

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, 14 May, 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 Employment Services and Economic Security.

HON. L. EVANS: Madam Speaker, I have a ministerial statement to give.

Madam Speaker, I would like to inform the House that the Single Parent Job Access Program, one of four new and expanded initiatives funded under the Canada-Manitoba Agreement on Employability Enhancement for Social Assistance Recipients, is now under way.

This program, which was piloted in Winnipeg and Brandon in 1986-87, will, in the coming year, provide pre-employment assessment and counselling, training and work experience placement for about 600 sole-support parents.

Under the new agreement, the program will be expanded and operated provincewide by seven Human Resource Opportunity Centres.

The agreement provides for the two levels of government to contribute jointly \$3 million to support this initiative from April 1, 1987, to March 31, 1988. Funding will be taken from social assistance budgets and used instead for this employment preparation support.

Employment preparation and training through the Single Parent Job Program encompasses a wide variety of skill levels and occupations, depending on the interests and abilities of program clients and available employment opportunities in the community.

Participants may move directly into employment experience placements with employers in the private, non-profit or public sectors for a period of up to six months, or they may enter an employment preparation program to develop basic work skills.

Single parents participating would be paid minimum wages during their involvement in group programming or work experience. As well, they may receive support for costs associated with entering the labour force, such as child care or special clothing required for the workplace.

At this time, Human Resource Opportunity Centres located in Winnipeg, Brandon, Dauphin, The Pas, Portage, Beausejour and Gimli are now undertaking recruitment for the Single Parent Job Access Program through referrals from social assistance workers and counsellors, Canada Employment Centres, the Human Resource Opportunity Program, and other social service agencies serving these regions.

I'd like to note that while participation in the Single Parent Job Program is entirely voluntary, it is anticipated that many single parents on social assistance will seek out this opportunity, preferring employment and the independence it brings to a life of welfare dependency. This innovative program serves as a statement of the province's commitment to addressing the special needs of single parent social assistance recipients.

Manitoba has benefited from from the Single Parent Job Access Program since its inception as a pilot project, and it has helped to create opportunities for individuals who are now contributing to our province's economic growth.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

MRS. C. OLESON: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I welcome this announcement by the Minister today of a program which, of course, jointly funded with the Federal Government, is doing something toward helping people on social assistance. One of the problems of being on social assistance, of course, is the dependency that develops from it and this may in some way help that, and I hope that the Minister's numbers - when he speaks of 600 - that those numbers can be increased a great deal in the time to come.

I'm also very glad to see that this is in the rural areas. This is one area where there is a problem. These job opportunity training programs often occur in the major cities of Brandon and Winnipeg where, of course, I know that they're badly needed, but it is now an opportunity for the rural areas to take part, and that is a step in the right direction.

I hope there is counselling to encourage as many people as possible to join in a program like this. I think one of the things, when a person is dependent on social assistance, one of their major problem is to get the courage to try to go out and get a job. And this program, I hope will encourage that sort of activity, and we will be asking questions about it in Estimates, of course, to find out how it is working, how many people are being placed and how the pilot project went this last year.

We're hoping, of course, we all hope to work to more full employment in this province and I hope this is a step in the right direction.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Madam Speaker, I have a ministerial statement and have copies for distribution.

Madam Speaker, I would like to make a statement with regard to the fire situation in the province.

The total number of fires burning in the province today is 22. We estimate the total number of hectares burned in the province to be 38,241.

The fire danger in the province is still extreme. Due to a fire at Fisher Bay the community was evacuated

late Tuesday. Fortunately, the fire crew managed to get the fire under control and there was no loss of homes or other buildings. I'm happy to report, Madam Speaker, that all residents have returned to their homes at this time.

Another fire reported Tuesday evening was in the Red Deer Hills area west of Lac du Bonnet, at the edge of the Brightstone Sand Hills Provincial Forest. This was actioned immediately by our ALERT response team and that fire is also under control.

The Wallace Lake area received cooler temperatures and about 27 millimetres of rain yesterday evening. This has allowed firefighters to re-establish all previous fire lines. The fire line has been extended up the east side of the fire, however, the situation is far from secure. One hot day will dry the area out again. Presently 450 firefighters are active on the Wallace Lake fire.

Firefighters from many northern communities are being brought in this week and this will allow us to rotate firefighters throughout the province.

The Woodridge fire in the southeast of the province received some rain and hail yesterday evening. This helped to bring the fire under control. Presently there are 27 fires at that location.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of all Manitobans, I would like to thank the firefighters, pilots, headquarters and rural staff, and Natural Resources Officers, all of whom have given long hours of hard work and dedication to gain control of the fires.

I would like to express our appreciation, as well, to the personnel of Abitibi-Price, Manitoba Telephone System, Highways and Transportation, Northern Affairs, the Community of Bissett and other agencies for their help in this extreme situation.

Madam Speaker, in spite of the fact that some areas of the province received rain over the last 24 hours, rainfall to date this spring in all of southern Manitoba is still much below normal, and the short-term forecast is for much higher temperatures, lower humidity and little or no rain. As a result, the fire hazard throughout the southern part of the province remains extreme. The following travel restrictions have, therefore, been announced this morning to ensure the safety of everyone using Manitoba forests, and to reduce the risk of new fires.

All open fires are prohibited in Manitoba.

In the southern part of the province, south of the 53rd Parallel, the following additional restrictions are in effect, and I will highlight these only, Madam Speaker, details as provided in the materials:

No burning permits will be issued.

Backcountry and off-road travel is prohibited in the wooded districts.

Access to Nopiming Provincial Park is limited to cottage subdivisions and campgrounds accessible from PR 315.

Access to Wallace Lake and the remainder of Nopiming Provincial Park, including Beresford Lake, Long Lake and Black Lake is prohibited east of Bissett on PR 304, and from the south end at the junction of PR 314 and PR 315.

Cottaging is permitted, except in the closed areas of Nopiming Provincial Park.

All provincial park campgrounds will be open, with the exception of closed areas within Nopiming Park and the Lone Island Campground. Wood fires in

approved facilities will be allowed only between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 11:00 a.m., with these hours subject to adjustment at the discretion of the local Natural Resources Officer based on fire and weather conditions in that region.

Canoeing and boating are limited to road accessible lakes with no landings permitted on undeveloped shorelines.

Aircraft landing or drop offs are prohibited on undeveloped shore lines. However, aircraft travel to developed lodge facilities is permitted.

Picnickers and other day users are encouraged to visit areas outside of the wooded districts, such as the Birds Hill Provincial Park and Lake Winnipeg and Lake Manitoba beaches.

Bush operations are suspended throughout the region, unless authorized, in writing, by a Natural Resources Officer.

Madam Speaker, these restrictions remain in effect up to, and including, May 22, but may be lifted or expanded on short notice if conditions change. Our department continues to monitor the situation closely to ensure the protection, not only of our forest resources, but to ensure the personal safety of Manitobans who enjoy these resources.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

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

Certainly, on behalf of the Official Opposition, we would want to associate ourselves with the comments just made by the Minister when he indicates the hard work the firefighters have faced in the last little while in fighting the extreme situation that they've had to face. Those of us who have had some bush experience acknowledge that it's both dangerous, round-the-clock kind of effort that obviously has taken place there and we associate ourselves fully with those concerns.

Madam Speaker, it would appear that the travel restrictions and other restrictions placed on Manitobans and visitors in our wooded areas are sensible and we support those in the main. Hoping, as we all hope for a change in the weather - more rain - to ease the situation.

Madam Speaker, the Minister indicated, in a previous statement, that at least one of the major fires was likely suspected to be arson. We have, as yet, no further indication as to the cause of the other major fire. We'll look forward in other statements from the Minister, and other information coming from the department, as to the precise causes of these fires.

Madam Speaker, it's also not too early to say, particularly when the province suffers such heavy losses - we are now looking in this short little while of having some 70,000 or 80,000 acres, or 30,000 to 40,000 hectares, of prime forest land ravaged by fire - that the department plan ahead and to program the widest possible salvage operation to take place in the burnt-out areas. There is a very limited time for these stands that can be salvaged before other natural causes - worm decay - begin to make that salvage less profitable. Surely bureaucracy ought not to stand in the way of salvaging the best we can out of a poor situation.

I remind the Minister and the government that, indeed, there's a heightened interest in the gathering

of wood just by ordinary citizens of Manitoba for their own use; and, of course, we have traditional commercial users who are well acquainted with salvage operations under these circumstances.

So that, while I concur that our job right now is to contain the fires - and that comes first of course - but I would encourage the Minister to have his staff people also planning the necessary mopping up and salvaging operations that can do two things - gain some value out of the remaining portion of the resource that we have, as well as, to help clean up the areas in a speedier fashion.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: Notices of Motion . . .

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

HON. A. MACKLING introduced, by leave, Bill No. 32, The Retail Businesses Holiday Closing Act; Loi sur les jours fériés dans le commerce de détail.

MOTION presented.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. A. MACKLING: Madam Speaker, I have a short explanation, as provided under Rule No. 85.

Madam Speaker, this bill ensures that as many working men and women in the retail industry as possible will enjoy either Saturday or Sunday as a traditional day of pause.

By taking this action to preserve an important aspect of Manitoba lifestyle, the government is protecting family life and an individual's ability to socialize. This bill also protects hundreds of jobs in the small retail business sector.

Manitobans already have more than enough access to major shopping facilities throughout the week. Not being able to do major shopping on Sunday is neither an imposition, nor a major inconvenience.

This bill does not diminish Sunday shopping that exists already; it limits a questionable expansion of Sunday shopping. Madam Speaker, this is a reasonable bill and one that should be supported by all fair-minded people.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MADAM SPEAKER: Before proceeding to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery where we have 18 Grade 9 students from the Murdoch MacKay Collegiate under the direction of Mrs. Nancy Trush. The school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

We have 30 students from Grade 5 from the Chancellor Elementary School. These students are under the direction of Miss Linda Clark. The school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

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

Also, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the loge to my right where we have Mr.

Rod Murphy, who is the Member of Parliament for Churchill, visiting.

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

Order please.

The Clerk just reminded me that we did not put the question on the first reading of Bill No. 32.

All in favour? Agreed and so ordered.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Co-op Implements Ltd.- 49 percent Dutch owned

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. G. FILMON: Thank you, Madam Speaker, I knew you were going to recognize me.

Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Co-op Development.

I wonder if he could explain how it is that a Dutch multinational corporation can own a 49 percent interest in a cooperative, namely, CCIL.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Co-op Development.

HON. J. COWAN: Madam Speaker, what the Leader of the Opposition is referring to is an arrangement that has been developed between Vicon Limited and Co-op Implements, in respect to the operation of both of those different entities. As you are aware, Vicon located in the Province of Manitoba several years ago bringing with it expertise, a new industry, jobs and benefits for, not only the province as a whole but, more particularly, for rural Manitoba.

A year ago, when Co-op Implements required some management assistance to help it through a difficult time, it entered into a management agreement with Vicon that allowed Vicon to provide them with some of that expertise in order to rebuild Co-op Implements so that they could continue to serve the rural communities of Manitoba, and Manitoba generally.

As a result of that working relationship which, as the Member for La Verendrye said yesterday, turned out to be a dramatic turnaround for the company, Vicon and Co-op Implements decided to go one step further in their working arrangement. They have come to a business arrangement between the two entities which allows for Vicon to have a certain interest in Co-op, and for Co-op and Vicon to sit on a board of directors - and I might add, Madam Speaker, that board of directors is structured so that both of them have a complete and total say as to what will be done in the organization; one entity can't control the other entity, they both have to be agreeable to the action that's being taken. I believe, Madam Speaker, that sort of arrangement, which is unique and innovative, will bring long-term benefits and jobs and a stronger farm implement industry to the province.

MADAM SPEAKER: May I remind Honourable Ministers that answers to questions should be brief.

Vicon - corporate income tax

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, I don't believe that the Minister did answer my question, but I will give him an opportunity to answer this question then. Is Vicon, the Dutch multinational corporation, paying corporate income taxes in the same way as they would as a private corporation, or do they get any advantages in tax by way of being involved with a cooperative structure?

HON. J. COWAN: Madam Speaker, Vicon, as it is located and operating in Canada would get the same benefits - and Manitoba - as other corporations operating in Canada and Manitoba, whether they be federal benefits or provincial benefits. There are certain tax benefits that accrue to corporations that will accrue to Vicon, and some of them will, in fact, be impacted by the way in which they are now organizationally structured, just as those same benefits would apply to Versatile. I have to remind members opposite what they had to say when another farm implement industry was saved in this province, how glad they were that happened. It would apply in the same way to them; it would apply in the same way to any major industry. There is nothing unusual about what is taking place in this regard; they are taking advantage of those tax benefits, primarily, those tax benefits of the Federal Government that would accrue to any other company or any other corporation or any other business entity in exactly the same circumstances.

Workers Compensation Board - Report of King Commission

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for the Workers Compensation Board.

On May 4, in response to my question with respect to the tabling, or at least the handing in of the report of the King Commission, the Legislative Review Committee into the Workers Compensation Board, the Minister said that he expected to have that report by the end of last week. Is his office now in possession of the report of the King Commission?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister responsible for Workers Compensation.

HON. H. HARAPIAK: Madam Speaker, there has been a complete copy of the report delivered to my office. It is now being edited for printing, not edited, it's in the process of being printed, Madam Speaker, we should expect it in about three weeks.

King Commission Report - tabling of

MR. G. FILMON: I'm not sure whether that slip was intentional, Madam Speaker, but I'll ask the Minister responsible for the Workers Compensation Board when he is able to table it in the Legislature?

HON. H. HARAPIAK: Madam Speaker, let me assure the Leader of the Opposition that the report is not being edited, that was a slip. We expect that the report will be printed within three weeks and, once we have

had an opportunity to assess the report, then we'll be tabling it.

Manfor - purchase offers

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have a question to the First Minister.

Madam Speaker, we were told this morning at Manfor, at the committee dealing with the Manfor Report, that there were four companies that are interested in the purchase of the Crown-owned corporation, of which the taxpayers have invested some, probably \$250-some million in equity shares and the carrying of some losses of in excess of \$50 million, a direct cost to the taxpayers, and we have a major stake, Madam Speaker, as taxpayers.

My question to the First Minister: Will he live up to what his Minister said, or support his Minister in the provision of all documentations, particularly who's interested in the purchase of it? The Minister indicated he had two offers, two written proposals to enter into purchase agreements; will the Minister provide that information, who they are and at what price he's selling Manfor for?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, I'm not quite sure what the Minister indicated this morning. However, I believe it to be very unusual if documentation along the lines that the member has illustrated would be released during a process of negotiation. Subsequent negotiations, it's a different matter, but during the process of negotiation it is a matter of public interest that the public receive maximum benefit as a result of any sale. That does not mean, Madam Speaker, that government's proposals or counterproposals, or counter-counterproposals would be in the public domain until a contract is finally arrived at maximizing the interest to Manitobans as a whole.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Madam Speaker, in view of the fact that the taxpayers have a massive interest in dollars and cents, and the economic future of the Manfor Forest Products and those people who are depending on it for the jobs, those hundreds of jobs in The Pas area, is it too much to ask who the Canadian companies are that are offering to buy it? I don't believe, Madam Speaker, when there are four people who are making offers, that that is disclosing anything that has anything to do with the deal.

Would he provide it, Madam Speaker, for the public?

HON. J. STORIE: Madam Speaker, I just want to put on the record, a matter of historical fact, that the significant investment that Manfor represents, and the concern that the member expresses for recouping some of that investment, of course, was a result of a particularly careless deal that saw the investment of Manitoba taxpayers' money, not only in the facility, but also into the pockets of some very unscrupulous individuals.

Madam Speaker, I indicated in committee this morning that I would not be releasing any of the names of the people who were interested or involved in negotiations; that I respect the confidentiality of those companies to have negotiations conducted in a private fashion. But I did indicate that the conditions, Madam Speaker, for the sale, the divestiture for any joint private sector participation in Manfor would be based on three simple principles.

Madam Speaker, they seem to be a bit sensitive that I'm providing the facts. The Member for Arthur has indicated that he would like to know the conditions upon which the government will sell or divest itself of Manfor or be involved in joint participation. If he's really interested, Madam Speaker, I will certainly inform him of it.

MADAM SPEAKER: May I just refresh honourable members' memory of Beauchesne Citation No. 359(2) which says: "The question must be brief. A preamble needs not exceed one carefully drawn sentence. A long preamble on a long question takes an unfair share of time and provokes the same sort of reply. A supplementary question should need no preamble." And that answers to questions should be brief.

Legislative Building - check for PCB contamination

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have a new question, to the would-be or whoever is the Minister responsible for Government Services, Madam Speaker.

The other day I asked a question to the Minister of Government Services as to whether or not the building was being checked for PCB's, and the Minister in his response, and I'll refer to the . . . (Interjection)- Well, I'll tell you, Madam Speaker, if it's PC's they're worried about there'll be a lot more in very short order, I can assure them that. They'll need a lot more inspectors. Madam Speaker, the Minister said that he was not aware of any PCB test being conducted in this building two days ago. The report in the newspaper yesterday indicates, in fact, that there was a major test being done.

I ask whoever the Minister is, Madam Speaker, responsible for the Legislative Building, what was the outcome of the test? Is there any contamination of PCB's, any public health or anybody's health put at danger in the building? I leave the question open to whatever Minister asked for the test to be done.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

HON. H. HARAPIAK: Madam Speaker, there was a newspaper article about three weeks ago on PCB's, and I guess the PC's continue to be consistent in their approach; they continue to use the Free Press as their source of information.

Madam Speaker, there was some concern raised about the fluorescent lighting that was installed in 1970.

There was a routine investigation carried on into the small box, the ballast box, where there is some concern about the capacitor possibly leaking PCB's. There is a sample being taken and we have not had any results of the sample that had been taken at this time.

Bank of Nova Scotia - head office to Calgary

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

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

I took a question as notice yesterday from the Member for St. Norbert regarding the move of the Bank of Nova Scotia's regional office from Winnipeg to somewhere else and, as usual, with that rumour-mongering doom and gloom crowd down there, there is nothing true about it. We've been in touch with officials from the Bank of Nova Scotia who . . .

HON. H. PAWLEY: I think they got in touch with us.

HON. V. SCHROEDER: As the Premier notes, they got in touch with us, and with him, and they have told us they are furious about that kind of allegation which is totally unfounded and which can have an impact on the morale of the staff, and is again wrong in the way the Opposition tends to be wrong as they were with the ad company.

Madam Speaker, there again, I had a meeting with the people from Ford-New Holland, one of the people referred to by that particular agency two months ago, and they agreed that where quality is reasonable in Manitoba, the job will go to Manitoba.

Shelter Allowances - no increase since 1983

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for River Heights.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Economic Security.

Madam Speaker, the government boasts of its assistance program for the poor. For example, in this year's Throne Speech, it declared that the government has maintained and improved measures to assist low-income Manitobans in coping with economic security. It goes on to say that, unlike other provinces, Manitoba has not restricted eligibility for benefits, and has increased basic social allowances.

Would the Minister, therefore, explain why there has been no increase since 1983 of Shelter Allowances for those who are, in fact, on social assistance in this province?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Employment Services and Economic Security.

HON. L. EVANS: Madam Speaker, the honourable member's question is based on a story in yesterday's Free Press and, regrettably, that story is filled with total inaccuracies.

Madam Speaker, the fact of the matter is that we do have rental guidelines that are adjusted every year. The last adjustment was of January 1, 1987. I might advise the honourable member that the adjustment is in line with the rent regulations of this province.

Last year, January 1, 1987, we permitted landlords to raise the rents by 3 percent - this is the guideline that we use. I can assure the Honourable Member for River Heights that each year we have endeavoured to keep up with increases in revenue.

I might also advise the honourable member, however, that the regional directors have the authority to pay actual rent, including utilities, if circumstances warrant, and there are many cases where this occurs and, indeed, I think, therefore, we have a very progressive policy with regard to providing shelter.

Shelter Allowances - deductible increase to \$100

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: A supplementary question, Madam Speaker.

Will the Minister take any action in response to the request by the people attending that conference that deductible earnings over \$50 should be increased to, say, a deductibility of over \$100 for those on social assistance?

HON. L. EVANS: Again, Madam Speaker, here's another example of an inaccuracy in that story. I'm not blaming the Member for River Heights, but the fact is, Madam Speaker, that we have a policy which enables a person indeed to keep that amount, but we also say you can keep 30 percent of the gross income earned, whichever is larger. So that benefit is the richest benefit paid of any of the provinces in Canada so that indeed, therefore, Madam Speaker, as the income earned goes up, the amount of money that the welfare recipient receives also goes up.

So I would say that we are treating people who regrettably have to be on social allowance in a very progressive way, and providing them with adequate incentives so that they may, if they wish to, get out and find supplementary employment.

Special Needs Allowance - change in 20 years

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: With a final supplementary, Madam Speaker.

It's absolutely amazing all this communication from the Minister and none of the people on social assistance know about it.

Would the Minister tell us what change has been taken in the \$150 for more than 20 years on Special Needs Allowance?

HON. L. EVANS: Madam Speaker, I would suggest that most of our recipients realize the program and they know the benefits that are being provided. I know many organizations do, like the Manitoba Anti-Poverty Organization, is well-versed in our regulations. They are doing a job too; they're doing a good job in giving that information to members and people particularly who are new onto the program.

In terms of special needs, Madam Speaker, yes there is \$150 limit which hasn't been changed for many years, but that \$150 is not the limit. If a recipient requires additional assistance for whatever, a purchase of a major appliance or if there is a very serious medical circumstance where someone has to be given special treatment, additional drugs or special equipment and so on, that money is provided. So I would say that, again, our treatment of people is very generous. The \$150 limit is really meaningless, Madam Speaker.

Natural gas prices - decision of Public Utilities Board

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Madam Speaker, I can remember very well a question to the First Minister about this time a little over a year ago. I think we were in the midst of an election. The Premier promised Manitobans that he was going to do something about gasoline prices. I can remember just three or four months ago and, if I can't remember, I know for sure all the delegates that were at the NDP Annual Convention will remember this Premier's commitment to bringing down substantially those who use natural gas in the City of Winnipeg and the Province of Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, my question to the First Minister is: Does the First Minister consider the recent decision by the Public Utilities Board as a keeping of that promise?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, first in respect to gasoline prices, that in fact was realized, as the honourable member realizes I'm sure, last year.

Insofar as his specific question though - and I'm glad the honourable member has raised the question of the Public Utilities Board hearing and the question of natural gas prices. I am disappointed in the decision by the Public Utilities Board yesterday.

I believe that it is indeed unfortunate that the Public Utilities Board that is responsible for the regulation of prices in respect to basic commodities such as natural gas in the Province of Manitoba found itself unable, according to its inability to deal with this matter jurisdictionally, to rule differently than it did.

Madam Speaker, from the decision that was rendered yesterday, it is clear that the prices being charge by Inter-City Gas are excessive. They're discriminatory to the people of the Province of Manitoba. Madam Speaker, we do not rest content on the basis of the decision yesterday by the Public Utilities Board. This government, along with the Minister of Energy representing us, will continue with our efforts by way of negotiations and other options to ensure that the homeowners and small businesses of the Province of Manitoba are not left to continue to be overcharged by excessive and discriminatory rates as described by the Public Utilities Board.

MR. H. ENNS: Madam Speaker, in view of the track record of this First Minister on these kinds of questions

because, as I recall passing gasoline stations today, they were up at 47, 48 cents per litre, which was pretty well what they were prior to the last election.

But my question to the First Minister: Would he describe the answer that he just gave as political grandstanding?

MADAM SPEAKER: All right, please. That question is out of order. It does seek an opinion.

Abraham case - investigation into

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Community Services.

Yesterday, the presiding judge in the Abraham case had harsh words for the social workers who worked with that family and the young two-year-old who was killed, in saying they appeared to have neglected the child. He wondered if there had not been follow-up by the proper authorities to ensure this home was protected and the tragedy avoided.

Could the Minister indicate when she will be tabling in the House her department's investigation into this matter?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, the report will come shortly. As I said before, we wait until the court case is complete and then we will complete our summary, forward it to the board of the agency, and discuss it with them, because we do want to review the policies and procedures in great detail and see that, where corrective action is needed, it is taken.

But we will table the summary of the report and recommendations here very shortly.

Land Transfer Tax - implementation of

MR. G. MERCIER: Madam Speaker, I have a new question for the Attorney-General.

In his quest for new sources of revenue, the Minister of Finance has ordered the Attorney-General to implement tomorrow a land transfer tax, a completely new tax on Manitobans, Madam Speaker. Could the Attorney-General indicate whether this tax will be implemented by virtue of regulations or by virtue of new legislation, as we have seen neither?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. R. PENNER: Madam Speaker, the Minister of Finance does not go around ordering his colleagues to do this, that or the other thing. We make collective decisions. We act very much as a collective government, and that particular decision is no different from other decisions of that kind.

Yes, the effective date for the change in the Land Titles fees, which will be going down, and the imposition of the land transfer tax is in fact tomorrow, and it will

take place; and in common with all tax legislation, there will be legislation brought in before the end of this Session by the Minister of Finance in one of the tax bills that will provide the ultimate statutory authority for that tax.

Land Transfer Tax - transitional period

MR. G. MERCIER: Madam Speaker, I was giving the Attorney-General an opportunity to get off the hook for the responsibility for the implementation of this new tax on Manitobans, but if he wants to assume . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Question?

MR. G. MERCIER: . . . responsibility, he can have it.

I would ask him, Madam Speaker, in view of the fact we have neither regulations nor legislation with respect to this matter, in the event that a document, a Transfer of Land is rejected from the Land Titles Office this week for some sort of technical defect, will there be a transitional provision in the legislation then that would allow the document to be re-registered May 15 or after, at the same fee level as was in existence prior till tomorrow?

HON. R. PENNER: A very good question, Madam Speaker. In fact . . . Bless you, Madam Speaker. Are you sensitive to PCB's, Madam Speaker?

Directions have gone out, at my request, from the Registrar General of the Land Titles Office to the Land Titles system that, in fact, if that happens, then it is the lower original fee that will be paid and not the post May 15th fee.

Natural gas prices - reduction of

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

MR. M. DOLIN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question follows on the question from the Member for Lakeside through the Minister of Energy and Mines.

It appears that the Public Utilities Board has stated that ICG did not aggressively pursue alternate sources, that the rate should be between \$2 and \$2.25 per thousand cubic feet and yet they allow \$2.96 per thousand cubic feet of gas, which strikes me as somebody being charged and convicted of theft and then being given an absolute discharge.

MADAM SPEAKER: Question?

MR. M. DOLIN: I'm wondering if the Minister of Energy and Mines can tell me what action can be taken to see whether or not the rates can be brought down to what the Public Utilities Board says they actually should be.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

HON. W. PARASIUK: Madam Speaker, the Public Utilities Board did indeed rule that the prices are

excessive and discriminatory. They indicated that ICG did not aggressively pursue lower prices for Manitobans.

They also indicated that they felt they did not have the power to handle this particular issue and they have asked the Government of Manitoba to deal with this entire issue to remove the constraints and ensure that Manitobans have the lowest and fairest prices possible.

This government has been involved in negotiations with Alberta, with the Federal Government, with the various companies over the course of the last six months. Now that the Public Utilities Board has come down with their report, we are accelerating our efforts and, Madam Speaker, when we bring forward our action, I know that people on all sides of the House will be linked 100 percent to ensure that we do in fact bring about the lowest and fairest prices for Manitoba.

MR. M. DOLIN: A supplementary, Madam Speaker, to the same Minister.

Can the Minister inform the House what specific action can be taken on this particular price approval and whether or not this particular price approval can be brought back either through court appeals, or what have you, to what it actually should be according to the Public Utilities Board?

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

Could the honourable member please rephrase his question so it's not hypothetical and does not ask an opinion?

Natural gas prices - reversal of prices rise

MR. M. DOLIN: My question to the Minister is what specific action can be taken on this particular ruling of the Public Utilities Board, either by special interest groups or by government, to bring the price back to where it should be?

HON. W. PARASIUK: Madam Speaker, there is a procedure whereby people can in fact appeal a decision of the Public Utilities Board or the ruling of the Public Utilities Board to a court. I understand that one or two of the interest groups that appeared before the hearings have indicated that they are exploring that particular option.

The Government of Manitoba will be pursuing the major focus, which is to reform the system as soon as possible to ensure that we no longer have a situation whereby prices are excessive and discriminatory. That will be the focus of our attack, Madam Speaker.

Gov't policy - spousal appointments

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. C. BIRT: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the First Minister.

The husband of the Minister of Community Services has been appointed by this government to the Teachers' Retirement Allowance Fund Board and is to receive compensation for that appointment. The same individual has been appointed over the past three years to the Health Sciences Services Centre.

My question to the First Minister: Is it now government policy to appoint the spouse of members of the government to paying jobs?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, I'm disappointed that a question such as that would be posed. If the honourable member had checked, he would have found that the appointment was made on the recommendation of the Teachers' Society. As well, the honourable member should be aware that the service and the contribution by the individual in question is being done to the Province of Manitoba without any compensation, without any expectation of any reward whatsoever.

I would like to indeed, in view of the fact that it's been raised in this Chamber, thank the individual in question for volunteering his time and effort, on behalf of the people of the Province of Manitoba, as a result of his having been recommended by an interest group that requires representation on the board in question.

Gov't policy - appointments and funding of children

MR. C. BIRT: In light of the appointment of children of Cabinet Ministers to Crown Corporation Boards and Cabinet Minister's children receiving special grants through the Department of Education and also through the umbrella groups of Lotteries funds, is it now the policy of this government to give funding and special appointments to the children of members of the government?

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, we seem to be moving towards some mud right now, and I would like the Honourable Member for Fort Garry to identify the Cabinet Minister's children who are receiving some sort of special assistance. I would like the Member for Fort Garry to identify the Cabinet Minister, the children it involved, the circumstances, so we know whether we're in the mud or whether we're not in the mud.

Gov't policy - appointment of family members

MR. C. BIRT: My question to the First Minister: Is it the policy to appoint family members to public-paying board positions throughout this province? Because if it is, then it puts the whole system in disrepute. Is it the policy of this government to appoint family members to boards and commissions in this province?

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, I don't know what the honourable member - he says, if indeed, and refers to a paying position. I don't know what the honourable member is referring to.

I thought that the Chamber of Commerce should indeed at this point be commended for a letter that they sent to the party leaders in this Chamber - and the Leader of the Opposition would have received that, the Honourable Member for River Heights - asking members in this Chamber to avoid spending so much time with allegations of conflict of interest, innuendo,

rather than dealing with the important issues of the Province of Manitoba. I would commend the Chamber of Commerce for having so advised us, and would like to relate that advice from the Chamber of Commerce to the Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

Landfill site - environmental effect

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Niakwa.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would direct my question to the Honourable Minister of Environment, Workplace Safety and Health.

I have been advised that, as of June 1, 1987, a landfill site will come into being in the Rural Municipality of Cornwallis, directly over a sand and gravel aquifer, and it's going to be located on the southwest quarter of Section 8, Township 10, Range 17.

Can the Minister advise if this dump will have any environmental effect on the drinking water supply in the district?

A MEMBER: Oh! You got cut off at the knees there, Gerry.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, I'm reluctant to do this but the - on a point of order - Member for Fort Garry has left a shadow over all the children of Ministers of this government, over all Ministers of this government, by the allegation that was made a few moments ago, an innuendo, a serious innuendo. I would ask the Honourable Member for Fort Garry to assist in removing that shadow . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please.

HON. H. PAWLEY: . . . or identify the individual which he is so charging.

MADAM SPEAKER: The proper time to raise a point of order is when it has happened. We have moved on in our proceedings to the Member for Niakwa.

The Honourable Minister of the Environment.

HON. G. LECUYER: Oh, yes, I can hear you now, Madam Speaker.

There has been, as far as I know, no decision made at this point in time in terms of an additional landfill site for the R.M. of Cornwallis which presently has an arrangement with the Base of Shilo, CFB Shilo, where they deposit presently their wastes. Because the contract terminates in 1988, they are looking potentially at a new site. The department has indeed been involved in investigations and drilling test holes and, more recently, has been in correspondence with concerned citizens of that area. And I am rather gratified, Madam

Speaker, that citizens are increasingly concerned about the potentially inherent problems associated with landfill sites, because indeed they do frequently pose problems as we are all too well aware of.

All I can add, at this point in time, Madam Speaker, is that the staff from my department are also meeting with members of the rural municipality tomorrow, and there will be further assessments. But it does appear, indeed, that there is gravel above the aquifer and, if a landfill were to be developed, it would have to be under special procedures, and special precautions taken, such as, impermeable layers constructed on top, so that it could be used as a landfill site. So there are no decisions that have been made in this regard at this point in time.

I want to end, Madam Speaker, by saying that the department's responsibility is to ensure that when landfill sites are developed, that they are developed in accordance with the regulations in place. We do not select the sites for that purpose.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I want to thank the member for advising me that he was going to ask me this question yesterday.

MR. A. KOVNATS: To the same Minister.

I am advised that it will take place, as of January 1, it will be a fait accompli. Can the Honourable Minister advise his department to immediately advise him of a stop-action work order so that we can assure and ensure that there will be a clean water supply for the residents in that area?

HON. G. LECUYER: As I've said before, there is a meeting scheduled for tomorrow on this very issue with the members of the R.M. of Cornwallis, at which time the decisions may require further investigation and testing.

As I said before though, Madam Speaker, our responsibility is to ensure that the municipal body that proposes to develop a landfill site does so in accordance with the regulations, to ensure that if there is, indeed, a landfill site developed, that it will not contaminate underground water.

I have to add, Madam Speaker, that my preference, and that of the department, would be that the current arrangements with CFB Shilo were to continue in place until that site could be filled, and that I understand is good for quite a few years to come. Perhaps we can provide some measure of assistance to the Municipality of Cornwallis in their negotiations to renew that contract. All of these things will be determined as part of that meeting.

Lakeshore Land Improvement Co-op - repayment of loan

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. H. PANKRATZ: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Cooperative Development.

Lakeshore Land Improvement Co-op received a loan in 1985, an interest-free loan, and their payments fall due on March 11 of each year, I believe. Have the 1986 and March 11, 1987, payments been made?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Co-op Development.

HON. J. COWAN: Madam Speaker, it's interesting how members opposite picked out certain co-ops and certain co-operative entities to ask questions about consistently.

Madam Speaker, we're quite proud of being able to assist the Metis community in that area to form a cooperative, to work together, to work the land so that they can become productive citizens of that area by their own hard work, sweat and their own abilities. Madam Speaker, we were proud to lend them the money and I am proud to say that through that money they are performing a service for the province, they are creating jobs and they are ahead of their repayment schedule at present.

MADAM SPEAKER: The time for Oral Questions has expired.

The Honourable Opposition House Leader.

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

May I have leave to make a very non-political statement?

MADAM SPEAKER: Does the honourable member have leave? (Agreed)

NON-POLITICAL STATEMENT

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

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

Since some time last summer, I've had the opportunity to serve as secretary of the committee hosting the Canadian National Gymnastics and Trampoline Championships, being held in Winnipeg, which started yesterday and will end on Sunday evening.

The official opening ceremonies were held last night, and I thank the Honourable Minister of Sport for sending Mr. Don Stone, the Director of Sport, who ably represented him at the official opening ceremonies.

I'm sure all members of the House would like to welcome the hundreds of visitors, athletes, judges, officials, supporters, parents who are in Winnipeg this week for this event, Madam Speaker. We all hope, of course, that they enjoy their visit in Winnipeg. Perhaps of special significance to the House, Madam Speaker, the daughter of the Member for Brandon West, who is in the gallery today, will be participating in the trampoline aspect of the championships.

ORDERS OF THE DAY HOUSE BUSINESS

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. J. COWAN: Madam Speaker, on a few matters of House Business, first, I'd like to indicate we will be dealing with Condolence Motions tomorrow by agreement with members opposite.

The Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources will be meeting on Thursday, May 21, at 10:00 a.m., to continue its consideration of the report of the Manitoba Telephone System.

I also understand, Madam Speaker, that there's an inclination on the part of all members to forego Private Members' Hour today, and to continue on with our review of the Estimates in the Committee of Supply.

I therefore move, Madam Speaker, seconded by the Honourable Attorney-General, 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 and 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 Community Services; and the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet in the Chair for the Department of Education.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY - EDUCATION

MR. CHAIRMAN, C. Baker: I understand that you are at page 56, Resolution 52, Universities Grants Commission, No. 6.(a) Salaries - the Member for Kildonan.

MR. M. DOLIN: Through you, I'd like to ask the Minister about the Challenge Program. My understanding is that this program was instituted about three years ago, and I'm wondering - is it in effect now and have people been availing themselves of this program?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister.

HON. J. STORIE: Although I've never heard of it, I understand it's doing very well. I don't know what you're talking about.

MR. M. DOLIN: The program was announced by the previous Minister some three years ago, and I don't know whether it's still in effect and that's what I'm trying to find out. This is a program for foreign-trained professionals to be able to not to have to start in law school or medical school, that they can challenge various courses and start at a higher level. I'm wondering, is this program still in effect and how many people are availing themselves of it.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, yes, a credit challenge, I can't speak for the universities obviously. They evaluate the credentials of people who apply for university positions on their own. I can only indicate that, within the teacher certification and records area, we have gone out of our way to make sure that there is some sort of way to balance the credentials of people transferring in, immigrants coming with professional certificates and so forth from out of country with the requirements in province. In fact, I think I've moved some way to making sure that individuals who are trained professionals outside of Canada are eligible for certification in the province.

MR. M. DOLIN: I doubt if the Minister has this information available at his fingertips, but the Universities of Winnipeg, Brandon and Manitoba, if this kind of program is available, I'm wondering if the Minister could provide information as to what professional schools or departments make this available and how does one apply.

I have a number of constituents who were professionally trained abroad, particularly in India, the Philippines, etc., who would like to avail themselves of programs who are now underemployed, I feel, based on their skills. I would like to be able to direct them into these credit challenge programs, and I'm wondering what schools have them, in what departments are they available. Could the Minister provide this information?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, I am not aware of any overall program. I'm aware of certain initiatives to speed up either the process of certification, or programs to take people and recognize some of their credentials towards certification or professional status and then move them along and support, for example, the development of the language skills. But I'm not aware of any overriding program to which someone can apply. There are individual circumstances and individual faculties, and I've mentioned what's happening at the teachers' certification area.

MR. M. DOLIN: Approximately three to four years ago, there was a specific program announced by the previous Minister. I think it just dealt at the U of M. I'm wondering if perhaps that program is still in effect or is a university-based program, probably not through the department - I don't know. I would like information on it so I can provide such to my constituency.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, I will endeavour to get from the universities details on whatever challenge programs they might have available and get it back to the member, but the department is not currently running any internally.

MR. M. DOLIN: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Ellice.

MR. H. SMITH: I'd like to ask the Minister: Your department is evaluating credentials for people who are not going for teaching or any job with education. Are you still pursuing that practice?

HON. J. STORIE: The individual who has been responsible for the credential evaluation, we're not on that section, so none of those staff are here. But perhaps if the member would like, I could arrange to pass on some information about what the current practices are, both in terms of educational certificates and others that may be available either through the community colleges or schools.

MR. H. SMITH: What I'm asking is the City of Winnipeg sends people over to the branch, and the branch evaluates the certificates for the City of Winnipeg.

HON. J. STORIE: For the city in what respect?

MR. H. SMITH: Well someone applying, for example, for a job in the police department and has credentials from the Philippines or wherever it may be. Really my experience with that is they do it by the book. In fact, last summer, I had a situation where a person was away, and I believe the secretary was doing the evaluations. I do think it's important to look into that.

HON. J. STORIE: Just so we're clear, the member's not talking about a test that is given? He's not talking about GED tests?

MR. H. SMITH: No.

The City of Winnipeg sends someone and says, look it, you get your credentials evaluated by the department. They go down to the department . . .

HON. J. STORIE: So it would be a credentials check going back to the individual schools or institutions.

MR. H. SMITH: I just don't believe you should be doing that for the City of Winnipeg or for a private employer.

HON. J. STORIE: Interesting point, and it's not that I'm opposed to doing that. There may be some fee involved.

MR. H. SMITH: There should be a fee involved. I don't think there is.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Fort Garry.

MR. C. BIRT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is to the Minister.

I think in January of this year, the Minister announced the increase of funding for the coming year to the universities. Then some three months later, his colleague, the Minister of Finance, imposed a fair number of taxes that, in effect, reduced the amount of funds that would then be flowing through to the universities for this particular year.

The Minister indicated that he was considering reviewing or looking at the question of whether there was some hand back or some compensation for the loss of the taxes because I believe, for the University of Manitoba, it's about \$1.8 million of loss in the grant that they would have otherwise received. What's the status on the review?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, the Universities Grants Commission has been in touch with the universities and reviewed the issue of increasing cost, not only in terms of the budget that was announced provincially, but the impact of budget changes coming from the Federal Government and other increasing costs that are really fixed costs. In fact, I believe the commission has made some recommendations. Those will be reviewed, and I expect that there may be some adjustment to the base of support to universities announced over the next couple of months. I have indicated to the universities that is in process as well, and that I am hopeful that some adjustment will be made.

MR. C. BIRT: We saw, Mr. Chairman, in section 16-3.(d), where there'd been a transfer out of the

Department of Finance into the Department of Education of funds basically equivalent to the cost of the payroll to the school divisions. They had been compensated for that sum, but it had shown on the treasury books before now. They appear in the books of the Department of Education. There doesn't seem to be any specific line for that type of compensation. So is there compensation then flowing through to the universities for at least the payroll tax portion, similar to what the school divisions are receiving?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, there is no local government support program which would be applicable to the universities.

MR. C. BIRT: Is the Minister saying that then there is no compensation for the taxes that were imposed in the budget that basically subtracted funds that the Minister had previously announced to the universities, except for this possible review that the Minister has just made reference to?

HON. J. STORIE: The review, yes, Mr. Chairperson, will take into consideration the additional costs that accrue to the universities as a result of budget changes, but not only the budget changes. As I've indicated, there are other circumstances which create additional expenses for the universities including federal budgets.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, the Minister makes reference to implications of the federal budget.

Are those same studies being applied to the effect of the federal budget on the school divisions and, if there's any compensation flowing through to the university because of the federal budget, will the same be flowing through then to the school divisions?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, as the member knows, school divisions are funded on a substantially different basis than universities and, in fact, school divisions receive support based on their supportable expenditures which includes operating expenditures of one kind and another, so there isn't the same necessity. Those costs are already included in our calculations of the support that goes to each school division.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, when the funding came forward from the Universities Grants Commission to Cabinet this year for a particular recommendation as to the funding they should get, was there any discussion from that body that if certain funding levels weren't met that there would be a reduction in the number of students who could attend university?

HON. J. STORIE: No, Mr. Chairperson, certainly no indication of potential direct impact for student enrolment. I think everyone recognizes that to the extent that funding is constrained, it is going to create the necessity at the institutional level for change. In some cases, that has meant imposing certain restrictions on enrolment or making other changes which have an impact. But there was no identification of numbers because, really, that's not a very fruitful exercise, because the institutions have many, many ways of adapting other than limiting enrolment.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, I believe a Cabinet paper went forward in the '85-86 fiscal year which dealt with the question of certain funding if you got a certain percentage, or if a certain amount was given to the universities that enrolments, because of the lack of funding to the universities, in the universities or in certain faculties would have to be curtailed and that was a consideration put forward to the Cabinet.

What I would like to know is whether or not, when the Cabinet set its grant structure for this year, there was any consideration and acknowledgment that the level of funding for this year would impact and require a curtailment or would not allow expansion of student enrolment at the universities?

HON. J. STORIE: No, Mr. Chairperson, I don't believe that was a formal consideration. As I've indicated, I don't think that is a necessity. Various universities have responded in various ways to the lack of substantial increases in funding.

I point out to the member that there have been increases every year; some would say an adequate increase this year. I would like to think that while the levels of support have not been generous, that they have been adequate to allow the universities to cope with their requirements.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, the grant, when it was initially announced, which basically dealt with approximately slightly less than a 4 percent operational grant to the university, because in the initial announcement that was made, there was a sort of grossing-up figure dealing with capital and some special type programmings. But the core in all of this is the amount of money that is paid to sustain the university, in other words, its operating grant.

I believe the president of the University of Manitoba said that was not a great solution, but at least it would allow them to stay static or maintain the status quo. But then the implications of the provincial Budget removed just shy of some \$2 million that was the flow through to the university. When the amount of money, the funding, to the universities was considered, was there a consideration that there would be a reduction in the funds because there was going to be additional taxes or charges imposed on the institutions?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, as the member knows, the announcement was made some time before the Budget was delivered on March 16. While I guess it would be fair to anticipate that some of the tax changes may have impacted upon it, those decisions had not been finalized at that point. The announcement that was given to indicate level of support to universities was done on the basis of the spending levels appropriate for the year.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, according to the Estimates, approximately \$7.5 million was to flow through to the universities by way of grants. A lion's share of that would be going to the University of Manitoba. Well, according to the University of Manitoba Digest, they would lose \$1.849 million because of these new increases: \$1.14 million in payroll taxes, another \$580,000 provincial sales tax, and the increase in

electric power rates of some \$122,000, which I believe the university picks up around \$4 million or \$5 million of the \$7.5 million. Well, in effect, you don't quite take half of that back. It strikes me that there must have been some implication or some consideration at the time the Budget was set that it would have on the institutions of the University of Manitoba because the grant was not significant. As the president of the university said, at best, they could hold their own. It was a holding pattern and then to remove almost \$1.9 million in taxes does not put them in a very good position to even hold their own.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, I recognize that at the universities I guess numbers are based not only on their own operating but also on research. So the numbers that they have given that I have received actually, or seen from the universities, are substantially less than the ones the member is quoting from. That, I believe, is based on their total budget, not just the operating budget at the university, but their entire research budget, which is funded from other sources other than the Provincial Government.

But I think I've said already that the final decisions, in terms of the budget, had not been made; so the implications were not, at that point, readily knowable.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, the Cabinet considered the implications of certain grants, or the sizes of the grants, when it considered the budget funding of '85-86, and in it, they looked at enrolment limitations, the number of courses that may have to be reduced, perhaps cut back in some facilities, long waiting lines or a great number of people wanting to get into a limited space.

I can't believe that the Universities Grants Commission would not understand totally the impact of 4.7 percent increase to the universities and some consideration as to what costs would be, because, at best, the funding, in its fullest before any taxes were taken away, it was a standpat budget and of course they've got increases for salary and other costs that went up. Some of them were federal budget, some of them were just in straight operational things. So that standpat situation would still have an impact.

Did the Universities Grants Commission or the government consider what impact that its standpat budget's increase would have on the ability of the universities to provide services at the university level?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, I'm reminded by the executive director of the Universities Grants Commission, that enrolments grew substantially in the early Eighties, and actually, what we've seen more recently in the last couple of years have been small reductions in enrolment. No. 1. No. 2, the answer is no and I think I've explained that universities have many ways of adjusting their own operations to ensure that there are a few, if any, problems of accessibility.

I think universities, to give them credit, have done a good job in dealing with the circumstances of constrained finances. I have said to the universities, in all candor, that I will accept the argument that we have not provided adequate funding to the universities. I won't accept the argument that we haven't been fair.

There are substantially two different propositions, and the fact of the matter is, that on a national basis we are very generous to our universities, on a per capita basis and on many other basis; and our universities are also cognizant of what is going on in other jurisdictions and they could look to what's happening in Saskatchewan or Alberta or B.C. or Quebec, or many other areas; not only this year but a history of underfunding that has been difficult, to say the least, for those institutions.

So I think that when the president of the University of Manitoba says that the 4.7 percent operating increase this year is basically a standpat position; that's a far superior position than many of the other presidents of universities across the country find themselves in.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, I think the students and university presidents take cold comfort as to what is happening in other parts of the country. The key is here in Manitoba and what priority the province gives to higher education.

In the '85-86 submission to funding to Cabinet, they talk about enrolment limitations that have been imposed at the University of Winnipeg and the University of Manitoba, because current funding does not permit acceptance of more students. Universities indicate that more than 500 students attempted to register for courses, but were unable to do so for lack of space. Most faculties now have enrolment limits. Further, several course offerings have been postponed. Should this practice continue, growing numbers of qualified high school graduates as well as adults will be denied an opportunity to pursue a university education. This could present a serious problem for the government.

Now we're talking about funding for '85-86. Here we are in '87-88 fiscal year, that same submission to Cabinet dealt with the various options of percentage increase in operating to the universities, one was 2 percent, 1 percent, zero. The 2 percent option says that it would allow the universities to meet approximately two-thirds of the salary cost associated with progress through the ranks. Of the professors it would reduce the number of layoffs the university would be required to make and it would reduce the impact on student population through fewer course reductions and a smaller increase in fees.

It says that in '84-85, 500 to 600 qualified students were turned away from universities, as they were unable to register, and that was just the funding from two years ago. Keeping in mind that the Minister presented his budget through the Universities Grants Commission, also that the Minister is part of the Cabinet that decided what levels of taxation should be imposed; did the Minister do an analysis of what the impact of the taxes would have, or just the operating grant being held at just under 4 percent for the university, as to the number of layoffs that may occur, the number of courses that might have to be curtailed, or in fact the number of students who could not get into the university?

HON. J. STORIE: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure of the document the member is quoting from. He referenced to the fact that 500 students might not be able to pick up specific courses. Courses don't mean that the individual isn't enrolled in the university; it

simply means that because of limitations, and, that is, that they can't have four professors to teach introductory sociology, they have three courses and the students have to choose some other course. I'm told that the University of Manitoba has had no such problems, although each of the universities have reduced the courses that they're offering.

I've said to the universities that we're all in this together. The fact of the matter is that we have increased funding by 47 percent since 1982. If you took that out to the average person in the street and said, does that sound like underfunding, I think the answer would be no. That sounds pretty reasonable. The problems universities face are problems that are shared with large institutions. They have their own inflation rate.

All I can suggest, and have suggested, is that we will try and provide modest levels of increase in funding. It's up to the institutions to find creative ways of living within those means, and I have no apologies to make for the funding levels that we've provided. If I compare them to what is being offered to universities in other provinces, ours looks remarkably good. The concerns that are raised in the submission are legitimate concerns. We would have liked to have been able to provide a 10 percent increase to universities this year. Unfortunately the pie can only be sliced in so many pieces.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, the reference material that I am referring to is the Cabinet Submission for '85-86 by the Minister to Cabinet for consideration of funding for that year. They looked at the various options and they knew that with the policies they were following, that the university was being cut back substantially and that the amount of programs that could be offered were being reduced; and also, that the number of people who wanted to access the situation were being denied because there was just nothing available for them, as far as space was concerned, or space in the areas of their interest.

Now we've gone two years later and, at best, the operating grant is about 2 percent for this year. Has the Universities Grants Commission done an analysis of what the impact be on the universities, if they do not get at least their full funding that the Minister offered them back in January of this year?

HON. J. STORIE: Well, Mr. Chairperson, I meet with the presidents of the universities; in fact I spoke with the president of the University of Manitoba last night. I also spoke with the president of Brandon University last night. I spoke with the president of the University of Winnipeg on Friday last. I keep in touch with those individuals, and I'm not aware of any overriding concern they have about the programs that they're able to offer this year. Clearly they would like more money.

I don't know any institution that's operating universities and operating in Canada that wouldn't like more money. I think there's some recognition that the government has done the best it can. In terms of the additional cost that universities face this year because of exceptional circumstances, circumstances beyond their control; I've indicated that we are looking at some adjustment to base. I think the university presidents have taken those words as encouragement and are

continuing to operate, using the substantial additional resources they did receive this year.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, I think the Minister's words would be acceptable or would go a long way if the university was in a static situation. Unfortunately, the university is not in a static situation and to say that they've had a 42 percent increase in funding, which is at least the level of inflation over the last number of years, is cold comfort because the simple fact is that the number of people attending the university has been increasing.

Now granted the universities have got their own particular inflationary costs because of equipment or chemicals or whatever, but we're not just dealing with we've maintained the cost of living increases; we're talking about an increasing number of people going to facilities who, for a variety of reasons, have had their resources reduced. In fact, if one looks at the Minister's educational budget from '81-82, I believe university funding represented about 25 percent of the total educational funding in that particular year; and it has dropped now below from about 22 percent or 23 percent for the last fiscal year. So we've seen a decline in commitment of dollars and in commitment of priorities to the university, because 2 percentage points of the total educational budget is a very significant impact and of course the universities have been feeling that.

The key here is just not to match inflation. The important thing here is to try and reverse the trend of reduction of incomes to the universities, so that they can get on with the job that they're supposed to and, quite frankly, the Minister may be talking to the various presidents of the universities; but when one looks at the correspondence sent out by the presidents, their comments in the press, their comments in letters to the editors; they're anything but pleased with what the priority that this government is giving to post-secondary education; namely, university funding, because without money to do an adequate job, we all suffer. There have been a number of stories over the past that says our good teachers are leaving. We're not being able to provide the services to young Manitobans, so I take cold comfort in the comments of the Minister that we're going to give them modest levels of funding.

I think it has to take a little more courage and a little more leadership than to say, we're going to settle just for modest levels of funding increases, because, quite frankly, I think we've got some major problems on our hands at the university. Some of them may be created by themselves, but some of them have been created by government or governments; and I think we need some leadership shown, just to say that we're going to standpat, let them look after their own thing is not the answer, because a lot of policies that are put into place that affect the university are government driven; such as sales tax, such as an early retirement or no retirement, such as cost of electricity.

It goes on and on and on like this, so the government just can't say that we're going to give them a modest increase and then walk away from it, because I, quite frankly, think it's an abdication of responsibility and really doesn't show any leadership.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, the member is absolutely right. Governments do obviously make

decisions from time-to-time that affect universities and their ability to function. Regardless of the fact that the percentage has changed in terms of the total proportion of educational spending, the fact is that a 47 percent increase is a significant increase, better than, I would say, most other provinces.

The fact is that we are not the only government that impacts upon what universities are doing. The member and I have had opportunity on previous occasions to discuss the EPF funding changes, which the Federal Government decided, in a unilateral way, to change, which impacts on our ability to fund universities significantly. The Federal Government has changed some of the rules of the games in terms of research funding, which impact upon universities significantly; not to mention all of the other budgetary issues which impact upon universities.

We certainly would be more than happy to go to any stage in the province and compare our record of funding with what happened between 1977 and 1981, when another government was in power and had an opportunity to deal with the problems at the university. I remind the member that this year we introduced in the budget a \$20 million University Development Fund, which is going to redress, hopefully, some of the long-term problems that universities are now having to face; and they result from actions, some of which occurred when the Conservative Government was in, in Manitoba, in 1977-81. There were no major capital projects during those years. There was a big cut in miscellaneous capital, down to \$1 million at one point.

The increases to universities were substantially below inflation. Those also have a cumulative effect, and we have had to deal with those problems, and the increases that went to universities in the first few years of this government were substantially beyond inflation, and inflation was at a significant rate. We're talking about increases of 13 percent and 16 percent.

So you know, we're not unaware of the problems that universities face. I think it's a little bit inappropriate to suggest that somehow we haven't tried to address those problems; and we have in this year's budget as well, by virtue of the \$20 million University Development Fund.

MR. C. BIRT: It's interesting that the Minister refers to the EPF Program. Quoting from the University of Manitoba Digest Bulletin, states that, according to the latest federal estimates, Established Program Funding transfers total \$5 billion-plus for 1987-88. I'll read on: "Manitoba's share of the '87-88 amounts to \$2.13.3 million, an increase of 5.4 percent over last year." Now, in theory, one-third of that used to go to Education and two-thirds to Health, but as we've seen over the period of time, the governments take that as a pool grant and they use it as they see fit.

So the Minister is not quite correct in the amount of transfer payments that he's making reference to, because there has been an increase in that program to the province this year of 5.4 percent; yet the operational grant portion of the funding was only about 4 percent; with the removal of about 1.8 percent in taxes, we're going to look at maybe 2 percent or 3 percent.

So quite frankly, the Minister is not passing on the revenue from the Federal Government to the

universities. They must be diverting it for their own use internally. So quite frankly, when the Minister talks about doing wonderful things for the university, it rings hollow, because he's trying to put some blame on federal transfer payments. It just won't wash, because the facts here indicate that there was a 5.4 percent increase in the particular funds that the Minister was referring to.

So if there is a shortfall at the universities - and there is - they've been neglected and they've had to do a fair amount of belt tightening over the years - it rests with this Minister and his predecessor.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, I get a little annoyed at the comments from the Member for Fort Garry because he is in possession of the facts. I have sent him a copy of letters that I've sent to students in this province, explaining that what the member's suggesting is hogwash; and I've invited the member or any other member of the conservative caucus or member of the federal conservative caucus to come in and listen to the facts, and the facts don't support that particular contention.

There is a long history to those discussions, and I believe the member's in possession of correspondence, which outlines, very clearly, the facts of the matter and there is no diversion. The fact is that the arbitrary nature in which the Federal Government determines what portion of spending will go to what activity has been a matter of contention and disagreement by all provinces and the Federal Government for some time.

There can be no denying that the Federal Government, unilaterally, decided to change the EPF arrangements between the Federal Government and the provinces in a negative way, which impacts upon our ability to fund health and post-secondary education.

Fortunately, the Secretary of State is somewhat more enlightened than his predecessors and has now indicated that, yes, there are substantial problems with the way that post-secondary education spending is reported, and has agreed to change; in fact, allowed the provinces, this year, to submit appendices to the report tabled in the House of Commons dealing with post-secondary expenditures, so that people will be aware of the true facts of the way provinces spend both health and post-secondary dollars.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, the increase in EPF funding to this province for this coming year is 5.4 percent. Why don't we see a similar increase to the universities?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, I believe that not all EPF dollars go to education.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, then I take it that the Minister and his Cabinet colleagues are making an arbitrary decision, on how the money that is flowing through under EPF formulas to the Province of Manitoba are being allocated and, as a result, the universities are being short-changed.

HON. J. STORIE: I don't think it's arbitrary at all, nor is it arbitrary in any other province where the experience is virtually identical. The proportionate share of Education versus Health in all of the provinces has changed dramatically since 1976-77 when the program was established, the criteria were established.

Since that time, the experience in every province has been that the proportionate share that goes to Health has increased, and that fact has been raised and pointed out to the Federal Government for many years by many different governments. The split that they refer to is arbitrary; it makes their numbers look good for Education and poor for Health. If you take the overall look at what has happened to EPF funding and transfers from the Federal Government, you find that what used to be 50-50 will end up 36-64 by the year 1990-91. Some provinces, perhaps those like Ontario, once Alberta, can handle that difference.

I think it was discouraging, and I know that the university community and many of the people involved in the Health and Higher Education Coalition found it discouraging that members opposite didn't recognize the position - Manitoba and other small provinces - that health care and our university community were being put in by those changes. It was a time for action and the members opposite had an opportunity to voice their concerns and we didn't hear anything, frankly.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, the Minister still hasn't addressed why the increase to funding to the universities this year isn't at least 5 percent or better, because the transfer of funds to him through the EPF this year is at least 5.4 percent. We're looking at something considerably less than 4 percent flowing through to the universities.

So all I can say is that he is taking an arbitrary approach to the funds that are flowing from the Federal Government into the province. And why are they being diverted? Why aren't they being targeted to the universities, at least, that the universities can share the economic benefits that are flowing or being created in this province to the same extent that other departments or institutions are in the government?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, the total increase in EPF transfers amounted to some \$12 million this year, I am told. The universities received an increase of \$9 million - that's cash increase, EPF.

Mr. Chairperson, the obvious question is if the Federal Government was interested in 50-50 funding, then we would obviously need substantially more money when you consider that the province put in an additional \$9 million to the universities, additional dollars to our post-secondary institutions, additional dollars for the funding of our senior matriculation year.

If you consider that we added \$118 million to the health care budget this year, the amount of money that we received by way of increase is insignificant and it reflects a reduction of the federal original obligation and, frankly, we resent it. The fact is also - and the member hasn't referred to the fact - that equalization payments are down by some \$54 million on a gross basis, some \$54 million down. So we're not in a net positive position because of transfers from the Federal Government and it simply makes it more difficult to cope.

We could have done what Alberta did and said, well, it's tough beans, a 3 percent decrease. We said no, a 5.2 percent increase. I think that's setting the right priorities.

MR. C. BIRT: Is the Minister suggesting that because the transfer payments to the province have reduced

in another category, that they're now diverting funds from EPF, which was for Education and Health services, and monies are being diverted in other areas and are not being targeted through to the institutions?

HON. J. STORIE: Now that's one of the most twisted pieces of logic I've ever seen. I don't know whether the member's been listening, but the fact is that we got an additional \$12 million, but the additional fact is that we spent an additional \$127 million. If that's diverting some way, I don't know how the member defines diverting.

We have spent additional provincial resources at a time when the province could have used some additional support from the Federal Government; in fact, believed that it was entitled to it; in fact, statutorily, was entitled to it until the Federal Government unilaterally changed its obligations.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, the funds that are targeted from the Federal Government to post-secondary education increase . . .

HON. J. STORIE: There are no such things.

MR. C. BIRT: . . . and that percentage of increase, the size was not passed through the universities. Why wasn't it?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, that is a totally spurious argument. There is no such designation. None of the provinces in this country accept the arbitrary breakdown of support. It has never been agreed to. It reflected only the circumstances when the program was introduced in 1976-77. History has changed those facts, and the Federal Government, and apparently the Member for Fort Garry, continues to use those arbitrary, inaccurate, unsubstantiated pieces of information to build a case which is totally constructed of straw or perhaps horse manure.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, what are the Established Program Fundings for? Why don't we just refer to it as a straight grant then from the Federal Government?

HON. J. STORIE: They are for health and post-secondary education together. At one point there was 50-50 funding; and by the end of 1990-91, there will be 36 percent coming from our federal counterparts and 64 percent from the Provincial Government.

MR. C. BIRT: Is the Minister contemplating making an announcement very shortly about the financial situation at the universities? He said that he was going to review it and would be making some comments soon.

Could the Minister be more specific?

HON. J. STORIE: No, I can only indicate that the Universities Grants Commission has had its meetings and is making some recommendations in terms of additions to the base. I hope that they will reflect some of the costs that universities have incurred over the past year or so, or past few years, in terms of additional costs.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, in the budget document that the Minister of Finance tabled and made reference

to in the House, there was reference made to a \$20 million program for the universities. I don't see any reference to it in the Estimates.

Is there anything there for this particular fiscal year?

HON. J. STORIE: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, the cash flow will begin next April 1. This year, there is \$1 million which has been identified as increase to the miscellaneous capital which will flow.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, when I read the announcement and heard what the Minister said, I thought it was \$20 million that was brand new being committed to the universities. Is he now saying that, of that \$20 million, \$1 million which there was an increase in the discretionary capital funding, if that's the correct word. It was increased from \$4.4 million to \$5.4 million. Of that \$20 million announced, is \$1 million being applied to this discretionary capital funding?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, that \$1 million was a 25-percent increase over the previous year, and I guess it's yet to be determined whether in fact it will remain, which would make the fund \$24 million or \$25 million.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Finance announced the \$20 million program with the \$1 million increase in the discretionary capital funding. Does that mean that there is only \$19 million left of that \$20 million program that was announced in the Budget?

HON. J. STORIE: Currently, without additional resources being put in or that additional miscellaneous capital being continued. As I said, that has yet to be determined. So it could be \$20 or \$24 million, depending on, I guess, future circumstances.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, is it possible, from what the Minister has said, that the discretionary capital allocation that has been going to the universities over the past few years then will be cancelled and something else put into its place?

HON. J. STORIE: No, Mr. Chairperson, I don't foresee that.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, the so-called \$20 million fund, was it not to be targeted for a specific fund raising program that the universities were going into?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, partly that's true. Of course, discussions have gone on subsequent to the Budget announcement with the universities about how that money will in fact be allocated between the institutions and how it will be used: (a) to support their fund-raising activities; (b) how it will be used to support capital projects or renovations; and (c) how it might be used to help the universities provide major equipment purchases and major additional resource purchases.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, the limited information that came out about this \$20 million, which I believe

was to be phased in over four or five years, one could take the current limited or small discretionary capital allowance that the university has, which has been running at roughly \$4 million for the last couple of years going up to \$5.4 million this year. You could simply say that it would be that program then just carried through. Are we talking about new capital dollars or are we talking about just the continuation of this small discretionary capital fund?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, we're talking about new funds in addition to what has traditionally been identified as miscellaneous capital.

MR. C. BIRT: The reason I ask is the Minister said we could easily call it a \$24 million capital fund. I'm wondering, is it his intention then to roll it into that line in the capital grants to universities which we're showing at \$5.4 this year.

Would it then be \$6 million to \$8 million a year? Is that the intention, or are we talking about a special fund that has nothing to do with the miscellaneous capital program, in other words, a special fund all unto itself?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, there will be a relationship, depending eventually on how the fund is used. As I've said, it will be used for a variety of capital purposes. The reference to the \$24 million was an indication that the additional million that was added to the base, if you will, of the miscellaneous capital of the previous year may in fact remain, depending on I guess budget decisions in the subsequent years which would add to the total amount of additional money that was put in, which would be above and beyond the \$4 million that the member referenced last year for a part of miscellaneous capital.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, I guess I want to make sure that we're talking about some new capital money going to the university, and we're not trying to get credit for something that is going to flow through or be there in any event. Capital programs, you can make a commitment and provide them on an annual basis or however you're going to do it.

Is there going to be a specific plan put into place by the government or the Universities Grants Commission that the universities can then look to this \$20 million or \$19 million now as additional funds over and above the ordinary operating grants with whatever increase they may or may not get, plus the limited capital fund that they've been used to.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, I can only indicate that, yes, that's the intention.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, is it to be tied to fund raising solely, the Minister made reference to it? In other words, is the money to be some sort of incentive matching grant to help them raise additional funds?

HON. J. STORIE: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, where that's possible. It may in fact not be possible in all cases. I think the universities have indicated that some projects have more sex appeal in terms of fund-raising efforts than others.

I think our interest in providing additional resources is to make sure that those things which are critical are in fact done and to provide additional resources to make sure the universities can do that. Now whether that's restructuring some pillars or doing some renovations, those kinds of things sometimes are difficult to develop a theme around which one can raise funds.

So to the extent that it's possible, we will be encouraging the universities to look for ways of getting matching dollars, but that may not be possible in all instances and we're not holding that as a hard and fast rule. Obviously, some institutions have more scope in terms of fund raising than others as well, so it may be different for different institutions.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, is there a formula that is in place or will be put into place as to what institution will get what percentage, because you've got basically your four institutions, three of them which are involved in a capital fund-raising drive: the University of Manitoba, \$40-odd million; the University of Winnipeg, I think it's around \$16 million; I believe Brandon University is trying to do something about \$5 million; and I don't know if the St. Boniface College is into one or not. So is this going to be on a prorated basis?

HON. J. STORIE: I don't know if I would say it would be on a prorated basis. There are discussions and negotiations going on. It will be determined, I guess, by the plans of the university, their ability to fund raise, a number of different factors, but there will be some announcement when the final allocation and time-table of that allocation is determined.

MR. C. BIRT: There is always the shopping list provided by universities relating to new buildings or additions to buildings, and that depends on government's ability to finance these things or, depending on what the Universities Grants Commission says, whether or not they are needed or when they should be phased in. Is it the intention to coordinate these funds in some sort of design or capital-building program or is it merely to be used for - and I use this in a very general sense - a refurbishing thing? I think the Minister touched on upgrading and equipment and things like this. I mean, what's the thrust of this fund going to be used for?

HON. J. STORIE: I think I tried to sort of outline the scope of what the funds might be used for. I've indicated that it may be a major purchase of equipment. It may be renovation upgrade. It may be capital projects which are perhaps targeted for fund raising.

MR. C. BIRT: What's the thrust of this fund going to be used for?

HON. J. STORIE: I think I tried to sort of outline the scope of what the funds might be used for. I've indicated that it may ease your purchase, perhaps targeted for fund raising. So it's a utility fund. It recognizes that the universities have some miscellaneous capital requirements that need to be addressed. We are trying to structure in a way that meets the unique needs of each of the institutions.

Brandon University, for example, is relatively blessed with fairly new buildings. That's not true of the University of Manitoba and, to a lesser extent, the University of Winnipeg. So we're trying to match it to the individual needs of the institution. I think that has been relatively well received.

MR. C. BIRT: I believe in the past the universities that have gone on capital fund-raising drives and the governments of the various days have gone into some sort of matching grant formula. I think it's varied from time to time. I believe at the universities, once that money was in their till, they could do with it as they saw fit.

Now is this going to be discretionary funding to the university or, this \$20 million fund, is it going to be sort of controlled as to where it goes by the Universities Grants Fund. I realize there may be consultation with the universities, but in fact are they going to start using it to either refurbish buildings or buy equipment, or is it just going to be in a bank account that the universities basically can use as they see fit?

HON. J. STORIE: No, Mr. Chairperson, the intent is to identify the purposes to which that fund will be put, the basis on which those funds will be used in terms of whether they are matching dollars or whatever. So it will be fairly structured, but it will be based on issues that the universities have raised, needs that the universities have. So it will be fairly structured.

MR. C. BIRT: The funds that the universities raise through their capital campaigns, are they unrestricted as to how they spend it, or will there be some control or direction put on how those funds are spent by the Universities Grants Commission?

HON. J. STORIE: No, Mr. Chairperson, the money that the universities raise through their own fund-raising efforts would be spent in accordance with the wishes of the board of governors and the administration.

MR. C. BIRT: There is reference in a March letter by the president of the University of Manitoba about the cost of funding an early retirement program. What is that program, and what are the costs that they are referring to?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, that refers to the buy-out costs that the university incurs and I guess the saving that may in fact materialize when they hire someone at a lower salary rate, so that someone is offered some sort of retirement bonus. The savings that are incurred because of bringing someone in at a much reduced salary saves the university over the long term.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, the president makes special note of the cost of the funding of an early retirement. Is it something that's shared between government and the university, or is it solely a cost of the university?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, I guess it's shared to the extent that it's paid out of the operating grant

they get from the province, but decisions in terms of who is offered or whatever are made at the university level.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, do we know roughly what the costs were, say, for last year or this year in that retirement program?

HON. J. STORIE: No, Mr. Chairperson, we don't know.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, I have a couple more questions in the university area, but one of my colleagues who must leave early would like to ask questions on the Capital portion of the Estimates. Do you have staff here available that he could ask the questions?

HON. J. STORIE: Yes, no problem at all. Go ahead.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Thank you very much for your consideration, Mr. Chairman.

The Minister received a letter dated March 9 from the Strathmillan Teachers and Parents Association of the Strathmillan Elementary School in my constituency, and it's regarding the construction of the gymnasium on that school.

In 1985, there was a presentation or a request made to expand the gymnasium. In 1986, there was a request made and then there was a brief presented after the request was turned down to the board explaining the need for the expansion of the gymnasium. Then they've made a request now again in 1987. This school is a mainstream school as far as kindergarten is concerned, and will be a mainstream school in higher grades as the program moves along.

It's the smallest gym in the whole of the division. When the school was built, there weren't that many children, and then the district grew up and the school was expanded. They have a large enrolment at the present time, and the gymnasium just does not suit the needs of the community. When they have a concert or anything with parents involved, they have to put TV monitors in other rooms of the school so that they can accommodate the parents and many of the students when they have some activity on. As a matter of fact, they can't get all of the students in the gymnasium if they want to do something which is a project where the whole school is working together.

They feel that the community will benefit and the children will benefit certainly from the point of view that this school will be a mainstream school in the future. The chairman, Mr. Frye of the Teachers and Parents Association, believes that consideration should really be given to this request this year.

I'd like to ask the Minister if he has made any inquiries after receiving the letter from the Strathmillan Teachers and Parents Association and if he has any information he could give me on it?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, a letter has been drafted in reply to that letter. I can tell the member that the second phase of that project, which is the gymnasium, has been approved and is part of the \$81

million that was announced some two or three weeks ago. It's anticipated that the project will be commencing this year and, hopefully, concluding this year as well.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and I thank the Minister for considering the request of the people. I'm sure the news that you just gave me at the present time will be very welcome. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Fort Garry.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, the Minister has made some comments, publicly, from time to time, in the role of the Universities Grants Commission and he's always indicated that he's going to strengthen it and change it.

Will the Minister be introducing new legislation into this Session that will affect the function or direction or how the Universities Grants Commission will operate?

HON. J. STORIE: No, Mr. Chairperson.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, will the change or direction of the Universities Grants Commission then be done by administrative order, or how is the change or direction to come about?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, the change - although it is still possible that at some future date that the act will be changed - I think that on review, the Universities Grants Commission has considerable authority and that what I have done, along with my cabinet colleagues, is attempted to define a new mandate - a much more pro-active mandate - for the Universities Grants Commission; something that has been encouraged by the universities themselves, who want to be assured that there is a better understanding, a good understanding of their program requirements, the obstacles they face in budgeting.

There's an understanding that there needs to be a better communication, a better establishment of mutual goals, a better coordination between universities in terms of program offerings, those kinds of things. The executive director of the Universities Grants Commission is now pursuing discussions on many different fronts, dealing with many of the issues that we have discussed here today actually.

So, we've done a couple of things, specifically. As the member knows, the previous Deputy Minister was chairperson of the Universities Grants Commission, which linked very closely the department and the Commission. Since assuming responsibility for Education, the Deputy Minister is no longer chair of the Commission; in fact the chair is a person from outside the department.

With the new mandate of the Commission, I expect that there will be significant benefits for the department and myself and my Cabinet colleagues, in terms of understanding the university's problems. But I think there'll be significant benefits for the universities as well, because they need to use the Commission as a sounding board for ideas, proposals as well, to the extent there's a good understanding of their responsibilities and mission, they can provide that function.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, is this then a policy development or directive by the government to the Universities Grants Commission, or is it something that's they're going to put in the legislation of some new code or format, or is it going to be by new regulations adopted by them. How is this new direction going to take place?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, the new direction is taking place and will take place because of direction from the Minister and Cabinet. I have already referred issues to the Universities Grants Commission and I made the universities aware of the increased importance which we are attaching to the role of the Commission and their liaison role with the universities.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, the Minister made reference to making the Commission a much more proactive - I think that's the phrase he used - organization. Is it the intention of the Commission then to look at how the universities function, because in the past they've been traditionally a financing body that deals with the financial request, prioritizes them, and submits them to the Cabinet; and, in turn, authorizes the expansion of either certain facilities or faculties or adding new programs at the universities.

Are we now talking about a much more hands-on policy guidance of day to day - maybe not day-to-day operation - but of framework in which the universities would be looking at; and given the fact that we've got four universities in a population of just 1 million Manitobans, will it then be saying you can offer certain courses and you can't, but that you can offer these courses; in other words maybe rationalizing the system a bit?

HON. J. STORIE: Well, Mr. Chairperson, to some extent, the Universities Grants Commission always did play that role.

MR. C. BIRT: But very limited, very limited.

HON. J. STORIE: I agree with the member, that it was limited and that will certainly increase; that's not only at the insistence of the government, but I think it's also at the request of the institutions themselves. I think no one wants to see unnecessary duplication in a time of scarce resources. Because of the greater involvement, this will allow for a closer scrutiny of the programming emphasis and the programming change at the universities.

I don't see that as being too directive, however I think it's simply a matter of informing and receiving information and working together to come to some mutually responsible conclusions.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, funding in direction of the universities is always a major part, but it is, I guess, how the universities function internally. Not that I want to cast any aspersions on the people and the institutions, but sometimes the way of doing things perhaps aren't the most economical a way or perhaps a better way; or are we getting the best value for our scarce resource dollar. Sometimes it takes an objective observer to say, now look, you seem to be going the wrong way in this area or maybe knocking a couple of heads together might do it or something like this.

In other words, it really becomes - I guess the thing that I want to ask is: Is the Commission going to play much more in a planning direction role and leaving the day-to-day affairs, much like the Department of Education does to school divisions, but it has a very large role to play in policy guidelines and how it's functioning.

I know the universities always guard their autonomy with great vigour and their institutions under themselves, just you know, send this money and I don't mean it in an facetious sense, but sometimes perhaps a little external guidance or planning might make a system work a little better. Is this the direction the Minister is looking to, for this sort of expanded policy role for the Universities Grants Commission?

HON. J. STORIE: I can only say yes. The member has summarized exactly what I feel that the new role might accomplish; and I agree with the member and he's free to cast "asparagus" on whoever he wants. The fact is that sometimes someone from the outside can take a second look and - surprise of all surprises - find a better way to do things that are more efficient or a rational way of doing things; and I think the Universities Grants Commission has always played that role to some extent. I think what's interesting is that the universities were asking for an increasing level of interaction and increasing level of supervision and coordination themselves, so that's what makes it easy.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, you know, you talk to people in the universities and they freely admit that some of their problems are internal problems, they just don't know how to solve them. Some of them are historical in nature; some perhaps are personal in nature and you can't deal necessarily with those problems, but will then the Commission - and I know in theory this is what they're supposed to have been doing since it was created 10-15 years ago, maybe it's longer.

Looking at a coordinated effort of the universities - in other words, we're dealing with one university - we've got personalities in Brandon, we've got the University of Winnipeg, the University of Manitoba, they're all doing their own specific thing and perhaps filling a niche; but it's perhaps coordinating how these universities are going to deliver services and what services they're going to deliver. It means more than just taking a short-term view, perhaps taking a long-term view of the province, of what these institutions will be offering, you know, where their focus will be, what resources will be allocated to them.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, I think the member is quite right. The critical issue is, I guess, long-term planning for the universities, and I think I can say with some degree of satisfaction that the universities - and I'm sure the universities are proud of their accomplishments over the last few years in terms of planning - each of the institutions now either has or is in the process of developing a longer-term perspective in terms of their particular role and mission; and each of them have identified an area of specialization, an area of excellence that they believe they have established or are likely to establish, or can establish, which will lead them into a unique role in terms of our institutions.

I think that's something that needs to be encouraged and I think it makes sense not only for Manitoba in terms of the allocation of resources to our institutions, but I think it probably makes sense in terms of our ability to compete with other institutions to attract people from other parts of Canada and other parts of the world.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, I have two more small areas but they are different from what I was just asking questions on.

I believe the Member for Thompson has a question or two on a matter.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Thompson.

MR. S. ASHTON: I thank the Member for Fort Garry. What I wanted to do was just raise what I'm sure is something that's quite familiar to the Minister as a northern representative, and that is the general, I guess, view in certainly my area and other communities of the need for continued expansion of post-secondary opportunities particularly in the university area, as well as the community college area in Northern Manitoba.

There has been quite a bit of progress in recent years. I think that we've seen through the Bachelor of Social Work Program, the BUNTEP program, which I know have been discussed previously in Estimates, the Northern Nursing Program, a number of community college initiatives that we can offer education to northerners right in Northern Manitoba.

What I wanted to do was just report to the Minister that there have been a number of developments in my area which are of particular importance. In fact, a Citizens Committee has been formed to work towards greater post-secondary opportunities. It's often been described as a northern university, although I think people are flexible in the format.

I think such other models as a polytechnic model for Northern Manitoba should I think also receive consideration. In fact, that offers the advantage of being able to combine a variety of programs, including university programs, community college and other types of training opportunities.

I want to indicate there's a fair amount of public interest and I've certainly seen that not just in Thompson but in other communities. I know the Minister is fully aware of that himself from various meetings he's had with interested groups and individuals.

What I really wanted to do was just focus in on what the real, I think, feeling is, and that is not that we need an institution. I think the real concern in Northern Manitoba is access. That I think has been misunderstood somewhat in some of the press reports in Southern Manitoba. People aren't looking for an institution/a university, or an institution/a community college. They're interested in what it results for them in the way of post-secondary access.

So I did want to report on that feeling, I think, that is growing in the North and the fact that northerners are working towards it themselves and perhaps recommend that we look quite seriously at continuing to expand university and community college access in the North through a post-secondary facility such as a polytechnic or some other flexible umbrella. As I said,

I'm pleased to see the progress but I feel that we can move further ahead in the future.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, I couldn't agree more with many of the remarks from the Member for Thompson.

The fact is that I have had discussions with many people, including some of the organizations who originally started, I guess, thinking about the possibility of a northern university or a northern institution, not necessarily a university.

The fact is that over the past five years the number of opportunities for northern students to receive paraprofessional and professional training have quadrupled and multiplied tenfold, and the member mentioned a couple of courses. I could go through a list which would be, I think, very impressive in terms of the kinds of training that is currently being offered.

I have had the good fortune to attend nursing graduations and integrated business skills graduation and civil technology. There are a tremendous number of people, northerners, graduating from programs that certainly have not in the past been available to them.

But the fact is that we already have the core of an institution in Thompson which involves the activities of Keewatin Community College, Red River Community College, the University of Manitoba. I believe the member was in attendance when the Way-wah-tay-o Centre was opened in Thompson.

So what we need now is a body to integrate all of the activities of those institutions, to integrate the activities of the Inter-Universities North Program, the Continuing Education activities of all of the universities or community colleges, and I think we would be pleasantly surprised at the array of credit courses that could be offered in Northern Manitoba.

What's missing at the current point, obviously, is the use of technology that exists for the delivery of those courses. The University of Manitoba has telecourses or teleconferencing courses, video teleconferencing courses, a whole plethora of different ways of delivering courses in Northern Manitoba.

The fact is that we're at the stage now where we can use computer-assisted/computer-managed learning to a much greater extent, which opens up the range of courses that we can offer in Northern Manitoba in rural remote settings, in individual homes, phenomenally.

So it is an exciting time and I think that we're moving into a period where it will be increasingly possible for people in Pikwitonei or Nelson House or Big Black River to access some form of post-secondary credit courses through one of the various technologies that exists.

It's exciting and it's timely because, as the members knows, the interest in education really in Northern Manitoba is just peaking. For too long, and I guess we have to accept some of the blame in terms of the delivery of education in the North in elementary and secondary schools, but we have seen so many increases, so many improvements in the schooling, in the relationship between the community and the school in the past five years that now the communities themselves are saying yes, this does provide us with skills that are transferable and access to jobs and to opportunities. It's reflected in the involvement of

communities in the schools, it's reflected in the number of graduates we see in Northern Manitoba, and it's reflected in the number of graduates we see coming from high school into post-secondary institutions.

The fact is that while we're doing, I think, an exceptional job - and I give credit to the universities in this, not just the activities of the community colleges - the fact is that we have many students from Northern Manitoba attending southern institutions now.

In fact, in the discussions previously in this committee, we talked about Red River Community College having 20 percent of its student population from the targeted groups, from disadvantaged, from Native, from disabled. Really a phenomenal percentage, a tremendous change over a very short period of time. Good news for northerners, good news for our communities. As the member knows, we need that kind of leadership and that expertise and that educational strength, and I'd like to thank the member for giving me this soap box - no. It's a very interesting topic and obviously something that should create a lot of enthusiasm.

MR. C. BIRT: Has the Universities Grants Commission, or the Department, or both, devised or looked at a coordinated sort of research program that the universities are operating or should be operating and, in effect, developing a research policy for the Province of Manitoba as it relates to attracting people to come into the province: what the universities should be concentrating on; what avenues they should be pursuing?

And I'm not saying here that we should be dictating to the universities on what they're doing, but just sort of looking at coordination, cooperation, and perhaps stimulating research at our universities that would have not only beneficial effects at the universities but would have spinoff effects for our community.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, S. Ashton: The Honourable Minister.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, the Universities Grants Commission has identified the area of research as one where there is not a great deal of information interchange, and an area where, perhaps, as a commission, as a government, we've neglected in terms of the activities of the universities.

I think we all pay lip service to the notion that research is important to us not only for the long term but in terms of employment and in terms of creating new knowledge, new information, new technology, new hardware, whatever.

So the Universities Grants Commission is reviewing that with the universities. Hopefully, we'll be sharing information with each other - I mean between the institutions. As well, of course, the Federal Government has a strong role to play in research, and the whole issue of research has been one which I have identified in a paper that I have circulated to university faculty, the administration, to the students, to community colleges, dealing with the issues that are to be addressed at the National Post-Secondary Forum.

I think research and the question of research funding is going to be high on the agenda at that forum, and we, as a province, I hope, will be taking forward a

somewhat unified position. Unified - by that I mean there will be some consensus amongst the departments, the government, the universities and students, etc, in terms of an approach that we would like to be seen taken in Canada on the whole question of research.

So it is an important area and one that we're exploring both in terms of our own response, as a province, and also our position in terms of the national-federal-provincial responsibility in terms of research.

MR. C. BIRT: Could the Minister share that policy paper that he's been circulating with members of the Opposition? Can I get a copy of it?

HON. J. STORIE: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, I apologize for not including the Member for Fort Garry and his colleagues in that. It was an oversight; it certainly should have gone to them.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, the development or evolution of some sort of research or R and D type policy from the provincial perspective, is it the intention that a policy paper will ultimately be prepared, or a White paper would be prepared, or we are going to see some legislation?

It's one thing to review and discuss it; it's another thing to sort of make it a public issue and a policy issue so that either the universities or government or industry, or both, or the feds and the province or others, in effect, start addressing it and start working within some sort of framework.

What are we looking at? I mean you've made reference to this conference that's coming up, but it's really beyond the conference and what we can affect within our province and the role that we will be playing?

HON. J. STORIE: Well, Mr. Chairperson, I can't say that I have thought through what we might do after the internal review is done between the universities and the Universities Grants Commission.

I think that there is potential for encouraging a provincial debate on the role that the provinces and the universities should take. I think the first step is to identify where the Federal Government is going, in terms of their existing research policy, to see what pieces might be picked up by the provinces, because I think we cannot make any bones about it. We have not taken much of a leadership role in terms of research. I mean we have the Manitoba Research Council, we have the Manitoba Health Research Council, which really have limited involvement in certainly primary research.

The fact is that I will also be asking some of my colleagues, those in business development, those in industry, trade and technology, and health, who have a direct interest in research, both primary and technology commercialization research, to get involved.

I think, as the member knows, through the Jobs Fund, Industry, Trade and Technology has for a number of years been interested and been involved in transferring research to industry, and there is a program operating, currently called The Technology Commercialization Program, which does exactly that. That's part of the equation. The other equation is more pure research.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, the research budgets to the university are fairly large and they have fairly large

implications. With the scarcity of dollars at the university, I know a lot of faculties are out searching for other dollars to find ways of keeping themselves alive and are using the research vehicle to attract additional dollars for their faculty and staff.

My concern is that it is not perhaps a coordinated effort in the best interests of the province, and I'm talking overall. I think it is important that we work with the universities and other areas of government to develop an overall, shall we call it, research policy. I don't know if we'd ever get into the development game when everyone refers to research and development, but we have a lot of people here doing a lot of things.

I think it is important that we have the guidance. Maybe a few extra dollars have to be put in. I don't think it's one of those things where if you don't put hundreds of millions of dollars in, you're not going to go anywhere. So I think it is important that we get some guidelines established so that we can all benefit from it and we're not just pursuing, perhaps, our own little narrow objectives.

Mr. Chairman, one other area I'd like to ask the Minister on before I'm through with this particular area is the question of pay equity. Where does it stand as far as it affecting the universities?

HON. J. STORIE: The universities are currently reviewing with their faculties and their employee groups the various pay equity systems which can be used to implement pay equity. They are subject to the legislation and will be complying with the legislation as of September 1, 1988.

MR. C. BIRT: Is the question of pay equity left up to the universities and the government, or does the Universities Grants Commission play a role in this as far as the implementation and development? Are they the coordinating body?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, the requirements are spelled out in legislation. The Universities Grants Commission does not play a direct role. The contact between the university and the government is through the Pay Equity Bureau which is operated by the Department of Labour. So that's how the system works.

MR. C. BIRT: Is there any funding to be made available to the universities as it relates to pay equity in this fiscal year and, if so, is it in our budget? And when I say are the . . .

HON. J. STORIE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, they're obviously are no payroll costs at this point, so there is no special provision.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, I believe the Minister said that they have to be in place, I think he said '88, which would be the year following this fiscal year. Is it the intention then that they would flow through Appropriation No. 6 or would it flow through some other department of government?

HON. J. STORIE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I mean, if there are additional funds, they would flow through the Universities Grants Commission. They would be part of the base of support to the universities.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Kirkfield Park.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Yes, the pay equity, the Minister indicated they're looking at which system that the university will use. Will the universities not plan to use the same system that the MGEA have adopted?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, the legislation is structured so that each institution work group organization negotiates with its employees to implement a plan, so it's done by negotiations. I'm not sure, there are not that many systems out there that are full-fledged systems but it's left up to the two parties to make a decision on which approach is taken.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Possibly the Minister should speak to - would it be the Minister of Labour that pay equity comes under? Possible he should be speaking to the Minister of Labour and that may have looked like a good idea at the beginning, but it doesn't seem to make much sense that different areas adopt different systems. Pay equity is going to be difficult enough and to get expertise in one seems to me to make far more sense than to have hospitals in one area, universities in another. If there are three or four systems around and everybody is in a different one, that doesn't seem to make any sense to me at all.

I wonder if the Minister would consider checking with the Pay Equity Commissioner to see if she may have some recommendations in this area before the university gets too far down the line and bring everybody under the same system. If MGEA considers one system a good one, then surely that's the system that universities and the hospitals could live with.

HON. J. STORIE: Well, I, first of all, say that there are not that many systems. I believe there may be three or four systems out there. I do not know whether they're substantially different. Certainly their intent isn't different and I'm not sure what the concern would be in terms of an institution. If there was agreement between staff and administration on what system was going to be used, I don't see why that would create any additional problems for anyone else. The principle is that pay equity should be a part of the remuneration system and, as long as people understand that this institution or that organization has a system in place, I think it's somewhat immaterial on which system is used.

I'm not sure whether in fact one system may be better for a certain type of organization, a certain salary within certain salary levels versus another system. There may be logical reasons why one wouldn't work in another system and it would work in another area. I'm not sure what the member's longer term concern is about what differences might exist between systems.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Well, I haven't really gone to the commissioner myself and I will make a point to do this because my point is you have a Pay Equity Commission, you will have people monitoring the different areas and I just think this is something that's going to make more work. If there are different systems, they may have the same goals, they may have many of the same criteria. But I think unless there is something that would make

universities different from the department that possibly this is an area that should be looked into before we get too far down the road on pay equity and everyone is off with their own system. It may well make a difference in the amount of staff that you need overseeing the different areas.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairman, I'm going to accept the member's remarks and indicate that I will be talking to the Minister of Labour. I don't have any answer in terms of whether one system could be applied all over the place and what the advantages or disadvantages might be of doing that. I haven't heard of any overriding concerns about the way it's been structured and although no one has raised the concern raised by the Member for Kirkfield Park at this point, I will inquire and I encourage the member to raise it with the Minister himself when his Estimates are up for review.

MR. C. BIRT: Unless there are other questions by members of the committee, I'm prepared to move the adoption of this section. Could I be excused for five minutes?

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll take a five-minute break.

(RECESS)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution No. 52: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$169,727,800 for Education, Universities Grants Commission, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1988—pass.

The Member for Kirkfield Park.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Mr. Chairman, has the Minister got anything of import to say at the beginning of this part of the Estimates about the bureau?

HON. J. STORIE: No, I don't think so. Despite the small increase, it's basically a status quo, by and large. I would like to be able to say we have more dollars to spend here. I think, as the member knows, that some of this - if not much of this - is recoverable through the Canada-Manitoba Official Languages Agreement. So the conditions of that, although we're in the third year of an agreement and renegotiating, unless the terms and conditions change substantially, it will probably be carrying on much as usual into the future.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Yes, I was going to mention, I was rather surprised that things had pretty well stayed the same, and the only part that went up in any way were salaries. I'm just wondering how the department is managing. Have they completed all the work that needs to be done as far as curriculum is concerned and as far as the work in the administration? I would think that with the expansion, certainly of immersion, is everything now completed so that they can have a status quo and maybe not even have any extra monies put in this particular appropriation?

HON. J. STORIE: No, I'm informed that the curriculum is basically in place, K to 12, for the Française Program and the Immersion Program; that the Basic French

Program is completed up to the Grade 8 level, and the other level is being worked on. It's anticipated that it will be completed, hopefully in the near future.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Dealing with the division administration in the supplementary, it mentions that they negotiate and they administer the federal-provincial agreements on French language and education. Is that a block fund? Is that block funding, that money that they give you? Can you use it pretty well anywhere, or is it for specific policies and programs?

HON. J. STORIE: The money that is spent here by and large is 50 percent recoverable, spent in four different programs; the largest of which is infrastructure, which means supporting grants to school divisions for programming. That's the largest category.

It is not just a lump sum that's turned over to the province. There is an agreement which identifies specific areas and the funding follows the guidelines that are established in the agreement. As with any federal-provincial agreement, the province foots the bill and then recovers.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: I wonder if the Minister could expand, other than the grants. Where are some of the other areas that the monies have to go?

HON. J. STORIE: The other three areas are student support, teacher support, both of those are bursary programs to encourage those students and teachers for additional courses, additional training; and program development, which is in the area of curriculum and material support.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Yes, the other thing that I see that happens with the administration in this area is that the liaison between the government and local communities and organizations interested in French language education. What communities and what types of organizations would they be referring to?

HON. J. STORIE: Really, I guess the same groups as other parts of the department relate to, in terms of the trustees and the Teachers' Society. As you know, there's a section within the Teachers' Society that relates to - I forget what the title is - Educateurs Franco-Manitobaine, as well as the superintendents' and principals' associations.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: In the curriculum area, the objective is to develop, adapt and evaluate curriculum for the Français, the French Immersion and the Basic French Programs. I notice that in the sub-appropriation 7.(c) which is the Educational Support Services, that they also do evaluation for Français and French Immersion, not the Basic French.

I was wondering what the difference is between the two areas?

HON. J. STORIE: One is the evaluation of curriculum and learning material, and the other one is student assessment, developing materials, working on student assessment criteria.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Is there nothing on student assessment then for Basic French and the Conversational?

HON. J. STORIE: Yes, perhaps there's a reference there, but all three areas are included.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: In the Curriculum Development, under Supplies and Service, it's dropped about \$10,000.00. Is there a lesser need now than there had been before or what is happening in that area? I would think it might have been the reverse.

HON. J. STORIE: I think the problem is not lesser need, but lesser money.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: So then, Mr. Chairman, who does without? Is it the department, in essence, or is it the services going to the divisions?

HON. J. STORIE: Well, it's the department. It may mean more limited opportunities to attend other professional development activities for the people in the branch. It may mean less access to resources and those kinds of things. Obviously, it has implications for the field. I'm not going to try to say it doesn't. I think it's part of the recognition. The bureau is faced, as with all sections, of being asked to spend less within and give us an opportunity to provide more to school divisions and universities.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: I'd like to ask some questions on the Basic French. How many divisions this year have the Basic French starting at the Grade 4 and the Grade 7, and have any been able to start at the Grade 10 entry level or is it 9?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, the Basic French Program now includes some 56,000 students. Those are the numbers for 1986-87. That would represent probably 70 percent or 80 percent, perhaps more of the divisions. So virtually, there may be one or two exceptions, but most of the divisions have the Basic French Program in place.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: First of all, I think, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to find out which divisions are not involved in the Basic French, if I could have that list. I don't really need it right now.

Also, I want to know how many divisions have made Basic French compulsory at any level, or have any made it compulsory? Would the department be aware of that?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, I'm not sure that it's compulsory. There is no requirement that a school offer Basic French in every program. Obviously, to the extent that the school division makes a decision to offer Basic French at the Grade 4 level in a school, if there is only one Grade 4 class, then it means that it's compulsory, I guess, in that sense. But that's a school division decision. Certainly in some areas, there will be both Basic French offered and perhaps classes in the same division but a different school where there wouldn't be Basic French.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Yes, I understand there are the three entry areas for Basic French. Are all the divisions offering the different entries, or one division might be offering a Grade 4 and another a Grade 7? Has the Grade 10 entry started?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, I understand that 4 is the preferred one by the majority of the divisions. There are a few starting at 7, and the 10 obviously is just getting under way. There may be, I guess, a few but relatively few who have taken advantage of it.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: I wonder if the Minister could explain why there are the different entry levels. If the majority are starting at the Grade 4, will they eliminate the other two entry levels as the schools take advantage of the Grade 4 entry?

HON. J. STORIE: The member's question is that, if we have a Basic French Program offered in a division at Grade 4, will we have an entry level at Grade 7 three years from now?

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Right, and Grade 10

HON. J. STORIE: I guess the answer would be, only if someone came from another division where they weren't involved in the Basic French Program. Obviously, there wouldn't be need for local students to have three entry points if everyone at the whole division offered the Basic French from 4 up.

The original intention obviously was to offer access to Basic French to as many students as we could in a hurry, rather than waiting for six years before they would have exposure to it. Obviously, someone who starts Basic French in Grade 10 isn't going to have the same level of proficiency as someone who started Basic French in Grade 4. That, unfortunately for them, is probably a matter of circumstance and not because of their desire to start that late.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: So if I understand correctly then, as the divisions start the Grade 4, then they'll eliminate the 7 and 10 entry points.

HON. J. STORIE: I would expect that will happen.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: I would hope that possibly - I go through this process pretty well every year - when they stop the Grade 7 and Grade 10 entry points, possibly the department would start looking at using the resources that were going into those two, because it had to have been considerable, to lower the Grade 4 entry point to Grade 3 and on the way down.

I have been told time and time again - we go through this every year - that Grade 4 is supposedly the best entry point. Everything I read in this curriculum policy for French language immersion education indicates that the best entry point for immersion is the younger the better. I cannot believe, my common sense will not tell me that the younger the better does not apply at any level for any entry point that you're taking the Basic French. So unless someone will give me just really hard facts and not just say that this is the area, my own feeling is that this is an area that should be looked at. Maybe 40 minutes may be considered too long to start with, but I would like to see it gradually lowered till it's an integral part of the school system in Manitoba.

HON. J. STORIE: I was just getting the explanation for why it made sense to do it at 4, but I agree with the Member for Kirkfield Park.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Thank you. I've waited about five years to hear that.

HON. J. STORIE: I have heard the explanation. It's quite good. I gather that research would say that the final outcome isn't much different. I've seen those kinds of reports. I think logic would say it should make a difference.

I guess it's also a question of staffing; it's also a question of the plan of implementation that the school division adopts. School divisions, of course, can do that. There are support programs available for divisions who decide to move it down one level at a time or begin at an earlier level.

Also the bureau has available an exposure package which provides 20 minutes a day, and some divisions are using the exposure K-3 or 1-3 exposure package.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: What is the difference between Conversational French and the conversational exposure package? Are they one and the same?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, no, the exposure package is part of the Basic French which is much more structured than the Conversational French.

Just for the member's information, I don't think you have access to these facts unless they maybe are in the annual report. But, in 1986-87, we have about 5,600 students in the Français Program; 14,600 in French Immersion; 56,000 in Basic French. Although the Français numbers have remained fairly constant over the last three or four years, Immersion obviously has increased by 10 percent, 15 percent, 20 percent a year. Basic French likewise has seen tremendous increase. The Conversational French has seen a decline, as people move from the Conversational into the Basic Program.

In total right now, there are approximately 105,000 students involved in one way or another in either Basic, Conversational, Immersion or Français Programs, which is a significant change over a pretty short period of time.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Is the department pushing, shall I say, the exposure package, rather than the Conversational French? Is it 20 minutes a day - or there are 60 minutes a cycle? Is that the Conversational French? I'm not just sure here, when we're talking in terms of time, what everybody's going into.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, there is no policy governing Conversational, so divisions have tended to approach it in their own way. It's also true that sometimes we have - I was going to say disputes, but that would be inferring conflict. We have discussions with school divisions from time to time about the programs that they offer. Our curriculum timetable indicates so many minutes per week, per day, and we sometimes have disputes with school divisions over the appropriateness of the time allocated to these programs.

Divisions tend to try and fit the program into their schedule, so sometimes you have programs instead of 40 minutes a day, for example, with Basic French, it might be 35 and then 32. So there are small differences

sometimes between schools, even within programs such as the Basic French program. We try and discourage that; we try and make sure that the program gets the recommended allocation of time.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: I didn't quite understand or maybe the Minister didn't answer the question. I know that divisions may take a certain amount of time, may make their own time, but the exposure package, is it laid down as 20 minutes a day if someone was using the package properly?

HON. J. STORIE: There are time guidelines with the exposure package which recommend 20 minutes a day. The exposure package is not funded the same way as the Basic French Program, however. So we set guidelines, but divisions may feel more free to adapt the program for their own use.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Has the Minister considered funding the exposure package, possibly not at the same level as the Basic French, but more than the Conversational French, to encourage divisions to get into the exposure package, certainly with the idea, I think, that in the long run we'll gradually increase it into the Basic French?

HON. J. STORIE: Monsieur . . . was asking me whether I, in fact, had considered that question and I had to respond frankly no I hadn't. But I am sure that staff at the bureau have, and I know for certain that innovative superintendents and secretary-treasurers and school boards have wondered that same thing.

I am not sure that there would be much advantage to doing that, given that the Basic Program can be supported through existing programs. So I guess the member's question is: Would it be useful to support an exposure package which is 20 minutes, when the alternative that is available to them and is supported is already there? I guess no one has really thought about that. I can't actually say that there has been a lot of pressure or that suggestion has been raised to me by anybody to date.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: I just feel that, if there is a commitment by the department that children learn another language and that certainly with the rate that immersion has grown, it might be well worth looking at something. Because I know that the divisions, with the way the money is allocated these days and the number of other things that they have to do, certainly would need a little bit of encouragement to get into something that's going to cost them substantially more. I know, if the program is offered, the parents will want their students in these programs, although I can't say that I am advocating the spending of new monies, let's say. I really do feel that if the Basic French, if the materials are available - I spoke to someone - and it wasn't in the St. James School Division, it was another school division - who ran the Basic French Program, and she didn't seem to be aware that there were appropriate materials available for the Grade 3 level, or K-3 in Basic French, because she felt that they would have to be certainly different than what would be given to a student in Grade 4, given their understanding both

of their own language, English, and what they would get in French.

So this is someone that's actively involved. Is the information not getting out to the division or just what would be the lack of understanding here?

HON. J. STORIE: I don't know that we have an explanation. I think staff are available and do respond to requests for information, clarification. Certainly, they're available if someone has any further questions or wants an explanation for the existing range.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Maybe the reason the question hasn't been asked is, if somebody uses the material at the Grade 3 level, are they funded the same way as at the Grade 4 level in the Basic French?

HON. J. STORIE: If they are offering the Basic French Program at Grade 3, they would receive the same funding or would be eligible for receiving the same funding, as if they used it at the Grade 4, yes.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: I have a question about French labs. I wonder if the Minister could explain if they're widely used outside of the Immersion Programs by any of the divisions, and possibly what kind of service they provide?

HON. J. STORIE: I'm told, Mr. Chairperson, that language labs have generally fallen by the wayside, that they're not used very extensively in Immersion or other programs. I gather they just have not proven to be as useful at the elementary level, at the public school level, as I guess was originally believed that they would be. I am aware that they're used at the university level with some degree of success, but apparently there has not been a heavy emphasis or a lot of requests for either help servicing additional support for labs for some time.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: I wonder if the Minister, Mr. Chairman, could explain what exactly the French labs were composed of, what services did a lab provide that the classroom did not.

HON. J. STORIE: I just have a note passed from staff that said that really they were used for reinforcement, I guess repetition, and students found them unmotivating or dull and just didn't respond to the setting, I guess. They're isolated, they're in individual booths; they just haven't proven to be effective.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Mr. Chairman, were they to get the sound? Were they to get the phonetics; was that what the labs were used for basically, to be able to pronounce better or just speak?

HON. J. STORIE: I suppose that was partly what it was intended to do, but I think it's like a lot of other things, it lacks reality. It's hard to get interested in something that's mechanical and doesn't have a face to it or any sense of purpose. I think probably - if my own experience is any judge - listening to the news in French is probably more beneficial than going to a language lab.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: In the curriculum policy book that was put out, it talks about whether you have a

dual track or an immersion school, but especially in a dual track that you would need a bilingual principal and bilingual staff.

Has this been a problem in divisions because I was noticing and just reading in the paper, Assiniboine South have been going to primarily dual-track schools. I'm just wondering, are they having a problem at all with administration? I know that teachers may well be a problem, but I was wondering about the administration?

HON. J. STORIE: I think it's simply a matter of familiarity, feeling part of the program and, I guess, may impact on staff development and morale and all of those other things; teacher supervision, the question of evaluation. There are several related issues to the question of the policy.

As the member knows, that has been circulated now to all school divisions. There have been very few responses to date, but we're looking for feedback. I think the policy document sets out some pretty sound principles on which to base immersion programming, and we'll wait and see whether there's any recommendations, suggestions, that come back from the field.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: I wasn't questioning the policy, I was just questioning whether they were having difficulties finding administrators for all these dual-track schools and if the divisions were basically following that policy. I know in our division, I think in two of the schools I know we have bilingual principals, but I'm not sure if they all have.

HON. J. STORIE: I think the member's right. It's not a problem everywhere; I think there are many cases where it won't be. I think we're not expecting any large reaction to the suggestions. Basically they're codifying what's already in practice, to a large degree.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: I just have another couple of questions. One thing I was noticing in the Annual Report, there's a little spot called "contentious issues." Since a number of the issues surrounding French language education are contentious, liaison officers are called upon to act as mediators, resource persons and coordinators between different parties.

Have there been lately a number of contentious issues and in what area? What has been happening?

HON. J. STORIE: I don't think there have been any major issues. I think one of the problems that has been addressed already this year has been the question of space. There were some pressures for additional classrooms and so forth to meet demands of growing immersion student populations, but those have largely been met. Other than that, I guess the individual queries and concerns are normally addressed by staff. There is some mediation, some consultation kind of services that are offered and most of them have been settled amicably in one way or another.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: I just wonder how many teachers and students are taking part in the bursary program. Are they staying in Canada mostly or are they going overseas?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, the exchange programs are only in Canada. There are no foreign exchange programs supported through this program. About 450 students are supported and approximately 150 teachers.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Has anyone evaluated that program and what have they found from the exchange programs?

HON. J. STORIE: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, evaluation, of course, is part of the terms of reference I guess of most federal-provincial agreements, that we do from time to time evaluate the programs.

Interestingly enough, I just attended a liaison committee meeting of the Council of Education Ministers for Canada and we met with a group who coordinate exchanges across Canada. I'm prejudging what the member may think about exchanges, but they are useful I think, much beyond what most people would anticipate, and language exchange is probably the most beneficial. They indicate their studies have shown that a two- or three-week exchange is probably worth four times that in the classroom. My suggestion was why don't we just save all our money, ship them to Quebec for six months when they are 18 years old, and have a bilingual country.

I do also know from experience, I've had friends who have gone to live in Quebec, and there is one over there actually whose exchange experience has done more - although he can't speak French, as you can hear - for him than probably several years of experience at school. I think it's a generalization, but I think exchanges generally are a superior way of providing language experience, probably all kinds of other experiences too.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: I agree with the Minister on the exchange. One thing I did want to ask, who is taking part in the exchange programs? Do the kids in the Basic French program get a chance at the exchange or is it just Immersion and francais?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, the support is to university students. The schools themselves organize exchanges between regions of the country and many are organized with Quebec. But the public school students, that's done with local initiative, there is no individual student support.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: I wonder, would the department then be aware of which students get involved in this? Do students in Basic French get as much of an opportunity through the divisions or is it mainly happening through the Immersion program and the francais?

HON. J. STORIE: I would say it's probably the majority of exchanges occur with the immersion students, but there is nothing preventing other students organizing exchanges. As the member knows, there are all kinds of exchanges that go on in various divisions?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. 7.—pass.

Resolution No. 53: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$3,560,700 for

Education for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1988—pass.

No. 8. Expenditures Related to Capital - the Member for Fort Garry.

MR. C. BIRT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dealing with section (a), there are sums of money set out for the three community colleges. Roughly, what are those being spent on? Are they specific capital items or are they just general purchase items, small items for the particular schools?

HON. J. STORIE: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, it relates to teaching equipment. It may be large or small, items up to \$100,000 or \$50,000, apart from some other much smaller ones.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, none of that is then for physical plant additions, changing things like that; it's more for the - as the Minister made reference to - equipment or facilities for the school.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, major capital construction occurs through the Department of Government Services for the colleges, so it wouldn't be in this particular appropriation.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, going down to the question of school divisions, I have a few questions there, that's (b)(2). My colleague from Turtle Mountain unfortunately is in the hospital this week and is not able to ask some of these questions. So, on his behalf, I'd like to ask a couple of questions.

The Boissevain School renovation was announced, and there's been a series of conflicting reports as to the amount of money being allocated for the school. One story indicated some \$600,000; an article in the local newspaper said some \$410,000 was being spent on that particular school.

Could the Minister advise what is scheduled for the Boissevain School renovation? I believe it may have been some construction approved or authorized for last year, but there's some more for this year. So maybe you could give me the whole story as that relates to the Boissevain School and the amounts, say, each year if it's going to be spread over one or two years?

HON. J. STORIE: Did the member ask for the whole story?

MR. C. BIRT: Yes.

HON. J. STORIE: Well, it all started with a little one - I really don't know the history of the Boissevain School, other than in 1986 . . .

MR. C. BIRT: It's the renovations that I'm talking about.

HON. J. STORIE: Yes. In 1986, there was some \$90,000 put into the first phase of the upgrade, and the second phase or the balance of the upgrade is going to occur this year. In total, there will be approximately \$500,000 spent on the upgrade.

I believe the school division has been notified. In fact, I believe I signed the letter almost a week ago now

indicating that approval had gone forward and that we would be in the "go" mode.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, I take it any school division, but this one in particular, would submit its plans to the appropriate authority. They would review it and then the government makes a commitment. Is this then the total commitment, this \$500,000 the total commitment of the Province of Manitoba to the Boissevain School renovation program?

HON. J. STORIE: Well, Mr. Chairperson, that's an estimated figure. It will depend on the actual experience. Obviously, there may be some variations.

I think just referencing the earlier part of the member's question, this project like all of the projects are now submitted on a five-year capital program that rotates and is updated, and all of the submissions come in. They come in on a prioritized basis from the school divisions, and then are prioritized on a provincial basis by the Public Schools Finance Board.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, the Minister in a press release earlier this year made an announcement that there was going to be \$81 million in capital construction over the next three years. How much of that \$81 million is to be committed this year?

HON. J. STORIE: That will depend, I guess, on how quickly the plannings, the assessments, the discussions that go on occur. It's probably a fair guess that the 81 will be fairly evenly distributed over the three years in terms of cash flow.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, as the Minister indicated, he was on a five-year sort of rolling time schedule for capital construction. Does he not know what will be on the list for 1987-88? And if so, what's the amount?

HON. J. STORIE: Well, Mr. Chairperson, some projects, yes, have been approved, and cash may in fact flow in 1987. Other projects are on the approval list, but have yet to have certain details worked out with the school division.

We may be talking about site-acquisition problems, architectural problems, I guess questions that need to be discussed between the Public Schools Finance Board and the division. So there is no certainty in those numbers.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, if what the Minister says, there are some difficulty or delays, does the capital lapse like we do in operating funds or, if a school is to get X amount of money and for some unknown reason it can't get the final commitment where the cash will flow or at least the commitment will be made, is it held sort of in a reserve account so that, when things do flow even if it's the year following, then it's committed?

HON. J. STORIE: Yes, the funds do not lapse. The capital funds for the Public Schools Finance Board do not lapse.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, earlier in the Estimates, I think the Minister touched on it was something like

\$1.5 million allocated for the construction or addition of day care facilities for the public school system, given that the operating and the lease arrangement and everything else was in another department's responsibility. Are there some funds put in this year's capital budget for child care facilities at schools?

HON. J. STORIE: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, there are funds allocated for this particular year. Most of the money from the 1986 year, I think that was the \$1 million or \$1 million-plus that I had referenced earlier, most of it is cash flowed. There are facilities being developed in new schools and, in 1987, approximately \$700,000 has been allocated.

MR. C. BIRT: Is there then a percentage of the capital budget for each year sort of allocated to day care facility construction? Or is it just an arbitrary amount that's set each year?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, no. The total amount is in some senses arbitrarily set. In other words, we set a budget for a year or three years, or whatever for capital construction, day care construction. But the amount that's targeted for 1987 represents, I guess, our best guess of projects that are likely to be under way, completed, based on requests that have come in and some initial assessment by Community Services as to the likelihood of spaces being allocated to that particular group.

MR. C. BIRT: Can the Minister give us an approximate breakdown as to what schools will be receiving the \$700,000 for the coming year?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, it will include I guess, as I've indicated, the completion of some projects scheduled in 1986 and additional spaces constructed in Fort Garry and St. Vital, Seven Oaks and Transcona.

MR. C. BIRT: In the allocation of \$19.3 million, is the minor capital for the schools included in this area?

HON. J. STORIE: Yes, it is.

MR. C. BIRT: What portion of that capital program represents minor capital, and was there an increase over last year?

HON. J. STORIE: Approximately \$6.5 million is for minor capital, and there's an increase of about 1 percent or 2 percent, 2.5 percent.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, the Minister gave me a "1987 Approvals to Date" list, saying the Norwood School, Seven Oaks School Division, Seine River, Pelly Trail and then the Turtle Mountain, which we just discussed. Is that pretty well all of the commitment of the, I guess, it would be about \$13 million, or are there other matters that will be approved or waiting approval?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, there are others that are under consideration now by the Public Schools Finance Board, and will likely be approved for the 1987-88 year.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, in a number of these when approval is given, does that mean that it is to go to construction in that particular year or are we just talking general planning for a year, and then a year later construction will follow?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, it normally takes approximately two years from approval to completion.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, last year, the Minister gave us a list of the school construction projects for '85, both new school and replacement and the acceleration program. I have the list here. I have nothing else to refer to, but it related to something like about \$39 million. Has all of that been completed, or are we still waiting for some of it to be completed?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, all of them have been approved, but they're in varying stages of completion.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, are we near total completion or is there still a fair amount, small percentage - what? - to be completed from that list?

MR. J. STORIE: Approximately 25 percent still to be completed.

MR. C. BIRT: There was also provided an analysis of school construction projects for 1986 and it totals \$37 million. Has all of that been committed and completed, or what stage of construction or renovation are we at?

HON. J. STORIE: Approximately 60 percent would be completed.

MR. C. BIRT: Is it anticipated that the balance will be finished in '86?

HON. J. STORIE: '87.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, the Minister made an announcement of \$7.5 million for Winnipeg School Division 1 on May 8, and listed a number of schools. Is that contained in the \$81 million commitment he was talking about that's to be spread over three years, or is that something special for Winnipeg 1?

HON. J. STORIE: No, that is part of the \$81 million commitment.

MR. C. BIRT: . . . getting a second kick at the cat for the same amount of money. Is that it?

HON. J. STORIE: I plan to announce those again soon.

MR. C. BIRT: No doubt.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no further questions in this area.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Inkster.

MR. D. SCOTT: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I just have a couple of questions in regard to situations

within my constituency. I'm in the Winnipeg No. 1 School Division.

I was at a tea the other evening and a couple of representatives from the school came up and spoke with me on the difficulties that they're having at the Garden Grove School for next year. As the Minister may well be aware, we've had a severe shortage of school space for the last few years in that area with the expansion not only of Garden Grove but also in Meadows West. It's being rectified by construction of new schools, the Stanley Knowles School in Garden Grove, and also the new Meadows West School.

At the Garden Grove School, the first Garden Grove School, they're facing severe overcrowding problems next year, and transport of a large number of students possibly to another school in the division, if they're not able to find portables for next fall. I wonder if the Minister could give any indication to me if there's any possibility, if it's economically feasible to move for the fall term at least of next year any portable units for use of that school.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, I appreciate the member's concern. I know that there have been concerns raised in the area about the overcrowding that is going to occur, which stands to be quite, I guess, uncomfortable.

Unfortunately, the portable relocatables are in short supply. It's unlikely that we will have any available before perhaps October of this year. The cost for moving and installing and so forth is also quite expensive, and would cost in the area of \$100,000.00.

Given that the Meadows West School is likely to be completed or ready for occupancy early in 1988, it may be possible for the division to find some alternative in the meantime. The Meadows West School was delayed for perhaps some unfortunate reasons in its construction, and I guess now we're faced with a problem that probably could have been avoided. I'll certainly take the member's request up with the Public Schools Finance Board at some further opportunity and explore what other ways exist for dealing with that problem. I recognize it's going to be uncomfortable, hopefully for a very short period of time.

MR. D. SCOTT: The delay in construction that the Minister is referring to, I presume he's referring to Winnipeg No. 1's position over whether or not they would build a school or have the school built with day care attached to it or not attached to it. How long did that slow up the process of Meadows West approximately?

HON. J. STORIE: I think probably three to four months delay, which could have made significant difference in terms of the length of disruption at Garden Grove.

As I said, I think we will have to look at the severity of the problem, the options that Winnipeg 1 has in terms of relieving that problem. There are some options that include, I guess, transporting students to other locations, etc. We'd have to look at how much disruption that delay is going to cause and weigh that against the cost of providing additional portables, if they become available.

MR. D. SCOTT: Mr. Chairman, what the Minister is saying is that there will not be portable units available

to be set up this summer so that they would be usable next September for the start of the school season, even if it's only for a three-month period.

HON. J. STORIE: It seems doubtful at this point, Mr. Chairperson, but the Public Schools Finance Board is still trying to accommodate that. If they can without having to incur unusual costs, then they will try and make that accommodation, but it may not be possible.

MR. D. SCOTT: Thanks very much for that, Mr. Minister. I have just another couple of clean-up questions in regard to the Stanley Knowles School, I guess. I'm wondering, is it still on target for occupation by the students in September of 1989 or is it January of '89?

HON. J. STORIE: '88.

MR. D. SCOTT: '88, yes, I was thinking of '88, September, '88.

HON. J. STORIE: I understand that the obstacles, to the extent there were any, have been cleaned up and that it is a go and should be ready on schedule in the fall of '88.

MR. D. SCOTT: No difficulties that the Public Schools Finance Board sees, and any delays. Construction has already started and they're well under way now. Very well.

Thank you very much.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Kirkfield Park.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: I'd like to know if the Minister could tell me where the negotiations are. Are there any ongoing with Laura Secord School in Winnipeg 1?

HON. J. STORIE: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, I think the most recent correspondence was a March 10 letter that was sent out by the Public Schools Finance Board which indicated, I guess, their understanding of what was required. They have, I think, chosen a somewhat less expensive option than one recommended originally by the consultant, but one which will satisfy the safety health concerns of the staff, the students and the parents, but which will preserve the school, ensure its longevity and which will allow the Winnipeg School Division to continue on with a renovation upgrading program over the next year or two or several to bring it up to par.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Are they planning a day care addition on to that school?

HON. J. STORIE: I'm not aware of that being requested at this point, Mr. Chairperson.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution No. 54: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$26,454,600 for Education, Expenditures Related to Capital, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1988—pass.

Resolution No. 47: Minister's Salary - the Member for Fort Garry. Do you have a question?

MR. C. BIRT: On the Minister's Salary? Just a brief statement, Mr. Chairperson.

It's been an interesting exercise the last two weeks going through the Estimates. I would like to thank the staff who were involved and helping make it flow smoothly and trying to make the Minister look good, because I realized on some occasions it was difficult. In many instances, it's almost trying to achieve the impossible.

One area I'm going to be very interested in looking at, in January of 1988, is whether the Minister decides to take the \$5 million that he set aside for the so-called zero increase for teachers and make it an educational fund. I'm willing to bet that the \$5 million does not flow back in to help defer or reduce the deficit as the Minister seemed to indicate, that if there was no agreement on zero increase for teachers that then these funds would not be allocated. I'm just willing to bet almost any sum of money with the Minister or anyone else that probably a light will go on in someone's mind someplace that this would be a nice little target fund that we could start handing out goodies for. It'll be interesting to see if (a) that step is taken, and then (b) how it's allocated.

So I'm going to be keeping an eye on it and wonder what the Minister is going to do with it, seeing as how he's going to have three months on which to make a decision on how to spend the \$5 million. Is he going to help out the Minister of Finance or is he going to put it to some lesser objective?

The other thing that I'm going to be looking forward to, especially in next year's Estimates, will be to see the progress or the implementation of the policy as it relates to manpower training and the community colleges and the thrust that they're making into the communities. It's an interesting area and I still maintain that I think there are just too many training dollars flowing through too many divisions, and that perhaps we're not getting maximum mileage out of the dollars that are there. I mean, we're talking I believe probably in the neighbourhood of at least \$100 million or more and, quite frankly, with so many people doing so many things, it's the proverbial too many cooks spoiling the broth.

It just seems to me that I think it should be coordinated and brought together, either under one ministry or at least in a more coordinated effort. I look forward to continuing the debate on whether or not the movement to cap the training facilities that we have in the system will continue and whether or not we're going to start better utilizing the resources that are in fact in place, whether they be in community colleges, in the regional schools or in the high schools themselves.

One other area that I'm looking forward to over the next year will be the Federal and Provincial Governments' debate. I guess it's the Federal Government's national debate on education and education policy that the Minister referred to. I'm hopeful that some positive things will flow from it. Granted that we all can't get the money we want for things, but I'm hoping that it will at least maybe set the tone of cooperation and coordination of post-secondary education in Canada. Hopefully, we can get away from squabbling as to who owes what or who should get what and put our energies into the area that is of most concern to all of us, and that is to try and provide a good quality post-secondary education system in this country.

In closing, Mr. Minister, I would like to compliment the new Deputy Minister that you have. I think you have an excellent choice there. I just hope that he doesn't age too quickly in trying to make you look good. I realized he's put on a fair number of years since he was last here in a different status, but I wish him well in his new job and I hope that he can outlast you.

I note that one of my constituents who played a very interesting role in creative financing in the Department of Finance, that the Minister keeps hanging his hat on, on the transfer of funds debate that goes on between us, the Federal Government and the provinces, has now been moved into the very sensitive role of High School Finances. It'll be interesting to see whether he can continue his creativity to make the trustees and parents and no doubt reduce some of the heat that is being applied to the Minister in this area, because it is probably the biggest single issue faced by parents in the community at the moment and taxpayers. Are they getting quality for their value and for their tax dollar, and are these tax dollars too high? So he's going to need all of his talents to satisfy, if it's possible, many conflicting demands on the public purse.

So I look forward to this time next year to see if he has been able to pull a rabbit out of the hat for the Minister, or if in fact he will just be, perhaps, another one frustrated by the competing demands on the system.

That concludes my remarks on the department. I'd like to thank the Minister and his staff. We kept them here long hours sometimes, and they, I think, did a good job for us and I know they do a good job for the system. We can get into debates on issues, but I try not to get involved in personalities because I think, on balance, they're doing a good job for Manitoba; and, as I say, when they're handicapped with the present Minister, their job is of course more difficult.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, I would like to thank, first of all, the Member for Fort Garry and the Member for Kirkfield Park and other members who have taken part in the debate. I know I have expressed the view, from time to time, that this is a somewhat pointless exercise in terms of the time we spend and what results; but I think it is true that members have a chance to share their own concerns, and perhaps apart from asking the questions, get information that helps them do their job as members.

I also know, as Minister, that it's intriguing to see the results year from year; that when members ask questions about how this has progressed, it's always fascinating to see what progress has been made. It's not always perhaps what you would hope, but I think, year over year, it's usually quite substantial and there are changes being made to make the system more efficient, make it more effective and that's useful for myself.

I appreciate the comments, particularly about staff, and I know people in the public domain often make disparaging remarks about civil servants. I certainly feel quite fortunate to have an extremely capable group working in the Department of Education -(Interjection)- I think they know. The Member for Fort Garry is right; it isn't always easy making this Minister look good and they've managed to do not a bad job so far.

I think it is also true that it is a very interesting time for education, because there are so many opportunities out there to change the way we do things. My hope is that the spirit of cooperation that does exist - I think I say that quite honestly - it does exist between the universities and the Universities Grants Commission, amongst the major organizations involved in education; I think put us in a good position to make changes that are necessary. They include changes to possibly the high school system, as a result of the Manitoba High School Review, changes to the functioning of our community colleges, to make colleges more accessible, and changes to the university, to help them collaborate and cooperate in a more effective way.

So there are good things in the horizon and I thank all the members for their good questions and their patience, when we didn't have the answer at our fingertips. I hope that we accomplished something at least in terms of informing each other.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution No. 47: Be it resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty, a sum not exceeding \$3,941,800 for Education, Administration and Finance for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1988—pass.

Committee rise.

SUPPLY - COMMUNITY SERVICES

MR. CHAIRMAN, C. Santos: Would the Committee of Supply please come to order. We are considering the Estimates of the Department of Community Services.

We are on Item No. 3.(d)(1) Program Salaries, 3.(d)(2) Other Expenditures, 3.(d)(3) Financial Assistance, 3.(d)(4) External Agencies - the Member for Rhineland.

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

This is a rather large area that we are going into, programs, evaluations, standards, and so on, with \$26 million-plus being spent. I wonder if the Minister can give us an opening statement as to the programs, the direction that she is heading into, what she is doing about standards, evaluation and so on.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

HON. M. SMITH: Yes, Mr. Chair, I just want to check if the member has received the information that we undertook yesterday to make available. You have received it?

MR. A. BROWN: Yes I did.

HON. M. SMITH: Thank you. Again . . .

A MEMBER: As late as it was.

HON. M. SMITH: Ignoring the facetious comments from the southwest, this is the area of community social services, Mr. Chair, that develops the program direction, develops standards and evaluates services delivered by both the department and non-governmental agencies for the care, accommodation, rehabilitation and assistance of physically and mentally-disabled persons.-(Interjection)- You're hard to ignore.

Within those general objectives, the program and funding standards and guidelines for residential and day programs, vocational, rehabilitation, respite, crisis intervention, additional care and support, apartment living and transportation service. As you can see, Mr. Chairperson, we are providing quite a broad range of services to the disabled living in the community and each portion of the program does have standards and funding criteria.

This is also the area that monitors compliance with these standards and guidelines, evaluates the effectiveness of the service, conducts regional and province-wide needs assessment surveys. The people working in this area, work in 10 regions, 7 out of the City of Winnipeg and 3 within the city.

There's the group assisting the development of resources to meet client-service needs; provide input to divisional planning and Estimates preparation process; provide input to regional and external agency resource allocations; provide program support and consultation to departmental field services and external agencies; administer the vocational rehabilitation training budget. They prepare submissions for the Minister and central government, carrying out agency relations functions relative to the external agencies, who are delivering service in this area and develop a comprehensive human resource development and training program for the provincial regional staff and for the community sector service providers.

There are 1,103 mentally handicapped adults who are being supervised in 356 community settings. There are additional services to a total of 1,526 mentally handicapped adults in 51 day programs. The Vocational Rehabilitation Training Fund is handled, and service provided by external agencies for disabled adults in Vocational Rehab is monitored.

Again, there's a continued development of community resources to accommodate the divisional and departmental programs for disabled adults, and we ensure compliance with external agency information and accountability requirements of the division, the department and the Provincial Auditor.

MR. A. BROWN: I thank the Minister for the figures that she gave me as far as how many mentally retarded there were in the province. I didn't quite get those figures, but I would like to break it down a little bit more, if I possibly could.

Can the Minister break down the population by region? How many are there in their own homes, and how many in group homes, and how many in institutions?

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, we covered institutions yesterday. Again, perhaps the member could review that material. But with the Regional Service we have, under the mental retardation, a total of 3,320 caseload statistics; under Vocational Rehab, 2,475. I don't know if the member wants the breakdown by region. We could provide it to you.

MR. A. BROWN: Mr. Chairman, if I could have the breakdown by region, I would appreciate that.

HON. M. SMITH: Central Region, M.R. 479; Vocational Rehab, 328; Eastman - again I'll give the M.R. figure

and then the V.R.- 370 and 228; Interlake, 284 and 188; Norman, 68 and 23; Parklands, 290 and 163; Thompson, 142 and 51; Westman, 474 and 343.

The total number of mentally retarded people being cared for in institutions is 955. That's made up of 615 at MDC; 270 at St. Amant and 70 at Pelican Lake Training Centre.

MR. A. BROWN: Are there any efforts being made at the present time to establish more vocational centres?

HON. M. SMITH: There is a development in the vocational training area and the day care, day program area. There are renovation replacement plans for some of the centres, and some expansion as the needs are identified.

MR. A. BROWN: I understand - and I think maybe you've probably passed this particular area, and I don't know if this question has been asked. But I understand that the Winnipeg Region has been divided into three regions. I wonder if the Minister can give me an explanation for this. Was there a big problem operating under one agency, or why do we have the three regions within the City of Winnipeg?

HON. M. SMITH: The problems that were developing about a year ago, a little over a year ago, stem partly from the fact that Health and Community Services are developed in a multidisciplinary way in the regions and, when the two departments were divided, there was a rough division of responsibilities at the field level and a multidisciplinary pattern of service delivery. But at the supervisory and accountability levels of the two departments, there was some room for confusion. We did look at a variety of ways of clarifying the accountability to maximize the clarity of lines of authority at the regional level.

We tried two different patterns. The first one, we had an individual in Health and an individual in Community Services who were to work cooperatively and supervise all the regions but we found, over time, that each department tended to have a slightly different approach to some of the information flows. Therefore, we agreed with the Department of Health that instead we would appoint an executive director to be in charge of Winnipeg and accountable through the health system for Winnipeg, and that we would appoint another individual who would be accountable through our system to supervise all the regions.

The approach to the Winnipeg Region where there had been six areas and some difficulties with regard to coordination and planning and so on, it was reviewed and several models were looked at for altering it. The model that was eventually decided upon was one that would remove the six area directors but put in three regions and, above that, to coordinate with the one executive director. I think it's to make the regions a little bit more manageable as to size, because of such a density of population and multiplicity of need that is encountered at the Health and Community Service regional levels.

MR. A. BROWN: Well, Mr. Chairman, by dividing it into three areas, I believe there must be substantially more

supervisory staff and that the staff ratio, staff versus supervisors, must have changed somewhat. I also understand that the staff was broken up equally between the three areas, and that one of the areas which has considerably more problems than the other has been left with quite a shortage of staff.

I'm just wondering how is the Minister going to be coping with a situation such as that? Is she going to be hiring more staff for that particular area? Or some of the staff from the other two areas, is that going to be put into the area which is short of staff?

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Chairperson, the staff is quite equally balanced between the regions. Again, within each staff unit there are representatives of the different major programs.

We are not aware of any particular problem in a specific region, but there is in the annual planning a full opportunity for caseloads and any problems at the local level to be identified.

If the member would care to be more specific, I do remind him that there are many programs delivered through these regions. Some come under the Health Continuing Care, Public Health Nurse and so on. Some come under the Community Services, most particularly the mental retardation, the vocational rehabilitation, there's day care coordinators and especially in the rural regions some child and family service persons. But again I don't know quite what specifically he's referring to.

With regard to the total numbers of people, we did have six areas and they all had a supervisor. In the reorganization we ended up with three regions and then one executive director over, so there were some up and some down. In fact we had four persons replacing the six.

MR. A. BROWN: I understand that there's a total of 303 SY's in these areas, if I'm right. I wonder if the Minister can give me the number of SY's for each of these three regions.

HON. M. SMITH: We have the total figures here for Winnipeg. We'll provide the breakdown region-by-region later.

Perhaps if we can just be sure we're looking at the same figures, do you have page 42 in the Supplementary? The 303 figure is the total number of staff for these programs throughout the province. The Winnipeg component is 117; 303 is the total for the entire province.

MR. A. BROWN: Okay, getting back to the vocational centres, what is the demand for these spaces? Is there a considerable waiting list for places at the present time as far as places for vocational centres?

HON. M. SMITH: Traditionally, local groups have initiated the development of day program and vocational rehab services. As we've developed the Welcome Home program, we have taken some initiative in enabling groups to expand or new groups to establish programs. There is priority given to the Welcome Home clients in the initial expansion phase and planning afoot for a more comprehensive service.

In terms of waiting list, there's also an attempt to move a higher number of people through pre-vocational

and vocational training so that more can be placed in regular employment, possibly on their own or, possibly with a supervisor, placed in small groups.

It will take some time before we have a fully comprehensive service that's province-wide. What would help in the development of that is the renewed Vocational Rehabilitation for Disabled Persons Act that we're renegotiating with the Federal Government. If we get a more comprehensive and up-to-date cost-sharing act, it would assist substantially in our moving along that program.

MR. A. BROWN: I wonder if the Minister could tell me what coordination has been done between the vocational rehabilitation and the Welcome Home Program. Are they working closely together and, if so, how many people have been assessed for the federal-provincial Vocational Rehabilitation Development Program, because that one has 50-50 cost sharing with the Federal Government?

HON. M. SMITH: One of the difficulties with the VRDP that we currently have is it's not a 50-50 cost sharing and not all the elements that are required in that kind of a program are included. We recover whatever we can from that program and we are working very hard to try and get a more comprehensive program.

The Welcome Home people though all have a day program which may be pre-vocational, vocational, or some other variety of activities in the day, so that they indeed have a regular program.

MR. A. BROWN: There has been considerable criticizing as far as individual planning is concerned as to who is being placed into various programs. There is a need for more individual planning. This has been stated in a number of the reports that the Minister has received in the last while. Is the Minister going to be doing something about this?

I wonder sometimes how much training the people who are doing the evaluation as to where the individual is going to be going and then to which program. I wonder how much training do these people themselves have in this particular area. Because this is probably one of the largest areas of criticism that this Minister has received in all the reports, that people do not have the proper training and people are not placed in the proper facilities. People are not placed with companions in apartment living that they can get along with. In all of these areas of placement, we seem to be running into a lot of criticism. So I wonder if the Minister can tell me: Is she planning on improving the system or what is happening?

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Chair, I think the thing for the member to remember is that there never was a system. There was a reactive set of funds that were accessed by various groups in the community who would initiate activity, but there never was a comprehensive program that covered all the people in need.

We have been engaged in building that kind of a comprehensive system, and we have had a very public planning process at the Provincial Steering Committee level and the Regional Implementation Teams. Membership there is from staff and, at the provincial

level, provincial advocacy groups, auxiliaries and so on and, at the regional levels, the regional equivalents of that. They are the people in the community who have expertise in this area. They are the people who are interested, and they are the people who are cooperating in building the system.

I think again in the evaluation report, they are measuring the progress to date against an ideal or a target of a fully effective system but, if you looked at the system now in terms of what used to be, you would see how far we have come along the way.

The 24-hour planning process for individuals never used to be a feature of planning for everyone. Families accommodated the family member as best they could unless they were fortunate enough to access some volunteer service in the community or they placed their family member in an institution. There really wasn't a planning process and a comprehensive system of appropriate supports in the community.

That's precisely what we're building and that's why evaluations are done, to identify where things are going along well and where there is need to build and develop more. But it's because we were starting from a lack of any comprehensive service that we naturally are only part-way along the road.

I think the items identified show where there's still room for improvement and that's as it should be in programs as they're developing, but to suggest that somehow there used to be a service that now is gone is quite a distortion. There was no systematic approach to individuals.

MR. A. BROWN: In the Vocational Rehabilitation Program, can the Minister tell me how many persons have been able to be placed in the community as a result of this program? In other words, is there evaluation going on? Is the program successful and, if so, how many persons have found employment?

HON. M. SMITH: Over 80 percent of the people in these workshops are mentally handicapped. In the past, for too many of them, it became a dead end. It was an activity place and therefore certainly better than nothing, but there was no systematic attempt to place or cultivate for them positions in the community. There were some volunteer groups who did that roundabout the province, but there was no systematic policy-driven approach.

Now what we have done, in consultation with the workshops, is set ourselves a target each year of moving 6 percent through the system to be placed in community employment. It's a target, and we've asked each workshop to make a best effort.

On the other side, we are working on affirmative action employment, both with the private sector and public sector, so that we can accommodate more of these people who have some special talents to contribute and they also have some special needs for supervision and so on. But there is a systematic plan and program to move as many as possible into integrated employment.

I know I attended one of the annual workshops they had here where they were honouring employers and also the employee where they had made successful placements. The Manitoba Council on Work and

Rehabilitation has been very cooperative and active in this area.

But I think it's only realistic to expect that a considerable number will spend most of their time in the sheltered workshop placing. Some people think we could, in time, place many, many more in the community, and I think we are open on that. We want to explore just how much can be done, and we have been consulting with people in other jurisdictions. There was some very innovative work being done down in St. Paul in Minnesota where they were placing enclaves of sort of a small group of people with some support in integrated employment.

I think it's right to say we're at a new beginning in this area and a new VRDP would really assist us with some of the additional costs, particularly during not only the transition period but the sustaining of people once they have made the move. That seems particularly important for some of the physically disabled people. They make the transition and then, like other people, they may encounter some temporary difficulty. Without much help, they can be got back on the tracks and moved along, but it's very often that pieces of the program just haven't been that well developed.

So I think we're on the right track in the way we're building this program and, as I say, we would get a terrific boost if the new VRDP Act is as comprehensive as we hope it will be.

MR. A. BROWN: Can the Minister tell me who is doing the evaluation or the recommendation as to who is going to be placed into the Welcome Home Program or into the Community Living Program?

The reason I'm asking this is I have grave concern that some people are being placed in the community who really ought to be in institutions. We have to think again of the Mitch Gowler case, where this individual was placed into the community, and from what I understand, to this particular person it wouldn't make any difference whatsoever where he was; he wouldn't know where he was.

Somebody must have recommended that this person be placed out in the community. I would like to hear the Minister say that they are going to be watching this very carefully. I think we must realize that not all persons can be placed out in the community, that some persons are better off in institutions.

I would like to know who is responsible for these placements and whether the Minister is going to give them directions as to, well, that some people really ought not to be put out into the community.

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Chair, I did yesterday and the day before - I appreciate that the member was not able to attend - go into quite a lengthy description and, in fact, did repeat it yesterday as to the process used for selection of people and planning for them and monitoring them. Again, I don't want to repeat all that. There are the people at the provincial steering committee level and the regional implementation teams who work cooperatively to identify, to plan for, to place and to monitor.

The question as to who can function in the community and who can't and whether there are appropriate safeguards, it's an important question. There are many

advocacy groups who say everyone could function in the community with appropriate supports. There are others who say many or most would be better off in institutions and, I think, a fair number in the middle who say, well, there is certainly need and room for more community placement. At this point in time, we're not prepared to say that the institutions are not necessary, therefore, let's have a mixed program. That's basically the line that the government has taken.

With regard to the planning and the appropriate supports, I think it is important that we do take great care with identifying needs and providing the necessary staffing, training, medication and so on. We are always going to rely on the best judgment of staff, experts, family and workers when we are doing this. But I think by having the multidisciplinary team that sits down and looks over the record of the person, their past behaviour and so on, and watches very closely how they adapt to the new setting, that we are building in as many safeguards as we humanly can. There is no absolute predictability when one is dealing with human beings, either when they are in the institution or when they are in the public.

When we have a very tragic and unfortunate incident such as we did have in the Mitch Gowler case, we have asked everyone concerned to review the decision-making and the knowledge and piece together information to see if there's anything we can learn. I would like to caution the member, who is inferring that he knows exactly what happened in that case.

My understanding is that nobody knows exactly what happened. That's part of the difficulty. Now we could say, well, if everyone was in an institution it would be safer. But, Mr. Chair, I don't know that's a reasonable deduction from the situation. When large numbers of frail and needy people are congregated in a big institution, even with the best of care and attention, sometimes unfortunate things happen there, too.

I prefer to take the route of the best judgment and input to planning, both for institutional placement and for community, very careful monitoring and, if in the very unusual event of a tragic event, that we get as much evaluation of what happened, to see if there was any improvement that could have been made at any level in the planning and procedures.

We have undertaken to do that. We have a special committee, not only reporting incidents in the institution, evaluating them and checking over to see if there's improvement, but we also intend to coordinate that type of committee for the community placements.

Right now we have an accountability through the local worker and the region coming through to the department, but we are looking at how we can tighten that up and ensure that very close evaluation occurs.

MR. A. BROWN: I am not inferring that I know everything that happened in that particular case. I don't think that anybody does. I just know that Mitch Gowler, who was a six-foot-two chap, who had a brown belt in Judo, who had been taking wrestling lessons and was enrolled in that class at the University of Manitoba, had from time-to-time great difficulty in keeping this person under control. He had taken him home with him on occasion, but he had experienced great difficulty with him on previous occasions. Mitch Gowler was the

only person who would take this person out, because nobody else felt that they could control him. So there was decided danger in letting Mitch Gowler take this person out by himself.

There is no doubt about that, and all I'm asking, Mr. Chairman, is for the Minister to come up with some kind of a decision. She is the one who will have to make this decision. We cannot rely on all kinds of people coming in with reports. Sure, you are going to get various opinions. But the Minister will have to take the lead and give the direction in instances such as this that this is who is going to be released, and some people will have to be institutionalized, because obviously it is better for them to be in the institutions than for them to be out in the community.

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Chairperson, I am speculating as to what the member opposite, what kind of directions or guidelines he would have me give to a multidisciplinary committee made up of the people most experienced, both with the particular individual and the people with mental disabilities throughout the Province of Manitoba.

Is he suggesting that I should say, because there is a smidgen of risk in a community placement, that all the mentally disabled people in Manitoba should be kept almost under lock and key in an institutional setting? Is he really suggesting that?

Again I ask the member - I'm hearing from the other side, first yes, that all of them should and then a thoughtful reflection, some of them should. And that, Mr. Chairperson, is the issue. Some people can function in the community with better personal experience of life. Some people believe that everyone could, with appropriate supports, and as I've said I'm not in that frame of mind at this point in time. And others believe that the institution is the only place.

I am saying that our policy is to have both options available and a very careful process for determining who is in each location and to make those placements and the supervision and so on as safe and as wholesome and nurturing as we possibly can.

But I think, Mr. Chair, if the members opposite think that there's a simple rule of thumb, that a Minister can just say everyone in the institution and put a huge fence around it and lock the door and restrict movement, I disagree. I can understand that the feeling for that sort of policy may come from a genuine concern for safety and I respect that, but it's like any one of us who undergo parenting - we have to make, day by day, choices about how much protection and support to give our children and how much freedom of action. All through our lives we make those choices for ourselves with the mentally disabled. Many of them are not as able to make as big a range of decisions about their own behaviour in the daily round of affairs but that's not to say they have no ability.

The policy is to have these committees who do have knowledge of the individual's past behaviour, current behaviour, make predictions as to probable behaviour but to monitor very closely how they respond to any change in circumstance and then come up with the correct mix of protection and encouragement for individual choice. I can't see a time when the Minister of the Day can ever be in a position of making those

choices or directions. I do think our role is to try to make the policy of adequate protection based on need, compatible with as much freedom and variety in the life of the individual as possible.

I think that is the type of policy decision that we should be making and it's the one that I intend to keep to with as close monitoring as we can manage. And again, if there are any incidents, to get immediate reporting and analysis.

MR. A. BROWN: Just briefly, Mr. Chairman, I don't want to belabour this point although I do have very strong feelings on this.

I do feel that when we have an incident such as what we have just witnessed in Manitoba, with the death of a person, then certainly we must learn from that death. And when you have somebody that is autistic, then you have to take a special look at a situation such as that. Certainly there are various things that we can look at and after a person has been assessed, surely they ought to know whether this person is capable of functioning in the community, whether he is a dangerous person, whether he is capable of losing absolute and complete control, and whether he could be a danger to society.

Certainly these assessments can be made and this is all, really, that we're asking for, that these assessments be made and that the Minister give the direction that these assessments be made and that some of these people will not be able to be released into the community. I suppose the concern we have is that when somebody from the Association of Community Living makes the statement that really, ideally all the mentally-retarded should be placed into the community, no matter how agreeably retarded they are, then we do have a concern, Mr. Chairman.

We have never really criticized the Minister's Welcome Home Program. We have been watching it carefully. We see some good things coming out of it. We also now have some concerns which are coming out of it and we are expressing these concerns.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that the Minister is going to heed some of the concerns we have and that she is going to take a very careful look as to who is going to be placed into the community.

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Chair, I have said that there is a process for discharge and placement, and also for readmission. The people on those committees are multidisciplinary. There may be representatives from ACL, but ACL is an organization of individuals. They have an advocacy position that some of their members agree with; some have differences of opinion, as with any community organization. I respect their right to hold that opinion, but I've said here that is not the policy or the opinion of the government. We believe in building up more community options, because what we had in the system was virtually no options. The person had to function at home, with their family taking full responsibility, or be institutionalized. We said, along with many people in the community who said with a little help, we could manage in the community; we felt there had to be a range of supports and more options developed.

There is a process for discharge, placement, and readmission. There is a process to review admission,

review placement regularly, and there is also a general acceptance, I think, among the people who are making the placement. They have taken the principle that the United Nations, the Government of Canada, and indeed the Province of Manitoba, in the Decade of the Disabled have taken, which is that a disabled person is entitled to live in the least restricted environment compatible with their needs. That is the policy. But there's no simple rule of thumb. I can't say everyone with brown eyes and dark hair, or blue eyes and a balding head, should be in the institution and everyone else should be out. That's not the criteria you use.

A MEMBER: What about brown eyes and grey hair?

HON. M. SMITH: Well, you know, that's getting a little - I might lean a little that way, David.

The criteria that have to be followed are the ones with the expertise and the people who work daily with the retarded persons; their family and their friends, they are the people who can comment on how the person behaves, how they react with what medications they're on, what variations in mood and behaviour. They make the best judgment they can. Again, we are committed, and I repeat that for the member's comfort, and indeed I invite him to meet with me regularly to ask how it's coming along.

We are committed to making that process as thorough and as careful and as foolproof as we humanly can. I think when you consider the large number of people in the community that often are in need of support and get nothing, with the care that we've been taking in this particular program, you know I really think that we have been very conscientious.

The truth is that of the 4,000 mentally disabled people in Manitoba, many of them have had no care other than what their parents or friends can provide. This is an attempt to build up a whole range of options so that people can be placed in the situation that is the best match with their particular needs.

I take the member's concern to heart. It is certainly, you know, when a tragic event occurs I think my department knows how much I take it to heart and try to check down all the details. But I do ask the various professionals in the field to give me a thorough report. I don't jump to an immediate conclusion. I wait until I get some report on the person's conduct in the home, what the different persons have said, what his past behaviour has been like. I think that in this particular case this particular individual had received three month reviews and his status had been reviewed as late as April of this year and he had followed a pretty stable pattern.

You know, again, on an individual case I encourage the member if he wishes to come to me and discuss it and maybe make suggestions if he thinks we're not as thorough as he thinks we should be, and we will certainly listen and try to work together. Because it's in all our interests to have an appropriately supportive environment in the community so that we don't fall into the path of thinking because someone is different or has a special need, that the only safe place for them is in a large institution. I don't think that's true.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for River Heights.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: I'm sorry Mr. Chairman, but this may have been asked and if it has the Minister can just say that and I'll read it in Hansard.

I'm just curious about the additional funding, the \$497,300 found on page 48 which is an Increase Allowance for Purchase of Services from External Agencies but there's also, on the previous page, an External Agencies figure of \$7.3 million. Can the Minister explain just what that additional purchase of services is supposed to be?

HON. M. SMITH: Yes, that's the total amount that we're estimating will be required in raising the service component according to the inflated cost. So it is at this point an aggregate amount but it will be allocated to give a slight increase to the service amount.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 3.(d)(1) Salaries—pass; 3.(d)(2) Other Expenditures—pass; 3.(d)(3) Financial Assistance—pass; 3.(d)(4) External Agencies—pass.

3.(e) General Purpose Grants - the Member For Rhineland.

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

I don't want to spend a lot of time on General Purpose Grants, it is pretty well straightforward. But I would like to make one observation and then express one concern, and that is regarding the Main Street Project. It seems to be underfunded.

I know that these people are doing excellent work and especially ever since the Remand Centre is not taking as many drunk people into the drunk tank, this has put huge pressure on the Main Street Project. I wonder if the Minister could tell me - have the concerns which were expressed a short while ago - and there was a great deal of publicity about this in the papers, there were a number of articles on it - has this concern been remedied? Have they received the extra funding?

I know at that time the Provincial Government was negotiating with the City of Winnipeg to take up some of the responsibilities. Has this been cleared satisfactorily?

HON. M. SMITH: The funding has been stabilized and we are negotiating with them as to the up-coming year and whether their needs are matching the grant. As you know, this has not been a program that's been under our department before, so we felt that perhaps it was a better mix than where it was being funded before and they seem pleased with the negotiations to date.

I think we're dealing with a group of people that often have a combination of problems, of which being intoxicated is only one. They are often homeless or their money has vanished or they lack some of the skills of managing it. We've been looking, along with housing, at some of the longer-term solutions for some of the individuals. But we are negotiating with them on their current needs.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 3.(e) General Purpose Grants—pass.

Resolution 32: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$59,192,300 for Community Social Services for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1988—pass.

Item No. 4. Child and Family Services, 4.(a)(1) Administration: Salaries; 4.(a)(2) Other Expenditures - the Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I wonder if the Minister could indicate the reasons why salaries for two managerial positions increased from \$80,700 to \$116,700 this year, nearly a 50 percent increase.

HON. M. SMITH: I think we have located the item. We, of course, have added the usual salary increments but we've added the position of executive director to provide administrative support to the Assistant Deputy Minister. The complexity and the volume of work that has gone on during the year, we attribute a lot of the increased volume in work to the fact that we seem to be, with our community-based organizations, much closer to the ground. We are, in fact, experiencing not only a great increase in caseload just in the normal run of things, but because we've also been adding the abuse group. I guess we've finally succeeded in alerting the public to the severity and need of this particular group; consequently, the work of this department has grown greatly. We felt that an executive director, a support person, would be a good organizational move.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, the supplementary information indicates that there were two managerial positions last year, in which those two people earned a salary of \$80,700.00. For this fiscal year, there are still two people employed in that department, in managerial positions, earning a total of \$116,700.00. Can the Minister indicate the salaries of the two people last year - there are just two people in the department - what are their respective salaries?

HON. M. SMITH: Yes, Mr. Chair, there has been an upward classification of the role because of the complexity of the work. The position was at \$25,000 and is now at \$58,800.00. It's an executive director position that wasn't there before; and then the general salary increases.

MR. G. MERCIER: Is it the same person who is filling that position at \$58,000 who filled it at \$25,000.00?

HON. M. SMITH: It was vacant at \$25,000 and then Drew Perry was moved into the executive director and then with our reorganization - I should introduce Drew Perry, who is now the Acting Assistant Deputy Minister for Child and Family - and that position is vacant at this point.

MR. G. MERCIER: How long has that position been vacant?

HON. M. SMITH: With the recruitment of our current Deputy as Deputy, he was going to come as the Assistant Deputy for Child and Family and as he was our best candidate for Deputy we placed him in that position. We have put Drew Perry in as the Acting Assistant Deputy, so that other position is vacant at the moment.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, I'm going to ask for the Minister's guidance here. Obviously, there are a

number of issues we wish to raise in the whole area of Child and Family Services. Should we be doing so under this item or is it more appropriate to do it in the next item? If it's a matter, perhaps, of her department's role in the whole area, we could do it here. I can assure the questions won't be repeated in the other sections if they're dealt with here.

HON. M. SMITH: Really, we can do it either way. I'll allow a certain amount of leeway but if you'd like to pass through the Admin. and concentrate on the Child and Family; I'm easy either way. If you want to raise all the issues now and then go through the specifics rapidly after that, I can take it either way.

MR. G. MERCIER: Perhaps you could start by telling me what does this area do and what have they done?

HON. M. SMITH: The Administration?

MR. G. MERCIER: Yes.

HON. M. SMITH: Perhaps if I could direct the honourable member's attention to the - do you have the Supplementary Information? Page 55 really outlines the objectives and the basic activity. The program components of the Child and Family, the Seven Oaks is, well, you can see the separate elements. The Seven Oaks Centre, the Child Day Care, the Family Dispute Service and the Children's Special Services. So they coordinate the planning and the operation of these areas.

Again, they have a particular responsibility for ensuring there's a sound legislative - well, I can read through it, but since you have it. You have it? Okay.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, I hoped for a more specific, practical indication of what they do than the general wording that's contained in the Estimates.

I would ask the Minister then - last year during the Estimates, we asked for, and she provided for us, a summary report on the rate of recidivism for physically and sexually abused children in Manitoba for 1985. Could we have that report for 1986?

HON. M. SMITH: As you recall, our Estimates last year were somewhat later in the year. We haven't that full compilation as yet. It should be available in a few weeks.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, the report we received last year was dated May 1986. It was dated May 1986. If there has been such concern about this whole area of child abuse, why isn't this report ready at this time?

HON. M. SMITH: Well, Mr. Chairman, May is not yet through and I said it would be a couple of weeks until that particular element is ready. The overall stats that we do have were tabled, I think it was yesterday or the day before, in committee - the abuse stats.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, the statistics we were supplied with do not in any way deal with the rate of recidivism in this whole area. It's very convenient, I find, Mr. Chairman, that this information is not available for this set of Estimates.

Mr. Chairman, I ask the Minister, when we look at the 1985 statistics in her department for 1985, they showed a total of 55 cases reported as repeaters. In the Child Protection Report for 1985, they showed 72 children reabused twice; 22 reabused three times; seven, four times; one, six times; and one, seven times, for, if my addition is correct, 105 cases. Why is there such a discrepancy between the statistics in the Child Protection Report and the report that the Minister gave us for 1985?

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, one of the problems that we've had in trying to build multidisciplinary reporting and treatment and apprehension on child abuse has been that we are dealing with systems: medical systems, legal systems, social service systems. The medical people had different definitions of what they reported because they were dealing with quite a variety of physical sexual abuse. The agencies only report to the centre, to us, verified cases. So there is some difference in the definition and the types of cases.

We did, after that report came out last year, sit down with the Child Protection Centre and went through, case by case, their information and ours, and we did come to an agreement as to how the systems, if they're going to work together, they must have some common definitions, ways of reporting and ways of exchanging information so that we can, in fact, work together effectively. I don't think we found any - how should I say - improper reporting. It's just that the two different systems have some different ways of sorting out with the child welfare system because they have certain limits. They have to go to court and verify or prove, whatever. The Health Sciences Centre, the Protection Centre, puts down everything from a bruise or laceration or whatever of physical abuse.

But after our working together with them and coming to a common understanding of how we report, we understand that the differences of opinion have been reconciled and it was not that there was an underreporting or a non-disclosure, it's that the two systems have functioned differently and never melded. That's one of the challenges when you get into these complex areas where you are starting to compile records from different professional services.

As I understand, those differences have been worked through and we had some challenge for some of the data they had but, as I understand, we went through in a case by case and got the history of them checked out, because we were concerned that there was some that were slipping through from our point of view. We understand that all of those cases were sorted out and that we now have an agreed on way to compile, share and report data.

MR. G. MERCIER: Would the Minister then indicate, what was the agreed upon revised number of repeat abuse situations which occurred in 1985?

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Chair, the process we followed with last year's stats was comparing, following-up investigation where there was disagreement and came to reconciliation. There were not any end differences of opinion. What we agreed on was the definitions we would use for future stats collection.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, would the Minister not agree that repeat cases of child abuse are a serious matter?

HON. M. SMITH: The Minister believes that any child abuse is a serious matter and repeat cases are doubly serious. The Minister is also very aware of the complex environment that a Child and Family worker operates in. They are only able to apprehend or take certain actions if they can provide evidence that stands up in court. There are many cases where they are not able to establish adequate evidence.

Over on the medical side, the medical investigator looks at special - well there are physical symptoms for physical abuse but even they, for some of the sexual abuse, find it hard to get accurate data. That's been one of the difficulties identified. There needs to be more skill in all the people who do investigations in terms of developing evidence that stands up in court.

One of the developments that may help us substantially is the new federal law. I'm not sure if it's proclaimed yet. But it will give more credence to child testimony, and that should assist with some of the difficulties we've been having in the court.

In repeat cases, in more than half the situations, the abuser was a different person than in the first case. So that, since peoples' lives don't stay static, in a sense a Child and Family worker cannot predict what liaison or friendship or household settings the parent may move into.

In 6 percent of the cases, the abuser was unknown. There were no investigation techniques that were able to identify. The other cases, there was insufficient evidence, lack of corroboration because, as you know probably only too well, you probably have more experience - well, you do have experience in the court where I don't. But as I understand, a child's uncorroborated evidence has not been considered sufficient for a finding of guilt, and that's really handicapped this area of prosecution for abuse, particularly sexual abuse because, by its nature, it tends to take place in a private setting. There usually are no witnesses and, if the child is - well they may be pre-verbal but, even if they are verbal, they may lack the sophistication to report or their evidence won't be accepted by the court because it's not corroborated.

In some cases, the abuser left the situation. The parents may have split and, since there was never any fault found with the first parent, the abusing parent had left the family home, and so there was no court justification for not returning the child.

Now again, I don't know whether as the system evolves we will flag some of these by seeing the kinds of repeat cases that come our way, whether we are going to be able to fine tune how to identify as high-risk cases and keep a closer watch. That may be the result of those risk-assessment tools that appeared in the Child Abuse Review report. That will be a guide or an aid to workers in the field in assessing risk. I think that will be a very useful additional tool to all the disciplines working in this field.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, I'm glad to hear the Minister agree that the reabuse cases are doubly serious. Given that response, I would think she could

provide this committee with the number of reabuse cases that occurred in 1986.

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Chair, we have the preliminary figures. They're being checked for accuracy; they are being compiled.

But I remind the member that one of the issues that's come up this year, that we haven't tabled an annual report, it's because we were early last year. If you look at the dates on other annual reports you're getting, the usual time for reporting are the '85-86 reports being tabled in May of '87. We tabled our annual report for '85-86 last year, and it was considerably later than this.

Now we have tabled the basic abuse statistics and we are compiling, cross-checking for accuracy, the repeat cases. We want to be doubly sure that we're following up on them as well. They will be made available to the member as soon as we are able. We said, within a couple of weeks, we will be able to table them.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, when did the Minister first see those statistics relating to reabuse for 1986?

HON. M. SMITH: I haven't seen the repeat statistics yet, Mr. Chair. I've seen the general summary, but I do know that they are being worked on in the department.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, therein lies one of the problems. Here we have a situation which, the Minister agrees, the situation is doubly serious with respect to reabuse cases. It's not as if this is the first time that this whole subject has been raised with the Minister, Mr. Chairman. We had a report tabled at the committee last year in response to our questions about the rate of repeat abuse. We had the Child Protection Centre Report come forward with a great deal of publicity, in which there were some very serious statements made last July about the number of cases of reabuse and about where part of the responsibility lies and about the weaknesses in the system. Given all that publicity last year and in years prior, we now have a situation where the Minister comes to us in May of 1987 and tells us she has not yet even seen the statistics on reabuse for 1986. She has not yet seen them.

Mr. Chairman, I suggest to the Minister that if she wishes to help solve the problem that exists, as I think all members of the House do, then why hasn't she developed a monitoring system of at least asking for these statistics on a monthly or a quarterly basis and trying to find out what's happening. Instead, we're waiting. Here we as Minister comes to us in May of 1987 and tells us she has not yet even seen the statistics on reabuse for 1986. She has not yet seen them.

Mr. Chairman, I suggest to the Minister that if she wishes to help solve the problem that exists, as I think all members of the House do, then why hasn't she developed a monitoring system of at least asking for these statistics on a monthly or a quarterly basis and trying to find out what's happening. Instead, we're waiting. Here we are in mid-May of 1987, and the Minister hasn't even seen the statistics for 1986.

What I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that a Minister with this responsibility in such an important area, in what has been a very controversial area in which there have

been critics of the system that she has developed express views for years, and she doesn't develop a monitoring system where she gets the statistics on a regular basis, I suggest, borders on irresponsibility.

I would ask her why is she not receiving these statistics on a monthly or regular basis? During the course of 1986, why hasn't she been monitoring the situation? She might have learned something. She might have learned about the two infant child deaths that have been dealt with publicly during the past few weeks in which, it's been alleged, the same worker was involved. Why hasn't she been monitoring the situation more closely, instead of not yet having received the statistics on reabuse for 1986 as of the mid-May of 1987?

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Chair, I would like to remind the member that it's this side of the House that has initiated the whole thrust in child abuse. It is this side of the House that has put four departments together and has been educating the public, has been educating - (Interjection)- It is because of time spent when no one was willing to admit this problem or do anything about it. Now all of a sudden, the concern is about whether we've got the count right. Do you not realize what we've been busy doing is getting the funding out there, getting the training out there, getting the multidisciplinary groups working together - common definitions so, when one reports, they aren't dumping on the other. They're cooperating and pulling together so that we can do something as a community to prevent and to support and to treat.

It is not by having monthly counts that we are going to change that system. It's by funding and building this. I defy the member opposite to say in the area of child abuse that I don't have an equal concern or compassion or knowledge or skill in trying to get down to the root of it and work day by day with parents, with children, with people who need to understand what it's all about, how to identify it, what they can do about it.

What do you think we put in the legislation for that intensified all the definitions so that we gave some tools to the people in the field, so that they could go to court and get more chance to do something? Why do you think we wanted more change in that law relating to children? Why do you think we are trying to make that Child Abuse Registry work?

It's not by getting monthly counts and pointing a finger at who's guilty. It's by building a system. A lot of people with the skill and the ability and the resources and the training and the protocols for working together, that's what the department has been doing. That's what the people who've been facing this issue day by day, building the capacity, trying to deal with the pain and the complexity - do you know the volume of child abuse that's out there? The volume is earth-shattering. Do you know the volume that's there?

You know, the issue of violence between people, between adults and children - (Interjection)-

A MEMBER: He just wants a political football, that's all.

HON. M. SMITH: Well, what does he want? He's quibbling about two weeks, whether we got the

reporting. It's more important that we get stats where agencies, department, the Child Protection Centre have common ways of understanding what they're doing. Otherwise, we're going to get into court, and we're not going to have cases that we can win. We're going to have people back in these situations that are so dangerous. It's not by these little - whether I'm getting a monthly count - it's whether I'm getting the resources, the training, the policies, the procedures, the integration of this system. That's what's going to make a difference in child abuse here. It's getting people to realize that any kind of abuse or violence between individuals, whether they are adults or children, or males or females, or nations or whatever, doesn't solve problems. It's getting together and trying to raise children in ways that are caring and nurturing, so that's what they learn. It's trying to deal with all these undealt with problems that have been here, certainly in my lifetime, and I didn't know the extent of it. I don't know when members opposite became aware. Why weren't you up there charging away at the head of the crowd when your party was in government? Why aren't you singing out for money and services? You know what help we're getting from the Federal Government? Very, very little.

Every time we go to a federal-provincial conference, it's this province that is seen as leading in this field. Of course, we're discovering a great iceberg. We never knew there was so much. We didn't know that teachers, social workers, doctors, mental health workers would say, "We don't know what to do about it; no one ever taught us. We didn't know it was there. Help, help, help!"

It's very easy to sit there and make me look like someone on trial because I haven't got a number so you can play the doctors against the social workers. I don't want to play the doctors against the social workers, or the families. I want to be out there and build a system that offers some hope and some protection and something we can all live with. The member will get his detailed statistics shortly. They are not available today.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, I'm asking for statistics because they are not just statistics. I've never referred to them as just statistics. Each one is an individual child. That's what I think the Minister should be concerned about, and is concerned about. I'm not questioning her concern or her compassion in this whole particular area. What I would question is her ability. - (Interjection)- And that loudmouth from Radisson better keep quiet unless he's got something concrete to offer because, obviously, up until now he's offered nothing. - (Interjection)- What did you say?

HON. G. LECUYER: That's what I suggest you do.

MR. G. MERCIER: Do what?

HON. G. LECUYER: You also do some . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Everybody will have a chance to speak.

The Member for St. Norbert has the floor.

MR. G. MERCIER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The reason I have asked for the statistics, as I've said, is because they each represent an individual child in the system and that's the concern. The statistic is not the concern; the individual child is the concern.

Mr. Chairman, the reason I point out the issue, the Minister is so concerned - in view of the fact that each one of these statistics is an individual child, why wasn't she getting these statistics through her department on a regular basis during 1986, to monitor the situation adequately, because she has indicated to us that she has not yet got the statistics on reabuse for 1986. I think that's a very questionable manner in which the Minister should be exercising her responsibility in this area.

She talks about training. I wrote to her on November 22, 1985 and I asked about the caseload for workers. I asked about training for workers and how workers were able to handle this. We're dealing with a department and an area of the Budget where under expected results, it says, "Ensure that all Ministerial correspondence and submissions regarding divisional activities are prepared in a timely and accurate manner." I didn't get a written response until June of 1986, to that letter.

But I raised this issue. She's talked about training. Why didn't she deal with it then? We've had to get, through the emergency debate in this Legislature, the Sigurdson-Reid Report, which indicates there are no standards and no training and recommends major overhauls in the system.

I ask her again why is she not getting these statistics, which each represent an individual child on a regular basis so that she can adequately monitor the work of the system?

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Chair. I think the member opposite is under the illusion that nothing happens in this area unless he's raising questions or jumping up and down. He doesn't know the numbers of people, the workers in the field, the people in the department, the people in other disciplines, the people developing, training, doing the training, the mothers, the volunteers who have spent hours and hours and hours learning how to work together as a system to make this fight on child abuse work.

Mr. Chair, you know an issue like child abuse, which some people are now estimating lies at the basis of over 40, some people are saying higher than that, 50 percent of the caseload that we're uncovering in the child and family service system. But now that they are knowing how to ask the questions and get to the root of it, they're finding that a lot of the other things they used to do were only symptoms and people in the field are shocked because they say now that I've found this out, what do I do?

There are so many elements in building a system that is able to cope with this, cope with the immediate trauma, the legalities, the family, the fact, the medical investigation, the checking of evidence, the preparation of court cases, the monitoring of what's happening to the child on a day-to-day basis.

If that member thinks that I don't care, in a personal way, about each of those situations, but it's not going to help for me just to get number counts; the only way that we're going to really get somewhere with this

program overall is that we try to build a system response. Do we want the chaos of doctors having one set of ideas, social workers another, lawyers and judges over here, and the people in the field not getting the service? The only way we're only going to get the people the service that they need is to get all those people working together with cooperative agreements.

Maybe we did trust too much that they would sit and recognize one another's difficulties and not need detailed standards. I'm actually pleased that they are willing to accept detailed standards, because when we put in the new act which addresses things like child abuse and gives far more tools to the workers in the field, the word we heard from a lot of the agencies was, you're interfering in our autonomy, you're doing too much.

Now, we did the legislation with a lot of consultation, we did the regulations, we did protocols, we did guidelines. Standards are the next level of definition and there was a time when a lot of the agencies didn't think we should be dictating to them in detail how to handle individual cases. Now that they're into the complexity of it they want that kind of detail and we are glad.

But that's the way this system is growing and building its capacity to work day by day and with these cases, in the front lines, that's where the work is going on. And, of course, all the agencies could do with 10 times as much money and faster training and all that, but does that member know of any system, any human system where you have a lot of people with a lot of different opinions, experience, perspectives on things, gear up to where we have a smoothly working system in the period of time that we've been operating in, and he thinks the only thing that was happening was when he sent letters or asked a question in the House.

Now, I must acknowledge that report is a really helpful report to us, because we were reeling somewhat from the volume and the complexity of this iceberg that we found in child abuse. That's true, and we knew it and we were moving to deal with that in the department. But we didn't back off and say, oh, well, we won't touch that issue because it's too hot to handle. We've been working very, very solidly to build a system that can respond. The way in which statistics are compiled, my department will tell anyone who bothers to ask how much I ask them to try to compile, compare, manage these systems, and the preparation of material in a timely manner.

I think the member had hoped he would have some more statistics for these Estimates, but he's got a great deal more information than he's ever had before. We are getting to the point where we can give more information more speedily, but, you know, I think he's hanging his entire questioning on the fact that this one piece of the system - it's not the only measure. It's not the only measure as to whether we're building an effective child abuse system. It is a measure of some pretty distressed families out there and some pretty troubled kids, and kids in a lot of need.

There are many, many ways and complexities in trying to deal with that need. It's not just a simple thing of me snapping my fingers and asking for monthly stats. The repeat is one element of it. There are also the young parents, and the victims themselves of violence, going into parenting and how can we break that cycle?

There are poverty issues; homelessness issues; there are young women who've been raised to be docile and then they submit to an abusing husband and before they know it, it's their child being abused. There are people who've learned about sexuality thinking that there's got to be dominance and submission, and that violence is exciting. There are so many connected factors here.

This government and this department have been working on all those fronts to try to get a healthier set of standards, of support services. The numbers of people who are working in this community, 3,000 in Winnipeg in the Child and Family Service system, out there finding many more kids in need, as well as this great wave of abuse.

Again, I welcome, really, questioning, supportive-building ideas, because we're in it together as a society. If we don't manage to do a better job with children and overcome some of this type of treatment of our children, we're going to get it at the other end, in the correctional facilities, and the mental health facilities, and the women's shelters.

The initiatives we've been taking, we've been working with the Native people and the Indian agencies to try to help them cope themselves with this problem that they're encountering in their communities. This legislation we have, that gives a tool in the court and a tool to the workers, is the most progressive in North America. Without the legislation, we don't even stand a chance in the courts. Again, I'm glad now that we have a federal piece of legislation that will complement and make our provincial legislation more effective.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, the Minister has made a number of comments. Firstly, let the record be clear: I have not criticized workers in general. In fact, I have sympathized over the years with the workers in general. I don't want the record to show that the Minister is suggesting that I've been attacking the workers.

Despite all she said, Mr. Chairman, let me just read to her from Page 4 of the Sigurdson-Reid Review, despite her glowing statements, and I didn't say this, the people that the government appointed to do the review said it. They said there is an almost complete absence of those centralized functions that one would normally expect from government in this type of organizational structure.

There are, in practice, virtually no standards of service, a management information system is non-existent, most records are kept in an archaic fashion and the planning system is rudimentary.

Mr. Chairman, that's why I am asking this question, because it is elementary, it seems to me, that you have to know what is going on in the system to be able to plan and fund and train and solve the problems. And if, for example as one aspect, you have no information on a regular basis as to the number of repeat abuse cases that are occurring within the system, then how the heck do you know what to train for, to fund for, to plan for?

This demonstrates one of the fundamental problems that exists in this department, Mr. Chairman, and here I'm not criticizing the Minister's personal concern, compassion or care. But you have to be able to administer.

What this report indicates to me and what the Minister's answers so far indicate to me, is that she has no ability to administer what is going on in this particular area. If you don't have the information, you can't plan, train people, fund them. Despite her glowing remarks, this is what the report in her department says. And I didn't say it. They said it. I suggested to her a number of years ago, because I had heard it from people within the system that this is exactly what existed. She didn't acknowledge that.

I'm not suggesting I'm the only person who made comments about the existing system. One of the difficulties in fact, Mr. Chairman, and let's acknowledge it, is because virtually everybody who works in this area is an employee of the government, or is funded by the government and this government was so paranoid in 1984, in 1985, in 1986, that people were afraid to speak out publicly because of what this government might do to them, might do to them in the way of loss of funding, might do to them in the way of loss of their jobs, and that's why they couldn't speak out publicly. They had to speak out privately to somebody.

Many of them spoke to me. I wish it were someone else handling this particular area because I don't enjoy it, I'll tell her that. But that is what was happening. So when she criticizes me for not getting the response to the letter that outlined the concerns, I was just reciting the concerns of the people that existed in the system and who were afraid to speak out. She can't stand up and talk glowingly about what her department has administratively done when she gets an independent report that states these particular reasons.

I'm saying to her that if she's not getting the information, maybe that's somebody else's fault within the department. Maybe that's not her fault, I don't know. I think others, if they assumed her position, would be asking for that information on a regular basis, would want to know it, and would want to attack the problems as much as possible, but without it, she can't do the job. That's what I'm suggesting to her.

I'd like to ask her, overall, then, what sort of monitoring is done by her department on the activities of the agencies in this particular area? What sort of reports are filed with her department? Are they only filed on an annual basis; are they filed on a quarterly basis; are they filed on a monthly basis? Why doesn't she get the information if and when it comes in?

HON. M. SMITH: There's monthly reporting going on by agencies to the department.

Again, I would just like to revert a bit to the question of standards. I don't completely agree with Reid and Sigurdson on the standards issue, because I think they assume that the legislation, the regulations and the guidelines and protocols and the basic social work standards are not in place. They are.

What is not there are the detailed standards for working with child abuse. A lot of the data for how you sort out risk and all is being developed. It's not that it exists in some other jurisdiction. There are draft standards that are being consulted with the agencies. It's not the kind of thing that you write out one weekend and then impose on agencies, because that's not how the acceptance comes. They are developing the standards with us. They are in draft form and we expect will be fully operational by this fall.

With regard to the information, many government departments have collected their information manually. We identified this particular problem three years ago and got permission to develop the information management system. We are three years through the four-year process of computerizing the information, using a user-friendly system for the agencies where they can access the information with the level of confidentiality they require. That information then comes to the centre and we can get it in a timely fashion because we have inherited a system that was manual, where we would use last year's data for next year's data, but until we get that full system operational, we have to use the manual systems. It's true that they hadn't fully worked out all the systems for reporting child abuse, analyzing it, and putting it into some form, because no one had ever anticipated the volume and complexity of it.

What I have assured myself is that the agencies out there - they are working under very heavy workloads. They have been getting increased resources; they have been getting clear policy and procedures as to what we expect of supervision and so on. But it's true that there are many workers who had worked in a system that wasn't too demanding in the past and didn't always practise the best of social work. Some of those people have taken awhile to persuade that we expect a higher standard out there, that we expect, when we say that there has to be supervision and there has to be ethical decisions by social workers and there has to be responsible executive directors and boards, that we expect that to be followed through on.

It's not as if there ever was an agency in the City of Winnipeg that lived up to that. That's why we ended up having to move in and take over the agency, because the standard of care, the number of people being serviced, the procedures, and so on, were lacking. They weren't even into child abuse issues.

Now we undertook that task. We could have put it aside, too, and said, well, we'll wait and see what's going on elsewhere; we won't really take it seriously; I'm sure there's not as much as everyone says, etc., etc.

(Mr. Deputy Chairman, J. Maloway, in the Chair.)

It would have made regionalizing the Child and Family Agencies a lot easier, not to have this great flood of cases at the same time; but we took that problem very much to heart and we've been trying to build both systems at the same time.

That information is coming in regularly. It is timely in being compiled. I have told you that we have the abuse statistics. The repeat cases, we are cross-checking, because when you've had systems that weren't meshed well, it's important that you double-check and see that the corrective measures are, in fact, working. We want to make accurate information available; so that will be forthcoming.

It's been this government, after all, that's been promoting social service and development in spite of the difficulty fiscally and economically. We've been willing to run a deficit that we don't like any more than members opposite do, but we've been willing to put the priority of services in this area in the building of an effective system up to No. 1.

I would like to have even more resources, of course, but so would all my colleagues for all the priorities that each one of their departments and communities are fighting for. I think, for these fiscal and economic times, we've done very well in this field. But what we're discovering is there is a great malaise out there among children and families.

Why wasn't this an issue that was dealt with 10 years ago, 20 years ago, 30 years ago? It's not new, but we've only now been able to get the community aware and willing to deal with it openly and up front. Yes, we have had a great flood and, yes, it's taken us time to get all the counting and the statistics and the reporting in full shape. That's why I welcome that Reid-Sigurdson Report, because it says, look, you have made headway in the past and you have been moving on the issue; there is a tightening-up and a refinement that now needs to be done. We agree with that. We had already taken some moves in that direction because we, ourselves, were aware of our own problems in giving the kind of full leadership we wanted in the field.

It has not been a simple case of just resources or snapping your fingers. There were not trained people around to train the trainers. I mean we've had to kind of build the skill out there to handle the situation as we've moved. We've tried to build a system that would work together smoothly and effectively.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for River Heights.

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

The Minister has said over and over that we're training trainers and we're putting the protocols into place; but the message that I get from social workers, in all agencies, is that they are receiving no training, that there is no basic on-line training, that The Child Protection Act has the broadest powers of any act we could possibly concern ourselves with, much broader than the powers that our police department has, for example, in apprehending criminals. They can go into homes; they can take over the child; they can remove the child. But the individuals who are going to do that receive no training, and they establish their own protocol; they establish their own ways of dealing with the issue.

What is all this training, why don't I see lines for professional development in this budget? Why don't I see training lines? Why don't social workers, when they're meeting, get money from this department to do it at their own meetings? But they say the money's been cancelled and that when they try to get experts in from outside of this province, they're told that we can't afford it, that there isn't any money for that kind of thing.

HON. M. SMITH: The training is, it's a complex range of initiatives that are being taken. Some are done through Health, some are done through Education and some through us.

We have the two child abuse trainers who are on staff since last fall and they're working with the agencies. Each agency also has a training allocation in its budget so it doesn't show up as a separate line here.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: That still doesn't answer the question as why do the social workers feel that they're

very much out there on their own without the training required in this particular area.

I think that there's no question that the training, which they receive in social work school, tends to be what we call soft training. They're very concerned with keeping families together; they're very concerned with the rights of individuals and that kind of academic training indeed should be provided to our social workers in the field. But protection is tough work and there are no if's, but's, or maybe's about that. Our social workers are out there without that kind of tough training which they require to deal with the problems. When are the social workers in the agencies going to get that kind of tough training?

HON. M. SMITH: The work of protection and child welfare has traditionally been - the training has occurred again mainly with social workers. But there are people who come from some different fields - child development and areas like community development.

The additional complexity of child abuse is something that, as I say, even had we wanted to offer training immediately to people, we wouldn't have had trainers around because that's been part of the whole difficulty. None of the professional schools have had any confidence that they had the right package.

So we have actually had, just in the last couple of months, a whole spate of training sessions, some of which I've been to, people right across the province have been to. We will compile a list of training events that have gone on.

There is a variety of kinds of training. There's on-the-job training, there's release time, there's professional training prior to you even arriving in a work situation. I think, ideally, we're trying to get the schools of social work, education, medicine, and so on to incorporate this kind of basic information and skill building in their training, the public health nurses and so on. But we can't overcome the past deficit immediately.

Now agency by agency, I don't know how detailed we can get the listing, but a lot of the training goes on in things like developing the standards. As I say, there's a full draft set of standards out there in circulation now, and part of the consulting, first on the act, then on the regulations, then on the different protocols. We developed the Indian Child Placement Guidelines and so on.

Part of the process of developing those is educational because the very people who take part in the consulting are themselves assisting with developing those standards and at the same time are learning themselves how best to use them. We're coming from the time when many of these issues weren't dealt with. The social worker in the field was relied on to bring the training with them and somehow work in the system. In a way we're trying to remedy a lot of looseness in the system that has been there for decades.

Now, I'm quite prepared to accept criticism for the fact that there's not as much, or as quick, as people would want in the field. But I don't know, realistically. It's not only a money issue, although it's always the money issue in these emerging fields. But it's also, even if we had the money, trying to find the people who have the skill and the confidence is a tough job. There just are not many people.

We have got people who are skilled at identifying, and giving initial protection, or arguing a case in court, but trying to find people who have some confidence for longer-term treatment is very, very difficult. There just are not those kind of people, so we've been developing them. We're building our own expertise. We will provide a list, though, of the workshops and the type of training that has been going on in the last while, and we'll make it as complete as we can. But, again, I think at the agency level the priority for training is a responsibility that we share with the agencies and we are going to be building as much resource as we can into that.

It is a complex area; it's a needed area. We are trying to develop more materials and so on, so that some of the training can be, in a sense, self-training. People can read and reflect, and then if they go to a workshop it's probably more valuable. It's at a more advanced level. There has been a lot of activity going on out there in the field in this area.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Mr. Chairman, when we talk about specifically - and I really would like to narrow it in on child protection - those who work in the police forces are usually partnered, the senior partner with the junior partner, so that although the junior partner has been through training there is a recognition that there is experience available to the senior partner that can be, through the working process, learned by the junior partner. Why is that technique not used in our agencies, in child protection? Why is the senior social worker not partnered with the junior social worker so that the training can be ongoing for the junior social worker?

HON. M. SMITH: I think, again, the police work is somewhat different than the social work pattern but some of the same principles do apply. It is our belief that in the social work delivery, that it is the supervisor who has the key role in an agency. We, in examining the pattern of work in agencies, have been repeatedly drawing to their attention that the front-line worker and the supervisor provide a team.

One may have skills, but if they don't get the supervision and backing from a supervisor, they may be less effective. By the same token, if a front-line worker is lacking in skills and has a supervisor that can review and, in a sense, do a lot of training in their day-to-day supervision, then you have a workable process.

Now what we find is, because we did redeploy all the people who worked in the old CAS, that a lot of them had not experienced or done really fully developed supervisory work. So there has been a lot of development needed in that area of social work. We've been trying to develop agencies that are somewhat - how should I say - broader and shallower in their organizational structure in the supervisor role. We've needed many more supervisors. So we've certainly targeted the development of the supervisory function as a top priority in our working with the agencies.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Is it not true that some of the supervisors working in the Child and Family Service agencies are not, in themselves, social workers and,

therefore, it's very difficult for them to provide training for social workers?

HON. M. SMITH: In general, we only know of one exception where a supervisor is not a social worker but, in general, they are. Agencies do, as I said before, employ a somewhat broader mix of persons than social workers. There is an inclusion of people with some other backgrounds and skills.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

With respect to the deaths of a number of children this past spring, the Chief Medical Examiner indicated that there still may be a need to clear the air to allay concerns in the community. Would the Minister use her office to have the Chief Medical Examiner hold inquests into each one of those deaths in order to, as he stated, clear the air with respect to those matters, rather than just an internal report, appreciating that the Minister said she would undertake to table those reports in the House?

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Chair, I have undertaken to table the summary reports and recommendations when all the review and the court process is complete.

With regard to the Chief Medical Examiner, he already possesses the information, but I will undertake to meet with him in the very near future and go through each case and discuss the advisability of an inquest. Because again, we want to clear the air; we also want to identify what are the system needs so that we can eliminate any loopholes that may be there. Any approach that will help us in that, I think we're welcome to review.

MR. G. MERCIER: I take it the Minister would agree to advise the House of the results of her discussion with the Chief Medical Examiner with respect to the possibility of holding inquests into each and every one of those situations.

HON. M. SMITH: Yes, I'll certainly do that, Mr. Chair.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, I would like to go through the Sigurdson-Reid Report with the Minister with respect to each and every one of the recommendations to obtain a response from the Minister as to how the government intends to handle each one of these recommendations.

The first recommendation is: "That all organizations considered 'first responders' to child abuse review their reporting guidelines to ensure they are in accordance with the Act and they should be filed with, and reviewed by, the Director of Child and Family Services."

Does the government agree with this recommendation? Has this been done? If it has not been done, when will it be done?

HON. M. SMITH: We agree and it has been done.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, there are a number of recommendations that deal with the role of the Police Department in child abuse investigations. I believe, as I'm certain she would agree, that these are very

important recommendations, because unless you have trained law enforcement people dealing with these cases, you sometimes are unable to prosecute successfully.

The report recommends eight additional police officers, four teams of investigators be assigned to the Child Abuse Unit, that investigators from the Child Abuse Unit be available on a 24-hour basis. They recommend a number of permanent positions and their procedure for assignment and recommend the RCMP compile separate statistics on the number of child abuse investigations originating outside of Winnipeg on a regular basis. I think this has been a bit of a problem, because I'm not satisfied that there has been any uniformity of services in this particular area by the RCMP outside of the City of Winnipeg. A further recommendation that the RCMP and the Winnipeg City Police Department jointly examine current practices of sharing information on child abuse cases in an effort to determine if improved procedures should be implemented.

Now I appreciate that law enforcement is not entirely within her jurisdiction, but would she use her good office, perhaps in conjunction with the Attorney-General's, to meet with the Chief of the City of Winnipeg Police Department and the Head of the RCMP, in order to determine whether the City Police Department and the RCMP will agree to implement the recommendations that I have referred to?

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Chair, as the member has identified, the main responsibility for the recommendations with regard to Winnipeg Police are the responsibility of the City of Winnipeg Police Department. We have agreed, and again it's a recommendation that it comes later on. We've actually strengthened the recommendation to set up a four-department committee at the provincial level, the Attorney-General, the Minister of Education, Health and Community Services.

The deputies are making up this committee to systematically go through all the recommendations. We acknowledge that these first recommendations will be the responsibility of the City of Winnipeg Police. Certainly if there was an expanded service, there would be greater stability and continuity. We will follow up with the Police Department and urge them very strongly to implement that recommendation.

With regard to the RCMP recommendations out of the city, again we agree with that and also would like the statistical reporting format to be developed so that we have stats that we can compare and deal with where it's appropriate for us to act.

We'll also work to ensure that the RCMP and the City of Winnipeg Police Department cooperate on sharing information, because we're often dealing with a mobile population. That would certainly help in providing greater protection.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, the report makes a number of recommendations with respect to the Child Protection Centre, including an increase of two full-time staff positions, one a physician, the other a nurse or social worker. It recommends that they get involved in training and that there in fact be a contract between

the Government of Manitoba and the Child Protection Centre for the provision of clinical services and training of first responders in a manner that permits for adequate resources and appropriate funding, and that there be a renewable contract between the Child and Family Services agencies and the Child Protection Centre for the centre to provide clinical training and research services.

I haven't noticed any particular response from the Minister in this area, and would ask her whether she and her department agree with these recommendations and are prepared to implement them.

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Chair, we agree with the principle of nearly all the recommendations. With regard to this particular one, this is the medical portion, and we will take it to our four-department committee. As the member, I am sure, I am aware, this department has been funding the Child Protection Centre, at least a large part of it. There are some costs that are covered either through the Faculty of Medicine or the Health Sciences Centre, but I think it's one of the issues that we have to sort out with the Department of Health in order to allocate the responsibility and the funding to the appropriate level.

We agree that the Child Protection Centre has provided leadership in the medical side of detection and early treatment but that, over time, we need to induce other medical groups in other hospitals in the city, indeed throughout the province, to accept some responsibility for the first response. Then hopefully, some of the expertise at the Child Protection Centre could be used to provide back-up clinical services and training for first responders.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, on page 77 of the report, they point out: "Stress levels are high and many workers report signs and symptoms of burnout. Skilled and experienced practitioners have either left Child and Family Services agencies or are actively pursuing alternate employment prospects. It should be noted that some teams are indicating higher stress levels than others as a result of caseload size and risk, inadequate supervision, difficulties in accessing resources and high staff turnover. The Review Team is aware of a number of staff who have left without having other employment rather than continuing under these conditions."

They go on to recommend that the Minister of Community Services and the Child and Family Services agencies jointly undertake annual workload studies in all Child and Family Services agencies. I believe that the Minister, in her preliminary response to the report, has indicated that she and her department are prepared to undertake this report. Perhaps she could expand on how that will proceed. Could she indicate some of the numbers of workers who have left the system, particularly in their experienced areas or the experienced workers?

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Chair, again I think it's important, when we're dealing with the issue and the stress that is on the workers in the agencies, to recognize that it's because we're trying to deal with the issue. There are many systems who've really not accepted responsibility or moved into tooling up and trying to

deal with it. So in many ways, this particular system has had to carry the brunt of the work and we're hoping that, in time, other systems respond and shoulder their share so that we, in a sense, can get some relief.

Now, there has been turnover in agencies. I guess that's always regrettable, and it's important to try to get to the root of it and reduce it. But there's also a fair degree of stability and a lot of enthusiasm as well at the agencies. I think it needs to be said that dealing with family breakdown, stress, and the problems of children in today's society, I doubt if there's ever been a time when the workers have had such a complex environment to work on. But again, I think the emphasis has to be on building the capacity and moving forward.

There is a senior policy analyst from the Child and Family Services who has already started a workload study of the agencies. What they want to build is a format and a mechanism whereby we can have an annual review with the agencies. One of the reasons that workload stats or analysis is more complex is that before we used to have a rule of thumb about workloads based on the types of cases that the agencies were dealing with. They were generally dealing with the mandated services of foster placement, guardianship, adoption and so on.

With the new act, we have developed new services, homemaker services, parent aid, counselling and so on. The agencies have had a very large buildup of these family support services at the same time, largely because of child abuse and because of being more accessible in the communities. They've also had a buildup on the more traditional protection type of cases.

What we want to do, in cooperation with the agencies, is work out some guidelines so that we have agreed-on ways of measuring caseload. What will likely result is two or three different levels of caseload measurement, where the most intensive work will have a lower caseload and so on up to the basic family counselling, family support work. Those workers will be able to carry a slightly larger load but we, to date, don't have any common way of defining that and, therefore, allocating the resources fairly to the different agencies.

One of the complexities in doing this workload study is what we hoped would happen is happening in that the agencies are developing innovative ways of working with cases. They're using many more foster parents, special foster placement, teaching parents and so on. In a sense, we're trying to measure a moving system. The agencies are not only now able to intervene when it's a crisis and they have to remove a child.

They are able to move in advance, and try to do some preventive supportive work. Hopefully over time, we will find that we're able to keep more families together although, counter to some of the rumour that sort of fly around in a system like this, we have never ever in the legislation or any communication given agencies to believe that before it used to be a principle of taking children away, and now it's leaving children in their families. I think some people have spread that type of a simplistic rumour, and it's complicated our communicating with the agencies and the workers because it's not what our legislation says. It's not what our guidelines say, and it's not what we want workers to do in the field.

We want them to make the best judgment for the best interests of the child, taking into account the fact

that the child's relationship with the family is important and that, in some families, a fair bit of learning can go on as to how to resolve differences better and keep together. But we're dealing with a moving target, as it were.

However, when we get that workload study done, it too can be reviewed year by year, and then be used as the device by which we review the agencies and negotiate their following year's allocation.

Actually one of the recommendations in the report, I think is particularly useful, and we'll probably see a development of that in other social service delivery areas. That is that we work out an annual contract with an agency, whereby we clearly identify what kind of service we're prepared to purchase, what the standards are and what the expectations are. So it should be a focus time, not that it would be the only time, but it will be a focus time whereby the agencies can communicate their problems and needs and where the government department can monitor, evaluate, and make recommendations or even tie conditions to the funding.

The workload will also review the role of workers and supervisors, and will look at ratios of supervisors and workers, but will also identify the expectations of the supervisors. Some of the past practice in agencies has left a certain amount of that, not to luck so much - I think there's an expectation that social workers come out trained with some of these notions and then, if they're in the agency, they carry them out. I think we're finding - and maybe it's true for all organizations - that clear job descriptions, clear expectations and regular evaluation is the only way to develop an organization and make sure that there's a regular way to identify problems and deal with them, and a regular time to evaluate the effectiveness of the work.

Again, I don't know if I've hit all the questions that the member raised. As you know, we have already moved to enable the agencies to have abuse committees at the agency level, and also to have appeal committees where there is - I think again, this will be one of the preventive measures or an early-warning measure whereby if any party to a case, whichever discipline, or if there's a disagreement with a decision or a procedure, that the Child Abuse Committee would review the placement or decision-making initially. But if there's any dissatisfaction or question, a difference of opinion, it can quickly be brought to the appeal committee at the agency level where they're closer to the workers in the day-to-day work. Where, if there's been an omission, corrective action can be taken quickly, or if there is a decision that does seem unwise and second thought, it can be quickly remedied. Again, we can't guarantee that every worker, every supervisor is going to be 100 percent sound, but what we can do is both train them and give them the support system so that if there is any difference of opinion it can get a quick review. Then, if that couldn't be resolved at the agency level, there will be a process whereby it can get a look at a higher level.

I think it's building in the capacity to deal with disagreement or problems at the agency level, in setting up these multidisciplinary committees, so people get a chance to learn what one another's doing and work together in an effective way. I think it's building those systems in. It's going to give us the capacity in the

long run to have really good practise in this, admittedly, very difficult area.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, does the Minister accept the recommendation on page 90 with respect to, ". . . follow-up work with referral sources be required as part of the comprehensive package of procedural standards"?

HON. M. SMITH: Yes, and we agree that this development of standards and expectations of workers in the field, again, I hasten to say that it's not that these things have ever been in place and that we have let them go by the board. They're selected agencies, which have, through very good individual managers, developed a fair bit of detail, but it has never been a part of the overall system in Manitoba. So, as we tighten up and really develop this type of check-balance organizational capacity, that we really are building a system with a great deal of promise and integrity. But it will take us some time to get all the way there.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, there are a number of recommendations and comments made with respect to group homes and facilities available to children. There also is, and I want to indicate to her, that over the past while I received a number of complaints about services available to, and they're obviously mainly teenagers, who are placed in group homes.

With respect to, I think it's called the Independent Living Program, the concerns that are expressed is that: (1) there are no services available to the children who are placed in these facilities. There's no treatment except very limited availability, for example, of a psychologist or psychiatrist. There's a lack of supervision.

I'd like to know from the Minister, how many of these teenagers who are placed in these homes eventually return to their home? The suspicion is that there are not very many. How many are in the program? What is the success of the program? Are they obtaining employment or going to school, and particularly this program where children or teenagers have been placed in this Independent Living Program in apartment blocks, what is the cost of that particular program?

HON. M. SMITH: I'm happy to comment on this whole area because particularly an agency like Winnipeg South where, in a sense, they haven't had quite the same buildup of cases of the more extreme protection need. They have experienced a great buildup of teenagers coming into the system for varieties of reasons which I guess they're trying to sort out. We aren't sure whether - each agency, I guess, is developing a little differently because they're in different communities and the need mix is somewhat different.

But if what Winnipeg South is discovering is what happens with an agency at a more - when the other type of cases level off, they start to have the time to deal with some of the disturbed teenagers. They're charting the course, in a sense, of how to handle that group.

There was a period of time where the group home movement had a lot of support and there was good work done in group homes, but in time we found,

particularly for the under 12's, and this is a bit of past history, it wasn't nearly as effective as the more intimate family setting. So we phased out our group homes for the under 12's, and developed instead foster care where they could get a little bit more personalized attention.

With the teenagers, we have kept the group home pattern, but we're also finding - and Winnipeg South I think has been the one that's done the most analysis of this - that even with these youngsters going into a group home it often combined their own problem that they had with the problem of adjusting or dealing with the problems of kids who may have come from quite a wide range of experiences. There was sort of far too much for them to adjust to. It was protective, in one way; I mean they were protected from harm and given food and clothing and so on, but it made individualizing the treatment more difficult.

So they have developed an approach which we think is going to be the pattern of the future. At least it's going to be a significant component of teenage treatment and that's what they call professional parenting where they actually - I suppose it's a development from foster care. We have special foster care; and the professional parenting, in a way, is the next stage. But you actually have people who are trained in child development and in the treatment modalities and they're able to give fairly intense support and treatment to these individuals. So we're looking at that as being a very important component.

The Independent Living Program is another treatment approach to older teenagers, over 16, and it was conceived - I think there was a fair bit of that program operating under the old CAS, but the young people would at age 18, of course, be on their own. They'd no longer be under the Child and Family umbrella. They needed some training in living alone in an apartment, managing their shopping, their budget, cleaning and so on, but with some supervision, so that when they became 18 they weren't faced with too abrupt a transition.

Consequently, the program has continued, but mid-year when we were trying to help the agencies deal with their deficit situation, we also were looking for ways to stretch the money further. Although we've added extra money into the system, it never seems to be quite enough to meet everybody's expectation. We thought that the administrative costs for the Independent Living Program could come out of a line in the agency budget; that was part of their universalized funding.

However, we've reconsidered that now. It has only applied for a couple of months this year and we have decided that it's probably not the best way to handle that program. So we are putting the administrative support funding back and, you know, we're going to assist the agencies with that.

As for the numbers that are in these different treatment modalities, or the success rate, we don't have at this stage the breakdown to that degree, but we are working with the agencies to develop outcome criteria by which they can test the success of their programs and give that feedback to us. So that kind of information should start to come.

I think, again, probably in the past all social services focused more on the intent of protection and removal of a youngster from a difficult situation, and it was not

as well developed in terms of the outcome and the evaluation. We recognize that as a very important way to check whether what we are doing is as effective as we want it to be. It's the only way we're going to learn in the long way whether what we're doing, what judgments are being made in the field are effective. So we are working with the agencies to try and develop outcome statements and measurements so that they can evaluate their work and then we, at the center, will have better guidance as to how to assist the total system to do well.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, again, one of problems we have is, there appears to be a lack of information to assess programs. Could the Minister undertake, if it is at all possible, for the consideration of her Estimates next year, that she would have available to the committee some information with respect to the numbers of people, teenagers, who are placed in group homes? How long are they there? Where do they go when they leave? Do they go home? Do they go to a job? The number who go home, what treatment services are available to them? I think if the Minister will inquire she will find there is very, very little available in the way of services.

What sort of discipline is there in these group homes? The concerns I get expressed to me from the people who've had teenagers placed in these facilities is that there is virtually no discipline. They run away. They come back when they want. There may be curfews but they're not enforced. People appreciate that the teenagers may have had a significant problem at home that required them to be removed and placed in a group home. But they expected that they were going to get treatment and they get none.

In the same way, I'd like to have some information on the numbers of people who are going into this Independent Living Program. What is happening to them and what is the cost of that particular program? What treatment are they getting while they are in there? Are they continuing their education or receiving treatment?

I'd appreciate it if the Minister would undertake to obtain some of that information if at all possible for consideration next year.

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, in the reorganization of the Winnipeg Child and Family Services, sums of money were made available to the agency for services like homemakers and family supports. Then there is a child maintenance amount which they can access for placement in group homes, or foster care, or so on. We are attempting over time to shift that money and the control of it to the agency so they can make the most appropriate use of monies at their level.

They will use a variety of modes: the follow-up; the assessment, again at the agency level, they are developing that type of data. I know I've been out to Winnipeg South in particular and have been through a full statistical presentation of their case loads, the success of, you know, how many they have in the different fields, and how long they stay as active cases, and so on. But I think the refining of that data is important.

Also, we want to keep some flexibility at the agency level, at the same time as we need some central data,

just how we'll collect it and present it. I take the concern that the member is expressing, that he'd like to know how effective the money is and we will be working on a way to display that more effectively with regard to treatment and group homes and what really happens there.

One of the frustrations that we've had as a system that was originally responsible for protecting children when there were crises, as we've moved now more into the emotional needs area and dealing with the child that has behavioural upsets and so on, is that we are often dealing with psychological problems, developmental problems. One of the systems in the province that perhaps has the most expertise with some of these difficulties has not been as closely integrated or active and that's the mental health system.

We have asked a lot of questions - and I think the report does as well - as to whether children's mental health dollars, as they're spent in the province, or currently exist, couldn't be re-allocated and provide enriched treatment for young people, whether there isn't instead of a more clinical or hospital base treatment, whether there wouldn't be a better way for that service to be delivered to more young people in the community or in a consultant way, or there are a variety of approaches.

So I think we're going to be active to see if we can access or cooperate, in a sense, with that system and get some of their expertise linked into Child and Family.

I think again, when we ask what goes on at a group home, people have different notions about what's wrong with the young person and therefore what should be done about it. The young person in a group home under the child welfare system is not a Young Offender and they have not done anything against the law. They are in a group home for protection and development.

Depending on the age of the child, the type of supervision, the type of consequences for behaviour, and so on, will vary. When you're dealing with a teenager, there are usually rules and expectations set up and responsibilities in the home. There's also consequences if the young person, say, breaks curfew or doesn't attend school or work training or whatever their day program is supposed to be. There are consequences in that they lose some of their privileges. But to an outsider watching, they may only see the offending act and not realize that the consequences are in there.

The goal is to try to give the young person internal controls and motivations and goals so that they don't need to be controlled by parents or other authority figures. Of course some of them haven't had very much help in developing that type of internal control as youngsters. They've developed patterns of running from authority and often engaging in destructive behaviour.

So, turning that around into a more positive direction, anyone who works in that field knows that it's not a - you can't give them a pill or you can't whack them or you can't counsel them and suddenly have the behaviour pattern turn around. It's a longer process, a certain amount of trial and learning from experience, but with people who help the young person sort it through in consequences and so on. Again, that is sort of a general description, but I think because there's been a lot of concern about how effective group homes are, it's one of the reasons that people are now a little more interested in the professional parenting or special

foster-type care, because they feel that a young person that age often lacks being treated very individually and having a kind of close relationship with adults.

If you are going to build trust and some kind of relationship that can motivate them to sort themselves out, have the courage, if you like, to chart a new course, they seem to need a more intense and personalized relationship than the group home staff with shift staffing afforded.

There's no easy answer, but some of the people working in the field think that the group home is a sort of temporary holding place. It is certainly better than the young person just being completely on the run, but we will probably find the professional parenting a more effective mode. It's a changing field. I guess in times gone past a lot of young people just left home at age 12 or 13 and drifted, or found some kind of work . . . I mean, way back, that's what used to happen. They were given adult status and there were a lot more school drop-outs. Now, we expect them to stay in school. It's not so easy to get part-time work. So in a sense there's a lot of them caught in a kind of no-man's land.

One thing that I think we have to remember is that the Child and Family Services alone won't be able to do it. They are going to be able to need the schools helping. The recreation people - I sometimes wonder whether we haven't let a recreation system develop that gives rather superb care and leisure activity and support to the kids who, in a sense are already well-motivated and skilled, and under-serves the kids who are perhaps harder to work with but who are in greater need.

I don't think any of these systems are going to look at huge increases in money in the years to come, and therefore, finding better ways to target the money and use it in a coordinated, cooperative way, I think, is something we are going to have to work at. Again, where agencies are starting to perform that networking role in their communities, they're starting to identify some of these questions. I know the region that the Member from St. Norbert lives in is part of Winnipeg South, and he'd be aware of the big Child and Family Study that was done, that attempted to look at how people felt about the community, but also what the unmet needs were.

I think they are now working on pulling together community groups to see what could be done to solve some of the problems. I know I certainly have had some come in and talk to me about youth recreation in my own area and they're putting their heads together to see whether they can't do some outreach because in the long run, young people in our society - how do they learn about what their role is and how to make a contribution when a lot of them, wherever they go, they don't fit or they aren't wanted.

Maybe they aren't the easiest to get along with but if we don't figure out how to do something with them when they're young, we're going to have them in the correctional facilities or causing trouble for themselves and others later on. It's a challenge, and again it's not one that the Child and Family Services system, alone, can deal with.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: I just have a single question, because the Member from St. Norbert raised the

Independent Living. Can the Minister confirm that there are youngsters as young as 14 in independent living situations in the province and what kind of services, if any, are available to those children in independent living?

HON. M. SMITH: Certainly, our approval would only be for 16 and over, and I happen to know one young woman who was involved in that several years ago. The worker that she had had helped her find a place to live and then visited her regularly, and went over the things - I mean, even getting used to living on your own, or handling your shopping and your money and your school and just not feeling that someone's there to lean on all the time. The worker is usually available on the phone for any emergency. But it's a transitional planning and experiential thing while there's still someone there to help because they did find that the sharp break at 18 was too much for some young people. Some had been making progress up until then and then all the public support disappeared.

Our act actually permits some discretion from 18 to 21. It's particularly necessary for the slower to mature young person but 18 is the usual age at which the system no longer supports them.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: I'm less concerned about the 16 and 18 year olds than I am the ones under 16.- (Interjection)- That there are no children under the age of 16 in Independent Living situations.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, on page 203, after making a number of comments about the existing multidisciplinary committees, there's a recommendation "that effective multidisciplinary consultations on difficult Child and Family Services cases be improved by the creation of a Child Abuse Committee for each agency." The Minister in her news release of April 13, indicated that she supported that decision and her department has prepared a new regulation under The Child and Family Services Act which would make such committees mandatory by July 1 of this year.

I wonder if the Minister can provide the House, at this stage, with a copy of that regulation and could she confirm that no child would be allowed to remain in a known high-risk situation or return to a situation in which they had been abused without a positive decision or approval of the multidisciplinary committee for the agency. And, in fact, when commenting on that she may comment on whether she's had consultations with the agencies and are they each able to develop such a multidisciplinary committee for their agency. There's been some concern expressed that there simply are not enough people available to do that for each agency.

HON. M. SMITH: In fact, the regulation has been passed and we'll obtain a copy for you, passed by O/C. The date though has shifted to September 1. We have been working with the agencies and we've actually devoted six months of staff time to help the agencies set them up. The question as to whether there are enough people in the community to deal with that is an important question, and we will work very hard to put together and help with training if need be.

One of the problems, I guess, with the overall system has been that the expertise was concentrated in very

few spots and was not developing more broadly. But in the past year or so, that network has broadened out quite a lot and there will also be support. We will still have our provincial multidisciplinary committee, and there are some coordinating people in the Winnipeg area too. So there will be backup for the agency committees. But it's still our belief that, because of the volume of the child abuse caseload and because of the need to have the review process close to where the workers are so that, if there's any problem, it can be quickly dealt with, they're better there than try to have one large centralized group.

With regard to returning of children to high-risk situations, the act and the regulations and the practice of social work has never justified returning children to high-risk situations. The individual social worker has a professional responsibility to research and act thoroughly. The supervisor has, I guess we can say, a generally understood role but, whether followed in reality to the full or not, I think we have to acknowledge that there's need for strengthening in that area. Probably the prior agency did not have a really tight effective system of supervision, so many social workers in the field have never operated in optimum conditions. They may have learned at university that it was a good idea, but they never experienced it in practice so they never really thought that it was a serious part of the new agencies. We're very concerned about that, because we believe that there must be a strong professional ethic. There must be strong supervision that must be part of the expectation we have of the agency. If spelling all that out in quite detailed standards is the way to accomplish it, we are doing that.

The risk is that you give people too many rules of thumb and they don't use their own judgment. When you come down to it, somebody has to get the feel of the individual case and the situation and make a judgment call. Again some of the cases, when they're analysed in greater detail, there are sequences of events that aren't - it's not always the social worker and their decision at a point in time that is at fault. Sometimes it is a guardian who doesn't play the normal role of, say, supervising a young mom. The young mom rules out and no one hears about it.

There are elements that make it complex but, to the extent that standards and workshops and guidelines and all can help regularize that procedure and make it more effective, we intend to do that.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, time doesn't permit dealing with each specific recommendation as much as we'd like to. I assume there are recommendations directed towards the Attorney-General with respect to court cases, and I would assume that the Minister and the Attorney-General and the Committee of Deputy Ministers will deal positively with those recommendations.

There are also a number of recommendations with respect to training. I would ask the Minister, in view of the fact that she's indicated in her press release that, in the area of training, money is being budgeted for agencies, staff orientation and board training. Two child-abuse trainers are now developing action plans to train agency staff in child abuse. That would appear to be a rather limited response to the recommendations

that are made in the area of training. I wonder if she could indicate whether she has any intention to proceed further, I think, as the report recommends.

HON. M. SMITH: There's always been some training money. These are additional funds for a specific purpose. The \$8,000 per organization for board training, there are a variety of ways of how they can use that money. There are the ongoing sort of training assessment, and there are workshops that are held annually, semi-annually.

We will be working with the agencies and continuing to work with them to identify the needs but, again, I don't know any work situation where people - teachers would like time off for sabbaticals or in-service days and so on. However many there are, people always want more, and I think it's a very healthy way to go. I think it's the way to keep people from burning out, giving them some support, new skills, new perspectives on what they're doing. We're committed to it.

Again, I don't know whether the member was expecting \$1 million in the budget right away, quick, to enhance that. The overall monies that have been going into this field have been growing steadily. As I say, we're committed to it but we think, for an initial quick response, that the \$8,000 will certainly go a long way.

Again, we also are expecting and will be working with the training schools, the universities' extension departments, colleges and so on, to intensify their training, so that we start to get a flow of people with expertise into the child and family system.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, the report on page 262 makes a recommendation that: "The government immediately act to establish a viable management information system for Child and Family Services in all areas of the province." It points out that, without such a system, children can be placed in an unsafe situation as a result of a worker not having appropriate or any information. They also point out how crucial are the consequences of failing to act to create a viable and functioning system for children.

I wonder if the Minister could indicate what response the government will be making towards this recommendation.

HON. M. SMITH: We're into Year Three of a four-year information management system development. There are \$600,000 actually in the budget this year for the third year. It's a fourth-generation information system. It's what we call "user friendly." It has been designed by people who are familiar with the needs of a child-welfare system, and have worked with our agencies and our department to build the system.

There was one system put in in Ontario which was designed at the centre, and then laid on the agencies throughout the province. Because the agencies hadn't been involved in the development and weren't committed to it - they didn't see how it would help them in the field - only half of them agreed to cooperate. Now being forewarned that way, we worked very hard in the planning stage of this system to avoid that pitfall.

We have two pilots - two or is it three? - three pilots up and operating now. The workers are being trained.

We were out to look at the one in Brandon. Brandon and Winnipeg West and South, I think, are the agencies that are being piloted to kind of get the wrinkles out, see what training requirements there are. Each worker is going to be able to enter with their own personal code and access information. It's very carefully protected in terms of confidentiality of information and for sharing of resources across boundaries if that's needed.

As we get to the central coordinating place, we will plug in the financial analysis and information systems, but it was the best advice we could get from the computer expertise that we were better - I know the Reid-Sigurdson Report says we should have linked all the program information, finance and planning information all together initially, rather like design it in the centre and apply it. But what we have is a system, that will eventually have all those capacities, but the process of developing it has been this bottom-up. But we are assured that it will give us the ability to get timely information.

We have never had a system of committal accounting. What we got were the bills after the agencies had made the decision about the placement. Often the bills would aggregate a little and then come in, so it meant that our - and again, as you know, with auditing a year-end or whatever, it takes awhile to get the accurate information. Our planning meanwhile would have taken place a year earlier, so there was almost a two-year time lag in timely information to plan for the following year's budget.

With this new system up and operating - and it should be by next year. As I say, there are three years, three or four-year process, we should have that capacity. It is frustrating to deal with manual systems and the information needs and all the financial support. I think this department deals with more separate agencies than any other department. I think there's something like 1,800 - sorry - 800 different agencies that we fund according to separate criteria and so on.

So the whole thing is a project we're very committed to. It's had its frustrations along the way, but it's starting now to get operational. I know, watching the people out in Brandon, I think they found their adapting to it was surprisingly quick. I spent a little time trying to get the rudiments of it myself. It is the best system that we've been able to deduce for the needs of this particular field.

MR. G. MERCIER: Is it accurate to say that type of management system, the earliest date at which it would be implemented throughout the province would be 1990?

HON. M. SMITH: Well by '88-89, it will be functioning province-wide. It is adaptable and we can add certain phases to it. But we've been analyzing, tightening, whatever, the other information support systems as we go. In other words, it's not that we're not doing anything with the other systems, but these are fairly complex and expensive systems. They're pure gold when you get them operating, but if you don't take good planning time and make sure that they answer the kind of questions that you need to have answered, they can also be a big waste.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for River Heights.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Just on that point, I mean, the Children's Aid Society had in fact a data entry system that was up and running in 1982 and 1983, and should have been finished that year. What happened to that system when the agencies came on stream. Was it all just scrapped?

HON. M. SMITH: I was not the Minister at that time, but I'm informed that it was really just a fairly simple information collecting system. It didn't go into the type of activity that this new system will, which helps you identify resources and access them to the extent that it had compilations of cases and staffing and so on. It was useful in divvying up the cases and the staffing, but it wasn't designed to accomplish what we need as a coordinating mechanism province wide. It was a much more limited system than what we will have.

In terms of the equipment, and so on, I don't know the answer; I could obtain it for you. I presume, if it was basic word processing or computer-type equipment that could be used elsewhere, that it would have been, or it could have been sold, but I can undertake to find out. I don't know offhand.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, the report recommends the development of a number of standards, comprehensive service standards, comprehensive procedural standards that update the 1978 standards, that comprehensive procedural standards be implemented no later than October 1, 1987, and that the department and the agencies develop a set of measurable objectives to be used as a basis for determining overall effectiveness of the service system.

There's a reference to this in the Minister's release. Can she assure us that these standards and objectives will be developed by this fall?

HON. M. SMITH: The standards are in fact in draft form and being consulted with the agencies. As I said earlier, they should be fully implemented in the fall.

With regard to the measurable objectives, I think it will be taking us a little longer, but if the process to a certain extent is linked once you get your standards defined, then your measurable objective is linked to that. So one has to come before the other.

But I've already said that we're committed to building that type of capacity. I think it's been conspicuous by its absence in the social field and some people say, well, how can you measure outcomes? My own experience in the field is that there are ways to evaluate your outcome, but people may not know how readily to record them or put them in numerical form. You end up with having to put things on a continuing excellent, good, fair, whatever, and different functionings, and so on.

But it can be done and we believe that type of rigour will help people in the field, though it may take a while to get people who've been used to functioning without that kind of discipline to comprehend and to buy into them. But I think it's a stage that social work has to get to.

Again hopefully we can stabilize caseloads a little bit more because it will add a certain amount of paper work now. But I think that once people get used to operating with that type of format, they actually find it helpful, because it brings a little bit more rationality, I think, and continuity to the work, that sometimes they can feel a bit harrassed and hurried just by the nature of the work. We're often dealing with emergencies and painful complex situations.

MR. G. MERCIER: The report recommends that the Minister create a Child and Family Services Coordinating Organization with a Board of Directors composed of the six presidents. I think actually I read a release recently which indicates they may have done that on their own.

It also recommends a Committee of Children's Services Organization which provides services to abused children in Winnipeg, and also as a recommendation with respect to the creation of a committee of the Planning and Priorities Committee, I guess, with the Executive Council for chairing a committee of representatives of the various departments that have a responsibility with respect to child abuse.

I take it that is really the committee that has been formed to date and perhaps the Minister can confirm that she's receiving these recommendations positively.

HON. M. SMITH: We've been encouraging the agencies to work together. In fact, we had - I myself - have had several meetings with presidents and executive directors, and my deputy has and the ADM and so on.

The formation of an actual organization of agencies, I think is a very good step forward; so we're very supportive of that. After the regionalization occurred, the implementation working group had in fact been a - the executive directors had been on it, and there were certain tasks that they had not completed: how to carry out the receiving function; and how to deal with some of the issues. So, although the IWG disbanded, they did in fact continue to meet fairly often.

For functional issues, like global funding, we've told them that we're quite prepared to move in that direction and that we can even move a couple of agencies at a time. We would like them to come to some agreement as to how, so that it is a cooperative venture. So in a sense, we're already a fair way along on those recommendations.

The multidepartment committee connected to planning and priorities has been formed and will be meeting to both view, in a systematic way, these recommendations. As a matter of fact, we have the Deputies of the departments rather than the ADM's feeling that we could strengthen their impact on their departmental follow-up.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, there are a number of recommendations around page 293 of the report which point out, at least in the opinion of the reviewers, that the Community Services staff have no training and investigative techniques which are appropriate to the function of investigating a child's death and point out that it is a complex and distasteful matter. However, it is essential to the integrity of the Child and Family

Services system that these investigations be carried out in a thorough manner that will give proper consideration to discovering the truth and will use procedures that respect the right of persons involved in an inquiry. They go on then to recommend that in the event of a child in care, or who has been a client of an agency during the last two years, or who has been a child whose parent or guardian has been a client of the agency during the last two years, the Chief Medical Examiner shall do an inquest and shall review the activities of the Child and Family Services agency or agencies which were involved with the case and submit a detailed report to the Minister of Community Services which assess whether or not the activities of the staff of the agency or agencies were appropriate by current standard.

I, myself, Mr. Chairman, would go beyond the recommendation of Dr. Sigurdson and Mr. Reid. I would ask that an investigation be carried out in the circumstances where there has been a significant physical or mental disability caused to a child. That is just as serious in many instances as death, because children who suffer those kinds of injuries will carry the burden throughout their life.

I would ask the Minister whether she and the government have made a decision as to whether or not to support this recommendation, acknowledging quite fairly as they point out, that it is a protection for the whole system because it will provide an independent investigation in these circumstances and can be helpful to the system.

I want to point out, perhaps here, Mr. Chairman, that in the introduction to the report that one of the concerns that was expressed - or statements - was that there had to be a willingness to review all child abuse deaths in a fashion that permits the system to learn from its mistakes. No one, Mr. Chairman, well, no reasonable person, and certainly not I, are ever going to take the position that at some point in time there are not going to be mistakes in the system and there are going to be unfortunate, very regrettable results. But we're not perfect and we can't have a perfect system and there will be mistakes made.

I think what the reviewers are saying is we have to learn from the mistakes, to try to stop the repeat of those kinds of instances in the future. It may be a difficult decision; it may be difficult on some people to do this. But if a system is to learn, and I think if people who are involved with this system would support this, because they would know then that there is a method of dealing with a mistake and bringing some recommendations forward to stop the situation in the future.

So I'd ask the Minister whether she and the government are prepared to adopt that recommendation and even go further and provide that an investigation occur where there is a significant mental or physical impairment of the child.

HON. M. SMITH: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to sort of outline what's currently happening.

When staff investigate, they only investigate the agency actions. The police are involved when there is a death or a criminal act, like a mental or a physical disability, so the police are involved and the Chief

Medical Examiner also has the option right now of ordering an inquest. I actually spoke to the Chief Medical Examiner and discussed the recommendation with him. I said that if his office had the willingness and ability to give us input in the evaluation of what had happened so we all could learn that I thought that was an excellent idea.

But the only question I had was whether he saw himself acting as judge over, say, the agency of social workers or the legal people in the court system, or whether he saw himself as part of a team, each of which would give their analysis and recommendations, and then we would pool them and help to improve the system or take appropriate action. He said that he saw his expertise in the fact-finding, not the faultfinding area. He wouldn't see himself as sitting over and above agency action or police action, but as one of a team. That matched my understanding.

Whether the question of inquest should be mandatory in all instances, I'd certainly be prepared to discuss that with him. I think where there's a death, there would be no question. In terms of mental or physical harm, I think again that would be an area that we could certainly look at. I don't know whether there are degrees that make - if there's slight harm, at what point do you kick in and have an inquest? If there's a broken arm or a bruising, is that physical harm? Or would we have to define the degrees of severity? But, in general, I think having several eyes or persons engaged in reviewing these tragic cases and seeing whether existing policies and procedures were followed or not and whether the existing policies and procedures could be improved on, I think is an excellent idea.

So I intend to sit down with the Chief Medical Examiner and with the multidepartment committee and come up with an agreed-on way of getting as much evaluative information as we can.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, the reporter pointed out at the very beginning in the introduction that one of the most striking facts of current work with abused children is that there's no agreement on the means of measuring risk. This may very well account for some ad hoc decisions, which may have been made wrongly during the past number of years. They, after some lengthy comments, suggest that "... a child-abuse risk index be used by Child and Family Service agencies as a tool in the assessment process."

Can the Minister indicate whether this risk index will be recommended to the agencies, or will that be part of the standards that are being worked on to be completed by this fall?

HON. M. SMITH: We're prepared to pilot it. It would be breaking new ground, and we think it seems to have a lot of potential for having a commonly understood procedure and understanding. It should also assist cross-discipline, if people understand just what procedure the other disciplines are following. This would be the social work assessment.

I don't know whether the procedure is followed by the other partners in the review. It might also be helpful to have, and then the social workers would understand what the doctors are doing and the police too. I'm just sort of, in a sense, developing the point as I think about

it. But I think anything that we can do to enable the different partners involved in these investigations and these cases to better understand what the other is doing and how they can work together, instead of pulling in different directions, I think would be all to the good. So again, we are prepared to pilot it, and we think it holds promise.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, one recommendation I didn't deal with, I would ask the Minister what her and the government's position is with respect to the Child Abuse Registry.

HON. M. SMITH: The member knows that we put out the draft report and we asked for input. We've had a first go-round of analysis, and there were some tentative recommendations, which I haven't yet taken to Cabinet. What we were wanting to do was to check out - there's sort of been a new concept proposed that would try to deal with some of the concerns around access of employers to the suspected abusers on the list and, yet, our desire to protect children to the best extent we can. That seems to be the most controversial aspect, so we've got a little bit of a new concept that we're checking out legally, so we should come to a final recommendation. But in the meantime, I have had written recommendations from two members on the other side. I've spoken verbally to you -(Interjection)- Yes, two members are against that particular element, so I just draw that to your notice.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hour being six . . .

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Mr. Chairman, I would ask for some information to be available on Tuesday. We don't have any breakdown of any of the family service agencies as to what kind of funding they got last year, or what they're going to get this year. We have big lump sums, but we don't know anything about the detail. We got that detail last year, and I'd appreciate it if it was available on Tuesday.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hour being 6:00 p.m., committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

The Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, reported same, and asked leave to sit again.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER, C. Santos: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. J. MALOWAY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Inkster, that the Report of the Committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried and the House adjourned and stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10:00 a.m. (Friday)