the adjustment, the regional supervisor provides the farmer with the application form to be filed within seven days to the tribunal.

That application form then is forwarded to the Corporation, to the chairman of the tribunal. The chairman of the tribunal would then seek the advice of the tribunal's lawyer who would consult with the Corporation lawyer to determine whether or not that dispute is in fact appealable. The tribunal has legal counsel from the Attorney-General's Department and the Corporation has its own lawyer. Generally, the terms are established, and if the decision is made whether it is an appealable case, automatically notification is provided that the farmer's appeal will in fact be heard and a date at some time in the future will be set.

MR. G. FINDLAY: I can just recall one particular case that came to my attention not too long ago, and I'm concerned about the seven days that the person has in which to apply for appeal. I'll just give you the specifics of this case as I recall them.

There was a problem with rapeseed yield and the Corporation did an adjustment on the person's production of rapeseed and he was given a grade - if

I recall right - it was a grade of No. 2 on the basis of the amount of mustard that was in it. Then when he hauled it to - I believe he went to Harrowby - and there they assessed it as having 15 or 20 percent wild mustard which dropped him into a lower grade which dropped him then, in terms of adjustment, into a loss position.

But had the Corporation given him the lower grade to start with, there would have been a payout. He's caught in a Catch 22, basis the grade that was done at the time the adjustment was done relative to yield, and therefore he's certainly missed his seven days, but technically it is still an appealable situation.

HON. B. URUSKI: The reason for the seven-day time frame, in terms of the tribunal, is primarily for the tribunal to send out another adjuster to make a report to the tribunal for its information, independent of all those adjustments that have been done beforehand.

The question of specifics that the honourable member raises, I believe could in fact be appealable. If a grade sample was taken of the product that the member speaks of, sent and graded through the Grain Commission, and the amount of loss could be shown in terms of that crop that the farmer produced, that still would be appealable if the seven days, primarily, is to make sure that we have time to send out another adjuster to assess the situation where there is a dispute.

But in terms of amount, the kind of amount that the member speaks of, because of the quality of the crop which would of course affect the amount of settlement, that would be appealable and could be considered, I would think, even at this late stage.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Just for information then, in all cases where grade adjustments are made, is it the Canadian Grain Commission grade that is used? Is that always done?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, the grading now is done by the Corporation. All the grading used to be done by the Canadian Grain Commission but, because of costs, we had our graders trained by the Canadian Grain Commission. So our staff has been trained by the Canadian Grain Commission.

If there still is a dispute on the basis of our grades that we provide, then the farmer can just take his sample and send it into the Canadian Grain Commission and let it be verified. But the grading is done by the Corporation, our staff having been trained by the Canadian Grain Commission.

MR. G. FINDLAY: I guess I have a bit of difficulty with that, because in order to be able to grade grain, you've got to be doing it repeatedly. I wonder whether your staff is handling sufficient samples and comparative samples to have an understanding of how grades are determined in a particular year.

I wonder, when you say, because of costs, sending it to the Canadian Grain Commission, I, as a producer, it doesn't cost me anything to send a sample to the Canadian Grain Commission. If it turns out that it costs the Corporation something to have the farmer send it in, then the grade will come back on a piece of paper that is authentic in my mind and therefore there is no cost if you follow that route.

I think that, for your protection and the farmer's protection when you get to the appeal process, you'd be much further ahead to always have a Canadian Grain Commission grade on it because that's the official grade that's used in grain trade in Manitoba, Canada and around the world.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, our staff performs thousands of grain tests annually in terms of samples that we take, so that our staff would be in close collaboration with the Grain Commission. There may be some crops that we would not have great experience in which we in fact would send to the Grain Commission for verification, but the major cereal crops, our staff would be well trained. Only where there is a dispute with the Corporation, then it's free for the farmer to send in his sample and certainly we would abide by it.

Mr. Chairman, there is another reason why we've been doing it ourselves, is for turnaround time, the time to get the samples back and to make prompt payments, which does affect the payment time frame. We've now lowered it down to 40-some days where we were up at one time in the 80- and 90-day time frame, so we've really brought it down, and part of that does affect our turnaround time.

MR. G. FINDLAY: When the authentic sample is taken by the adjuster and is sent to the Corporation for grade, is that sample kept on file? It's there for dispute further on to then send it on to the Canadian Grain Commission if there is an appeal or a dispute between the farmer and the Corporation at the time of settlement. Can it then be forwarded to the Canadian Grain Commission if that dispute arises?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, they are held by the Corporation for a period of time, but a dispute may occur months down the road and, of course, we basically might be involved in a resampling based on the farmer's word that was in fact the crop.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Is there any set time that is kept, 30 days, 60 days or something of that order, or is it just at the discretion of the Corporation?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, we'll have to try and get that information for my honourable friend.

MR. G. FINDLAY: I guess I would like some idea as to the number of appeals that have come before the appeal tribunal in each of the last five years and the disposition of those appeals.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, we'll undertake to get those statistics for my honourable friend. I know we've provided them before. We'll endeavour to get that information. We don't have it at our disposal now. As soon as we have it, I'll provide it for my honourable friend.

MR. G. FINDLAY: In the course of the last year, there's been some change in the appeal tribunal board by appointment or disappointment by the Minister.

Was there any particular reason for those changes?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, I've made it a policy to attempt to give Manitobans an opportunity to serve on various boards, and I have periodically on every board virtually made changes either by request of individuals or once their term has expired. Usually the terms have been three years, and attempted to give more new people an opportunity to serve on boards.

I believe practically every board that I have under my jurisdiction, there have been changes over the last number of years. Once you've had three years of service, notwithstanding the good works that people have been doing, I have said to all board members that it is my intention to try and allow as much opportunity for other Manitobans to serve in those capacities.

MR. G. FINDLAY: I don't question the Minister's good judgment in what he's trying to do, but the appeal process on crop insurance adjustments, I'm sure, requires a fair bit of expertise. And I'm asking him whether there are people on there with sufficient expertise right now to be able to deal with appeals and maybe people need to be there for a period of time in order to be able to develop that expertise.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, I believe that what is required on any tribunal type of board is basic sound judgment and not a mind to jump to conclusions, to hear all the facts from both sides and to try and make a determination.

From time to time, I know that I've even had disagreements with members of boards and I'm sure that whoever has served in the executive position does not always - there's not always a meeting of minds, whether it be on the tribunal, whether it be on the board of directors wherever, whatever the role of those individuals are. But on a tribunal basis they are basically the court of last resort. They are basically to hear the advice of both their people who advise them and that is their adjusters, and their lawyers, versus the - and the farmer's case versus the information that the Corporation has and try to determine the best decision from that.

I may from time to time disagree with the decision and the Corporation may disagree with the decision handled by the tribunal, or the farmer may disagree with the decision made but the fact of the matter is, if we're allowed to have it away from political interference so to speak, where there is no board direction or ministerial direction, then those bodies have to be left to operate. And unless there's been a major miscarriage of justice and some new facts have arisen that the tribunal is reluctant to hear, and I've not had those kinds of cases, then normally the normal process would be to allow that tribunal or that board to have their decisions stand and be maintained. That's been my practice and I'm giving the honourable member my, I guess, philosophy in dealing with boards and commissions.

MR. G. FINDLAY: What kind of technical staff are available to the tribunal and to the farmer at the time of appearance so that they can get a fair assessment of the situation that's before them?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, in terms of an adjustment where there's a dispute on amount, the

tribunal sends out its own adjuster and he reports to their tribunal and, of course, if there is a dispute between the adjustment that they have received from their own adjuster and that of the Corporation, obviously those are the kinds of questions that the tribunal would have of the Corporation's staff as to what did he do to arrive at that adjustment and to see whether or not - if there's a big difference - and what the difference was and how did they arrive at it and try to determine as best they can what the balance should be, whether to accept their recommendation, if it was substantially different, or whether to leave things as they are, or whether to modify and take the middle road. And those are the kind of questions and decision-making that I would see the tribunal being involved in.

MR. G. FINDLAY: The Minister mentions their own adjuster. Is it somebody who is already an employee of the Corporation or is it somebody, a private adjuster from outside the Corporation?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, that decision about an adjuster, if one is required, usually the tribunal does select their own adjuster. As I understand it, some of the adjusters who were employed by the tribunal were past adjusters of the Corporation. The Corporation does offer and provide training both in terms of adjustment procedures to the tribunal. They are welcome to attend any of our training courses, and that information and invitation is extended to them. The tribunal members, I know just this last annual meeting that I attended, members of the tribunal attended the annual meeting of the Corporation to get a better understanding of the Corporation. I know the previous tribunal, the chairperson had been previously a board member of the Corporation at one time. So that's the kind of information and liaison that the Corporation tries to provide while not being careful, trying to in fact influence the decision-making of the tribunal, and the tribunal does seek and have the advice of the Attorney-General Department's legal staff with them at the tribunal hearings, should they require some legal advice.

MR. G. FINDLAY: The tribunal then is not bound by the readjustment. They're still able to make any decision they see fit. They're completely free on their own to decide on whatever merits they choose to utilize in a particular case.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, provided it's within the limits of the contract. Like, if the maximum coverage in an area was 20 bushels, they couldn't authorize a 30-bushel payment, for example. It has to be within the contract. But yes, basically they would hear the evidence and, provided that they're within the limits of the contract, their discretion is final.

MR. G. FINDLAY: I guess it's difficult to really ask the question I want to ask because the information I wanted hasn't been supplied in terms of the disposition of the various appeals that have come forward over the last four or five years, but I'll put it on the record anyway and ask the Minister's response.

It is my understanding that there are some dissatisfied or unhappy staff because of the way things have been

handled by the appeal tribunal over the last period of time. This being the case, I hope the adjustments and changes that the Minister has made are satisfactory to the staff such that things can work better in the future.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, I know that there have been staff who have not felt very well as to the workings of the tribunal or the decisions of the tribunal but quite frankly, notwithstanding that, the tribunal is the final say.

I am not that concerned as to whether someone of staff is unhappy. What I would be concerned, whether the tribunal would be exceeding its terms of reference and in fact exceeding its mandate. That's where I would be concerned, but if they are within their mandate - I may not like some of the decisions that they make. Those decisions are within their mandate. I may not like all those decisions either, but if I'm allowing this quasi-judicial body to operate, I basically have to accept their decision. It's true that there have been decisions that staff have questioned and have had some strong feelings about, but I'm sure that members here from time to time, when they hear rulings in the courts, have often questioned the motives and the background information as to the judgment made by certain judges. So that will always occur in this case. That kind of a situation can always occur regardless. When a third party is making the decision and their decision is binding, there will usually be someone who will be unhappy. It will either be the farmer or it will be the staff. I mean there is no one who will always come out saying everybody is happy.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Just to take it a little bit further, you can see where malpractising farmers, once they realize that automatic appeal will happen, or take an appeal that will automatically be in their favour, with the situation that was in place with the appeal tribunal - I will just relate briefly one particular situation that was brought to my attention where a farmer went out and broadcast some rapeseed into some stubble on the last legal day to seed, hadn't worked the land, didn't make any effort to control the weeds at all. The quarter-section basically grew thistles all summer. There were a few plants of rapeseed that grew, and he ran around with a combine and took a little bit of that off and then called Crop Insurance. The adjuster was very upset, but he knew that if he didn't give him something that he would accept at that point he was going to end up in an appeal, and he knew what was going to happen in the appeal. So the pressure was on the adjuster because of the system that had evolved over time. I just put that one out for you to . . .

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, as I've indicated earlier, I may not have appreciated decisions made by any particular tribunal, but I know that in the tribunal

we have now in place that decisions have gone, I gather, both ways.

I understand what the honourable member is saying. If the decisions tend to totally reflect an appearance of one-sidedness, whether it be on the side of the Corporation or on the side of the farmer, then there can be an impression created that, oh, oh, this group will agree to anything. I guess that often happens in terms of court judgments. You hear of lawyers standing cases until they appear before the judge that they prefer. So what else has changed in the environment of human relations? So I accept my honourable friend's comments because I know that decision-making is not always easy, but it's much easier to criticize those who make decisions.

As I said, sometimes I may not like the decisions, but I respect those people who serve on those boards.

MR. G. FINDLAY: I think we've covered this section, prepared to pass all of section 2, and I think the Minister would like to call it six o'clock.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(a) Manitoba Crop Insurance Corporation, Administration—pass; 2.(b) Canada-Manitoba Waterfowl Damage Compensation Agreement—pass.

Resolution No. 7: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$4,664,300 for Agriculture, Manitoba Crop Insurance Corporation, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1988—pass.

Committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

The Committee of Supply adopted certain resolutions, reported same, and asked leave to sit again.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER, C. Santos: The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. C. BAKER: I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Inkster, that the report of the committee be hereby received.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do I hear a motion for adjournment?

The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. E. KOSTYRA: I move, seconded by the Minister of Employment Services, that the House be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried and the House adjourned and stands adjourned until Tuesday next at 1:30 p.m.