



First Session — Thirty-Fourth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

37 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fourth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

| NAME | CONSTITUENCY | PARTY |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|---------|
| ALCOCK, Reg | Osborne | LIBERAL |
| ANGUS, John | St. Norbert | LIBERAL |
| ASHTON, Steve | Thompson | NDP |
| BURRELL, Parker | Swan River | PC |
| CARR, James | Fort Rouge | LIBERAL |
| CARSTAIRS, Sharon | River Heights | LIBERAL |
| CHARLES, Gwen | Selkirk | LIBERAL |
| CHEEMA, Gulzar | Kildonan | LIBERAL |
| CHORNOPYSKI, William | Burrows | LIBERAL |
| CONNERY, Edward Hon. | Portage la Prairie | PC |
| COWAN, Jay | Churchill | NDP |
| CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon. | Ste. Rose du Lac | PC |
| DERKACH, Leonard, Hon. | Roblin-Russell | PC |
| DOER, Gary | Concordia | NDP |
| DOWNEY, James Hon. | Arthur | PC |
| DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon. | Emerson | PC |
| DRIEDGER, Herold, L. | Niakwa | LIBERAL |
| DUCHARME, Gerald, Hon. | Riel | PC |
| EDWARDS, Paul | St. James | LIBERAL |
| ENNS, Harry | Lakeside | PC |
| ERNST, Jim, Hon. | Charleswood | PC |
| EVANS, Laurie | Fort Garry | LIBERAL |
| EVANS, Leonard | Brandon East | NDP |
| FILMON, Gary, Hon. | Tuxedo | PC |
| FINDLAY, Glen Hon. | Virten | PC |
| GAUDRY, Neil | St. Boniface | LIBERAL |
| GILLESHAMMER, Harold | Minnedosa | PC |
| GRAY, Avis | Ellice | LIBERAL |
| HAMMOND, Gerrie | Kirkfield Park | PC |
| HARAPIAK, Harry | The Pas | NDP |
| HARPER, Elijah | Rupertsland | NDP |
| HELWER, Edward R. | Gimli | PC |
| HEMPHILL, Maureen | Logan | NDP |
| KOZAK, Richard, J. | Transcona | LIBERAL |
| LAMOUREUX, Kevin, M. | Inkster | LIBERAL |
| MALOWAY, Jim | Elmwood | NDP |
| MANDRAKE, Ed | Assiniboia | LIBERAL |
| MANNES, Clayton, Hon. | Morris | PC |
| McCRAE, James Hon. | Brandon West | PC |
| MINENKO, Mark | Seven Oaks | LIBERAL |
| MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon. | River East | PC |
| NEUFELD, Harold, Hon. | Rossmere | PC |
| OLESON, Charlotte Hon. | Gladstone | PC |
| ORCHARD, Donald Hon. | Pembina | PC |
| PANKRATZ, Helmut | La Verendrye | PC |
| PATTERSON, Allan | Radisson | LIBERAL |
| PENNER, Jack, Hon. | Rhineland | PC |
| PLOHMAN, John | Dauphin | NDP |
| PRAZNIK, Darren | Lac du Bonnet | PC |
| ROCAN, Denis, Hon. | Turtle Mountain | PC |
| ROCH, Gilles | Springfield | LIBERAL |
| ROSE, Bob | St. Vital | LIBERAL |
| STORIE, Jerry | Flin Flon | NDP |
| TAYLOR, Harold | Wolseley | LIBERAL |
| URUSKI, Bill | Interlake | NDP |
| WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy | St. Johns | NDP |
| YEO, Iva | Sturgeon Creek | LIBERAL |

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, December 1, 1988.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of the Winnipeg Canoe Club, praying for the passing of an Act to Amend an Act to Incorporate the Winnipeg Canoe Club.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. James Downey (Minister responsible for Native Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I have a ministerial statement which I would like to make. I have copies here for distribution.

It gives me great pleasure to announce that an agreement in principle has been reached for a \$10 million advance to the five Indian bands involved in the Northern Flood Agreement. As you are well aware, Mr. Speaker, prior to the election, our Premier (Mr. Filmon) made a commitment to the five Indian bands to meet with them as soon as possible to begin the intensive work needed to initiate the flow of funds under the agreement. As a result of those discussions, I am pleased to inform the House, after 11 years of long and arduous negotiations, an agreement in principle for this interim payment has been reached.

This agreement, I may add, was achieved as a result of the positive and constructive environment established between the Government and the chiefs of the five bands. I look forward to this continued relationship which we have been so successful to forge with the chiefs. The \$10 million interim payment is subject to a mutual agreement with the bands based on appropriate terms and conditions which will determine the final overall monetary responsibility of all parties to the agreement. These funds are an integral part of a settlement to compensate the bands for the impacts of northern hydro development. It represents a major breakthrough in these discussions which have been ongoing since 1977.

These funds are an integral part of the settlement to compensate the bands for the impacts of the northern hydro development. It is my hope that these funds will assist the bands to broaden their economic base, improve the infrastructure of their communities and provide the employment opportunities for people of the North.

* (1335)

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I am also pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Paul Jarvis as provincial senior negotiator for the Northern Flood

Agreement. Mr. Jarvis brings to this position an extensive and impressive background in resource management and engineering. Acting on behalf of the Province, Mr. Jarvis will be entering into negotiations with the federal Government, Manitoba Hydro and the Northern Flood Committee. He will take a lead role in negotiating a fair and equitable settlement of Manitoba's outstanding obligations with all the parties.

Mr. Speaker, he has a wealth of experience in both the public and private sectors. Mr. Jarvis is president of P.E. Jarvis and Associates, a management and technical consulting firm. He has served as Deputy Minister for the provincial Departments of Energy and Mines, Natural Resources and Northern Affairs. In addition, Mr. Jarvis gained valuable experience for his new appointment as vice-president of Corporate Planning for Manitoba Hydro.

Mr. Speaker, the appointment of Mr. Jarvis will be a cohesive factor needed to work toward the overall resolution of Manitoba's commitment to the bands at Nelson House, Norway House, Cross Lakes, Split Lake and York Landing. I am confident that the parties will ensure a full implementation of the agreement within a reasonable period of time.

Let me conclude, Mr. Speaker, by saying one of the prime aims of this Government is to build a partnership with the people of the North. I regard this interim settlement as a tremendous opportunity to begin to build and strengthen on the achievement of which this Government has accomplished so far. However, we are all aware that there are many changes or challenges ahead before we can reach this goal. The commitment to compensate the northern bands is long overdue. I will do everything possible, and I know I can count on the support of all Members of this Assembly to ensure the negotiations achieve a satisfactory conclusion for all parties. Thank you.

Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa): It gives me great pleasure to be able to respond to this statement that was made by the Minister just now. The fact that an agreement in principle has been reached, an amount has been determined upon, is very encouraging. I believe the Minister referenced that the Government is stating that the achievements the Government has accomplished are laudable. I think one thing that should be mentioned before we proceed any further is that 11 years of long and arduous negotiations were involved in this. This is not something that occurred just in the past six months. The negotiations have been in progress for a long time, both on the part of the bands involved, both on the part of the federal Government and both on the part of all of the provincial Governments.

Now, it is also important to recall that even if conclusions can be reached in a six-month term, generally these conclusions are based upon Memorandums of Understanding or perhaps a decision based upon different people making a commitment to

getting a conclusion. That, I think, is what this Minister has indicated to us today. The commitment was made to reach a conclusion and essentially all people who are involved in this must make that same kind of agreement to come to a conclusion, that they must be able to make a negotiation commitment that will enable them to go to the next step.

It is also important to recognize that in this particular principle here there are other bands in other areas of the province also subjected to similar kinds of either compensation requests, which have been ongoing. Some of the occurrences or some of the events may have gone back many, many years, and it is only now that there is a collective will to try and address some of these needs. I trust that spirit of cooperation and the spirit of commitment that has been expressed here by the Minister today will also be continued to address the needs of the other outstanding negotiations that are waiting for some resolution as of this moment.

* (1340)

Mr. Elijah Harper (Rupert's Land): I would like to thank the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) responsible for the Northern Flood Agreement. I would like to tell this House and also the Minister that the agreement in principle does not mean anything until the agreement is finally finalized.

I may say that when we were in Government we had been proceeding with \$10 million advance negotiations just prior to the elections, as if we had an agreement in principle, and unfortunately we were unable to come to an agreement. I might advise the Minister that we also had achieved an agreement in principle with the federal Government on the Treaty Land Entitlement which has not been acted upon. As a matter of fact, it was reneged on.

This \$10 million agreement in principle has still to be resolved by the bands themselves and this area is going to be a difficult task in getting the bands to settle in areas where a finality is reached. This is an area that I am sure the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) will be having difficulty in reaching.

During the Hydro debate, we had asked the Minister responsible for Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld) as to the position of Manitoba Hydro in respect to a Northern Flood Agreement, and we were not really totally advised of the direction the Government was going.

As a matter of fact, when we were in Government, we had a two-pronged approach. One was to settle, item by item, issues coming from the band. As a matter of fact, we settled the Nelson River fishermen. We settled the Nelson fishermen at Norway House. That was settled out, and also the Footprint Bridge and Nelson House were settled. Those were as a result of the item-by-item approach that we took.

In terms of taking the whole comprehensive approach to settle the entire agreement to put a quantum on the total settlement is something that is going to involve a tremendous amount of research and undertaking. It is something that the Indian bands that are part of Northern Flood will have to take into consideration

because this agreement, if a finality is to be achieved as a result of this \$10 million advance, I may say that it is going to take many years to settle, and I thank the Minister for announcing this agreement in principle.

I wish to support his initiative, an initiative that we started. I hope also that he addresses many of the other communities which are not part of the Northern Flood Agreement plans—South Indian Lake, Thicket Portage, part of the river system, the Nelson House community, the Cross Lake community—those areas that the Minister has responsibility for to make sure that those other people, their concerns and needs are as well addressed. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Would the House grant leave to revert back to Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees? (Agreed)

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Mr. Harold Gilleshammer (Chairman of the Committee of Supply): Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Swan River (Mr. Burrell), that the report of the committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

BILL NO. 49—THE PUBLIC WORKS AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Government Services) introduced, by leave, Bill No. 49, The Public Works Amendment Act.

* (1345)

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, may I direct Honourable Members' attention to the public gallery where we have, from the Glenlawn Collegiate, ninety Grade 11 students under the direction of Mr. Al Thompson. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for St. Vital (Mr. Rose). On behalf of all Honourable Members, I welcome you here this afternoon.

We also have with us in the public gallery, from the Fort Alexander High School, eighteen Grade 11 students under the direction of Mr. Don MacMillan. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik). On behalf of all Honourable Members, I welcome you here this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

AIDS Education Pamphlet Distribution

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): My question is to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). Today has been proclaimed World AIDS Day. There is presently only one solution to this very serious medical and social problem, and that is prevention. While we have made great strides in increasing public awareness of this tragic disease, educational programs are still sadly lacking in this province. The reality is that 50 percent of all teenagers are sexually active, with fewer than half using any form of prevention at all.

After months of waiting, we were very pleased yesterday to receive a copy of the AIDS pamphlet. Mr. Speaker, I have had the opportunity to review it. I would like to commend the Minister for the fine job done by his staff. The pamphlet is not only informative but it is also straightforward and honest. It dispels many of the myths about the spread of this terrible disease. But now that we have the pamphlet, it is very important that it reaches as many people as possible.

My question to the Minister is this: how and to whom will the pamphlet be distributed so that maximum distribution may be achieved?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): I thank my honourable friend for his encouraging comments on the AIDS pamphlet. We are hopeful that it will remain in individuals' possessions. That is why we put a hardcover on it and attempted to make it a more permanent pamphlet so that it is for use by more than one individual.

To answer the distribution question, the Department of Education and my colleague, the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), is assuring the distribution of the pamphlet throughout the school system. Within the Department of Health, the distribution includes our regional offices throughout the province. Physicians and clinics and other public health facilities will have access to the AIDS pamphlet. We believe we have an adequate number to meet the demand that we foresee, based on previous demands for the pamphlet.

AIDS Prevention Programs Village Clinic Funding

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): With a supplementary to the same Minister, it costs this province \$82,000 to care for and treat an AIDS victim. The Village Clinic has been waiting nine months now for some word from this Government about a request for \$50,000 to fund its AIDS prevention project. When is this Minister going to recognize the benefits of health promotion and prevention? When will he inform those who work at the Village Clinic that they will get this very necessary funding?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): My honourable friend asks a good question based on one of the organizations or one of the avenues through which

the province is providing funding for AIDS education and AIDS prevention.

The Village Clinic, in terms of budgetary vote, has received a 24-percent increase in funding from this Government over the amount budgeted last year. That additional funding can be used by the Village Clinic for purposes of AIDS education. They have made specific requests for an outreach worker. That specific request was not acceded to. However, within the budget increase, I have indicated that they have the flexibility where, if they find outreach workers to be the most important new direction for them to take, they have that flexibility within their budget allocation.

Mr. Carr: That does not sound to me like good news for the Village Clinic in its request for additional funding.

* (1350)

Coordination

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): What plans does the Minister have to make sure that the fight against AIDS and its spread in our community is coordinated? Does he have a plan and will he share it with us?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): My honourable friend indicates it does not sound like good news for Village Clinic, with a 24-percent increase in funding, budget year over budget year. That is a funding increase that organizations throughout the health care field would be delighted with, and is far beyond the increase that we have made available to other institutions.

In addition to that funding to Village Clinic, which is indeed supplemented by federal funding as well, the province has undertaken a rather ambitious campaign across the province in terms of the approval of six new staff positions, specifically in the regions, to assist throughout Manitoba with education and prevention programs for all Manitobans throughout the province.

We, as I have indicated by tabling yesterday, are sending copies of the AIDS pamphlet to my honourable friend. We have reprinted the AIDS pamphlet. It took longer than what I was satisfied with, but I think my honourable friend has already indicated he believes it will be an effective pamphlet, and that was part of the delay. In addition to that, we intend to undertake a rather ambitious media campaign early in the next year.

Mental Health Care Rideau Park Amalgamation

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): With a new question to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). Yesterday the Minister finally gave us some indication of what this Government intends to do to coordinate the very serious problem in this province's health care system.

We were anxiously awaiting to see some of the details but, less than a day after the unveiling of his master plan, we hear speculation out of Brandon that consideration is being given to the amalgamation of

Rideau Park and the Brandon Health Centre, something that was not mentioned in his master plan. Such a move will likely affect the quality of psychogeriatric care for the patients who are currently at Rideau Park. Is the Minister considering such an amalgamation of health care services at Rideau Park and the Brandon Health Centre?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, the Rideau Park circumstance would have been an ideal area for honourable friends of the Liberal Opposition to take more than a half an hour to discuss the Manitoba Health Services Commission \$1.4 billion budget, because I simply want to tell you that the situation at Rideau Park has been under negotiation with the unions involved. There are several and that is the problem.

It has been somewhat of a disappointing arrangement that was facing us when we assumed Government. Regardless of the outcome of the union negotiations, there will be no denigration of patient care and psychogeriatric quality care at Rideau Park because, if my honourable friend is aware, that Rideau Park facility is downtown in Brandon. It is not part of the Brandon Mental Health Centre complex. It operates with a staffing and a philosophical mandate which is dedicated to improved psychogeriatric care for those residents. There will be no diminution of psychogeriatric care for those residents, regardless of the outcome of our negotiations.

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Readmission Process

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): I am glad to hear the assurances and reassurances from the Minister because, as he well knows, the kind of geriatric services available at Rideau Park are much different than those at the Brandon Health Centre. There is some concern in the Brandon community that through amalgamation there will be a loss of quality of service to those patients who may have to be readmitted. Will the Minister tell us if it would be necessary for a readmission process should that amalgamation go through?

* (1355)

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, the Rideau Park Personal Care Home has, when I visited it some 10 or 12 weeks ago, at that time had a full patient complement. That full patient complement is there on a permanent basis. That is their home and any indication that my honourable friend is making that those individuals who are currently residing at Rideau Park would be moved to the Brandon Mental Health Centre is absolutely fearmongering on his part. There is no substance to that. Those residents are in their new home and will remain there.

Job Losses

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): We know that Ministers in this Government do not like Question Period because

every time we ask a good question, they accuse us of of fearmongering. There is concern in the City of Brandon that an amalgamation of those two facilities could result in the loss of jobs of some. Will the Minister today in this House give his guarantee that there will be no loss of jobs in Brandon due to this amalgamation of services?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, my Honourable friend talks about not wishing to face Question Period. If my honourable friend had a broader understanding of the Rideau Park issue, something that could have developed during the debate of the Manitoba Health Services Commission estimates instead of taking a mere 30 minutes to pass the entire 1.4 billion budget, he would get full and complete answers and not constantly be having to have partial answers given in the time constraints that are imposed by Question Period.

The whole question that he asked previous to this one about readmission to Brandon Mental Health Centre is a foolish question, and that is what I am pointing out to my honourable friend. If he had an understanding of the circumstance at Rideau Park, he would not ask that kind of foolish question, and that foolish kind of a question does nothing but cause anxiety in my opinion amongst those residents. That anxiety is certainly not necessary.

Now, Mr Speaker, if I could—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order.

AIDS Pamphlet Distribution

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, yesterday on late newscasts, it was projected to have 10 million people affected by AIDS in the world and 50,000 in Canada. I think, notwithstanding any partisan politics, all of us are absolutely challenged by those projections in Manitoba and in Canada and the world. I am pleased the United Nations has declared the day.

I have been willing to be positive about some of the positive announcements of the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), whether it was regarding mental health yesterday and some other issues but, quite frankly, I am rather disappointed in the answers given to the previous questioner on this very important issue, Mr. Speaker.

I do not believe the Government has a strategy on AIDS in terms of prevention, and I would like to ask the Minister what is his strategy to get this pamphlet out to the street kids. There are 1,000 to 3,000 street kids in the City of Winnipeg who are not necessarily attending school, will not drop into the Department of Health's office, and many of them are using drugs, unfortunately, and that is the greatest source now of transference of this very serious disease between our young people in our Province. I would ask the Minister what is his strategy to deal with that.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Chairman, my honourable friend is well aware that a number of agencies deliver services to the environs, that those same youth he is concerned about—and legitimately so concerned about—are on the streets, the areas in which they are on the streets. The Village Clinic and others have the pamphlet and have the ability to provide that pamphlet to any of those youths at any time, Mr. Speaker, and that of course is one of the reasons why Government, ours as well as the previous administration, provides funding to those kinds of community delivery service agencies.

* (1400)

AIDS Prevention Programs Village Clinic Funding

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, we appreciate the Government is providing the same amount that was in the previous budget on the Village Clinic. But, Mr. Speaker, this situation has developed much more in the last six months than anybody ever expected and there are thousands of kids on the streets faced with this disease. There have been six youths in the last three weeks who have tested positive at the Village Clinic. Why has the Minister not approved the budget for this year after nine months for the Village Clinic, and why would he not agree to extra preventative street workers to go out with the street kids to deal with this problem on the streets at their level, to prevent this disease rather than just dealing with it in the same way as he has in this House in the last five months?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, last year's Estimates for the Department of Health had an approved funding for Village Clinic of slightly over \$342,000.00. This year, Mr. Speaker, contrary to the information my honourable friend just put on the record, the budget proposal is over \$426,000.00. Now, Mr. Speaker, within that budget, there is the ability for flexible use of those funds by the executive and by Village Clinic.

My honourable friend makes the case that things have changed dramatically in the last six months, and I realize that is something that my honourable friend would like to use as a reason for backing the demand for increased funding. But, Mr. Speaker, we have significantly increased the funding to Village Clinic, as well as increasing the funding throughout the Department of Health in terms of providing all regions, Winnipeg included, with additional resources to reach those in risk and to reach people who need education and information on AIDS. That represents a significant increase in budget that we have dedicated towards the AIDS education program in this province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we will always have the argument as to what is sufficient, and certainly I cannot indicate that we are overfunding AIDS education. Neither was the previous Administration, but we have dedicated considerable additional resources to AIDS education and funding.

Outreach Workers

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): I do not want to get into an argument of bureaucratic rollovers of budget year over year. Mr. Speaker, there is a serious health problem on the streets of Winnipeg, and it is dealing with the youth who are dealing with drugs, unfortunately, in our communities. Mr. Speaker, there is a projection that there will be 700 kids affected in the next three years if something is not done.

My question to the Minister of Health, in the interest of the human suffering and also in terms of the very, very important cost realities of the Department of Health, does it not make more sense to put community outreach workers on the streets where the kids are to deal with this problem where it is at, Mr. Speaker, rather than paying for it three years later both in terms of human suffering and also in terms of the tremendous health care burdens in costs?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, that is a valid proposal that is currently being advocated by the Village Clinic, and I have indicated to my honourable friend that we have provided a significant increase in their budget this year. They have the flexibility within that budget to do just that. If that is the most pressing need as assessed by the Village Clinic people, by the administration of Village Clinic, they have the flexibility within their budget to put those very outreach workers on the street addressing and discussing with those very high-risk individuals that my honourable friend has identified and making them aware of the dangers of drug use and shared needles and the dangers they incur if they practise unsafe sex.

Mr. Speaker, that flexibility is there and, if it is the pressing problem that my honourable friend believes, then Village Clinic has the flexibility to deliver that program and we have provided the additional resource that they can do that.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, I know the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) is not suggesting the Osborne clinic, the Village Clinic, cut the nurses in their offices so they can put out outreach workers. I know you are not talking about cutting the people who go into the schools and work with the education system. We are not talking about redeployment of a lot of resources. My question to the Minister of Health is, does it not make more sense to put community outreach workers with the clinic and with the community to deal with the 3,000 kids who potentially are using drugs unfortunately?

To deal with the potential of some \$30 million to \$60 million that will be required in the health care budget three or four years from now in terms of this tremendous epidemic, does it not make better sense for the Minister of Health to put those resources that are needed in the community clinic, get onto the streets and start dealing with the kids? Let us start preventing this disease. It is tragic in human terms; it is tragic in terms of cost runs for the Health Department.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, that is why we have increased the budget this year, not only the Village

Clinic but indeed provided additional staff resource for education throughout the Province of Manitoba through Regional Services. My honourable friend is making what he considers to be a very valid point, and I cannot disagree with the general thrust of what he is saying. But we have increased the funding as I have said now for the third or fourth time, and the flexibility in funding is there to meet the most pressing need, as the executive of Village Clinic foresee it. They have an extensive volunteer program, because certainly within their budget they do not operate their program without considerable volunteer effort. That volunteer effort may well be more appropriately used to reach those street children my honourable friend has mentioned. Village Clinic has increased resource and the flexibility to do that.

Tender Process Unfair Hiring Practices

Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Connery). We, on this side of the House, have been repeatedly told from the Government benches that theirs is an open and clean Government. Yet yesterday in Estimates, the Minister and his staff admitted that not all service and consulting contracts are handled by tender call or proposal call. Will the Minister explain to the House how a Mr. Don Burdeny was issued a consulting contract without the benefit of due process?

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of the Environment and Workplace Safety and Health): Mr. Speaker, when I first got into office, one of my concerns and the concern that has been raised by the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) over the quality of water in the Assiniboine and Red Rivers that flow through Winnipeg and eventually to Selkirk and the terrible conditions that they are in, we felt that a study very quickly to get us started on where to go as far as river clean-up. We commissioned Mr. Burdeny to do a study on rivers in the City of Winnipeg.

Don Burdeny Hiring

Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley): Will the Minister of the Environment explain just what direction he received from the Premiers' Office to hire Mr. Burdeny's consulting firm in this fashion, to the detriment of due process and to the disbenefit of other legitimate consulting firms?

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of the Environment and Workplace Safety and Health): Mr. Speaker, I resent the insinuation that the Member puts into Hansard. We have consultations with a lot of people before we do things, and we are looking for good support people. I will talk to the Premier (Mr. Filmon), I will talk to Executive Council. We have a lot of different people who we will consult with when we are looking for expertise.— (Interjection)— Yes, we have even talked to the Member for Wolseley on some things.

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, on a further supplement, can the Minister tell the House why favoured treatment has

been given to Mr. Burdeny in that as a private consultant he was allowed to attend the recent CCREM Conference of Environment and Resource Ministers as a delegate while he was only a private consultant? Why is it that Mr. Burdeny continues to have unfettered use of the Minister's own office for his private use?

Mr. Connery: Mr. Speaker, Beauchesne and House Rules prevents me from expressing myself as to what I think of the comments of the Member for Wolseley (Mr. Taylor). I have had—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. Order! Not only Beauchesne's and House Rules, but me included.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Connery: Mr. Speaker, when Mr. Burdeny was doing his report, we had some conversations in our office. Since that report, Mr. Burdeny does not have the use of my office.

* (1410)

Winnipeg Police Racism Allegations

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): My question is for the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae). Recently, a member of the Sikh community in Winnipeg made complaints about the treatment he received from the City of Winnipeg Police and that incident was brought to the attention of the Attorney-General in this House. Now, regrettably, another Sikh family has raised concerns. The allegation by the Jawanda family is that the husband, wife and six-year-old child were all taken into custody, separated from each other and interrogated in a hit-and-run accident investigation in Winnipeg. No charges were laid and it now appears that there was little basis for the allegations.

Mr. Speaker, regardless of the merits of the case, the allegation that a six-year-old child was separated from his family, interrogated and shown handcuffs by police is extremely disturbing. My question is, is the Attorney-General aware of these allegations and has he had any discussions with police officials with respect to doing an internal investigation?

Hon. James McCrae (Attorney-General): I will get a report on the matter, Mr. Speaker, and report back to the Honourable Member.

Race Relations Training

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): I thank the Attorney-General for that commitment. Again for the Attorney-General, what if any specific race relations training is given to police officials at the Winnipeg Police Academy?

Hon. James McCrae (Attorney-General): I will get the specific details for the Honourable Member.

Maintenance Enforcement Hours of Service

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Again I thank the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae) and look forward to the responses. Finally for the Attorney-General, last week, I asked him to look into the use of an answering machine by the Maintenance Enforcement Branch. I asked about the use of an answering machine at the Maintenance Enforcement Branch to take calls from distraught women. He said he would look into it. Today, the answering machine is still in operation and the Maintenance Enforcement Branch does not take calls between 12:30 and 4:30. Is this an acceptable level of service to the Attorney-General and, if not, will he immediately investigate this frustrating lack of service for this very vulnerable group in Manitoba?

Hon. James McCrae (Attorney-General): Mr. Speaker, certain problems present themselves when we are dealing with sensitive family issues. The answering service the Honourable Member refers to has nothing whatever to do with any lack of financial or human resources in Maintenance Enforcement offices. Some of the problems the Honourable Member would be referring to coming over the telephone lines would be confidential in nature so that a decision was made that client information should no longer be given out over the telephone. So the answering machine does allow the—these are very busy offices, as the Honourable Member knows. These Maintenance Enforcement offices allow staff to look after Maintenance Enforcement work that they must do, and there are times when people can call the office and speak with Maintenance Enforcement designated officers and others.

So the question the Honourable Member raises does not have to do with lack of resources. It has to do with the confidential nature of the kinds of inquiries coming forward. The Honourable Member is talking lack of service.

Trapping Industry Compensation

Mr. Elijah Harper (Rupert's Land): My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Penner). As the Assembly knows, the current mild weather in northern Manitoba has delayed the trapping season and is causing hardship for many of the trappers and their families. Also, in view of the increased cost of living from hydro rates, food, telephone and now milk prices which trappers face, will the Minister now consider introducing a special compensation program for the trappers this year similar to the drought relief programs being offered to farmers?

An Honourable Member: Hear, Hear!

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Natural Resources): I certainly sympathize with the difficulties that the trappers of northern Manitoba are facing this year. The deep snows and the late frosts have certainly added a dimension to their activities this year that they have

not previously experienced in recent times. I would suggest to the Honourable Member that most of the support that has been shown to prairie farmers has come from the federal Government and I can certainly, if he wants me to, take up this issue with the federal people and ask them if there is any kind of support mechanism that could be structured that they could make use of.

Trappers' Association Grant

Mr. Elijah Harper (Rupert's Land): I think the Minister has a responsibility to the trappers in northern Manitoba. I also note that the new wildlife policy that the Minister refers to has not been released publicly. Can the Minister explain why the grant to the Trappers' Association is the same dollar amount that it was for the past two years in light of the claim by the Minister that the association has new and expanded duties?

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Natural Resources): Well, the grant to the Trappers' Association is similar to what it was last year. The weather, as a matter of fact, that we have been experiencing this year is probably very similar to the kind of weather patterns that we had last year in Manitoba, and I should probably ask the Honourable Member because he was probably quite involved in decisions when that same type of request might have come their way when they were in Government. I might ask him what their response was to that same kind of request.

However, that does not preclude us from entering into discussions with, as I said before, our federal counterparts to discuss whether there is any vehicle available to offer support to the northern trappers.

Trapping Industry Compensation

Mr. Elijah Harper (Rupert's Land): Since the Minister has failed to actually financially assist the trappers in this province, I wonder if the Minister could tell this House when he will be committing funds to assisting communities affected by the drop in fur prices and by the mild weather. Also, can I expect an answer from the Minister on the Order for Return I requested on October 21, concerning the Government commitment to the fur trade?

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Natural Resources): I should indicate to the Honourable Member that I have met twice in recent months with the Trappers' Association, and the Trappers' Association has indicated at both the meetings that they are quite pleased with the efforts being made by this Government and my department to enter into a new era with them. We are discussing numerous initiatives that can be used to diversify the incomes of the trapping community in Manitoba, including certain aspects of tourism that might be considered for them. I think that has added an element of excitement. I am somewhat surprised that the Honourable Member opposite will now start pointing fingers at us, saying that we are not doing anything for the trapping association when he in fact himself had the opportunity in the past to do so.

Seniors' Transport Service Funding

Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital): My question is for the Minister who advocates for seniors (Mr. Neufeld). It is most evident indeed that in this House and in the committees that there is a dearth of talent in this Government to deal with problems that affect over 60 percent of Manitoba citizens, namely, the City of Winnipeg.

Last Wednesday, during a question to the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme), I alluded to brochures distributed by Senior's Transport Service in the South End of Winnipeg on behalf of the Tory MP elect for Winnipeg South, in which federal support for seniors' transportation was pledged as priority. Mr. Speaker, my question is, did this Minister follow this up with the MP elect for Winnipeg South in order to liaise with provincial and federal support to save Senior's Transport Service from imminent closure, thereby depriving thousands of seniors of this most personalized, inexpensive, efficient service?

* (1420)

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for Seniors): The Member well knows that this is a commitment or is a responsibility of the Minister for Urban Affairs.

I have indeed discussed with the Minister of Urban Affairs on numerous occasions the transport services to South Winnipeg. I mentioned to the Member last week that this is a small portion of the seniors of Winnipeg and of Manitoba. When we come up with a plan for seniors' transportation for all of Manitoba and for all of Winnipeg, we will report to the House.

Mr. Rose: Perhaps it is time they did liaison with their people who make similar promises as their provincial people.

Provincial Payment

Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital): A question to the same Minister, on several occasions, information has come forward in this House referring to a pledge of support for Senior's Transport Service from five defeated provincial Tory candidates. Has this Minister, the Minister who advocates for seniors, had contact with these devoted individuals to seek their support in convincing the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme) of the necessity of maintaining Senior's Transport Service for the long run, which he says he is dedicated to in Estimates, or at the very least make the final payment of the \$37,500 on that pledge?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order please. Order.

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for Seniors): The Minister of Urban Affairs has on several occasions when I have been here explained to the Member that the responsibilities that we were

committed to have been met. The responsibility may well be that with the city. The Minister of Urban Affairs has repeatedly told this House that the obligation to which we had committed ourselves have been met.

Mr. Rose: My final supplementary to the same Minister. I certainly hope that on behalf of the seniors of this province and indeed all seniors that this Minister will shortly start doing his job to advocate for those people which he said was his job.

Last Thursday I asked this Minister a question about Senior's Transport Service.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member have a question?

Mr. Rose: Yes, I do, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: Would the Honourable Member kindly put his question now.

Winnipeg Seniors' Society

Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital): At that time, Mr. Speaker, he admitted that he had not discussed this transportation issue with seniors. My question is, can he tell this House what arrangement he has now made to meet with these groups to discuss this matter, and specifically the group known as the Winnipeg Seniors' Society, as alluded to by the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme) in Estimates?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for Seniors): Again, I will repeat that the Urban Affairs Minister has indicated that he has met all the commitments that this Government has made and has met all the commitments that the Members who ran in the last election have made. It may well be that the responsibility to the city was not quite met but the responsibility of this Government has been met. We will continue, Mr. Speaker, to work for the seniors. Contrary to what the Member suggests, we have been working with the seniors. We have been working for the seniors and we will continue to work for the seniors.

Manitoba Hydro Rate Policy Proposal

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): My question is to the Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro (Mr. Neufeld). Mr. Speaker, Manitobans are getting used to ever-increasing costs of living under this Government. Well, Mr. Speaker, the most recent example is a 6 percent increase, the 6 percent increase that Manitobans are going to face, the minimum 6 percent increase that Manitobans are going to face under Manitoba Hydro according to the chairman of Manitoba Hydro.

My question to the Minister is, the Manitoba Hydro Board has received a new rate policy proposal from Manitoba Hydro which includes a reclassification of the rate groups. Part of that paper recommends an increase in the proportion of costs allocated to residential consumers, which would add an additional burden over

and above the 6 percent general increase that Mr. Ransom has referred to and the Minister has confirmed is likely, which would add another 2 percent or 3 percent to that figure. Can the Minister confirm that Manitoba Hydro is in fact looking at a revised rate schedule which would add a burden to residential consumers?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for The Manitoba Hydro Act): Mr. Speaker, for greater clarity, I will come back to the House with information on that question.

Public Utilities Board Minister Intervention

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, I can confirm for the Minister the fact is that Manitoba Hydro is proposing that, and, my follow-up question—it was a test, he failed. Mr. Speaker, my further question is to the Minister. The Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro (Mr. Neufeld) has indicated that the Public Utilities Board will be setting the rate for Manitoba Hydro, that it is the Government's intention to present that to the Public Utilities Board. Given the fact that the Public Utilities Board has on more than one occasion recommended higher rates be charged to consumers, if the Public Utilities Board makes that recommendation, will this Minister give the House the assurance, and the people of Manitoba the assurance, that he will intervene to protect Manitoba consumers?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for The Manitoba Hydro Act): Mr. Speaker, just a few short weeks ago, there were a few Members in the House who wanted to get off of other Members' mailing lists. I would like to get on the mailing list of the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie). He obviously gets information on some areas of my jurisdiction before I do. Specifically, to his question, Mr. Speaker, that is hypothetical and, when the time comes, we will deal with it.

Mr. Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

SPEAKER'S RULINGS

Mr. Speaker: I have a ruling for the House. Yesterday I took under advisement a point of order raised by the Honourable Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) respecting the words, and I quote, "My honourable friend may wish Government to make that suggestion," spoken by the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). I have carefully reviewed Hansard and, in my opinion, the Honourable Minister was simply making an observation. Those words do not, in my view, impute bad or unworthy motives to the Honourable Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock). The Honourable Member, therefore, has no point of order.

NON-POLITICAL STATEMENTS

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might ask leave of the House for a non-political statement.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, December 1 has been chosen by the World Health Organization to be World AIDS Day, and yesterday I had the opportunity to send to each Member of the House a Manitoba Health brochure, pamphlet with a safety pin attached which is the logo that we have worked up in cooperation with the community to attempt to make awareness of AIDS more clear to Manitobans and the safety pin, or course, is to denote the symbolism of "pin your health on safety." In other words—

An Honourable Member: Good, we wanted to know what that pin stood for.

Mr. Orchard: Yes, that is what the pin stands for.

Mr. Speaker, I know that all my honourable friends in this Chamber on both sides of the House, in both political Parties as well as my colleagues in Government, wish to have the greatest level of success in the worldwide battle against the AIDS virus and its infection of the general population at large. In that regard, we each have a role to play as legislators and as citizens of this province in making people informed and factually aware of the disease, its method of transmission, its risk to the general population, how to avoid the incidents or the individual infection with the virus.

I think in that regard, Mr. Speaker—and I thank my honourable friend, the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party (Mr. Carr). That was exactly the kind of succinct information we attempted to put forward in the AIDS pamphlet. I think that will be easily read and easily understood by all Manitobans who have access to the pamphlet, and I am certainly hopeful of the widest possible access to that pamphlet. In addition, we want to make the same simple message and direct message available in our media campaign. I look forward to continued cooperation of all Manitobans who are involved in the battle against AIDS, from the professionals down to the volunteers who are assisting the people of Manitoba in this very, very important battle. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): You read my mind, Mr. Speaker, before I even asked for it. What a Speaker!

I would like to associate myself and my colleagues to the words of the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). There is nothing in this whole world which is more non-partisan than disease. Disease has its own way of selecting its victims. In the case of AIDS, there is a way to control the spread of that disease. It is incumbent upon all of us in this Chamber and throughout the Province of Manitoba to lend our efforts to making the education available to all Manitobans, particularly to young people, who are perhaps more vulnerable than most to the scourges of this disease.

We have already said today that we congratulate the Minister and the Government on the publication of the pamphlet. We think it is presented in such a way and in such language which is simple and straightforward,

but carries an important message to all those who will see it. Those of us on this side of the House would pledge our own efforts to assist in any way we can to ensure that individuals do whatever they can in their own small way, and as legislators, to make sure that Manitobans are best informed. In this case, information is the best protection which is available to all vulnerable Manitobans.

* (1430)

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for Churchill have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, I wish to associate myself with the comments by my colleagues from the Liberal Party and the Government with respect to the importance of this day today, World AIDS Day. AIDS, like any emerging public health threat, provides a significant challenge to not only the medical profession but to all individuals to work together to find ways to deal with the threats of that particular disease as well as, more importantly, find ways to prevent that disease from occurring.

As we stand in this House today, there are hundreds of individuals in Manitoba who are out talking to people, talking to their friends, talking to individuals, hopefully talking to young people on the streets about AIDS. I think part of our commendations today on World AIDS Day must be focused outside of this House and outside of the significance of the day itself, and onto those individuals who, not only today but day by day, undertake that work on our behalf. Hopefully, there are thousands of such individuals across Canada, and tens and hundreds of thousands of individuals throughout the world who are undertaking that work on an ongoing basis because this particular public health threat demands that sort of attention.

It is one of the major health challenges, as the Minister has indicated, that confronts us. It cannot be won by any one individual; it cannot be overcome by any one Government; it cannot be overcome by any one nation. That is why today World AIDS Day is so important in that battle. We associate ourselves with efforts all across the country and all across the globe with respect to what is happening today to combat that disease.

I hope that we are able today to focus not only on what is being done, but perhaps what should be done. I know that the Minister will want to look at his own policies and find ways they can be improved, as every policy can, and build upon the strengths of that policy as they now exist.

I hope that World AIDS Day will lead us to the development of a national policy on AIDS that then will flow into perhaps a worldwide policy on AIDS, because we are not going to be able to deal with this very significant worldwide public health threat on our own.

I am pleased to be able to associate the New Democratic Party caucus with the other caucuses who have acknowledged those challenges and, hopefully, when we have these sorts of days in the future on an

annual basis, we will be able to remark upon the progress we have been able to make by working together and, more importantly, working with those individuals outside of this House to combat this disease.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that Mr. 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 Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer) in the Chair for the Department of the Environment and Workplace Safety and Health, and the Department of Workers Compensation; and the Honourable Member for St. Vital (Mr. Rose) in the Chair for the Department of Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs, and the Department of Finance.

* (1440)

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY—ENVIRONMENT AND WORKPLACE SAFETY AND HEALTH

Mr. Chairman, Harold Gilleshammer: I would like to call the meeting to order to consider the Estimates for the Environment and Workplace Safety and Health. We are on item 1. Administration and Finance.

(c) Planning, Research and Evaluation: (2) Other Expenditures \$62,300—pass; (d) Community Relations: (1) Salaries \$136,200—pass.

1.(d)(2) Other Expenditures \$59,200—the Member for Wolseley.

Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley): Just an explanation from the department on how that money is used.

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of the Environment and Workplace Safety and Health): It is the same thing, transportation, communication, supplies and services, other operating.

Mr. Taylor: I understand the general things it is used for, but can I have an indication of what sort of community relation programs are involved in this area?

Mr. Connery: You said community relations, or communications?

Mr. Taylor: Community relations, what sort of programs are there?

Mr. Connery: Basically printing of brochures and putting out for things that we are doing.

Mr. Taylor: Right, but are there specific programs? For example, those brochures that the Minister refers

to, what is it in aid of? It is specifically, for example, telling people about the new Environment Act, or is there something about the hazardous waste disposal? I thought that came under the corporation itself. What I am trying to find out is just what sort of programs are you telling people about, and in what fashion?

Mr. Connery: Anything to do with the Hazardous Waste Management Corporation would be funded under the Hazardous Waste Management Corporation. Other things to do with The Environment Act or whatever in brochures is the community relations that we have.

Mr. Taylor: Do the staff officials not have, Mr. Chairperson, a list of the programs for this fiscal year they are offering, the sort of message they want to get across? I understand generally how it is being used, but I am trying to find out for what precise purpose.

Mr. Connery: A, for instance, would be the Radon Guide, similar to what we are doing in Workplace Safety with the water. We are going to be printing up some material to send out to people.

An Honourable Member: About the lead?

Mr. Connery: About the lead in water, yes. That is the sort of thing that is involved. There is also a public registry through the library for Clean Environment material and so forth.

Mr. Taylor: Thank you very much. I have no other questions in this area.

Mr. Chairman: (1)(d)(2) Other Expenditures \$59,200—pass.

(e) Financial and Administrative Services: (1) Salaries \$509,800—the Member for The Pas.

Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas): I want to know about the Affirmative Action Program within the department. Have you got quotas or targets established?

Mr. Connery: I think the goal in all affirmative action programs is to at least ensure that people in the affirmative action represent the kind of a balance that they have in society. While I said before, goals are kind of rather—I do not know how to explain it. Once you get to a certain point, you then want to quit the program. That is what I am saying. If you set a goal and then once you achieve the goal, you quit the program is not what I want to do. If there is more than that through affirmative action, that is fine.

Mr. Harapiak: You say you have no goals or targets, but have you been making any progress then in getting women and Native people and disabled and minorities into positions of, some of them, into management and some into other areas?

Mr. Connery: I guess, Mr. Chairman, when we get into the Civil Service and our Civil Service people are here, I would assume by the time the Opposition said was allocated to these departments, that we will be into

Civil Service this afternoon and they have figures that we are prepared to make available to Members so they can see that progress is being made, so we can show them the figures. I think that is the appropriate place where we could do it for all of us. It is not just in Environment that we are concerned about with affirmative action. It is all departments in the Government and Crown agencies and in the private sector.

Mr. Harapiak: There has been a reorganization within the department. Has there been any reduction in Clean Environment staff in this area?

Mr. Connery: For one thing, there has been no reorganization. There has not been so, in that aspect, no.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass?

Mr. Taylor: I have one question and this question I will be asking in Section (e)(2), the question applies to each section. The question is, does this department employ warrants in which—I am not sure they understand the question, but a warrant being a certain amount of money set aside for operational and/or emergency purposes but which is not detailed in a budget and which is at the call of the officials and not the Minister?

Mr. Connery: Nothing.

* (1450)

Mr. Taylor: Nothing like that at all in any of the sections of this department? The question then is, if an emergency comes up and action is taken—we are talking operational activity now—beyond what is normally been budgeted for, how is this handled?

Mr. Connery: It would either be funded internally, depending on how large of an incident it was or go back to Treasury Board.

Mr. Taylor: Could the Minister just explain “internally funded”? Does he mean taking from other accounts?

Mr. Connery: On an interim basis and then go back to Treasury Board.

Mr. Taylor: For a top-up?

Mr. Connery: Yes.

Mr. Taylor: Thank you. That is the only question I have.

Mr. Connery: Before we go on, Mr. Chairman, if the Member wants to know what we are doing in Community Relations and wanted a list of some of the things, those types of brochures, we would be quite pleased to give it to him.

Mr. Taylor: No.

Mr. Chairman: 1.(e)(1) Salaries, \$509,800—pass; (e)(2) Other Expenditures, \$136,400—pass.

Item 2. Environmental Management: Consists of activities intended to prevent environmental health hazards in places where people live, work or engage in their leisure time activities and to detect and eliminate any such environmental health hazards; to prevent safety hazards in public places and ensure the detection and elimination of any such hazards which do arise; to protect and enhance existing uses of the environment and to preserve long-term use and enjoyment options for future generations.

(a) Environmental Control Services: (1) Salaries \$3,000,900—the Member for Wolseley.

Mr. Taylor: If we could get a little explanation, Mr. Chairperson, of the distinction of the roles between the Environmental Control Services and the Environmental Management Services.

Mr. Connery: It is rather difficult. They are so close together that I have had trouble at times.

The control is more—I should introduce Mr. Orcutt, he is the Director for the Control.

It is licensing and so forth on the management side and inspection and so forth. If we were going up to Hudson Bay Mining, for instance, to do a testing, it would come under Control. If we are looking at, for instance, the hearings at Roblin-Russell, it would come under Management. That is the kind of distinction between the two. One is the licensing, and the other is the inspection and enforcement sector in the Environment Control Services.

Mr. Taylor: Just to clarify, the hearings though that are being carried out for the potential potash mine in the Roblin-Russell area, would that not come under the Clean Environment Commission itself?

Mr. Connery: The Clean Environment Commission is under this department. It used to be the Clean Environment Commission could initiate hearings on their own. There was a change when the new Act came under it, took away some of the authority of the Clean Environment Commission where they did things on their own. Now they respond to the Minister, requests from the Minister, to hold hearings, and that is where they get their—then they report back to, it would be the director in certain instances. The director can make a decision on a Class I or Class II proponent, and a Class III of course, it comes back to the Minister for the Minister's decision.

In the Class I and Class II, if there is an objection, they can be appealed to the Minister. So in any Class I or Class II, the Minister's Office does not get involved at all because when you become that person who might have to make some adjudicative decisions later on, you try to keep at arm's length.

Mr. Taylor: So what you are saying is the Clean Environment Commission is not independent to the degree that it was. It functions more as, if you would, a division of the department. Is that a correct definition?

Mr. Connery: It is an advisory body. As you know, there are members on it and they have staff of their

own. I think there are four or five staff, permanent staff. Stan Eagleton is the chairman of it. The Clean Environment Commission makes recommendations to the Minister as to what they think are appropriate when it comes to licences and that sort of thing. They are all public reports.

Mr. Taylor: In that the Minister brought up the Class I and Class II licences, he is the appeal body for those licences? Is that correct?

Mr. Connery: Yes.

Mr. Taylor: Thank you. In the case of Class III, you have the ability to issue the licence without the benefit of the Clean Environment Commission recommendations?

Mr. Connery: No, I would like to explain it. We would ask in a Class I or Class II proposal, the Clean Environment, if it was necessary to have a Clean Environment hearing, to conduct the hearings and make the recommendation to the director, which would be Norm Brandson, who is the Director for Management, and then he would make a decision. If the proponent or objectors then were not satisfied with the recommendation, they can then appeal back to the Minister. But in a Class III, the Clean Environment reports to the Minister and the Minister makes the decision as to what to do.

An Honourable Member: I understand that the hearings are obligatory.

Mr. Connery: Yes, the hearing is obligatory, as it has to be at a Class III event.

Mr. Taylor: You are saying for a Class III, it is obligatory to have the impact assessment conducted and cannot be waived by the Minister?

Mr. Connery: It has to take place.

Mr. Taylor: The last point, just to clarify, Environmental Management Services is licensing, and was there another function in there?

Mr. Connery: Yes, there is licensing and monitoring and setting of standards.

Mr. Taylor: And the setting of standards?

Mr. Connery: Setting standards and monitoring.

Mr. Taylor: Those are the only questions I have for the moment on that.

Mr. Chairman: 2.(a)(1) Salaries \$3,000,900—pass.

2.(a)(2) Other Expenditures \$542,600—the Member for Wolseley.

* (1500)

Mr. Taylor: In both areas, as a common question for Environmental Controls and Environmental

Management, we have a new Environment Act in place. It would appear from time to time to have a need for a very thorough review of environmental standards of various sorts. The Minister and I have talked in the House and we have talked in private about this. The question I have is, given what it appears to me anyway a change in orientation on environment across the society, is there a need for additional resources to be able to handle environmental responsibilities on the part of this Government?

Mr. Connery: Well, we are handling it. I think every department in Government would love to have more resources and do more things, but we are handling it.

Mr. Taylor: I would suggest there is one heck of a lot of juggling going on. I am not convinced how well it is being handled. But the issue is that we do not see any significant increases in any four of these budget lines, Environmental Control, Salaries and Other Expenditures, and ditto for Environmental Management. These are very tiny increases that would appear to be based on inflationary increases only. The question I still have is, is the capability there in the department because, other than allowing for inflation, there is a virtual freeze? One looks in gross terms at these numbers.

Mr. Connery: Well, there is always room for increased numbers and to be able to do more things, there is always that potential there. As we see in Question Period, other departments being asked, no question, every department could use more resources and do a lot more things that we would like to do. But of course, as you know, there is a constraint on money. We just do not have an open bank account. Hopefully, we will get the economy going where a lot more money is coming in. We will have more money for all of our departments.

Mr. Taylor: I recognize the want to do more things and the desire to do more things, but this is a department that has to do some things if there is going to be adequate protection for people, if there is going to be sufficient protection for the environment in general. The question in my mind is, did the Minister in the Budget formulation process put it forward either to an internal committee of Cabinet or on the Cabinet table itself that he did need more resources for this department, or did he just accept the fact of this Government that there was to be no growth in most of this department?

Mr. Connery: Yes, we are proponents for the environment, but internal discussions that we have with the Treasury Board and the Cabinet and so forth are not discussions that we take outside of those rooms.

Mr. Taylor: Thank you. I do not wish any details of it and I understand what the Minister is saying about Cabinet confidentiality. I will put it in more simple terms. Did he request more resources for this department or not?

Mr. Connery: That is still internal information that we are not going to discuss at this point. Every department

would like more, I am sure, additional staff. The Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) would love to build more hospitals, a lot of things we could do, but we have to operate within bounds of the money that we have available and that is prioritizing and setting priorities.

Mr. Taylor: The reason for the questioning is that it is more critical for some departments than others and the reason for the questions is, just where was the priority setting by this Government in various areas? It would appear that the environment certainly did not take a very high priority in the real scheme of things, notwithstanding many of the beautiful words and phrases that have caught on just recently.

Mr. Connery: Well, I take exception to the misinformation that this Government is not concerned environmentally. As you have seen with the Round Table that we have, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) being the head of the Round Table, the only province where the Premier has taken upon himself to be the chairman of the Round Table.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Chairman: Order, please. We will be pleased to give all Members a chance to ask questions.

Mr. Connery: Well, once again the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) likes to yip yap from his chair and, if he has a sensible question, I wish he would put it.

Mr. Taylor: It has been suggested by the Deputy Minister to the Environmental Council that there is underfunding of this department, and his sentiments and mine concur in that. I know it is a case of there are difficult times and always shortages of money but, when one hears that at the Environmental Council, when one feels that, when one sees the ability to respond notwithstanding the wishes and the good intentions, I think it is a fair question to ask the Minister, is this department adequately funded? It would appear not to be so.

Mr. Connery: I think the Honourable Member should know that it is just like your own home. You have so much money to function in and there are always many more things you would like to do, but you do the best you can with what you have. I think we have excellent staff and I think they are doing a good job for the Government and for the people of Manitoba. I am very pleased with the environmental staff.

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Chairperson, I am not sure if it is under this line, but it is right in this general area. I am looking for a—if the Minister can provide our committee with a status of the enforcement orders for northern mines, specifically as it relates to air pollution, and how many are under appeal, how many are complete, and are any being recommended for deferral?

Mr. Connery: That information is not here today to have the exact numbers of anything specific.

Mr. Taylor: Yes, amongst others is the status of the order for HBM&S for acid rain pollution, and what is the status of the enforcement order on that one?

Mr. Connery: There is by regulation, and they are in compliance for the regulation now. The new regulation states that by 1994 they have got to reduce it by close to 30 percent. The provincial quota is 550 kilotonnes per year of SO₂ emissions. HBM&S is within those. There has been a concern raised to me by the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie). When it is an issue of health, we unmothballed one of our monitors and we have ordered HBM&S to install two more, as we mentioned the other day, so that we can monitor them just to ensure that it is safe.

Now that smelter will not be able to come up to the levels required in 1994 without rebuilding it, and we are looking at probably \$140 million to rebuild that smelter. Without that smelter, Flin Flon is non-existent.

Mr. Taylor: Right, and just to clarify, Mr. Chairperson, the Minister says that HBM&S is in compliance on SO₂ emissions now?

Mr. Connery: They are in compliance at this time.

Mr. Taylor: Okay, thank you. Are you able to give that information for any other of the northern mine smelter operations?

Mr. Connery: I say they are all okay. This is not 1994, as you know. There are going to be some reductions for 1994 under the regulations, as they are in existence for today.

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Chairperson, have there been any waivers given, any deferrals so that compliance can be said to be reached, and has there been any communications from the Minister of Energy (Mr. Neufeld) in that regard on behalf of any of these mines?

Mr. Connery: Our departments are in consultation over mines at all times, and whether, as you know, Hudson Bay Mining is going to court over being in violation of one of their regulations.

Mr. Taylor: My specific question is, has the Minister of Environment received any form of communication from the Minister of Energy and Mines to deviate from the standards in any fashion for any of the northern mine smelter operations?

Mr. Connery: No.

Mr. Harapiak: I just wanted to ask a question on the water quality in the area of Pelican Rapids and the Shoal River. I was in that community recently and he said that there is an awful lot of waste comes down that river in the spring of the year. Is there any monitoring done on that river? And who is responsible for monitoring it?

Mr. Connery: That is one the staff say they will have to check on and we can get back to you on it. I am not familiar with it.

Mr. Harapiak: In the community of Pelican Rapids, it is the Shoal River.

Mr. Chairman: Item 2.(a)(2)—pass.

(b) Environmental Management Services: (1) Salaries, \$2,614,800—the Member for Wolseley.

Mr. Taylor: To what degree are officials in this unit investigating the state of the art as far as standard settings in other jurisdictions?

Mr. Connery: As far as emission levels and that sort of thing in other jurisdictions?

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Chairperson, emission levels, lead levels and air lead levels and water lead levels, and blood.

Mr. Connery: That, Mr. Chairman, is an ongoing basis where our department is going to conventions and programs and dealing with the federal Government. But the federal Government, all through CCREM of course, is an excellent one and many subcommittees of CCREM that are dealing with a lot of waste and so forth. That is an ongoing process.

Mr. Taylor: In speaking to the committees of CCREM, is this Minister satisfied with the whole thing in regard to the CCREM committees, as it relates to specifically standards review standard setting.

Mr. Connery: It has been a good effective process and there are other—you know, CCREM can establish different committees. These are not necessarily the only committees that can be established if there is a concern. There was a concern raised on radon, and Manitoba took the lead to take an information package back after the semi-annual meeting to talk about and bring forth recommendations for standards for radon, for the construction of new homes and for the repair or radon proofing of homes that have already been built.

* (1510)

Mr. Taylor: Has the Minister had his staff in any way review the practices of various municipal jurisdictions, not just the City of Winnipeg, as to the practice of dumping of street and road snow removal operations, the dumping of said snow on the banks of rivers and on the rivers themselves, the frozen river surfaces?

Mr. Connery: The Member would know if he would have the document that the other Party got, that was one of our departmental ones, would know that it is one of our concerns to deal with the City of Winnipeg. Maybe I should give you a copy of mine. Why not have everybody know what we are discussing with the City of Winnipeg? But you must already know, being a city councillor. You know the issues that are there. It was just a list of the various issues, environmental issues, that we want to discuss with the city. Putting snow on to the rivers is a concern with the city, but we have not come up with a final—we will deal with that first and then provincially we can move. But I do not think it is that widespread in the rural areas that I am aware of.

Mr. Taylor: I understand that the Minister is saying his department is reviewing it right now.

Mr. Connery: Well, we are in the process. We want to meet with the city and, as you know, the Environment Act gives us a lot of leeway. But I do not think the snow removal really—jurisdictionally, we have the authority, do we? It is a grey area but, even if it is grey, that does not mean that we will not address it and work with the city and with other jurisdictions to do the right thing.

Mr. Taylor: The concern has always been one of bank stability on my part but, during the time that I was on the Rivers and Streams Committee, the snow removal dumping sites were taken off any of the fragile banks. Now it is more a case of pollution that we are talking about. The snow dumping is not being done on unstable banks. That is a change in practice and a step in the right direction.

The problem is the committee trying to deal with it has not got the authority to deal with the pollution aspect and that is why I am looking to the leadership of his department, and it is specifically the biggest one being salt, but other chemicals as well.

Mr. Connery: I think the Member would recognize though that if huge amounts of snow were piled in vacant fields or whatever, with a quick spring thaw, we would see a lot of that water moving and eventually get back into someplace else. If it is salt, it would either seep into the soil in the immediate area, which would then render it probably useless, or it would eventually run into the rivers through the sewer lines, or just through ditches and so forth.

Mr. Taylor: I would ask the Minister that before he deals directly with the city, if he has his staff review standards that are being employed in other jurisdictions and, for example, one only I can give you, is Ontario which has a requirement of setback. There is no dumping on the rivers. You have to be back so many metres so that when the thaw comes there is a percolation effect through the soil and the water effluent reaching the river is not in the same condition as the melt water.

Mr. Connery: At that point, and I think the Member would agree, that when you designate certain pieces of land for snow dumping, and because of the corrosiveness, the salt in the snow, you are saying that we are prepared to render a piece of land fruitless for production after. That maybe is better than putting it on riverbanks. I mean, if you are going to have—either that or we will ban salt on the roads and I do not know if that is—we do so many good things environmentally, but you have to weigh the total consequences of it and sometimes you can do things that really in the long run are more detrimental.

Mr. Chairman: 2.(b)(1)—pass; item 2.(b)(2) Other Expenditures \$729,200—pass.

2.(b)(3) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations \$133,600—the Member for Wolseley.

Mr. Taylor: Oh yes, I see where you are here. All right.

Mr. Chairman: Does the Member have a question?

Mr. Taylor: The question is, recoverable from whom? Is it from other departments or is this from other Governments?

Mr. Connery: It is other departments of the Government.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass?

Mr. Connery: Just an explanation, like the Ward Lab, for instance, is under Environment. We have fees, and we do charge other departments.

Mr. Chairman: 2.(b)(3)—pass.

2.(c) Dangerous Goods Inspectorate Training \$183,000—the Member for Wolseley.

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Chairman, I assume these are the charges for people to do the training and, if so, how are those people hired to do that training?

Mr. Connery: This is a three-year Government federal program that they are paying the provinces to do the training for the dangerous goods part of the Act. The Fire College is doing the bulk of the training. People have gone out, we have discussed it before about the RCMP, the numbers of RCMP that have been trained. He also made the suggestion that we in looking for these culprits who are dumping hazardous goods that we ask other jurisdictions such as Highways to keep an eye out for it.

Mr. Taylor: The question is, to what extent are consultants used within that \$183,000 and how are they hired?

Mr. Connery: None.

Mr. Taylor: Thank you. Pass. Oh, pardon me, I have one last question.

On the end of the very last question on Tuesday was related to training about the handling of dangerous goods and I have here Hansard from Tuesday. The question goes as follows, that is: "Is the Minister aware that not all federal staff are taking the training for the handling of dangerous materials such as PCBs, and the example I can show him is the recent air handling of PCBs from Winnipeg International Airport to Georgia, in which the military staff and the military NCOs could not be guaranteed by National Defence that they had had any training in dangerous goods whatsoever." Is he satisfied with that?

Mr. Connery: I am satisfied that the process was done carefully and appropriately. It was done under the previous administration. They were notified. It was handled in the proper process but the military—we do not have jurisdiction over the military as far as the flying. I am not in favour of PCBs flying. I said that in the House. We asked the previous Minister, federally, Mr. McMillan, who is now defeated, to ask with his counterparts to put a moratorium on both water and air movement of PCBs.

Mr. Taylor: That was most unfortunate . . . but, as I said in the House, I suggested that was Devine justice striking, and that is Devine as in the Premier Devine of Saskatchewan.

The point is, does the Minister concur with the fact that federal staff do not have training and that the military is fully exempted? I am asking him to show leadership by requesting the new federal Environment Minister, whoever he might be, to insist that military staff, coast guard staff, etc., have training in the handling of dangerous goods before they handle them.

Mr. Connery: The training of federal people comes under the federal jurisdiction. The only people who we have trained are the RCMP who come under federal jurisdiction. It is an arrangement. The RCMP, as you know, are put here. I do not know all the arrangements, but these are the only federal people who we are being responsible for training. There are other federal people who are involved in the environment. They are trained by their own level of Government.

Mr. Chairman: 2.(c)—pass.

2.(d) Manitoba Hazardous Waste Management Corporation \$2,200,000—the Member for Wolseley.

Mr. Taylor: The question to the Minister is, we are going from a zero appropriation or special appropriation, I suppose, that filled in the blank to get the corporation going to an appropriation of \$2.2 million. How does the appropriation expect to spend \$2.2 million this year when it is a rather small operation and we will not be seeing any concrete put into the ground for the new hazardous waste treatment plant that has been talked about?

* (1520)

Mr. Connery: There was about \$300,000 last year. The money was achieved through financing, through the Department of Finance. This is the first year that they have come through the Estimates process for their funding.

The Hazardous Waste Management Corporation undertakes quite a few different things. There was some transfer of people from the Environment Department over to the Hazardous Waste Management Corporation. I think the Member is aware of that. They have the waste exchange. They work with people to indicate where they can take the product to, say, Sarnia for disposal, where it can be held. They did a lot of work with the PCBs in coordinating and picking up and consolidating little amounts into one area. Of course, with the open houses and the site selection, this is quite a process.

We can assure you we are not going to be wasting money. If it is not all used this year, we will use it next year. This is not a cheap process to locate a site, the publicizing of it to ensure that all people are made aware of the location and timing of these open houses because it is something that people who are not aware or not knowledgeable about worrying. When people find out what the site is all about, then the concern dissipates very quickly.

We anticipate the hazardous waste site employing some 20 to 30 full-time people. These are very good jobs. I think small communities would be very happy to get them. In fact, there are some communities that are indicating that they are having an interest in it. Other communities say, look, we do not want it.

Mr. Taylor: A last question in this area, before concurrence, I would ask that the Minister provide a more detailed breakout of the \$2.2 million for this Crown corporation operation so that further questions could be asked. I would also take him up on his earlier generous offer of being in receipt of his status report on environmental items with the city. I will take it right from his hand. I will not just find the thing somewhere else—

Mr. Connery: I appreciate the Honourable Member for suggesting that he would not just pick it up if I had laid it down and went for a cup of coffee and when I came back and it was gone. I appreciate that offer. Maybe I should give him a copy of it, it would only be fair.

We can give you a breakdown of the \$2.2 million. I did have one, had asked for it some time ago from the Hazardous Waste Management Corporation for my own edification. I was looking for it the other day and I could not find it. So we will redo that document and we will give you a breakdown of Salaries and - (Interjection)- yes, maybe I left it somewhere and maybe the NDP can show it to you. We will provide that for you, that is no problem, I would be pleased to. There is a whole list of activities that we can, for the Member. We can photocopy this and give you a copy of the various activities they do. It is your corporation as well as mine, and you should have that ability.

Mr. Harapiak: I just want to make a comment. There were many questions we need to ask in the area of dangerous goods inspection also in Manitoba, hazardous waste but, in the interest of saving time, I will pass on them. I just want to make a comment.

Public meetings were held in connection with the Manitoba Hazardous Waste Management Corporation, and I was pleased with the cooperation of the staff there. They are much more cooperative and much less sarcastic than the Minister responsible for the department. I think if the Minister maybe consulted with his staff much more, maybe things would roll along more smoothly than they have been but I would pass that.

Mr. Chairman: 2.(d)—pass.

Resolution No. 59: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$9,136,900 for Environment and Workplace Safety and Health, Environmental Management, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March 1989—pass.

3. Clean Environment Commission: Through public meetings and hearings, makes recommendations for Environmental Licences to limit and control adverse environmental impacts from developments; carries out investigations of environmental matters of interest and

importance throughout the province to provide policy and legislative advice to the Minister; and assists in the resolution of environmental conflicts through the provision of environmental mediation services. (a) Salaries \$225,900—the Member for The Pas.

Mr. Harapiak: I just wanted to make one comment. I think it is unfortunate that one of the Clean Environment commissioners was let go after she contacted her Member of the Legislature to let him know some of the interference from the Minister, and I think that the way that she was informed of not even getting a letter till after it was in the paper is not a proper way of doing it. I would hope that the Minister would expand on the Commission and have someone from northern Manitoba, because as it stands now there is nobody on the commission from northern Manitoba so, when he is looking at making his next change or making some changes on it or expansion, I would hope that you would consider somebody from northern Manitoba.

Mr. Connerly: I appreciate the comments of the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak). We did not let anybody go. As you know, the terms were expired and people are replaced or renew their appointments.

I guess we thought Swan River would be considered North. There is one person from Swan River on the Commission but the Member does not think that is really to be considered a northern representative. We are not opposed to keeping an eye if somebody decides to quit or terms run out to look for somebody from Churchill, Thompson, Flin Flon or The Pas. I guess those are the areas you consider to be northern and Swan River is not considered to be North. I am not saying that in a negative way, I am not trying to be smart. It is just I am looking for some advice.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass? The Member for Thompson.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I would like to add to the comments of the Member for The Pas. Having been contacted by one of the commissioners who was let go, by Mamie Hendren, I think the way she was treated was very shoddy. I think what she did was the appropriate thing given the circumstances and I, quite frankly, am very disappointed that this Government in announcing its new board, it publicly stated that it wanted its own stamp on the board. I just hope by that it does not mean it wants a rubber stamp, because I think the way in which Mamie Hendren was treated, as I say, was very shoddy and I quite frankly do not feel it did the Minister and this Government any good in terms of trying to give any assurances to people who are concerned about the environment that it does have any genuine concern, because I think we need more Mamie Hendrens on the Clean Environment Commission.

She was not afraid to state her mind, state her concerns, and that is what we need on that commission. I think one of the black marks on this Government's record this Session, in terms of the environment, is going to be the way it has turned the Clean Environment Commission, as I said, into a Government stamp, but I think a rubber stamp.

Mr. Connerly: I cannot disagree with the Member for Thompson. We should have made a phone call the same day when we released the news release. We mailed letters the same day that the news release was out but, as you are well aware, it would probably take two or three days to get there, so we should have made a phone call at the same time the news releases were out. I accept the criticism.

Mr. Ashton: I was saying I am not just concerned about the way she was informed. I think she should have been left on the commission. There was plenty of opportunity to put new people on the board. There were openings on the board. I think you lost someone that had a very genuine concern for the environment and someone who was not afraid to speak her mind. I feel that is a loss.

I know her personally and a lot of people in Thompson do. She is very highly respected, and I think the Government would have done well to leave her on the board even though she may have been outspoken in her criticism in terms of the Minister's action on that one particular occasion. I think that is an asset. I think she is not afraid to stand up to anyone, including people who would be making presentations before the commission. That was my reference as well, not just the way she was informed but the fact that she was let go from the Clean Environment Commission.

* (1530)

Mr. Chairman: 3.(a)—pass.

3.(b) Other Expenditures \$129,800—the Member for Wolseley.

Mr. Taylor: Just one question to the Minister, Mr. Chairperson, given the new Act in place now, can the Minister provide a rationale, and I do not ask him to provide it now, but to provide a written rationale before concurrence as to how he expects the Clean Environment Commission to operate, given the new Act in place and its major increase and its workload? So what I am looking for is a rationale of this small budget increase and how he expects it to operate, given its rather more significant workload.

Mr. Connerly: This is one department where it is pretty difficult to accurately budget for the expenditures because we do not know all of the various proponents that are going to come forth. If there is need for additional monies, we would have to go back to Treasury Board. That would be the process, just to go back to Treasury Board. We are not going to not have inquiries because we have run out of money. The inquiries will be done as necessary under the Act, so we would have to go back to Treasury Board for additional money.

Mr. Taylor: What assurance does the Minister have that he will get the money from Treasury Board if they are that short of money?

Mr. Connerly: It is a statutory requirement. There would be no concern. I am not afraid that we would not get our money.

Mr. Chairman: 3.(b)—pass.

Resolution No. 60: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$355,700 for Environment and Workplace Safety and Health, Clean Environment Commission, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1989—pass.

4. Manitoba Environmental Council: Provides advice to the Minister with regard to environmental problems and concerns. (a) Salaries \$53,800—the Member for Wolseley.

Mr. Taylor: Here we are again with an organization that has a flat situation as far as budget, has a very tiny increase for salaries. How can the Minister, in good conscience, leave the Environmental Council in this sort of a status?

Mr. Connery: It is not a large amount of money. I have to concur with the Member. I think our staff do other things. There are staff who are available for consultation with them. In fact, I am meeting with the Manitoba Environmental Council this Saturday. It is their annual meeting. We have fully replaced the—I should not say replaced, pardon me. We have reappointed, and the appointments came from the Environment Council themselves. I am not satisfied that we have affirmative action the way it should be on that council but, since it represents groups and groups make that decision, they do it, that is their representative. I asked Mr. Rollo to ensure that we had a good mix of all walks of life, whether it be visible minorities, Native people, women.

There are not enough women on the board to satisfy me. They have to be concerned about the environment. Naturally they should be on there, but there are a lot of women who are very concerned about the environment. The Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles), I think, was on that commission, quite concerned about the environment, and I appreciate that.

Mr. Taylor: Has the Minister up to this date finally concurred in the recommendations of the appointees to the environmental council beyond the small numbers that were recently of Mr. Rollo, his exec and a few others?

Mr. Connery: If you would have about three days ago been in the House and heard me muttering, I had all these letters to sign to go out. They have all been contacted by phone because the letters were not going to get there in time for Saturday.

Mr. Taylor: What are the numbers?

Mr. Connery: I think it is in the area of 50 or 60, somewhere like that, but we can give you the list.

Mr. Taylor: Nowhere near the 100 it used to be.

Mr. Connery: These were the numbers they gave us. I think 100 is an awful large body to try to be effective but there are committees and different groups who can work.

Mr. Taylor: The Minister did not recommend a lower number to the council?

Mr. Connery: Yes, we think that the numbers were high, but we did not come down with severe restrictions on them. We have talked to them and I think we have a good rapport. As you know, the last meeting of the Environment Council, I was not able to make because I was in Ottawa on an emergency meeting. My Deputy came home early. He was able to leave. I was chairman of the meeting. He was able to leave and addressed the Manitoba Environment Council. I will be speaking to them this Saturday and we will be spending three or four hours with them.

Mr. Harapiak: Just on this Environment Council, have there been any recommendations to the Minister to take a different direction in the whole area of Rafferty-Alameda?

Mr. Connery: They have not to me that I am—I cannot remember. I can almost say I am positive, but I hate using the word "positive" because the amount of mail that goes through you can always miss something and not be aware. If the Member wants, we can check our files.

Mr. Harapiak: I would appreciate getting that information because the Wildlife Federation would be part of that council and the Canadian Wildlife Federation came out in opposition to it. So I would think there would be consistency in the Wildlife's opposition to that proposal.

Mr. Connery: I do know that the Member for Niakwa (Mr. Herold Driedger) was on the council and they did bring it to the previous Government's attention that there were PCBs in boxcars that were not acted on.

Mr. Chairman: 4.(a)—pass; 4.(b) Other Expenditures \$13,800—pass.

Resolution No. 61: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$67,600 for Environment and Workplace Safety and Health, Manitoba Environmental Council, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1989—pass.

5. Workplace and Worker Services: Consists of activities to prevent safety and health hazards in all places where people work and to detect and eliminate these safety and health hazards. To provide assistance and services to claimants respecting workers compensation claims. (a) Workplace Safety and Health: (1) Salaries, \$2,752,700—the Member for Radisson.

Mr. Allan Patterson (Radisson): Just give us a moment here please, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Certainly.

Mr. Patterson: The responsibilities of this department are strict.

Mr. Connery: While the Member is getting prepared, I would like to introduce my staff that is here. We have Jerry Spiegel from Planning and Research; John McNevin from the Worker Advisor; Jane Riewe from Workplace; Jeff Bawden; Ron Glassford, who is the

Director; and Wolf Boehm, who is our finance person for the whole Environment and Workplace Safety.

Mr. Patterson: I was given to understand we are going to go to the Workers Compensation after the Environment. But it is immaterial to me if—where are we here?

Mr. Chairman: On Item 5. Workplace and Workers Services (a) Workplace Safety and Health: (1) Salaries \$2,752,700—shall the item pass?

Mr. Patterson: I would just like to ask, Mr. Chairman, this item at the bottom of the list for "plus general salary increase of \$124,000.00.2 I would assume that the general salary increases are in the salaries and would have been up with the totals.

Mr. Connelly: Yes, the big increase here is because the first was put in after—this is the MGEA contract. Okay, this is the new contract.

Mr. Patterson: I note the reduction in staff years here for professional and technical of roughly five staff years. I assume that professional/technical would include the various inspectors in the whole area of Workplace Safety and Health. It has been more or less my understanding of what one heard generally speaking over the past years since this Act came in that one of the problems is a lack of sufficient inspectors to really keep on top of things and see that some of the things that have happened do not get repeated. I just feel some concern about staff reductions in this particular area. Why, for instance, would they have a reduction in construction inspection and the training activity?

* (1540)

Mr. Connelly: We felt the department at that point could provide the service that was required.

Mr. Patterson: I must apologize. I do not have the specific piece of paper in front of me that I had as a reminder but, at any rate, one of my colleagues brought up the question of inspectors for the automotive body shops, particularly in the spray painting and so on. I forget the particular chemical that is in these fast drying paints now that is quite toxic—isocyanates. I think the regulations for controlling these are satisfactory, but I understand there are many small, shall I say, hole-in-the-wall body shops out in the country that, you might say, are getting away with not having full protection for their workers.

Mr. Connelly: There has been no reduction in that area.

Mr. Patterson: Where is the reduction specifically?

Mr. Connelly: Two in the construction area. There was one related to a reduction of support in the Government-sponsored sector activities. There was one to the deletion of a specialized client services to employer and worker groups. It was four years and 30 weeks.

Mr. Patterson: What do we mean by the Government-sponsored sector activity and the training? Is the reduction related specifically to inspectors?

Mr. Connelly: It was related, in one of them, through the health institution sector. There was a deletion there.

Mr. Patterson: But not an inspector? Okay, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass?

Mr. Harapiak: Mr. Chairman, it is surprising to me that there would be a reduction in the number of staff when at the time there are more responsibilities being taken on, with the WHMIS regulations coming on and new health regulations. I had been told that there are people who are seeking—before I get into that, the Act, it says there should be a medical doctor on staff. The last time I raised that question, the doctor had not been hired yet. Has that position been filled at this time?

Mr. Connelly: No, that is a valid criticism. We have not been able to fill that position, it is not an easy one to fill. We are attempting to fill that position.

Mr. Harapiak: You do intend to fill that position?

Mr. Connelly: Yes.

Mr. Harapiak: There are schools who are calling for safety and health symposiums which were put on for the last two years. This year, I am told that the courses that are being put on by the Health and Safety Department have been reduced in quality from a two-day course to a one-day course. The department is not able to fill all of the requests that are coming forward. They are saying that it is not their responsibility. It is a responsibility of the Manitoba Teachers' Society or the Manitoba Association of School Trustees. Can the Minister tell me if it is because of the shortage of staff that they are not able to fulfill these requests that are coming forward?

Mr. Connelly: To date, there has been—the staff have given me the numbers—39 have been held and there were about 1,300 participants. Because of the interest, we are expanding and carrying it out more. We feel that we will cover the needs of the training.

Mr. Harapiak: So they are able to fill it? I have had calls from school divisions who say they cannot have their request filled. The department feels it is not their responsibility, that is, putting on courses that were put on in previous years. Has there been a change in policy for filling safety and health symposiums?

Mr. Connelly: No. Those figures I quoted were WHMIS training courses. There will be health hazard courses starting in January.

Mr. Harapiak: There is one issue that has been raised today and given profile because of it being declared World AIDS Day. Has this subject led to a lot of difficulty in the workplace? How is the department dealing with requests for injuries that may become—by needles or some other form of injuries in the workplace?

Mr. Connelly: Our department is going to be co-sponsoring a program with the Department of Health starting in February.

Mr. Harapiak: On the WHIMIS regulations, they came into effect on October 31. Has it been necessary—I am not sure what the proper term is—to lay any charges or lay any orders against any organizations because of the regulations?

Mr. Connery: I was carrying that in my briefing notes for about four months, waiting for a question like that to happen. Actually, the regulations do not really come into real play for 90 days after October 31. So really it is about the end of January before they really come into effect.

Mr. Harapiak: But if there is any new material brought in between now, that is in effect now, from my interpretation of the Act, that is for existing workplaces when they come in that they have 90 days to make whatever changes are made. But if there are some new materials coming into place that Act is in effect at this time.

Mr. Connery: There have been no charges laid and I think the Member full well knows that WHIMIS is a very, very complicated and complex legislation along with the health hazard regulation. It is going to take a little bit of time to make sure that people are informed. We do not want to come in and people are not even fully conscious of all the things they have to do. So we would rather work with businesses to ensure compliance. At some point in time, if companies are trying to get around it, then of course we will, and the regulations are there, but it is more working towards compliance rather than walking in and starting to lay charges right off the bat.

Mr. Harapiak: Does the Minister feel that his cutting off the Labour Education funding is restricting the ability to educate the public on the whole WHIMIS regulations?

Mr. Connery: It has been brought to my attention that there has been no reduction in the delivery of their programs. As far as I am aware of, there has not been.

Mr. Harapiak: I have been told that there have been reductions because all they have on is one staffperson. So there has been a reduction and there are people out there who are crying for information on the WHIMIS regulation, and there are people especially involved in the agricultural field asking for seminars to be put on, and there is nobody available to put seminars on in rural Manitoba.

* (1550)

Mr. Connery: There are a lot of private groups that are able to put on these seminars. The Manitoba Safety Council is getting into that sort of thing beyond just the driver training. They are getting into safety in the workplace, but theirs is a fee for service and of course they do have a charge. Naturally, people would like to get all of it for nothing but I do not think the Governments have to do everything for all people. If there is a need of that, it can be purchased. So there is no need for people not to get the training.

Mr. Harapiak: There seems to me some confusion in the health field as to how the blood samples are handled

that may contain hazardous material, blood samples from hospitals to labs. How are they supposed to be labeled?

Mr. Connery: I do not have that detail here. We can get that for him. That is getting right into the fine detail of how to label it. That information can be supplied.

Mr. Harapiak: There is confusion with the people who are involved in that field. I was told it would be good if the Minister would be able to come up with a definitive statement of how this should be labeled because there is confusion in the health care field on how that is supposed to be labeled.

Mr. Connery: The health care sector committee is discussing it tomorrow. They are aware of the concerns and are working with it.

Mr. Harapiak: Could I meet with the Minister and be briefed on it after it, because there have been quite a few calls on this particular item?

Mr. Connery: We can supply the information to the Member, that is no problem.

Mr. Patterson: Just trying to refresh my memory, one other item, going back to inspectors, we had a letter, and unfortunately anonymous or unsigned, so I do not like to give too much credence to this type of thing. On the other hand, I have mentioned this specific incident and location. Just last month, in one of the rural towns, this individual had called in to the department to inform them of a construction site of some roughly half a dozen or so violations of the Act, and was told they would have the inspector for that particular area be right out. Roughly a week to 10 days later, the inspector still had not been out. I will give the letter to the Minister today or tomorrow. That is what rouses concerns about the workload of the inspectors and are there sufficient numbers of them, particularly to cover all the rural areas.

Mr. Connery: We set priorities as to what areas but, if it is a week or 10 days, it seems to me that is far too long. Who knows, did it get lost? That is always possible. If you supply us with the information, we will follow up on it to find out why it took that long. That is not an acceptable period of time.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Chairperson, to the Minister, I am not too sure if this might be the exact location that I should be asking this question. It is regarding Workers Compensation and applications put forward if that is okay?

Mr. Connery: Sure.

Mr. Lamoureux: The question that I have is, I have had a great number of constituents in my own area who have made application for workers compensation. In many cases, because of their unspecific injury, they had been put on a waiting list or been continuously

put off. I have one individual who is documented every time he has called Workers Compensation and has been told virtually every time that they are seeking further information. I have six or seven such constituents, and it raises a lot of concern with myself and the process.

Maybe the Minister can explain to me how it is people who are in need, because after all they have commitments that they have to make, mortgage payments or whatever it might be—they were unfortunate enough that they have to go on workers compensation. I am sure that they would like to go back to work but they are continuously put off, at least in their view that they are being put off.

Mr. Connery: I get many complaints from people on workers compensation, and we are really not into Workers Compensation at this point. We will be getting into it when we have staff coming forward right after we finish this which, hopefully, we will get done today. We have a process and we have people over there who will help you. Have you talked with Bryan Weibe from the Workers Compensation?

Mr. Lamoureux: Yes, I have been in contact with Bryan Weibe. Actually, the last couple of times he himself has not even given me a call. I guess this is where I really have some sympathy for the claimants because I am getting the same reasons that is given to the claimants. I understand that there might be a backlog of applications. I do not have that great an understanding of exactly how it works but I have been lead to the impression on several occasions that it looks as if some type of decision was going to be determined and, once that time period has lapsed that I was assured of, nothing has happened. I would do a follow-up call. Of late, I have not had return calls. Maybe so that we can continue going on to other sections, if the Minister is not initially aware of it, if I should maybe submit the names to him and he would look into these six or seven cases on these constituents' behalf.

Mr. Connery: I would be pleased to but I personally never get involved with a case for anything. As you know, the Compensation is a hands-off department or it is supposed to be. We deal with regulation and legislation and my really only role is to appoint members to the commission. There has been a large backlog and that is why we appointed three more appeals persons to the commission to get that backlog cleaned up. Hopefully, by the end of March, we will be in a current position.

As you know, we have hired a new CEO over at Workers Compensation. There were many department heads who were gone. We did not have anybody in Finance, Rehab. We just really had a rudderless ship over there which just added to chaos. The morale of the people was bad. I think we have in Graham Lane an excellent CEO. He is starting to rebuild it. The size of the Workers Compensation Board is quite a large one so you just do not turn it around overnight. It is going to take us probably another year before we really get it humming. I am very optimistic that with the new legislation that we are bringing in which makes it more specific, getting people into rehab as you know. I was

very adamant last year in Opposition that 18 months was too long for somebody to wait to get into rehab and the commission agrees with that. So we have been working very closely with the commission, with the implementation team to bring Workers Compensation back into the 1990s and be an effective organization.

Now we will always have some complaints from people who feel they were not adjudicated with properly, so someone who is turned down naturally is not happy. But we have the process and if we have the process in place and if the adjudication is done properly, those workers injured in the workplace will be dealt with in a fair and, hopefully, quick fashion.

Mr. Lamoureux: In terms of process, I have been led to believe that there has been a change in the way a claim is being processed, that no longer are people phoning in. They are phoning in to someone who handles all telephone calls and they are not going to be talking to the councillors or the ones that are actually looking after their case. Is that true?

Mr. Connery: Quickly Kevin, could you, sorry—the Member for Inkster. I was just looking at this note.

Mr. Lamoureux: A claimant who is submitting for Workers Compensation, if he phones in, is he able to talk to his or her councillor?

Mr. Connery: That is a detail I would have to get from our staff. The process—now I do not know, the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) wanted to raise a couple of questions in Workplace Safety. He has gone to another committee that he wanted to. Are there more questions on Workplace Safety? I do not want to close it off so that I want to leave it open for the Member for Thompson to ask his questions on Workplace Safety, but I do have staff here from Workers Compensation. When we get into that kind of detail, then we are able to give it.

Mr. Harapiak: The Member for Thompson had questions on Workers Compensation. He is a critic for it and he wanted to make sure that he was called back when—

* (1600)

Mr. Connery: Then, if that is the case, we can try to finish off the Workplace Safety. Is it the intention that we finish Workers Compensation today? Is that the idea? What about Civil Service?

Mr. Harapiak: I have nothing further to say at this time.

Mr. Chairman: 5.(a)(1) Salaries—pass; 5.(a)(2) Other Expenditures \$715,700—pass.

5.(b) Worker Adviser Office: (1) Salaries \$357,000—the Member for The Pas.

Mr. Harapiak: Is there a full complement of worker advisors at this time?

Mr. Connery: Yes.

Mr. Harapiak: Who is handling northern Manitoba?

Mr. Connery: It is in the process of being filled. I guess they have been going up from Winnipeg and we are in the process of doing that.

Mr. Chairman: 5.(b)(1)—pass; 5.(b)(2) Other Expenditures \$51,500—pass.

Resolution 62: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$3,876,900 for Environment and Workplace Safety and Health, Workplace and Worker Services, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1989—pass.

1. Administration and Finance (a) Ministers' Salary \$10,300—the Member for Wolseley.

Mr. Taylor: Before passing this, I have two questions of the Minister. It relates to his own office's operation. Can he confirm that the situation now, in the sense of support staff for office, that he has now gained three secretaries and the Deputy Minister's office only has a single secretary, which is a change?

Mr. Connery: I have two secretaries and then there is a part-time secretary. There are two with the Deputy Minister. There are five secretaries in the office.

Mr. Taylor: Can the Deputy Minister confirm that he has two positions still?

Mr. Connery: Yes, he has.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass?

Mr. Taylor: Shall we have the Deputy Minister at the table to confirm that?

Mr. Chairman: The staff are not permitted to attend at the table at this time.

Mr. Taylor: I have a further question. In discussions and on Tuesday, upon questioning from another Member, the Minister had said that he has an executive assistant and a special assistant. I have information that there is a third position that comes under the Minister's direct purview and that is a departmental liaison officer, hired on by the Minister himself and then all the paperwork had to be gone through by the staff post facto to legitimize that hiring on. Can the Minister make a comment on that?

Mr. Connery: We were short-staffed because of the number of portfolios. I have hired one additional person to help coordinate the work of the Minister's office.

Mr. Taylor: Well then to say the least, Mr. Chairperson, I would suggest that the discussion that took place on Tuesday afternoon between the Minister and the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) when the responses were decidedly misleading, because there is not just an E.A. and just an S.A., there is also a departmental liaison officer on a full-time basis, I might mention, somebody hired out of the Minister's own constituency

and hired in a most irregular fashion. I wonder if he would like to make a comment about that.

Mr. Connery: We were looking for a quality person which we were able to get. I see the train of thought that the Member is going on. That position was first offered to Roberta Ellis-Grunfeld.

Mr. Taylor: Can the Minister explain the pertinence of that last comment? I do not quite understand what that has to do with what has happened in the fact of there is misleading information as to the numbers of staff officer positions in the Minister's own office and also the very unusual way in which the hiring practice took place. What has that comment about Ms. Ellis got to do with that?

Mr. Connery: Eventually with the questioning, there will be some political connotation. So I just thought I would let you know.

Mr. Taylor: You presume that I was going to ask what Party card this departmental liaison officer is carrying? No. But if the Minister wishes to tell us, I would be most interested in hearing it.

Mr. Connery: She is a good Conservative. I am not ashamed of it at all. We have good people from all walks of life and all stripes in our Government, and I am proud of that.

Mr. Taylor: Can the Minister explain why he misled this committee, earlier in the Estimates of his department, as to the number of department staff he had?

Mr. Connery: There was no misleading. Department staff are brought in. We have cutbacks, we have increases. Where the workload determines it, that is where we put staff.

Mr. Taylor: The question was put to you as Minister of Environment (Mr. Connery) as to what sort of executive support there was. The answer was, after a lot of detailed questioning, two. The answer is not two, the answer is three, and the hiring practice was irregular. There had to be a post facto correction by staff because the hiring was done without advance notice in any fashion. I think an explanation is in order here.

Mr. Connery: There was no post facto. It was known for some time that the disposition was required or there was a person required to do some of the work of the Minister's office. It was not a last minute just quick decision. There had been some time and some thought for some period of time to fill that position.

Mr. Taylor: Why did the Minister not then tell this committee on Tuesday that there was a third position?

Mr. Connery: Well, we are hiring and moving people around on a continuous basis. There was work to be done and we hired a person to do it.

Mr. Taylor: I fail to understand, when questioning at a given point in time what is the staff that is in the

Minister's office, the Minister can be off by a factor of 50 percent here. It just does not make much sense and it does not wash very well, and I think this is something that is going to bear further discussion in the concurrence process because I, for one, am not satisfied with the answer, and I am certain the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) who raised the issue will not be satisfied either.

While asking the Minister these sorts of questions, the Minister has tabled the requested information that I asked late yesterday afternoon about the number of consulting contracts. I have one question to him. Are there any other contracts that Mr. Burdeny has issued by the Minister of the Environment, or were there any others that he had previous to this?

Mr. Connery: No.

Mr. Taylor: In both cases?

Mr. Connery: Both cases.

Mr. Taylor: Is this Minister aware of any other contracts Mr. Burdeny had on behalf of other departments?

Mr. Connery: No.

Mr. Taylor: Thank you.

Mr. Harapiak: I was disappointed as well when we had to probe to find out how many staff there were. They were told there were two but there is three, especially when you show in another department of yours that there is a cost-saving exercise to reduce your staff by two and I think that is misleading and it is a little disappointing to receive information of that sort. I guess another point I would like to make is there was a completion of a study to deal with the review of Occupational Health Services needs. Maybe we should have asked when staff was here, but I am wondering if that copy is completed now and if we can have a copy of that report. That was referred to in your opening statement, page 6, which you never read because it was referred to as part of the Health and Safety part of your department.

Mr. Connery: I would have to check on that to see if that is a public document or an internal document. If it is a public document, I will make it available to the Member.

* (1610)

Mr. Harapiak: I guess there are many other things that we would like to have had, but I guess we have some decision as to when we would end so I guess I would close with those remarks.

Mr. Chairman: 1. Administration and Finance (a) Minister's Salary \$10,300—pass.

Resolution 58: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding 1,422,600 for Environment and Workplace Safety and Health,

Administration and Finance, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1989—pass.

That brings us to a conclusion of the estimates for Department of Environment and Workplace Safety and Health, and I would thank all Honourable Members for their cooperation.

Mr. Chairman: We will have a short recess till we go to the next department.

(RECESS)

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY—WORKERS COMPENSATION

Mr. Chairman, Harold Gilleshammer: I call the committee to order again to discuss Workers Compensation. We do not have a budget in front of us.

Mr. Allan Patterson (Radisson): Mr. Chairman, first I would like to say I understand the problems at the board and the fact that these problems arose much earlier and not during the term of this particular Government. I understand their problems in coming to grasp with it and trying to rectify the things which cannot be turned around overnight.

(The Acting Chairman, Mr. Praznik, in the Chair.)

Along the lines of what the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) brought up under Workplace Safety and Health, I might just say that as a Compensation critic I have had several calls over the summer and to date. While many of them relate to appeals and particularly the stage of final appeal to the board, I fully understand that there is this backlog and, when there is this backlog, it cannot be cleaned up overnight. So I have been telling people, well, look, you are in a queue and it is hard to make just cause as to why any one individual should be jumped ahead in the queue and others turned down, but the board is spending every effort to clear up the backlog. I hope, as the Minister indicated, I think you expect to have things in reasonable shape by early next year.

Some other calls from constituents or claimants have to do with the bureaucratic treatment, where they feel they are not being treated courteously or they are being ignored, they are being stonewalled. Calls are not being returned and so on. Realizing that there are probably thousands of calls to the board that are handled courteously and expeditiously—I am not implying they are typical but, nevertheless, there are some complaints along those lines.

Just looking through the annual report here, there are a few things I would just like to inquire about, first, to get more knowledge on my own part, which is minimal, being relatively new here. I note on page 34 here on Figure 2 in the annual report—

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister responsible for The Workers' Compensation Act): If I could get a word in first? I just wanted to—I know there have been concerns about the time, the delays, maybe the calls

coming. What we are looking at is putting in an Ombudsman next year so there will be some independent person to look at these things for you. I know Brian Wiebe is an employee of the board, and he is the person who I go to or people go to, to make sure that he is an advocate for the injured worker, not just—you know, and I think he was doing a good job, but we are going to put in an Ombudsman. We think it will be a little easier. People will have more confidence, and I am confident in what Brian Wiebe was doing. I guess when you make it into a form of an Ombudsman, the perception out there will be a little better. What page were you on?

* (1620)

Mr. Patterson: Page 34. I just want to mention that my contacts with the board have been very helpful to me and in one of my previous incarnations, having worked for some 15 years with the T. Eaton Co. and occasionally getting into horrendous backlogs of this nature, I know the trouble with the backlog is you get it, and then you keep getting all these phone calls which prevent you from getting at the backlog.

Mr. Connelly: That is what has been happening.

Mr. Patterson: I understand the situation but, nevertheless, we all must bend every effort to see that things get straightened out. In the meantime, it is important to be courteous and helpful to clients.

To get back to Figure 2 here on page 34, this is going back in history but one would obviously wonder what the cause might be in the rather significant jump in the average days of disability for 1981 to 1982 which seems to have set a trend and then of course, assuming that prior to 1981, it was on that plateau that extends leftward back through 1980.

Mr. Connelly: I think what I am being told is that some more severe injuries may be with the complexity of the workplace and also that we are getting more people into rehabilitation which we really want to do. We want to get people rehabilitated and back into the work force and this has added some time. Also, the workplace changes. We are getting more occupational disease now. That is a bigger part of the claims, with the lead in blood levels and that sort of thing. It is not just physical accidents. They can be the occupational disease sort of thing.

Mr. Patterson: Yes, I understand these things take place, but one would sort of intuitively feel that there would be a gradual increase over years rather than the—was there some sudden recognition in 1982 of these types of problems?

Mr. Connelly: As you know, in 1982 there was a— the fall of 1981, there was a change in Government and there was a significant change, a new board and adjudication could be part of that. As you are well aware, there were a lot of old claims too, but there was some concern from the business community that the Workers Compensation Board had moved in to

become a safety net rather than a means of compensating people injured in the workplace. Of course, we have to change a little bit from—we say injured, and it is not just injury any more because of the occupational disease factor. There are different things coming, not just a broken arm but lead in the blood and that sort of thing which we are monitoring very carefully, and there are some pretty severe, stiff regulations in place to try to bring that number down of people having occupational disease.

Mr. Patterson: Yes, I note if we go to page 45, Table V, again I just went back five years starting with a column in 1982 and notice the percentage of claims settled to those reported was a little over 83 percent in 1982, and then has dropped down to the mid-70s since then, about 79 percent roughly in '83 and then it has been 75 point-something percent for the remaining years to date.

Mr. Connelly: It is because there has been—longer on compensation is one of the reasons, and it is reflected in the average time lost claims.

Mr. Patterson: That clears to how the length of the claim would affect it. We are looking at just the number reported and then the numbers settled, regardless of the length

Mr. Connelly: Yes, it is because when people are on rehabilitation, and there has been a big increase in rehabilitation and, as long as they are on rehabilitation, the claim is not settled. It is not a settled claim, so it leaves it open. With the increase in the length of time in rehabilitation, that means that the numbers have not been finalized. They are still sitting there. We are rehabilitating the individual. I think we all agree that rehabilitation is important to the injured worker, that we just do not pay them for an injury in the time they are off work, but that we rehabilitate them and in some cases into a different work environment.—(Interjection)—December 8, Harry, right after the Session.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Praznik): I take it the Minister's comment is not information for the record of the House, although I am sure all Members of the Assembly are equally welcome to that invitation.

Mr. Connelly: It is a tradition by some Ministers, when their Estimates are over, to invite the critics up to his office to discuss the Estimates just a little bit further.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Praznik): I take it on record the invitation is extended to those critics. Are there other questions of the Minister in this particular area?

Mr. Patterson: Just bear with me a moment, Mr. Acting Chairperson, while I translate my hieroglyphics. I defer to the Member for Thompson for a moment.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Acting Chairperson, I have a series of questions related to the Workers Compensation Board. I would, first of all, like to ask the Minister what the current plans of this Government are in regard to the new Workers'

Compensation Act that would presumably follow from the King Task Force Report. I am raising that because I would like to indicate that I feel the King Task Force Report was an excellent report. It identified many of the areas that we need changes in, some of which are administrative, but many of which would also be legislative. I would like to ask the Minister what the current intention of the Government is in regard to introducing either a new Act or amendments to the Workers' Compensation Act.

Mr. Connery: We are carrying on with the same implementation team that was there. It was appointed by the previous Government. They are working on drafting new legislation to make it a clearer piece of legislation for the board and the appeals board, and the people who are going to be make the adjudication. We would like to have been able to introduce it this Session. To have done so would have pushed it very quickly and not have had as much of the consultation that I think is really required. I am disappointed because it makes it go a little bit longer before we get into new legislation.

The Board of Commissioners is cooperating very good with us. We will be doing consultations, as I said, the same as with the labour code. We will be inviting in the Opposition and some of the news media. Michael Rennie will give you a briefing on the basics of what it is so that you can have comment and input. Michael Rennie and the implementation team have been working very closely with the management group and with the employee group.

We are trying to draft legislation that serves both client groups well, gives adequate compensation and protection to injured workers and as efficiently as possible to the business community, because I think it is well recognized that, while some might say that it is the business that is paying for it, the consumer in the long run pays for just about every expense that there is. It is in the interests of us as consumers also to ensure that it is running as effectively and as efficiently as possible.

* (1630)

Mr. Ashton: I certainly hope that there is greater consultation than there was in regard to final offer selection. I am sure when the Minister is referring to the labour code, he was not talking of the final offer selection. As I have indicated at other times and other places, there was anything but consultation. I certainly do agree with the Minister that it is an excellent implementation team. I am, quite frankly, a bit disappointed that the recommendations were not brought in this Session. I know that was the commitment that had been made by the previous Minister, the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak) in the Throne Speech.

I say I am disappointed not really so much in terms of the dynamics of this Chamber, but because we have been in a fairly lengthy process with the King Task Force Report. I think many of the problems that are coming forward to our attention, I know as critic and

the Minister as well, are related to some of the areas that are targeted for significant changes in the King Task Force Report so I am somewhat disappointed.

I would like to ask the Minister in regard to a couple of specifics, however, in particular, one I think caused a great deal of concern and that is in regard to some of the statements the Minister made about the presumptions clause. Particularly, the Minister is referring to a case that had been identified by the employer rep on the Workers Compensation Board.

It did go for legal opinion as to whether the board's decision was within its mandate, whether it was appropriate and I could have said right from the start it was found to be appropriate. But the Minister took that as an opportunity to talk about major changes to a couple of key sections of the Act, particularly as they relate to the presumptions clause. I am wondering if the Minister subsequently had the opportunity to consider the ramifications of his proposed changes and whether he will now indicate and perhaps clear the record that the new Act will not involve rolling back the presumptions clause which has been in place for literally decades in Manitoba.

Mr. Connery: That presumption clause is a real tough clause. I think as the Member well knows, we have had many discussions with Michael Rennie over the presumption clause. We are still working on it. We have not got it in—well, it is getting close to final form, I guess. I think really the best time to really get into this is when you and Michael and the implementation team who have been working on it—I have gone over the legislation with him and looked at what I think is pretty good legislation—make some comments on it. I think when we do have that implementation team here and, unfortunately, I guess maybe—I do not know where Michael is. We have talked about him coming. He can explain much better in detail because we are still building it.

So I do not know, it might not satisfy the Member but the opportunity to discuss it will—of course, as you know, it is in the formative stage. So whatever is there still has to be passed by Cabinet and still has to go out for a discussion by the client groups, management and labour, both to review it and to make suggestions.

Mr. Ashton: I am not concerned about Michael Rennie's explanation or other staff's explanation. I was concerned about the statements the Minister made and I was trying to give the Minister an opportunity to indicate that perhaps after, I believe it has been about four or five months, that he may have reconsidered some of these statements. I give the Minister the benefit of the doubt. He was confronted with this situation and it developed in one specific case, a concern that had been identified by the employer rep on the Workers Compensation Board. As I said, that concern was not brought out as being justified, given the later legal opinion. But the Minister made some rather quick and off-the-cuff statements in regard to the presumptions clause.

What I was asking was, and I am giving the Minister the opportunity to clear the record, will the Minister

commit this Government to maintaining the current presumptions clause, which I think any jurisdiction right now in Canada has, which is vital to the rights of injured workers and, if it is removed or even watered down, could result in literally dozens, if not hundreds, of workers who would currently be eligible for compensation not receiving that compensation because of the difficulty they would then face in proving their case? Will the Minister now commit himself to maintaining the current presumptions clause?

Mr. Connery: I think it is presumptuous of the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) to think that I am going to make some definitive statement on the legislation when we are going to be going to the various groups in a discussion way. Before we make our final—I want to be able to have the opportunity of listening to the viewpoints and the knowledgeable suggestions by people who work on a daily basis, the employee side and the employer side.

So as to what the legislation is going to be, I would not make any definitive statement on any part of that legislation until we are ready to bring it in as a Bill, and then of course that would be final. You can criticize it and I will defend it at that point.

Mr. Ashton: I am disappointed because I had hoped the Minister would have cleared the air on that issue. I can assure him that will be one of the areas that we will be watching very closely with the upcoming legislation and that our caucus will be fighting strongly to maintain that clause. We will fight strongly against any attempt to water it down.

I also have another question in regard to another area that the Minister raised around the same time that relates really to pre-existing conditions. It has been particularly important in regard to heart attack cases where the workplaces contributed somewhat to the heart attack but obviously there were other pre-existing conditions in place. It is not strictly related to that. There are many back injuries where there may have been some degeneration due to aging that has been greatly worsened by a workplace incident. I would like to ask the Minister whether the Minister will be keeping the current policy and legislation in place in regard to pre-existing conditions.

Mr. Connery: I guess, listening to the Member, if I drop dead from a heart attack after Question Period, after being viciously attacked by the Opposition, I would get full claim or my widow would get full claim is what the Member is saying.

This pre-existing area is one that has—(Interjection)—You tried to do it and it did not work. You gave it your best shot and you failed. It would be pointless and I know the Member wants to get me to put things on the record. That is always part of the strategy. I can say, if he wants to put on the record what he would like to see in the legislation, I do not blame him for that but I am not going to be making any comments on legislation that is being drafted. As I said, the Member will have an opportunity to get, not the Bill before it goes to the House but an opportunity to be

briefed on it, like all the other client groups. At that point, I think it will be a little clearer to him which way the legislation is going.

Mr. Ashton: I have just a couple more questions. I know my colleague has some further questions, as do I, and I will defer to him.

Just on the heart attack question, I did in fact want the Minister to put statements on the record. The statement I wanted from the Minister was that he would reconsider some of the comments that I would consider to be rash, off the cuff and ill informed that he made earlier on this year. I was willing to give him the benefit of the doubt perhaps that it was related to his being not aware of the implications of the statements he had made, if they were adopted in policy. He was a new Minister. I realize he was critic previously, but I was willing to give him some benefit of the doubt.

I do want to highlight again that one of the areas that has been key in terms of giving rights to injured workers and their families over the last number of years has been the recognition that, in cases where there is a pre-existing condition, there can also be a significant contributing factor from the workplace and that it is not fair, whatsoever, to deny individuals their coverage on that basis.

What I would like to do is specifically ask, in regard to heart attacks, whether the Minister will be responding to the concerns expressed by firefighters. They are placed in a particular position. The policy has been to recognize basic presumption that certain types of injuries or illnesses or medical conditions are related to the workplace. That has been a presumption because it has been a documented fact that firefighters do, for example, have a higher incidence of heart attacks, lung-related ailments, etc. I would like to ask whether, because I know the Minister has received correspondence and I believe has met with the firefighters, and that is whether at least their concerns either have been dealt with or will be dealt with in legislation.

Mr. Connery: Very quickly, yes, we are dealing with them.

* (1640)

Mr. Ashton: I do hope that consideration will be given to other sufferers in that particular area in terms of pre-existing conditions, whether it be heart attacks, etc. I want to highlight for the Minister that, once again, that will be an area I will be watching very closely. I think any change in policy along the lines he was talking about previously would have a devastating impact on many Manitoba families, injured workers and their families. I would hope we would reconsider that. I do have further questions, but I will give the floor back to the Member for Radisson.

Mr. Patterson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I note, going to page 49, the Assessment Statistics Table, Table 9, over this five-year period I referred to earlier, starting in 1982, there has been this tremendous increase in

percentage of assessment to payroll. I can see from the figures on Table 6 on page 46 that a good bit, by far the majority of the increase in benefits has been in the rehabilitation area, from some not quite \$2 million in 1982 up to over \$12 million last year. Nevertheless, the increase in the assessment has been in the order of 144 percent, from '82 to '87. I would like to ask the Minister if this \$2, well, \$2 and—what?—four thousandths of a cent current assessment will remain level for the future.

Mr. Connery: What was the last comment, please?

Mr. Patterson: We have this marked increase in assessments every year from 1982 to date and it is now marginally over \$2 per \$100 a payroll.

Mr. Connery: It is our hope that by having an efficient operation at Workers Comp, by getting people in, getting them quickly into adjudication, getting them quickly into rehab and quickly back into the work force, streamlining the whole operation, will significantly reduce the cost of Workers Compensation. It is hoped to have a very, very, very low increase for this year or little, if any. Very, very minor increases, we think we can achieve.

Mr. Patterson: Given there are some past problems to clean up, I can see possibly the need for some marginal increase this year but really the increases should just be covered by the assessment, because it is the employee's pay that goes up more or less with inflation. When the assessment is on a percentage basis, therefore, as wages go up each year, therefore the income of the board goes up each year. Assuming that the costs are going up at relatively the same rate, you need a pretty strong case to be made for increases in the assessment rate.

Mr. Connery: I thought it was more a statement than a question. Is there a question there that I missed?

Mr. Patterson: On page 49—I pretty well asked the question earlier—given that there have been some problems of some increases in costs due to the addition of rehabilitation, that explains to some significant degree the 144 percent increase in the percentage assessment from 1982 to date. But we should be able to look forward to that assessment being relatively level for some reasonable time into the future.

Mr. Connery: Very quickly, for the Member for Radisson, by having an effective organization they are defining the roles of the board of administration, they are forming a benefits division involving claims and rehabilitation. They have finance and medical functions, forming a management team, improving markedly claims administration, developing an ombudsman position in the human resources side, new and qualified chief executive officer and executive director of benefits hired, new management in claims and rehabilitation to be hired, a planning and policy branch is being developed, training program is under way, close consultation with the union is taking place.

We have used outside professional people to help in the reorganization, so we think it is coming quite

well. This should hold down the escalating costs to the employer because the bottom line is it is still the consumers who pay the bulk of the costs of Workers Compensation.

Mr. Patterson: Yes, really this ties in of course with Workplace Safety and Health in the reference I made earlier to in questioning the strength of the inspection staff or, if Workplace Safety and Health measures are implemented well and effectively across the province, it should really reduce the number of claims. It would help to hold things down.

Mr. Connery: The goal of course with having all of these under one Minister is that in Workplace Safety there is a real need for me to have them work effectively to try to reduce injuries in the workplace, and that in the long term too will save an awful lot from Workers Compensation. The department is working with Workplace Safety and Health to identify problem sectors, to identify problem employers, employers specifically, if we have a bad employer, or do we have a whole industry that has a high level of injuries? Then we can examine very quickly with Workplace Safety what we do to reduce the incidence of injury.

Mr. Patterson: Just one other question, Mr. Acting Chairman, I had a call from a client a few days ago. Evidently he has been on permanent pension. He was injured in 1975. I was wondering if there will be any increase coming in the pension so far as indexing is concerned. The point is it has been adjusted every two or three years but I am wondering why are compensation pensions not indexed or is there some system of periodic adjustment.

Mr. Connery: It has been the habit basically every two years to raise the pensions but it is not in legislation. I believe that we will be introducing that with the new legislation so that pensions would automatically be indexed. This is why the books show a \$95 million deficit where really we are in the area of over 200 million when we look at the true facts that pensions are indexed but it does not show in legislation. Therefore, it is not being audited in that fashion.

The Members have said that they have to finish Civil Service today too, so I hope that they are watching the clock so at least we have an opportunity to say "pass." You said you were going to do Civil Service today. I thought they had an agreement to get it all done.

An Honourable Member: I would like to see it finished.

Mr. Connery: Okay, that is fine. If you are not having to finish it, then there is no problem.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Praznik): The next question. The Member for Radisson.

Mr. Patterson: I am sorry, I am finished.

Mr. Ashton: In regard to pensions, I certainly echo the previous comments. That was one of the questions I

was going to raise because it is in the area that has been done as a past practice and was included in the review of Workers Compensation that took place, and I think is indicative of the kind of changes we do need in terms of Workers Compensation.

* (1650)

I want to ask the Minister in regard to some of the statements, reports recently related to lead and levels of lead, particularly as they relate to Workers Compensation, at the present time, the policy is that if someone has 50 parts per million, I believe is the figure, or higher in terms of concentrations, that they are automatically eligible for compensation. I understand concerns have been expressed by various companies about this particular requirement that people receive compensation. There have been similar concerns expressed by others who wish to see it kept in place. We feel that it was a result of a considerable lobby effort, considerable medical study that shows that is the appropriate level for lead concentrations. I would like to ask the Minister whether he can now state clearly, for the record, that he will not change that requirement either by legislation or through regulations of the Workers Compensation Board?

Mr. Connery: The level of allowable in the board is the decision of the boards. In the industry, it is the decision of the industry.

I think the Member is slightly wrong just when they go into 50 parts per million, they cannot work in that environment. They can work someplace else. They do not have to automatically be on workers compensation. They can go to work in part of the facility or another portion of that employer's facility where there is very low or no lead levels in the air. It is just that they cannot stay in the same workplace where they achieved that high level of lead in the blood.

Mr. Ashton: My understanding is, if that level does persist and the problem of course working in a plant where there is lead contamination from the internal environment is that it is very difficult, if not impossible, for someone to work in another area unless there is a separate type of plant entirely.

The concern that has been expressed is any watering down of the protection of workers involving lead poisoning. What I was asking was—and I realize the Minister is lobbied many times. I am sure he has been lobbied on other items in regard to Workers Compensation by business groups. I realize sometimes that a particular business may feel that they have certain concerns about allowable limits, etc. The reason I am raising this one is because there is medical evidence showing the impact that the lead poisoning can have; 50 parts per million, I think, has been accepted as a fairly reasonable level in terms of the Workplace Safety and Health, the Workers Compensation area. I am asking if the Minister can state clearly that he will not be changing that particular policy.

Mr. Connery: I guess to say forever is a hard thing to do. We have not been discussing changing it. Yes,

we have had people come to us. As I said in Question Period, we have been working with these companies to lower the levels in the air because it goes in through the air basically. It can go through your skin but basically it is by inhaling. So there has not been a determination to do that. Somewhere down the road, maybe we will be lowering it.

As you know, Manitoba's level is as low as any in this country and even in the United States. The United States goes for 50 parts per million also but then they make an awful lot of exemptions to the rule. So just having a low level in a regulation and then exempt everybody from the regulation really is not the way to go. We would rather have reasonable regulations that pertain. It is the safety of the worker. That is the first concern that we have is what is safe for the worker. If it is not safe for the worker, I am not going to be the Minister of Workers Compensation or Workplace Safety or whatever that is going to bring in legislation that is detrimental to any worker in Manitoba.

Mr. Ashton: Apart from the general statement, and I would just point out once again, the Minister did not take the opportunity to clear that on the record. I feel that we have to maintain the protection against lead levels. I think it is a serious hazard both, as I said, in terms of Workplace Safety and Health and in terms of Workers Compensation. Quite frankly, I do not think we should apologize for having the toughest standards in North America. I think that is something we should aim for generally, whether it be in regard to Workers Compensation or Workplace Safety and Health or the environment. I would be very disappointed if we were not in that position.

I guess I had hoped the Minister would have stated clearly that no matter what the particular companies have been arguing, and I understand why they are arguing. But his responsibility is, he is the Minister of Labour, he is responsible for Workers Compensation and Workplace Safety. I think he would have done a lot better if, when he had been asked specifically by the media and asked in the Chamber, if he had said, no, we have no intentions whatsoever of reducing the protection for workers in Manitoba and raising the limit.

I will give the Minister the opportunity again, if he wants to put it on the record, but I think he should realize some of the concerns those comments have caused. I have talked to people and they have a very serious concern that this could be the prelude to opening up a whole series of areas of standards, including this one and others, and a watering down of our regulations here in Manitoba.

So, once again I will give the Minister the opportunity, and I do not mean that facetiously but, if he would say, no, there will not be a backing down on the 50 parts per million, I think it would be greatly appreciated by workers in this province.

Mr. Connery: The Member knows full well that the request for relief from the number of 50 has been in my department since almost the day I took office. I think you were—the previous Government was being lobbied and there has been no change. So, I think that tells the Member something.

The lead in blood is not quite as black and white as what the Member would like to say. I have talked to Dr. Tenenbien and (Interjection) Pardon. Well, there are many different philosophies and no matter what subject, you can talk about free trade, you have 50 different places to go with it, for a Meech Lake. This lead in the blood is a concern. It is a concern to me, but anybody who comes to me with a request, whether it be from management or the labour side, we entertain them into our office and take a look at what the request is. But then if we are looking at something significant, as I have said to the client groups, I will consult with them before we make any major changes.

Mr. Ashton: Point of order, Mr. Acting Chairperson, I just have about two more questions that would probably require the presence of staff. I do not believe the Member from Radisson has any further questions. I wonder if, with the leave of committee, we could deal with those two questions and then there may be some just very brief, general, closing remarks next time by myself and perhaps the Member from Radisson that would not require the staff to be here. I just do not want to bring the staff back for 5 or 10 minutes, if that is agreeable.

Okay, I had a couple of questions in regard to the statements the Minister made in regard to the financing. I mean, it has been a topic, I know, that he raised quite extensively when he was critic. He had some difficulty at the time with the term "unfunded liability," which I am sure he may have changed his mind on now. He may try and add different words to it but I think he, as Minister, probably realizes that the challenge facing the Workers Compensation Board is the challenge facing other Workers Compensation Boards across this country.

In fact, I think the vast majority are in the situation of having that unfunded liability. I think there are only one or two which actually do not really have any extensive unfunded liabilities. In at least one case, in B.C., that was done at the expense of the injured workers and their families. What I would like to ask the Minister is, what are the projections financially in terms of the unfunded liability related to the various requirements, various obligations the board has currently? I am talking in terms of figures. Is it expected to increase over the period of time? The second question is, the Minister has referenced briefly the plans in terms of finances of the board this year, but what basically is this Minister going to do in upcoming years to keep pace with the obligations of the board?

I would like to add since the Minister will probably only have time to respond, I will not have time for a supplementary question. If there is one concern that I think I would have is that in the past we have probably been increasing compensation costs too little to reflect the actual increase in the liability to the board, despite the fact there have been regular increases. There has been a tendency, I think, sometimes to view the deficit that has resulted as either the result of mismanagement, which it usually was not—in fact it was not period, I think—or else an indication of the fact that benefits are too high. So I would like to get some idea from the Minister where the board is at now financially in

terms of the unfunded liability, what the projections are, and what he predicts in terms of rates.

* (1700)

Mr. Connery: Well, the deficit or shortfall, that the board has, as I mentioned earlier, while the books show about \$95 or just under \$100 million, the realities are it is in around the \$218 million, \$220 million, and this was outside actuaries that did it, projected the costs of the indexing pensions all of that sort of thing that is there. That is where it is at.

We are not going to keep the cost of Workers Compensation down at the expense of workers. If there is a clear case of a worker injured in the workplace, then they will be properly and adequately compensated. But hopefully through many means of administration and getting people into rehabilitation quickly, we will be able to keep the cost down, and I think it is in the best interests of everyone to try to keep our costs to a minimum because we, the consumers, still pay that Workers Compensation cost. Employers pass it on to us, the consumer.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Praznik): The hour is now 5 p.m. It is time for Private Members' Hour. The committee rises.

* (1440)

SUPPLY—COOPERATIVE, CONSUMER AND CORPORATE AFFAIRS

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Rose): The committee will come to order to consider the estimates of the Department of Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs, considering item 1.(c) Communications: (1) Salaries \$94,500—the Honourable Member for Burrows.

Mr. William Chornopyski (Burrows): I want to say at the outset that I reviewed the information provided to us by the department, and I am absolutely pleased with everything that is in that supplementary.

Mr. Acting Chairman, the one thing that I do want say is that not everything can be done by way of legislation. I would like to ask through you to the Minister whether or not—I think one of the things that perhaps should take place of legislation in many cases is education. I think we need to educate the public perhaps a little better. I wondered if the Minister ever considered something of that nature, or does he agree with my assumption and, if not, why not.

Hon James McCrae (Attorney-General): Mr. Acting Chairman, before I get on to answering the Honourable Member's question, I would like to introduce at the table with us today—we have the Director of the Manitoba Securities Commission, Mr. Tom Tapley; and Karen Gamey, our Director of Communications.

Just on the education and communications aspect of it, it is fortunate that we have Miss Gamey here with us today because something the Honourable Member

said yesterday in his question got me thinking about that and certainly the Honourable Member—I profoundly agree with the Honourable Member that education and communication in the area of consumer protection is vital. I am very happy with the work done by the communications area of the department. It is certainly a more and more complex society we live in, and there are more pitfalls that go with those complexities.

Well, for that purpose alone, I was delighted today to attend a luncheon to honour some of our volunteer sector, who are involved with our department in helping to get the message out. Without that kind of assistance, I do not think our department would be anywhere near as effective as it is, and I suggest that it is very effective in this province.

Just while we are on the discussion of getting the message out, not so long ago I was able to attend a high school assembly at Miles Macdonell Collegiate, and award five students with a prize for the work that they have done in preparing a television commercial, which we are going to be seeing, I take it. I am not sure of how soon, but it will not be too long before we will be seeing the commercial, I think it is MTN. I am told that it is in two weeks' time that we will be seeing that, prepared by five students at Miles Macdonell Collegiate—pardon me, Daniel McIntyre.

I remember walking into that assembly and seeing the enthusiasm in the faces of these young people. They were enthusiastic, of course, because they had won a competition, a province-wide competition for the production of this commercial, but enthusiasm about issues of making people aware of what their rights are and how to protect ourselves and how to work with each other on consumer matters. But the communications area of the department is responsible for promoting and increasing the knowledge and skills of both the consumer and business communities when interacting in the Manitoba marketplace.

What I am going to do is take the Honourable Member's question as a kind of continuing representation so that we can be reminded. The Honourable Member asked the questions today and obviously we are aware of it anyway, but we appreciate the Honourable Member's support for the idea of making sure that people out there understand how important it is to have an informed consuming public.

Mr. Chornopyski: Mr. Acting Chairman, I have to say when I perused the Estimates yesterday I said how short my relationship has been with the department and how pleasant it has been. While going through the Estimates here, I can see the work is straightforward, very understandable, and I can see why the department works so well just judging by the information that I had received so far.

I really have no questions on the matters of Salaries or Other Expenditures. I have a question further down when we get to the co-op development and credit unions and caisse populaire. As far as my satisfaction, there is very little time necessary to pass these particular Estimates.

Mr. McCrae: If I could, obviously I would like to accept the comments of the Honourable Member, and suggest that—maybe I should be a little bit modest for a change—we have people in the department who are very committed to what they are doing, very committed to doing a good job. The Honourable Member's comments are a tribute more to them than they are to me. I think the staff of the department should accept it as such.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Rose): Will the item pass?

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Mr. Acting Chairman, are we on 2. Consumers Affairs or are we still on the Administrative Services, part (d). I am prepared to pass (d) and move us on to Consumer Affairs if we are not already there?

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Rose): 1.(c)(1)—pass; 1.(c)(2) Other Expenditures, \$32,100—pass; 1.(d)(1) Salaries, \$338,100—pass; 1.(d)(2) Other Expenditures \$31,200—pass;

Item 2. Consumers Affairs (a) Salaries \$720,700—the Honourable Member for Elmwood.

* (1450)

Mr. Maloway: A couple of questions here for the Minister, I am not going to be as charitable as the Member for Burrows (Mr. Chornopyski) as far as the department is concerned. I am aware that the department does a considerable amount of advertising and networking out—I believe they are around to the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns)—and informing people. I am also aware that there are legislative initiatives that are required in this department. I believe, if the Minister was not so overworked and did not have to spend so much time as the House Leader and as Attorney-General, perhaps there would be more action taken in the Consumer and Corporate Affairs Department at this time. Be that as it may, there is still time left for action and certainly room for improvement.

My first question to the Minister has to do with whether the Consumers' Bureau is aware of any recent home renovation company complaints? That was a problem in the past and I am just wondering what the current situation is. I would like to know how many cases are currently under review for prosecution purposes at the Attorney-General's office?

Mr. McCrae: The Honourable Member may have—I am sure the Honourable Member was listening yesterday, Mr. Acting Chairman, when I made my opening comments and spoke of the number of complaints and number of cases handled by the Consumers' Bureau. So he will know that but, in terms of prosecutions pending and files pending on different types of matters, I would be happy to make that information available to the Honourable Member.

Mr. Maloway: I understand that a number of these cases involve such things as water in the attic and alleged foundation problems and that type of problem. So when the Minister is addressing that question, that sort of zeroes it in a little more.

I would like to also ask about any action that the Consumers' Bureau is taking with respect to the closing down of the International Warranty Company of Alberta. That is something that happened a while ago, but I would like to know whether there is anything new in that area, and how would The Unfair Business Practices Act have helped in that situation?

Mr. McCrae: I am advised that the Honourable Member's proposed Unfair Business Practices Act would have no application in the matter of International Warranty Company. It would not or could not help in those circumstances. What we would need would be some specific type of warranty rules to operate by and that type of initiative is presently under review by the department.

Mr. Maloway: The new developments then, to the Minister, in the International Warranty situation?

Mr. McCrae: The foreign auto dealers have accepted their responsibility in this matter and further problems should be referred to the Consumers' Bureau of Manitoba.

Mr. Maloway: I would like to ask what the Consumers' Bureau position is regarding the licensing—or at least get an update anyway, regarding the licensing of Matol Botanical International in the selling of certain products that are being investigated by the Health Protection Branch. I would like an update on that.

Mr. McCrae: The Member should be aware that the Consumers' Bureau is there to assist Manitobans who have disputes that arise in their dealings with the company the Honourable Member mentions, for example, or any other company where disputes arise. We are quite proud of the work that the Consumers' Bureau does in mediating disputes and bringing them to successful resolution to the general satisfaction of both sides. Yes, there are cases that the Consumers' Bureau, for whatever reason, may be intransigent some time on the part of one of the players in the piece or because perhaps the courts are a better place to decide certain issues. The Honourable Member, I suppose, could bring to my attention any number of complaints that come forward. That is why we have a Consumers' Bureau. The Honourable Member should perhaps let the Consumers' Bureau do its job.

Mr. Maloway: I would like to ask the Minister, if it is not conceivable that the workload of the Consumers' Bureau would actually decrease if we were to adopt in this House The Unfair Business Practices Act.

Mr. McCrae: The Honourable Member is perhaps using the vehicle of Estimates review to flog a Bill that he has on the Order Paper in this place. That is something that the Honourable Member is entitled to do, I suppose and certainly would like to put forward his thoughts on it.

The Honourable Member knows that I have raised the issue of The Discriminatory Business Practices Act in Private Members' Hour. While I am not going to

comment in detail on the content of the Honourable Member's proposed legislation except to say that in terms of the way the parliamentary rules work, the Honourable Member is asking too much when he asks the House to pass Money Bills. Our rules do not allow for that. The Bill is clearly a Money Bill. It is for that reason and that reason alone that I raise the issue about it. Now as to the contents of the Honourable Member's Bill, that is another matter. Our Government will certainly be looking at legislation and reviewing legislation and making legislative decisions as we go along.

Mr. Maloway: The Minister suggests that I am flogging the Bill. The fact of the matter is it is the Minister who has suggested that it is a Money Bill when we believe that it is not. His staff are here. His staff are the people, I assume, who advised him in the first place that it was a Money Bill and it was going to need more staff. I have maintained all along that in fact the mediation process, while it has worked fairly well over the years and is a good process, if you were to give the Consumers' Bureau the powers that seven other provinces have done, you might even reduce the workload on these people because they would have some power to bring quicker action. I have suggested to the House before the Bill may facilitate a lighter workload. Staff is here. The Minister has been relying on their opinion to try to scuttle a Bill on the basis that it is a Money Bill, something we do not agree with. I ask, is it not possible, asking the staff, is it not possible that the workload might be a little less? Is that not conceivable?

Mr. McCrae: I already told the Honourable Member that I am not arguing with him and I do not want to engage in an argument or a debate on the contents of a Bill that he has on the Order Paper. I have only said or confirmed that we do seem to disagree on whether it is a Money Bill.

I have to bring forward to the Legislature the best advice I can get. I have already told you what I think of the quality of advice of the people in my department. I have said that I think that advice is sound and that the people in the department are qualified and they are very dedicated to the work they do. The best advice that I have is that the Bill is a Money Bill. That is the only argument I have made. I have not got in to the details of the Honourable Member's Bill, because that kind of exercise is unnecessary when one takes the position that it is a Money Bill.

* (1500)

The Honourable Member did ask about Matol Botanical International Inc. I do have a briefing note that I can refer to in order to tell the Honourable Member the position of the Consumers' Bureau. The Consumers' Bureau has received an application from the above-noted company to licence, as a vendor, in the Province of Manitoba to direct sell tonics, vitamins, powders, natural cosmetics and natural foods. To date, the vendor has not registered their company with the Corporations Branch, supplied the necessary bond, or supplied a copy of their contract. This documentation is required

by the bureau in order to complete the licensing process.

Further, it has been brought to the attention of the Consumers' Bureau that Health and Welfare Canada is investigating the company because it believes the sales agents involved are making false claims about the products' benefits. The Manitoba Consumer Protection Act, in Section 78.1(h) provides that the director may refuse a licence to any person who has not complied with the requirements of any applicable federal, provincial or municipal statute, regulation or by-law. The bureau, before issuing any licence to allow this company to directly sell their products will ask the company to verify and ensure that all requirements concerning claims made about their products are accurate and correct and fall within the applicable legislation as required by Health and Welfare Canada.

While I am on my feet, Mr. Acting Chairman, the Honourable Member also got off to a bit of a bad start by, may I suggest, talking about the workload of the Minister responsible for Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Perhaps the Honourable Member is incapable of carrying the workload but, Sir, I am.

Mr. Maloway: I have a final question to the Minister. I am aware of his answer on the Matol question. What I asked him for was an update, if he has any more information than I already have. All he told me was what I already know.

Mr. McCrae: It appears we share the same knowledge of the situation.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Rose): Shall the item pass? 2.(b) Other Expenditures—pass; 2.(c) Grants—pass.

Resolution No. 35: Be it resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$849,200 for Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs, Consumer Affairs, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1989—pass.

Item 3. Corporate Affairs (a) Corporations Branch: (1) Salaries, \$757,900—the Honourable Member for Elmwood.

Mr. Maloway: This is as appropriate a place as any to bring up my next questions. As the Minister may be anticipating my question now but the Minister is probably aware that it will be soon, about 240 days, since Brick Warehouse of Calgary tried to register in Manitoba, that being April 14, 1988. Now as the Minister is aware they are in breach of Section 3.2 of the Business Names Registration Act, and I would like to know how many days does the Minister need to make up his mind on whether or not to prosecute in this case.

Mr. McCrae: It seems to me, Mr. Acting Chairman, that the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) said some time back in a press release that this had been a matter of concern to him for the previous two years. Now 240 days somehow becomes different to the Honourable Member or somehow things are different now than they were for the past two years.

I kind of wonder, if he has been concerned that long, why we have not heard anything about it. The Honourable Member was certainly vocal about other matters and I wonder why he did not get involved at another time. Was there something happened that maybe back last April, for example, that changed his way of operating or was there a different understanding of the political realities in this province after either April 26 or March 9 of this year that all of a sudden he can give voice to concerns that he has had for two years? I cannot quite understand the Honourable Member's question.

However, I think the Government of Manitoba, since taking office has been very, very sensitive to a very, very difficult issue in our province and in the City of Winnipeg. We have said that we recognize the difficulties that would be encountered by a local company of long standing in our community when another operation comes to town using a similar name. We have discussed the fact that there are court proceedings going on and the Honourable Member knows all of those circumstances. We have had discussions about this matter in Private Members' Hour with relation to Bills 2 and 3 standing in the name of the Honourable Member.

The Honourable Member knows the positions that I have put on the record and the Honourable Member knows that correspondence has been going back and forth between our Government and the federal Government. The Honourable Member understands that much of this has arisen during the course of a federal election campaign. The Honourable Member knows that I have committed myself to keep working with federal authorities and other provincial authorities to put into place a system that would not allow this to happen again.

The Honourable Member raises the matter again, and I do not really blame him for raising it again, but I do have to ask, where was he two years ago when he was so concerned, as he says he was?

Mr. Maloway: I would like to ask the Minister whether he thinks prosecution would be useful in this case.

* (1510)

Mr. McCrae: The Honourable Member, I think, is asking somewhat of a hypothetical question in the sense that there are court proceedings ongoing now. I remember cautioning the Honourable Member early on in this discussion about getting too deeply, in this public place, into the issues involved in a federal court case that is in progress. I think the Honourable Member should perhaps use a little discretion.

If he really wants to help solve this problem and help resolve this issue, as I do and as I believe everyone in this House really wants to do, whether it is two years later or whether it is now, putting all that aside, yes, there is something to be resolved here. Let us work together, if possible, to try to resolve it, but I do not think that trying to second guess what might be going in a matter that is before the courts is a useful exercise. I have warned the Honourable Member. I raised the

matter as a point of order with Mr. Speaker about the sub judge circumstances, the sub judge convention, and whether it applies in this case or not in a strict parliamentary sense probably does not matter, but the point is let us not engage in discussions which might have the effect of prejudicing the case that is ongoing before the Federal Court of Canada.

Mr. Maloway: The Minister conveniently hides behind the skirts of the courts when it suits him. He tried this once before and it was pointed out at the time that there was no difficulty in discussing this. There is nothing before the courts and of course he is feeling a little bit of heat right now and he is trying to duck and run. All I have asked him is, why is he allowing this corporation, which has been in violation of The Business Names Registration Act for some 240 days, coming on to 240 days, why is he allowing them to defy the law and not prosecute them? It makes a mockery of the law. If this business can get away with it this long, then what kind of an example does that give to the rest of the business community?

Mr. McCrae: The Honourable Member talks about ducking and running. I can tell the Honourable Member, as I have told him previously, that I have been working since shortly after my appointment as the Minister of Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs, working with both sides in this issue. The Deputy Minister of the department can tell you that he has had weekly, if not almost every second day or so discussions and communication with one of the parties. I have had two meetings with one of the parties and one meeting with the other party in an attempt to bring this matter to a successful resolution. I, for one, feel that if people can arrive at an honourable agreement, then that is far better than seeking a resolution by litigation. This is very much parallel to the kind of discussion we are going to have on our Bill respecting final offer selection, that surely a resolution arrived at by two parties working hard and negotiating is better than having a resolution imposed.

Nonetheless, if failing that, and at this point we have not reached a successful conclusion, the courts are there. So it is not a matter of ducking and running. It is not a matter of hiding behind the skirts of the courts. Perhaps the decisions that come out of the courts, if a negotiated settlement is not possible, and I have hope right down to the wire, but should my hopes not be fulfilled, perhaps the court's decision might be very instructive to us all in terms of how we can proceed from here.

So the Honourable Member need not make that kind of comment about seeking the protection of the courts. The courts are there for a purpose. I know the Honourable Member's feelings about lawyers and maybe that extends to judges too. He has not tried to hide his disdain for those people who practise in the legal profession. I do not share those feelings. I happen to believe that whether you are a lawyer or a judge or even, heaven forbid, a police officer who is off duty that all Manitobans are worthy of our respect. The Honourable Member's feelings about lawyers are becoming well-known to the legal profession in this province and not very well appreciated, I might add.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Acting Chairman, the Minister is increasingly difficult to pin down. He hops around like a jumping bean. Now, he is conjuring up negotiations that as far as I am aware do not exist. It is admirable that he would want to solve the problem by negotiations and he is aware, of course, that there are other companies with this kind of a problem. So, if he solves this one by negotiations and he does not take steps to solve the real problem, he is going to have more companies in the same situation later on.

But he should be aware that he and the whole process here is putting Mr. Brick and his wife through a tremendous amount of emotional strain. I think that we are entitled to know why he is not enforcing the law that he is sworn to uphold. Why is he not prosecuting under this section of the Act? Tell us why. Surely there is a reason.

Mr. McCrae: The Honourable Member's questions betray, and I am surprised that at this late stage that the Honourable Member still would be, by his comments, betraying a clear lack of understanding of the issue itself. After all his concern of all these years, I am really surprised, Mr. Acting Chairman, that he still has a lack of understanding of the issues. He has demonstrated—maybe this misunderstanding is deliberate, and that is parliamentary, by the way. Maybe it is a deliberate misunderstanding of the federal and provincial arrangements that we have in this country.

The Honourable Member refuses to accept those things. I refuse to accept that they always leave us with a positive or a beneficial result. I do not accept that. That is why we are continuing to have meetings. Our Deputy Minister has been involved in meetings; other officials in the department have been involved in meetings. I am pursuing the federal Minister and other Ministers across the country to try bring some kind of order to this whole situation so that the procedures in the federal Trademark Office recognize the difficulties that can be created when there are not clear lines of understanding about what constitutes a similar name or a similar trademark.

I think that I have garnered a fair understanding of this issue in the last six or seven months but, after two years, all we get out of the Honourable Member is concern. We do not get responses that will solve the problem, not for Brick's Fine Furniture, not for the other businesses of which I am aware who have concerns and potential concerns about the future in the Province of Manitoba, but just to go and suggest that it is something that can be handled by me signing my name to one particular document, the Honourable Member is showing that he does not really understand this and I thought he did. I really did think he understood, but it is either he does not or he still continues deliberately to misunderstand this issue.

The Honourable Member understands, I believe he does understand; but it is not coming across in his comments here today. So really he is trying to step behind what is actually going on or to move around what is actually going on. There are things going on and the Government of Manitoba has been very, very attentive to this issue and any suggestion by the Honourable Member to the contrary is totally false.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Rose): Shall the item pass?

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Acting Chairman, I have one final question and a comment. The Minister is aware that in the legal system those who have money are in an advantage. He must admit that. The large corporation, Brick Warehouse, has I would not say unlimited money, but has a much bigger fund to pay lawyers than do Brick's Fine Furniture, the little guys. I think that if you look into cases like this you will probably find that many, many people give up principles and give up what they are fighting for because it is pointless trying to fight a big company with lots of money. The big guys can just starve these guys out of existence just by the sheer might of money, so I make that as a comment.

* (1520)

But my final question to the Minister, what I would really like to know, is he refusing to act, is he refusing to prosecute Brick Warehouse under Section 3.2 of The Business Names Registration Act? Is that what he is really telling us?

Mr. McCrae: That is not what I am telling the Honourable Member. That matter has not been addressed in that kind of hard and fast way. Of course, it is not what I am saying. What I am saying is I have been telling the Honourable Member the steps that have been taken and are still being taken. The Honourable Member wants to see a resolution to this problem before the resolution is arrived at. That is patently impossible, but it reminds me a little bit of our friend over there, the Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), who wants to see something done now. Never mind whether it is the right thing to do, but just do something.

Well, that does not make sense to me and I reject that approach and I also sometimes wonder about the New Democratic Party when they talk about the little guys and the big guys and whether we should adopt rules that do not treat individuals in our society fairly in terms of our relationships, that maybe one side should have more rights than the other. We have seen some of that in some of the initiatives of the Honourable Member's Party. I do not think we will get into a lot of detail because we do not need to extend the conversation that long.

I do not think I need any moral lessons in looking after the little guy, certainly not from the Honourable Member for Elmwood. I have been attempting to look after the little guys since the day I got involved in politics.

Mr. Maloway: Before we pass this particular section, it seems to me that the Minister is simply stalling for time and it seems to me that, the bigger you are, the more clout you have with this Government. In fact, if it was some little guy, it seems to me—I may be wrong—who was in violation of one of the statutes of Manitoba, there would be some quick action that they would be prosecuted summarily. But because this corporation is a large company with branches across the country, it has a lot of political clout in Ottawa, it has a lot of connections across the country, and I really believe that

we are seeing a very, very soft approach when in fact different action is called for.

I happen to know that even within the Minister's caucus there are differences of opinion as to how quick or how decisive the Government should be. So I know it is not a black-and-white sort of situation but surely, when a company is violating a section of our Act for this long and the Minister, when asked about this, just continually dances around it, surely he is leaving himself open to the suggestion that in fact he does not have the best interests of the little guy at heart. I leave it at that and I am prepared to pass that section.

Mr. McCrae: I have no doubt, Mr. Acting Chairman, the Honourable Member would like to leave it at that, but you cannot make comments like that and then expect the Minister not to have some response. I mean, for goodness sake, we are talking about political clout, little guys and big guys, and the Honourable Member is making statements that not only are silly but they are also intended to convey some kind of motive on my part that is not worthy. I really resent that, it is not true.

If you want to talk about motive and looking after the little guy, I ask the Honourable Member where was he when the little guys wanted to get the big union, for instance, with regard to the T. Eaton Co. off their back? Where was the Honourable Member then? Whose side was he on, and whose side was he on when we were talking about Springhill Farms at Neepawa when we had the big union versus the little guy? Did he take the side of the little guy? I do not remember it being like that. How about Sooter Photo, when the little guy was being told what to do by the big union bosses? Was the Honourable Member on the side of the little guy then? So, you know, you can point fingers all you like.

An Honourable Member: When it suits him.

Mr. McCrae: Yes, only when it suits him. That is the unfortunate part about it. I do not think we need to carry this discussion on further, unless the Honourable Member wants to, but to say that this is the end of the matter after levelling a bunch of innuendoes like the kind he did is really not very fair.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Rose): Item 2.(a)(1)—pass; item 2.(a)(2) Other Expenditures, \$523,700—pass; 3.(b) Insurance Branch: (1) Salaries \$306,100—pass; 3.(b)(2) Other Expenditures, \$126,600—pass; 3.(c) Manitoba Securities Commission: (1) Salaries \$991,200—pass; 3.(c)(2) Other Expenditures \$110,600—pass; 3.(d) Public Utilities Board: (1) Salaries \$263,200—pass; 3.(d)(2) Other Expenditures, \$715,200—pass.

Resolution No. 36: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$3,794,500 for Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs, Corporate Affairs, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1989—pass.

Item No. 4. Cooperative and Credit Union Development and Regulation, (a) Cooperative and Credit Union Development: (1) Salaries \$1,036,900—the Honourable Member for Burrows.

Mr. Chornopyski: Mr. Acting Chairman, from time to time there are business failures. They happen in the private sector, but they also happen in the co-op movement. I think perhaps a good example of just that kind of failure is the Red River Co-op and I am sure there are others that perhaps I am not even aware of. I would like to ask whether the Minister is aware of any co-ops that have perhaps failed or, for that matter, credit unions and caisses populaires.

Mr. McCrae: The Honourable Member is right when he refers to the cooperative movement in the context of the general economic climate of a jurisdiction. I think that the numbers of cooperatives and cooperatives getting started, the number dissolving, is probably in the same kind of order as in the private business community. I do not think that there is anything unusual in terms of statistics that I can report to the Honourable Member or anything alarming at this time.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Rose): Item 4.(a)(1) Salaries—pass; 4.(a)(2) Other Expenditures \$264,400—pass.

Item 4.(b) Cooperative and Credit Union Regulation: (1) Salaries \$494,200—the Honourable Member for Elmwood.

Mr. Maloway: We could go on to Minister's Salary and then go back if you want.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Rose): Item 4.(b)(1) Salaries—pass; 4.(b)(2) Other Expenditures \$46,700—pass.

Resolution No. 37: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$1,842,200 for Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs, Cooperative and Credit Union Development and Regulation, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1989—pass.

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): Perhaps while the staff are here the Minister could provide us with an update as to the new projects that are currently under development by now, the new department, if he could provide us with some indication as to the last fiscal year, how many incorporations were actually finalized, the status of those co-ops that were incorporated, as well as provide us with an update as to how many projects are currently under development, how many have been finalized in the current fiscal year and what he anticipates as the final count for the end of the fiscal year.

* (1530)

Mr. McCrae: I would like to reintroduce for, I do not know how many years, 19 years in the department for Mr. Vic Hryshko who is the Director of Co-op Development. We also have Margaret Porcher who is the Director of External Finance Services.

In response to the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan), I do have some information that might be of interest to the Honourable Member. There have

been 20 new cooperatives incorporated between April 1 and October 31 of this year. I am told that the note I am working from is a little dated. It is now 25 new cooperatives. There you have it.

The Honourable Member asked about how many projects were under way. There are 59 projects under way. During the period of the election campaign, departmental programs were promoted and that might have resulted in a smaller number of projects. I think that is the information the Honourable Member was looking for.

Mr. Cowan: I had asked a number of detailed questions. Perhaps the Minister could, if he has it readily available in written form, pass it over. I imagine he would, given the complete briefing which his department usually provides in these areas.

Can he indicate how many projects are anticipated to be incorporated by the end of the year? I recognize that is a judgment call at this point in time. Usually the department can give some indication at this point in time with only three months left as to what they believe their final outcome will be. As well, if he can forward any information over, and again I do not want to take up the time of Estimates with the detail, but forward to us any information concerning the list of projects that are currently under way and the status of those particular projects.

Mr. McCrae: I can tell the Honourable Member that by the end of the fiscal year we are expecting somewhere between 50 and 60 incorporations. We are into new initiatives, such as farmers' markets and aquaculture and on-site day care. The Honourable Member has put his questions on the record and the department will have a copy of those questions. We will be happy to make that available to him, unless the Honourable Member wants to discuss each and every matter now. We will be happy to make whatever information the Honourable Member has put on the record available to him.

Mr. Cowan: I appreciate the suggestion of the Minister that they provide that sort of detailed information in another form. I think that would be helpful to moving the Estimates along.

But there are some more general questions which I think are important to discuss in this form. The first would be with respect to the Gas Bar Co-op Program. Can the Minister give us some indication as to the results of the first year of the Gas Bar Co-op Program, some indication as to the projects that are currently under way, and also take this opportunity to provide some of his Government's or his own personal viewpoints as to the Gas Bar Co-op Program?

I ask that question specifically because that program was referred to by my critic when I was Minister as the "Titanic of the Co-op movement," and that is in Hansard and there for anyone who wishes to read. The previous Opposition, the now-Government, when it was in Opposition was very critical of that program. I believe even perhaps the Minister might have, at one time or another, expressed some concern about the program.

I know there is concern in the communities because of comments which the previous critic made in this House so I think it would be opportune for the Minister now to provide some insight as to where this Government intends to go with that particular program and, at the same time, give us some information as to the exact status of the projects that are currently before the department in this area.

Mr. McCrae: It would be incorrect for the Honourable Member to say that this particular Minister has said something negative about the Gas Bar Program. In some cases, perhaps where there are proposals that have not gone forward to this point, there might very well be concerns. I do not think the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) wants to go on record as supporting something that is just clearly a bad deal. I do not think he is saying that and, if I have ever stated any concern, it would be along those lines. But I cannot recall, and I would be happy to have it pointed out to me where I have been anything but positive about the future of cooperative development in this province.

It has contacted approximately 30 communities in its development in regard to the potential development of gas bars. That is happening under this Minister and I suggest that would not be happening if the Honourable Member's suggestions were correct. I do not say they are suggestions, but what the Honourable Member has said, if there was some lack of philosophical commitment to the development of cooperatives in Manitoba on the part of this Government, then those kinds of contacts would be a waste because of the lack of philosophical commitment. It is just not there.

The Member, I believe he and his colleagues, in debate on Bill—I believe it is 15—have attempted to make that case and I do not think that the facts back the Honourable Member or his colleagues up. I know the Honourable Member's feelings about his former department and I now can confirm for the Honourable Member that this department is working well. I am very pleased to be the Minister in charge of this department and the people in the department are very dedicated to the principle of developing cooperatives in this province.

In view of the interest being shown by the federal Government in the cooperative movement, I think that is a very natural thing for a provincial Government to want to do, and that is to be interested in the development of cooperatives. There are five gas bar programs operating: Gods River, Shamattawa, Red Sucker Lake, Gods Lake Narrows and Garden Hill. The Honourable Member is very familiar with those and he also should be familiar with the great benefit that those gas bars provide to the people in those communities, so I do not think the Honourable Member is going to be able to make the kind of case that perhaps he has been trying to make.

Currently, the department is working with the three incorporated gas bar cooperatives at Brandon, The Pas, Grand Rapids, five groups in northern locations—Pukatawagan, Oxford House, Wasagamack, St. Theresa Point and Norway House. As I said earlier, over 30 communities have been contacted and presented with information on the program.

I do not have the most up-to-date figures on the interest being generated in Brandon, although it was passing strange to be hearing people who might like to see a gas bar getting started in Brandon, to hear them expressing dismay that prices are too low and that we cannot get going because prices are too low, when the object of getting a gas bar going was to help to bring prices into a reasonable level.

* (1540)

I recall looking at a Brandon Sun article and spokesmen expressing some dismay that prices are not high enough for us to get going. I do not think that is really a positive kind of comment. I have not been anything but supportive of any thrust on the part of people wanting to get together to try to improve market circumstances in my own community and in any other community, but it seems that the gas bar program is particularly suited to northern and remote areas.

Mr. Ashton: I know the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) has some additional questions to ask. I am in a bit of a dilemma as the Co-op Development critic. I am also up in the other committee as the Workers Compensation/Civil Service critic.

I appreciate the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) having raised a number of questions in this area, certainly well versed in it, and certainly I concur with some of the comments he has been putting on the record. I know that if there is one thing the Member for Churchill would not have done himself, which I feel I should have to do, is to commend for his record as the Minister responsible for Co-op Development. I think the statistics that the Minister can certainly provide to this House show that his commitment was one of more than words. It was put into action. We saw a record number of incorporation of cooperatives and we saw some innovative developments similar to the gas bar co-ops, for example, which the Member for Churchill was just asking in terms of questions.

I hope that the thrust is continued. If this Minister had done nothing more than continue the initiatives brought in by the previous NDP Government, I think that would, in itself, have been sufficient because certainly there was enough under way in terms of the Co-op Development Department. But the thing that concerns me is that, while some of the individual initiatives may still be ongoing, the commitment clearly is not there, as shown by the fact that the Conservative Government has chosen—one of its top priorities, apparently, was to roll the Cooperative Development Department into this current one.

I think that has taken away from the focus that was given previously to Co-op Development. I would ask the Minister this and that is, why, given the fact that there was such an excellent record and in part at least because of the fact that the co-op sector, a separate sector from the public and private sectors, was given recognition as being an equally legitimate sector—as the former Minister for Co-op Development points out, the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan), why did this Government as one of its first actions decide to bury the department in the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs?

I say "bury" because, first of all, it no longer has a separate department and, second of all, if the Minister had even put it into some of the other economic development portfolios such as IT and T, at least there would be some recognition that it was an equal partner. I am not saying that we on this side would have agreed with the cut that would have taken place as a result, but why has this Government chosen to downgrade the status of co-ops and bury it in with the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs?

Mr. McCrae: The Honourable Member may not have heard the exchange between myself and the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) just before the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) got into this discussion. I made the point with the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) that I do not believe that he can possibly make the point or the Honourable Member for Thompson that somehow there is any change in the thrust of the cooperative development initiative of the Government of Manitoba. The Honourable Member has said that the commitment is not there. He has absolutely no facts to back that up. He refers to an amalgamation of two departments and says that is somehow a burial. That is not so, and the Honourable Member cannot show with any evidence whatsoever that is a fact.

There indeed has been an amalgamation. There has also been an election. One of the most important key issues in that election is who is best able to manage the affairs of this province. One of the ways of better managing the affairs of the province was to bring Cooperative Development under the umbrella of Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs. The Honourable Member cannot make any more out of that than what it is and all the arguing in the world is not going to make his case.

I know there was extended debate on Bill 15, a bill which had nothing whatever to do with the amalgamation, but Honourable Members, which is their right, used the opportunity to discuss the matter of the amalgamation of the two departments. Nowhere in that debate were they able successfully to make the point that there has been any change in this department's commitment to the development of cooperative enterprise in this province. If the Honourable Member is trying to make a case that there is some change in commitment, then how does he explain that 10 farmers' market cooperatives are projected to become operational by the summer of 1989. That number is already outdated. We are moving so fast, Mr. Acting Chairman, it is already up to 14 from the 10 I mentioned a moment ago.

I mean things are moving right along. How can he say that there is a lack of commitment when, as of October 31, 1988, there were 59 projects in various development stages. The breakdown of these is as follows: day care, 14; employment, 7; gas bars, 7; farmers' markets, 7; community service, 9; housing, 5; cable TV, 2; marketing, 4; utilities, 2; agricultural, 2, for a total of 59. The Honourable Member's arguments do not stack up.

I know it is nice to say, well, because they made a change, somehow that reflects a lack of commitment

to cooperative development in this province. No way. If the Honourable Member knew the Honourable Charlie Mayer who is the federal Minister responsible for the development of cooperatives, if he knew that gentleman as I do, he would know what kind of thrust there is going on at the federal level. We want to get in on that here in this province. The Honourable Member is reading this whole matter incorrectly.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the Minister knows full well why there has been development in terms of cooperatives. It has been because of the initiatives of the New Democratic Party Government. It has already been documented there was a dramatic increase because the New Democratic Party Government previously, which is in keeping with its philosophy since the 1930's with the CCF, actively promoted cooperative development not just in the general sense but in terms of some of the specific programs that have led to the statistics that the Minister is referring to. As I said, if this Government had done nothing else other than leave things alone, leave well alone, I have no doubt that this momentum would be continuing indefinitely.

My concern, Mr. Acting Chairperson, is what is going to be happening in the year after that and the year after that and the year after that, after the momentum that is going to develop from the programs that were introduced by the previous Minister of Co-op Development, what is going to happen? Now the Minister can say that burying this department in with Consumer and Corporate Affairs is somehow giving it a higher priority. I just do not know. Clearly, it is not. The Minister knows that.

The Minister knows that his present colleague, the previous critic for this area, was very critical of some of the initiatives that he is now trying to take credit for, which I find ironic in the extreme.

For the Minister to then turn around and say, well, now we will talk about election mandates. I would suggest to this Minister that no one particularly got much of a mandate out of the previous election. We are in a minority Government situation. I think it is incumbent on this Government, instead of giving this long rambling 15-minute speech as his supposed answer, recognize what we have been saying. Now if the Government wants to stand up and say Cooperative Development is not as high a priority with this Government as it was with the NDP, I think it would be the honest and straightforward answer.—(Interjection)— Yes, I think the former critic might have had that sort of same honesty to say that—political honesty.

I am surprised that the Minister now attempts to defend this decision instead of saying, no, we did not feel the Cooperative Development deserved the same sort of priority as other sectors in the economy, because that is what the bottom line is. They have not only buried the Department of Cooperative Development, they have put it in with Consumer and Corporate Affairs. They had not put it in with other major economic portfolios. I think I would like to ask the Minister why was that not chosen. At least, if the department was going to lose its own independent status, why was the

decision made to put Cooperative Development in with this department rather than the other major economic departments, either Small Business or Industry, Trade and Tourism?

Mr. Helmut Pankratz (La Verendrye): I would just like to put a few comments on the record. These two years, while I have been the critic of Co-op Development, we were never really critical of the co-op movement as such. I think what we were critical of is certain aspects of it and there are the records that can bear that out. I am sure the Member would be able to have the records available whereby co-ops were set up for a specific reason of qualifying for federal grants, where the province was giving all the monies that the co-op, their share, their percentages and everything was given to them through grants.

I will tell you, we have on record—and I can get the files from my office—whereby the accountability was in a shambles and it is unfortunate that the previous, the person in charge of Co-op Development is not here at the present to hear me out on this, because he always indicated to me, you come to my office and I will show you everything that is happening. But it was always confidential that I could not use it in this House. I think everybody in this side of the House, in Government today, is not against the co-op movement as such but the poor accountability that took place in so many cases. I think that is what I believe must be for the record.

* (1550)

I think there is no question about it. We have credit union co-ops and gas co-ops and so forth, which we are members of, a lot of our Members are members of themselves. I think it is very unfair to say that this Government side of the House is against co-ops as such. But we are not in favour of the co-ops that were set up for the mere sake of qualifying for grants, whether they be provincially or federally, which would not bear out any accountability as such. I think that has to be stated. Thank you.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Acting Chairman, I will be fairly brief—(Interjection)—The Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) seems to be suggesting that somehow I should not be on my feet right now. Last time I looked, I was a Member of this House, as was the Honourable Member for Thompson, as was the Honourable Member for La Verendrye (Mr. Pankratz). So we will take it from there.

The Honourable Member is trying very hard to make a case that is not there. The Honourable Member will have noticed that I have said nothing negative about the performance of the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) when he was Minister of Cooperative Development and, if what the Honourable Member for Thompson said were true, do you not think that the initiatives that have happened since the election of the new Government, do you not think those types of initiatives would have been stopped in their tracks if we disagreed with the thrust of Cooperative Development in this province?

The Honourable Member does not make a very good case. Activity has not stopped in the area of Cooperative Development. Now then, that is not good enough. The Honourable Member has not been able to make that case. So then he says, okay, what about next year, what about the following year and what about the following year? We had a debate just like that on the Free Trade Agreement, Mr. Acting Chairman, until it was coming out of our ears, until some of us could not take it anymore. We have had enough and the voters said, uncle, we think free trade is going to be okay for our country and they voted that way, but Honourable Members opposite carry on with the kind of "what if" arguments, you know, what if the sky should fall, and all of those kinds of arguments. But that is what you have to do when you do not have a case to make, and that is what the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) is doing.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the case is quite clearly before the people of Manitoba. This Government came into office. Cooperative Development was a separate department. It was considered to be equal in terms of its potential with the public and private sectors. It was on an equal basis with other economic portfolios. This Government has changed that, and this Minister obviously does not understand that by changing the priority given to Cooperative Development, while there may still be continuing certification of co-ops following from the programs that were put in place, it is not going to lead to the kind of expansion which there is a great deal of potential for in Manitoba, as would have been the case, I know for a fact, if the continuation had been there of the previous efforts.

So let this Minister not get up as he does with his sort of continually expanding debating techniques of attempting to put forward a proposition that is not true and build on it. Well, the proposition the Member put forward is not true. This Government has clearly indicated that it does not have the priority toward co-ops. I think the Member for La Verendrye (Mr. Pankratz) misunderstands the point I was making, that he makes my point for me. What he did is he got up and he said, well we were concerned about these programs. We were concerned about that particular type of co-op.

You know, I never said that the Member when he was critic attacked the cooperative movement, but I do know there was a great deal of criticism put forward in terms of specific programs that were initiated by the previous Minister of Cooperative Development. That is what we are talking about, not whether Members are in favour of co-ops or not. I am sure there are many Members in this House who are individually members of co-ops, as I am, I know, and others are or support the general idea. That has never been the issue at debate. The issue is what the provincial Government is going to do in terms of promoting cooperative development. For the Minister now to try and get up and take credit for an issue that is based on programs put in place by the NDP Government as the only defence he has available to him, to the clear and evident fact that this Government cut the funding for co-op development, I find is absolutely incredible. The Minister obviously did not understand the criticism that was put forward.

The fact is that without this department being a separate department, the fact is that with it being buried in with Consumer and Corporate Affairs, the concern that we have in the New Democratic Party is that great potential for expansion will not be fulfilled. In fact, the developments of the last couple of years will not continue in the future. This is not trying to beg the question. I mean, obviously the Minister should understand that most, if not all, of the initiatives put in place were based on programs that he inherited from the NDP.

Now if he wants to try and take credit for that, he is the one who is stretching the argument. What we are saying is there will not be those type of new and bold initiatives that we saw under the NDP, unless this department is given the status it deserves, an equal status with other economic departments, and also if there is a commitment to new types of initiatives.

Now if I had the time, and we do not unfortunately in Estimates, I could go into a whole series of areas that I think are important. I know that the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) was a strong believer in worker co-ops. I still feel a lot can be done in that area. I have a piece of legislation before this House, Bill No. 33, which deals with plant closures. I think there is a great deal of potential for worker co-ops to take over plants that would otherwise be shut down. I would be willing to discuss that with the Minister at any time.

I think there is a great deal of potential for the development of community economic development corporations in Manitoba, CDCs as they are often called. They are in place in other jurisdictions. They are in place in other Canadian jurisdictions and they have shown, for example, that you can have a great deal of economic benefit when, say, northern and Native communities or in the city areas, in some cases, it is women working together, in some cases depressed rural communities, when they work together, when they develop a financial base. I can once again go into some detail when we have the time which, unfortunately, we do not in the Estimates process.

But these are the type of programs that I feel that the Department of Cooperative Development could be working on, and may in fact have been working on. But these are the kind of programs that I feel will suffer if the department becomes an appendage of the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. That is why I ask, for example, why they did not at least put it in with Industry, Trade and Tourism. I still would have had some difficulty in losing the focus for Cooperative Development. But to my mind, it would have made far more sense to have Cooperative Development in with another major economic portfolio, Industry, Trade and Tourism, which deals by and large with the private sector.

So I will ask the Minister again, because I think in his rush to get into the larger debate, he did not answer that specific question: why did the Government not proceed with the other alternative of putting the department in with the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism? Further, would it consider at least doing that as an alternative to what I feel was a bad decision on two counts: first of all, for the loss of the department;

and second of all, for the fact that it has been put into a department which does not I think give it the kind of stature as an economic sector deserves?

Mr. McCrae: I am sure indeed, Mr. Acting Chairman, that those involved in the delivery of the services provided by the Department of Co-op Development, those involved in the cooperative sector itself, would tend to be offended by what the Honourable Member has said today.

Mr. Ashton: Oh, get lost.

Mr. McCrae: The Honourable Member takes 10 minutes to ask a question and, when I start to answer it, he says get lost. I will put the Honourable Member on notice. I mean, if he wants to heckle, I mean he just was given—and I sat quietly and listened to him—an opportunity to ask his question and I am going to proceed to answer it. I am not going to be told by the Honourable Member how I should do it either.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. McCrae: When you are finished, I will start. Mr. Acting Chairman, the Honourable Member talked about criticisms. Now surely that is the nature of this place and I will accept criticism and I often do, and I often act on criticism in an attempt to improve the matter on which I am being criticized. I am not unable to take criticism. I am quite good at it, lots of times, as a matter of fact.

Now the Honourable Member is making this case that somehow we should have done something else. I can tell you, if we had decided to do exactly what the Honourable Member said, he would have said, well, why did you not put it in with Consumer and Corporate Affairs where they have a regulatory capacity, and they are a regulatory kind of department? That is what he would have said then. We know that is what Oppositions are here to do is criticize. The Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) does it well and will be doing it for a very long time, we know that.

* (1600)

The Honourable Member's arguments do not add up about commitment. I would just like to get back to that. The matter of how the Government of Manitoba is organized was a matter addressed by the new Government of Manitoba as we told the people of Manitoba we would do. We have done some reorganization of the Government and this is going to benefit Manitobans. After all, the Honourable Member may not remember, but I do, and that is that it is the taxpayer of this province who is paying the bills. Where we can use taxpayers' dollars more efficiently and where we can streamline Government departments without hurting programs, without impacting in any way upon the programs delivered by those departments, we will do that. If the Honourable Member wants to play games with departments for cosmetic purposes, so be it.

I would rather that the things that we do be real and genuine and deliberate results, rather than paint a pretty

picture of something that sometimes is not so pretty. But in Cooperative Development, the picture is a good picture and I have not been critical of my predecessor in this office. I have not done that. We are in a position to pursue new initiatives and we are. The Honourable Member is concerned about new initiatives and that there will not be any because there has been a change of Government and the NDP are not in charge anymore, so everything is just going to slide. Well, it is just not so.

Mr. Acting Chairman, with respect to farmers' market co-operatives, every community that this department has contacted with respect to that has shown an interest in farmers' market co-operatives. Fourteen are projected to become operational by the summer of 1989. Not all this work went on when the Honourable Member and his colleague, the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan), was the Minister. Those things are going on today. The Honourable Member wants to make some other kind of case for that.

There is a conference being held in Brandon in March to discuss the possibilities of setting up a central for farmers' markets. Well, if there is no commitment, why would I want to be there as the guest speaker? I want to be there. I am telling that to the Honourable Member, so maybe he will understand, maybe he will believe me. Sometimes I think they do believe me but feel they have to say something anyway. But anyway, I will leave that aside. I will be there talking about how the cooperative sector can have an economic input into communities, how the cooperative sector can assist our province in its pursuit of the goal of more tourism, how there can be a spin-off effect from that kind of activity in our economy.

The Honourable Member says there is no commitment to any kinds of new initiatives or any even ongoing initiatives. His arguments are not making it, because we are also interested in on-site cooperative day care. That is a facility, as the Honourable Member would know, that is located at a place of employment. It has many advantages over conventional or baby-sitter arrangements. It reduces absenteeism, allows a parent to visit during coffee break or lunch break and improves attitudes and productivity on the part of employees.

Those are two areas that there is significant interest being shown in and then there is the area of aquaculture cooperatives. Now, it is not that is anything brand new, but fish farming is becoming more and more popular and many technological advances in that field have been made. Because of its geographic makeup, Manitoba has a lot of potential to develop a large aquaculture industry. The department is currently exploring areas of opportunities in this field. These are things that my department is telling me they are doing and the development area of the department, there has been no change in the attitude of those people. The people in the department are as motivated as ever, I suggest to the Honourable Member, and these facts speak to that very point. Sorry, I say through Mr. Acting Chairman to the Honourable Member, but his argument is not making it today.

Mr. Ashton: Well, Mr. Acting Chairperson, the Minister keeps repeating ad nauseum the same sort of

programmed answers that we find from him in Question Period on other occasions. He keeps referencing arguments that make my point again. I said right from the start that the Co-op Department is an excellent department. There were some excellent programs put in place, a vast majority, if not all, by the previous Minister. He even admitted that himself. That is something I said right from the start.

I never said that the Co-op Development Department had ground to a halt or all of a sudden the people in the Co-op Development Department are not doing their job. What I said is that by the change that this Government has brought in, I honestly believe—I know the previous Minister, the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) honestly believes. Our caucus honestly believes that there will not be the priority within the broad parameters of Government through the cooperative sector.

Now, there will still be cooperatives incorporated, many of them under programs that were initiated previously. We do not doubt that. We hope that is the case. We hope this Government will at least allow the department to continue doing its job. As I said, if they did nothing more than leave it alone, we would be quite happy, at least in the meantime, because we would not have to worry about the future situation. But I want that to be very clear that we are not offending the co-op sector, as this Minister rather ridiculously tried to put on the record. I find that quite silly actually, Mr. Acting Chairperson, and it may be typical but I find that kind of thing to be rather a petty sort of debating technique that really does not have much place in here.

If the Minister wants to know, if he will go to his Premier (Mr. Filmon) and argue that Co-op Development should be put in with Industry, Trade and Tourism, I want to tell him that I would not get up and criticize that move. I would say that this would be one case where perhaps the Government listened to some criticism. I still think what should be done is that the Department of Cooperative Development should be made a separate department in Government. But short of that, I think it will be far preferable to be in Industry, Trade and Tourism. I want to indicate that in no way would I have said that if the Minister had got up and said, we had a choice between Consumer and Corporate Affairs and between Industry, Trade and Tourism that I would have attempted to change my arguments to meet the circumstances.

The most preferred alternative is a separate department. To my mind, the second-best alternative would have been in Industry, Trade and Technology and, yes, we would have criticized it, but not to the same extent to which we criticize what I consider to be the worst of all possible alternatives, and that is the decision made by this Government.

Now I know the Minister did not answer my question before. Unfortunately, I do have to go to the other committee in Estimates to deal with a couple of departments there, but I would leave that with him and I would hope that perhaps in next year's Estimates that the Minister by then would have perhaps had a chance to review this.

I want to say once again that I will be the first one in next year's Estimates to get up and say, well I may

have criticized this Minister but at least he did listen to one thing, if the Minister does arrange to have this department put in with Industry, Trade and Tourism. I think that is where it belongs in terms of the economic sense of the portfolio. I think that is where it belongs in terms of the workload, because this Minister is overworked.

I do not think anybody has suggested he is underworked. It may surprise him for me to be saying this, but we know he is overworked. He is the Attorney-General and he is also the Minister responsible for Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Co-op Development. And I think that is a very tremendous load, and House Leader no less, for the Minister to be undertaking. I know that the Minister responsible for Co-op Development also had a heavy portfolio in our Government, and he had a lot of attention placed on Cooperative Development because he did have at least some time in the day to consider cooperative matters.

So that is the second reason, not very much, but I would urge that this department be moved and that is because—and I say this in all honesty—I really believe that this Minister is overworked. He does not have enough time to pay attention to every part of his department. I really feel that the area that is going to suffer is going to be in terms of Cooperative Development.

So, it is a function, yes, of the Budget, yes, of which department it has been put in, and third of all the attention that this Minister can give.

* (1610)

As I said, I wish I have further time to continue this discussion. I am sure he will in the upcoming Estimates. I am sure that my colleague here from Churchill (Mr. Cowan) will continue it now. But I really do want to put on the record that if the Minister wants to listen to our criticism, at least go part way, I think the appropriate thing would be to put the department in with Industry, Trade and Technology, and I would appreciate it if he could at least give some consideration, recognizing that perhaps that was not done in the initial go-around to reconsidering the move.

Mr. McCrae: I believe the honourable Member's comments are well motivated and his intentions are good and I will take them as such. I do not agree with everything he says about my being able to carry out my function, and so on. But we are not going to agree on everything, but I will take the Honourable Member's comments in the spirit that they were intended this time around. I believe he was sincere when he expresses concern about the future of cooperative development in this province, and we will do all that we can to ensure that cooperative development in this province moves ahead.

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I want to go back to my earlier comments about the gas bar co-ops and I want to remind the Minister that I choose my words carefully in this House when I speak them, and what I said was that he had indicated in the past that he had some concerns about gas bar co-ops and the Gas Bar Co-op Program.

I got the impression from his comments that he has no concerns about the Gas Bar Co-op Program, that he is fully supportive of the Gas Bar Co-op Program. I will seek some affirmation if I can from his seat if he can indicate that is the case. Okay, he will answer the questions, and the question I will ask him very clearly then is, does he consider himself to be fully supportive of the Gas Bar Cooperative Program as designed and as was being implemented by the previous administration?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, at Gods River before the Gas Bar Co-op, the price per gallon for gasoline was \$8.50. The price is now \$3.50. At Shamattawa, the price was \$6.50 per gallon. The price is now \$4.00. Now these figures might be slightly out of date, but I am taking these figures for what they say on the paper I am referring to, and I can go down to the others and in each case it shows a significant improvement in the cost of a gallon of gas.

Now, you know, the Honourable Member may be wanting to stir something up here or stir the pot, but the point is you cannot argue with those figures and I cannot either, and I would not try. I think in the City of Brandon where they are talking about setting up a gas bar, and my honourable friend, the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) has had some involvement there, I believe that maybe it is because of different market forces in the City of Brandon, different from what you will find them at Gods River or Shamattawa, Red Sucker Lake, etc. I believe that difference in market forces may be what is holding things up in terms of getting the same kind of gas bar going in the City of Brandon. But if you look at those statistics, you kind of have to be impressed by them.

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Acting Chairperson, not only am I impressed by them but I am proud of them because my administration had a large role in developing that program, designing it, putting it in place and working very hard to make certain that it happened. Not only am I proud of them, but I am certain the staff are proud of them because they played even a larger role in respect to once the policy had been developed—and the policy was criticized, I might add—but once the policy had been developed and confirmed by the Government, they had the hard task of working under some very adverse time constraints to put gasoline into those communities. They did an admirable job. The communities are well aware of the significant cost savings which accrued to them as a result of that initial policy development and the hard work to implement it.

I ask the Minister though very clearly, is he in favour of, does he fully support, is what I asked him exactly, the gas bar initiative program as designed and implemented by the previous administration? I did so because there was criticism of that program. There is criticism by his colleague who sits a few rows behind him now, the Member for La Verendrye (Mr. Pankratz), who called it and I quote, "a Titanic of the co-op movement." That is in Hansard, so it is irrefutable. I believe that he was sincere when he made that criticism. I do not believe he understood the program, perhaps

he understands it better now. But on the basis of his understanding of that day, that is what he did call the program.

I would ask the Minister if he has had an opportunity to meet with Federated Co-op to discuss with them their concerns respecting the Gas Bar Co-op Program?

(The Acting Chairman, Mr. Kozak, in the Chair.)

Mr. McCrae: The Member talks about criticism and how criticisms are made. I look at, I think the Manitoba Telephone System was nationalized I believe by Sir Rodmond Roblin, something that David Orlikow reminded the House of Commons about almost daily in his speeches. When he did that, it reminded me of the Honourable Member's comments today. I am sure there must have been somebody out there criticizing Sir Rodmond Roblin when he nationalized the telephone company or criticized R.B. Bennett, probably the most criticized Prime Minister in this particular century in this country. Near the end of his term, he brought forward a number of initiatives that we have to this day. So the Honourable Member can make whatever he likes of the fact that some things are criticized at certain points.

At the time of the amalgamation of the department, I met with many players in the cooperative sector. The last meeting with Federated was last week. That was attended by officials of the department. I was not able to be there, but I will be meeting with the Co-op Council next week. So we do have an ongoing dialogue and we try to listen to what is being said to us. The message does not come through just exactly the way the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) delivered that message, but we listen nonetheless.

Mr. Cowan: The reason I asked the question is because I, as Minister, had met with Federated Co-ops and they were critical of the program. As a matter of fact, they were opposed to the program. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) agrees with that and he was critical of the program in this House, I think mouthing the Federated concerns which he sincerely believed.

The reason I find it hard to square what the Minister is saying in this House and what I have heard he is saying outside of the House is because Federated Co-op is going around now—and it is in writing so it can be substantiated, I do not have it with me but it can be easily enough substantiated—saying that they have swung the Minister over to their way of thinking with respect to the Gas Bar Co-op Program, and that the Government is not going to proceed with those elements of the Gas Bar Co-op Program which the previous Government was going to initiate. If the Federated Cooperative is not portraying the Minister's position correctly in that regard, then I would suggest that he should have some discussions with them because that is how they are portraying it. If they are portraying the Minister's position correctly, then he is not in favour of the program as it was designed and attempted to be implemented by the previous administration.

The Minister says that he is not opposed to Gas Bar Co-op Programs. The reason I asked him the question

is not to stir the pot, but perhaps to let the pot settle down a bit by allowing the Minister the opportunity, in a very definitive way, to clarify his Government's intentions with respect to Gas Bar Co-op Programs. Because what he says in this House is not what is being perceived out there. I just quote from a newspaper October 8, 1988, not that old, a newspaper with which the Minister is very familiar. It is called the Brandon Sun. It is a front page article and it says, "McCrae says no to gas bars." That is the headline. The subhead is: "Don't hold breath for price drop." I will just read the first couple of paragraphs:

"Gasoline prices will have to increase dramatically before the provincial Government heeds the report and buys gas bars, says Consumer Affairs Minister, Jim McCrae. The Brandon West MLA tabled a long-awaited report Friday which recommends the Manitoba Government purchase several gas stations to keep the price of gas low."

And here is a quote from Mr. McCrae:

"It was never our policy to build gas bars around the province to provide competition. It is risky business."

* (1620)

And then the Editorial of May 30 which is some time ago, again one which I know the Minister has some familiarity with because I know he reads these editorials and he tries to respond to them as every politician does. But this editorial is from the same paper. It is entitled, "Keep Open Mind." Let me just again read a couple of comments from it—direct quotes:

"There is a fair degree of irony in the fact Brandon West MLA Jim McCrae is going to help decide the fate of a plan that was promoted earlier this year by former NDP Cabinet Minister, Len Evans, the MLA for Brandon East. When Evans was in Government, he promoted a co-op gas bar for Brandon as one way for citizens in this city to get around the cartel manner in which gasoline retailing is conducted in this city.

"McCrae, as one of his many and varied Cabinet responsibilities, is Minister of Cooperative Development and could do much to ensure that the gas bar gets under way. The new Brandon Cabinet Minister was a skeptic last winter when Evans began promoting the idea."

So now the Minister is telling us that he was not concerned about the program, because that was the program that Mr. Evans, the Member for Brandon East was promoting, that he has not been concerned about it. But the paper quotes him as having been a skeptic. Just a little over a month ago, the papers are saying he is saying "no" to gas bars and there seems to be a lot of confusion out there, given the fact that even Federated Co-op is going around and saying that they have swung the Minister over on this one and they do not have the same problem with this Minister that they had with the previous Minister with respect to gas bar co-ops, because this Minister is not going to promote that idea.

That is fair, that is a philosophical decision. I think it is one which he will find supported by his colleagues, beginning with the Member for La Verendrye (Mr. Pankratz) who called this the Titanic program, and going all the way down to the front benches to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), who has always been critical of that aspect of the program. So I believe in fact there is a great deal of concern within his caucus about the way in which the program was established previously.

There is no disagreement that the program has brought many benefits to northern communities, and it should bring more benefits to northern communities. I will add though that he should reflect back on the questions in this House, and some of the questions outside of this House, when his colleagues' concerns were primarily about whether or not we would lose any money on this particular program. I do not believe we have. He can clarify that.

The fact is the bands, I believe, have very well paid off the investment which was made in their gas bar co-ops. There are many more bands that need this sort of a program. We would do everything that we can to encourage the Minister to continue to work with the bands, not only the bands but with the Metis settlements in other northern communities that are outside of the Northern Affairs communities jurisdiction or Indian Affairs jurisdiction, to develop gas bar co-ops there.

But we would also encourage the Minister to continue with the other part of the program which was to develop gas bar co-ops in other cities, larger industrial cities, as a way to aid in bringing about competition that would bring the price of gasoline down. We may be at a point in time in Brandon where the price of gasoline is dropping and that is not a suitable time to start a gas bar co-op, as the Minister knows and as the Members know. I think we can take some satisfaction in the fact that for many years those prices had stayed arbitrarily high and it was not until there was a sincere and an honest and a committed effort to develop a Gas Bar Co-op Program in that community that the prices did drop. You can ask your staff if this is not the case, because they will confirm we thought that may be one of the results of our program, that the price would drop before we actually got a co-op established, because they would want to drop the prices to keep the co-op out.

That appears to be what has happened in that particular circumstance. So we have been successful in the same way that we were successful in final offer selection, when it is not used, but the threat is there that it brings the parties together to take action that they would not have otherwise taken.

So I believe the Minister has to clarify the record with respect to his own support of the entire Gas Bar Co-op Program. Unfortunately, there is not enough time to go into a great deal of detail in this set of Estimates, but I do want to ask some other questions which I would like the Minister to provide answers to outside of the Estimates process. I want to make a couple of other comments.

I want to reinforce what my colleague, the critic for Cooperatives from the New Democratic Party caucus

said with respect to our concern about the way in which the department has been disbanded. The department, in fact, has been disbanded. There is no Department of Cooperative Development. There are some very good people, some really good people in that department who work hard to promote co-ops in this province. Some of them are sitting with the Minister today. Yesterday, we paid tribute to Mr. Dick Chenier who did an excellent job over a number of years as Deputy Minister and is now going on to some other activities. Although we made a few jokes about his tenure, I think we are both quite sincere in our appreciation of the work that he had done for co-ops.

There are other staff who are here and staff in the department who work very hard. I consider a lot of those staff friends, as does the Minister and as does every Minister who works with his or her staff. I can tell when friends are happy and I can tell when friends are not happy. I have enough cordial contact with departmental staff to know that things are not all that the Minister says they are over there, that there is a bit of a morale problem. There is a bit of concern about the way in which the cooperative activities of the Government are going to be undertaken, given the disbanding or disestablishment, which is a correct word, of the department. If the Minister does not know that, he should have a very frank discussion with some of his staff. They will tell him that is the case, that there are morale problems, that people are concerned about where they are going, that there is an ambiguity, that there is an ambivalence, that there is a lack of clarity with respect to what this Government wants to do about the cooperative sector in Manitoba.

That is based partly on historical perceptions which linger on. They do remember what happened between 1977 and 1981 and the downturn of cooperative development in this province during that period of time. The statistics very clearly showed that was the case—irrefutable. They are concerned when they read these things because they do read these things about the Minister saying no to gas bars, even if that is not an accurate representation of what he said or not. He has to clarify that. This is an opportunity to do that. They are concerned, because they have contact with Federated. As a matter of fact, many of them came out of Federated as a movement and learned their skills as cooperators and cooperative development officers in that venue. They hear them saying that the Minister is thinking about not proceeding with the Gas Bar Co-op Program as in the way it was initially established. That is fair; that is a philosophical decision. But if you want to make it, at least clarify what it is you are going to continue with and what it is exactly what you are not going to continue with.

I do not know if the Member made it in an off-handed light-hearted fashion yesterday or not, but the type of comment from the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), who suggested that the cooperative curriculum was a commie curriculum. They do not know whether he was joking or not. The fact is that when the Lyon administration came in, of which he was a prominent Cabinet Minister, they stopped the activities around the development of the cooperative curriculum. They probably did so because they had a philosophical

problem with that curriculum. Maybe we just found out yesterday what that philosophical problem was. They thought that it was curriculum that was too left or, to use their words, commie curriculum. They hear those things and they wonder.

Without the clarification, without the very explicit sense of direction and the very explicit Mission Statement from the Minister, they do not really know where they are going and they begin to doubt their own value within the system, as they did from 1977 to 1981. I do not want to see that happen again. I do not think that should happen again. I think the Minister can take actions to make certain that it does not.

I would ask the Minister as well if he can report on the Co-op Implements and Vicon Agreement and how that agreement is proceeding and whether or not it is living up to the expectations of the Government of the Day when that agreement was put in place. I have to again say that the previous administration, when it put it in place, was subjected to quite a great deal of criticism by the Conservative Opposition who said that we were clouding the deal, that said it was a bad deal for Manitoba, that said that the Vicon deal is a "sham," to quote them in the headlines of the day, to say that we would not be able to recover the loans which we had put into place and to suggest that we were doing all sorts of—not nefarious, too strong a word—but certainly undertaking all sorts of wrong-headed decisions with respect to working with Co-op Implements and Vicon to build a viable opportunity for both operations to exist in the Province of Manitoba.

I would also ask the Minister if he can indicate the status of the development agreement with Arctic co-ops, because that is another area where the previous Conservative Opposition was very critical of the New Democratic Party. Now that they have access to the books and access to all of the staff resources, perhaps the Minister can stand in this place and say, yes, we were right, Vicon and Co-op Implements was a bad deal and here is why. Or perhaps he can stand in this place and say, yes, the Arctic cooperatives was a bad deal, the development agreement was a bad deal and here is why. Or perhaps he can stand in this place and say, yes, the Lakeshore Metis Land Improvement Co-op was a bad deal and here is why, because that is another co-op that was heavily criticized by the Minister.

I bring those points out, not because I want an answer or expect an answer on all of them today, but because I want to make the point that what is said in this House is written down and it is a matter of the record. What is said outside the House is also written in the newspapers, in the media, and it is a matter of the record. One has to justify their previous statements as well as their present activities and square the two, reconcile sometimes what may appear to be in the mind of those who were forced to undertake that activity an irreconcilable difference as to what was said and what actually happened.

* (1630)

Then we expect the Government of the Day to have the courage to say, yes, we were wrong in that particular

instance. We had miscalculated because we did not have all the information available to us or we did not share the same vision of cooperative development in the province as the previous administration but now, with more information available to us, we have been able to better articulate that decision and we can agree with what was done in the past.

The final point I would like the Minister to do is indicate if his Government intends to continue at the present level the Employment Cooperative Program and the Cooperative HomeStart Program. What plans, if any, does he have in mind for those and when would he anticipate implementing them if in fact he does have those plans in mind?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Acting Chairman, the Honourable Member has put a number of queries on the record. I will deal with some briefly here and we will have the Hansard of what the Honourable Member has said, and we will ensure that he will get a response in writing as he would like to have it at the appropriate time, when the work is done.

I would like to say a few things though. The Honourable Member knows that, in Government, rumours do fly around and comments get made here and there. I certainly hear about it a lot in the Attorney-General's Department. I hear comments and rumours that so and so is going to do such and such. I kind of find it somewhat humorous because rumours do not mean a thing to me and I do not respond to rumours. I know Honourable Members sometimes have asked me to give my comment about a rumour that is going around or they have asked a hypothetical question. My response usually is, well, I do not answer questions like that and I am not going to start now. When it comes to my position, as the Honourable Member has heard it from Federated Cooperatives or from somebody else, I am telling you that my positions are stated by me and that is where the Honourable Member can get those positions from.

The other matter I want to talk to the Honourable Member about is, I am always sensitive when he or any Member brings to my attention something written in the Brandon Sun. Of course, that is an important publication in my community and plays a very important part in the ongoing development of my community. The Honourable Member made a point. When things are down in writing, they are irrefutable. That is true if they are correct. I do not write the headlines, Mr. Acting Chairman. I rarely disagree or quarrel with what is in the text of a news story, but sometimes the headlines I can disagree with or I can comment about.

The headline on October 8, I believe it was of this year says, McCrae says no to gas bars. The Honourable Member made all his comments about that article without one word of reference to a fellow named Dr. Costas Nicolaou. Surely that is what that news story was about. For your information, Mr. Acting Chairman, you would be interested in knowing that Dr. Costas Nicolaou was asked by the previous Government to do a study on gas prices in Manitoba and whether those prices are fair and reflect proper balance in our economy and in our market system. The Honourable

Member did not mention that that story is a result of the Costas Nicolaou Report which was released by me.

The history of that matter takes us right back, not just to the last election but to two elections ago when the Honourable Member's then Leader, the one who, by the way, signed the Meech Lake Accord—the Honourable Member remembers which one that is, the one about whom the headlines wrote about Mulroney, "Mr. Mulroney, All is Forgiven." I remember that headline in the Winnipeg Free Press when Mr. Pawley returned to Winnipeg having signed the Meech Lake Accord. The headline in the Winnipeg Free Press was, "All is Forgiven." That was a reference to the CF-18 matter, with which the Honourable Member's Leader and my Leader and I and a whole lot of others disagreed rather profoundly, but now the Honourable Member wants to tell me how to make my comments. I did not tell him how to make his.

The Honourable Member wants to speed things up. He did not have to take this long. He could have written me a letter to ask the questions he has asked. In any event, I will try to get to the point.

The point is that the Costas Nicolaou Report made certain recommendations. That report was held by the New Democratic Party for many, many, many months before it was swept from office. It took me a little while to get to know what was in that report, and then I made the report public. The report suggested that we should get into this retailing of gasoline and get into the kind of gas bars Dr. Nicolaou was talking about. It was not a reference to the program begun by the Honourable Member, a program I think I should be clear on the record by now as being supportive of. I see it—(Interjection)—The Honourable Member asks if I am entirely supportive. I have allowed my Department to make contacts in as many as 30 communities to try to promote this thing, so I do not know what the Honourable Member is talking about.—(Interjection)—The Honourable Member keeps chirping from his seat as he often does.

Mr. Acting Chairman, under ordinary circumstances, I am glad I sit down at the other end there. I would be rattled having to listen to the Honourable Member and his colleague, the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) heckling all the time. I do not know how the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) can manage but, of course, he is a very calm and well-composed individual, the Honourable Minister of Health, and so he is not put off so easily as I am by the Honourable Member for Churchill and his heckling.

But let us be fair when we are talking about the Brandon Sun article to which the Honourable Member is referring. It says, "No To Gas Bars," but read the story, and that is what I invite anybody to do. I do not make a habit of writing letters to the editor to correct what they have written, but I did on one occasion write a letter to the Brandon Sun in regard to the gas bar proposal being put forward by the Honourable Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans). Now why did the Honourable Member for Churchill not read that into the record? Because in that—he says he does not have it, but I am sure he has read it, because he is interested in this program, the Honourable Member is. I think he

will find that I said in that—and I do not have it in front of me either, but the letter to the editor that I wrote to the Brandon Sun suggested that maybe, just maybe, the work being done by the Member from Brandon East might have some effect on prices in Brandon, and might be the reason that prices at that time were at a fairly acceptable level. I gave credit where I thought credit was due.

That gas bar may never get started. It may very well get started too, but it may never. But just maybe, the fact that those people got together to sign up to this particular gas bar project might have had some impact. Now, I can say that I do not agree, maybe that they do not have the best location in town to locate a gas bar, or that I do not think they will last very long if they do get started. I could say those things, but what I have been saying consistently is I support people getting together to try to do something about a problem.

Now, in recent months, the price of gas in Brandon has been, well some would say ridiculously low, and I am delighted. Very frankly, I am quite delighted. In fact, the Honourable Member might not even know this, but for a short time, very, very short, after a long time of being at levels of about 30 cents a kilometre, goes down around 25 cents, one day, per kilometre—did I say kilometre?. I am still trying to get used to what those Liberals in Ottawa did to us several years back. But Mr. Acting Chairman, we are talking litres here, I am sure everybody knows, but I knew that was the death knell, the end of the gas war when they dropped right down to 25 cents because they are right back up to 45 again. But, even so, if 45 is too high, then the proposal put together by those public-spirited people in Brandon might get off the ground. But I do worry as Minister what might happen if prices were to drop again and stayed down for awhile. Now the Honourable Member and his colleagues just naturally assume, oh, that is predatory, they are ganging up on the new gas bar. Saying it is one thing, proving it is another thing.

Now, that story in the newspaper referred to the Costas Nicolaou Report. The Honourable Member knows it and refers to that story in reference to the Gas Bar Program that he initiated, which I have not criticized. Now then he points to me to an editorial, which I did not write and so I do not take any responsibility for that, but the Honourable Member is taking things out of context and I do not think he is being fair. Quite frankly, I am skeptic and the Honourable Member says, "You are not skeptic, are you?" The fact is I am a careful person, I think. I believe myself to be a careful person. I do not believe in putting taxpayers' dollars at risk. I think doing the right thing for the people of Manitoba is my job and I do that in consultation with many, not only with the Honourable Member because, after I hear the Honourable Member's suggestions, I think, gee, maybe I will just check that one out before I grab it and go with exactly what he suggests everyday, or his friend and colleague, the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton). I am not just quickly going to jump on the bandwagon with their ideas. I am going to check them out before I carry them through.

* (1640)

So, in that respect, okay, if being careful means skeptical to the Honourable Member, so be it. I will not play games with words with the Honourable Member, because I do not find that a useful exercise. As I said, the Honourable Member is not quite as bad as the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), but he is just about there in terms of allowing the Member to make his speech without being interrupted every five minutes or every two minutes.

Now the Honourable Member asked if money had been lost on the Gas Bar Program, I think he was looking for an assurance from me that money had not been lost. I can give him that assurance. It is my pleasure to give him that assurance, and I am sure it makes the Honourable Member happy. I am sure it will make the Honourable Member for La Verendrye (Mr. Pankratz) and any person in public life happy to know that public dollars were not lost as a result.

Now the Honourable Member spoke also of the matter of the amalgamation, disestablishment was another word, and that is a correct word by the way—disband, disestablish. We could play word games all day long, Mr. Acting Chairman, but I really do not know that we would be serving the interests of the people of Manitoba by playing those games. I call it amalgamation. I see the Department of Cooperative Development serving important needs in our province and, as Minister responsible, I see the development of the cooperative sector, something that is important to our society. Heck, it is part of our culture. It is part of our traditions and heritage. I mean, look at our credit union movement, going all the way back to those days of Desjardins in Quebec and something—what?—50 years now in Manitoba with the cooperative movement?

The Honourable Member asks me all of a sudden to say—wants people to believe that all of a sudden this new Conservative Government, which he likes to compare with Governments of yesteryear (Interjection)—See, he has given us the years, too. We could go back to R.B. Bennett, if we like. I remember on the doorstep during the election campaign saying, oh, I was talking to Jay Cowan, or I was talking to Howard Pawley, and they said that Sterling Lyon did this or that. I said, well, we could go back to R.B. Bennett, too. We could do that. We could talk about the Bennett Buggy.

The Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) and his colleagues, they can only despair because they know, as do all the people of Manitoba, that we have a new competent, caring and businesslike Government in this province that has been and will continue to do a heck of a good job for the people of this province. Now that may be a problem for the Members in the Liberal Party and may be a problem also for Members of the New Democratic Party, but you cannot fight with the facts.

The fact is the Government is not the kind of Government they have been complaining about and we are not the Government that they say that potentially we could be. We are not like free trade which potentially could do this or potentially could do that. They never told us what free trade would do and they cannot say what this Government will do because this Government is delivering on the promises it made during the election

campaign. We are a very predictable-Government; we are a solid Government. We are carrying out our mandate. Predictable; it can be predicted that we will carry out our commitments.

The Honourable Member and the others keep trying to invent these monsters that do not exist. The Honourable Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), who just came in, does the same thing all the time.

Anyway, I have gone on quite long enough, Mr. Acting Chairman, I will respond to the questions I have not responded to in writing to the Honourable Member.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Kozak): Does that conclude discussion on item 5.? If that does conclude discussion on item 5., committee will now return to item 1.(a) Minister's Salary. Before resuming discussion, I would ask the Minister's staff to leave.

1. Administration and Finance, (a) Minister's Salary, \$10,300—the Honourable Member for Burrows.

Mr. Chornopyski: I move that we pass the Bill.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Kozak): Is there any further discussion of item 1.(a)?

Mr. Maloway: A couple of questions for the Minister and then I would be prepared as well to pass the Minister's Salary. The first question concerns a policy area that the Minister, I think, can address. That is that in Alberta, evidently Alberta is the only province that has legislation dealing with franchising, and I was wondering whether the Minister had any plans to introduce legislation concerning franchising in the future.

Mr. McCrae: I can tell the Honourable Member that franchising legislation is something that has been discussed by myself with officials in a number of briefing meetings and in discussions respecting legislation, so that the answer is, yes, the matter is being discussed.

Mr. Maloway: I want to ask the Minister a final question regarding a subject that is I know is near and dear to the Minister of Urban Affairs' (Mr. Ducharme) heart. He spent two years continually bringing up this subject, and I see the Government so far into this mandate has done absolutely nothing to fulfill the desires of their former critic. What I would like to know is whether the Government will be developing any type of lemon laws, such as those that exist in the United States.

An Honourable Member: Lemon laws?

Mr. Maloway: Lemon laws. Are you familiar? New cars. Ontario has a version of them. I believe it is the only jurisdiction in Canada that does, but it is nowhere near as comprehensive as what you have in some of the American states.

Mr. McCrae: I think maybe the Honourable Member should have asked me this when I had my officials here. We did go through several items of possible legislative initiatives in the future and that may very well have

been, but I can get back to the Honourable Member and let him know whether this is one of the items. The Honourable Members know that there were a number of things on the previous Government's agenda. I think some of the things we have seen come forward in Private Members' Hour, some Bills that could be said were probably ready.

The Honourable Member, if he would like to talk about the Honourable Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) for a little while longer, I will sit down and let him do that, but I am telling the Honourable Member that I will refresh my memory on that and let the Honourable Member know.

Mr. Maloway: I take it that the Minister will look into that. The reason I asked the question was that we, when we were in Government, were fending off his colleague for two years on this very question. I thought it passing strange that the Government has been in power now for six or seven months and this major issue of that Member, when they were in Opposition, has not been addressed at all. So that is what I was bringing to the Minister's attention.

I think that would be all the questions I have at this point. I have tried to get an answer from the Minister regarding that whole question about Section 3.2 of The Businesses Names Registration Act. I know that it is impossible to pin down silly putty. I am hopeful that at some point he may in fact do something about that. Thank you.

* (1650)

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Kozak): Item 1.(a) Minister's Salary \$10,300—pass.

Resolution No. 34: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$692,200 for Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs, Administration and Finance, \$692,200, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1989—pass.

We will move to the Department of Finance and hear from the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness).

SUPPLY—FINANCE

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Rose): Committee come to order, please. We are considering the Estimates of the Department of Finance.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Acting Chairman, it is a pleasure to begin the Estimates of the Department of Finance. I will take roughly five or ten minutes to make an opening statement dealing with some of the activities of our department over the last six months, bearing in mind the strong improvement in a fiscal sense within the Province of Manitoba. No doubt, the Opposition Finance critic may want to—as a matter of fact, I will give him my notes if he so wishes, and he may want to use them as we come back to this item on Monday.

Members of the committee, I am pleased to present the 1988-89 Estimates of the Department of Finance for your consideration and approval.

I previously tabled on November 23 the Estimates Supplement for the Department of Finance. It should provide answers to most of the detailed questions which are normally asked during the Estimates review process.

As Minister of Finance and vice-chairman of Treasury Board, I wish to reconfirm the Government's commitment to improving both financial management within the Manitoba Government and disclosure to the Legislature and public. In my Budget Address of August 8, 1988, I stated that sound fiscal planning must be based on an accurate accounting of the financial obligations facing Government.

During the election, we promised a full-scale independent review of the financial position of the province, including foreign borrowing. To fulfill that commitment, we have initiated a special three-phase project to improve financial reporting and accountability.

Phase 1 of the independent review: The objective of the Phase 1 review was to provide a true and complete accounting of the fiscal circumstance facing the province, including an accurate evaluation of debt ultimately carried by the taxpayer and losses incurred in Crown corporations and agencies.

Phase 1, undertaken by the management consulting firm of Stevenson Kellogg Ernst & Whinney, was completed on schedule and the results were tabled in association with the Budget on August 8. The recommendations derived from this study called for a more complete and straightforward disclosure of Government spending and net liabilities.

As noted in my Budget Address, application of the Phase 1 recommendations meant that the excess of liabilities over financial assets at March 31, 1988, was more than \$1 billion higher than under the former accounting system. Secondly, the province's deficit for 1987-88 stood at \$311 million. Thirdly, the General Purpose Debt financed by taxpayers outstanding at March 31, 1988, was increased \$1.3 billion to reflect the consolidation of debt issued for general purposes, including debt through Manitoba properties.

It also provided for the inclusion of unrecoverable debt of and advances to Crown corporations and agencies and the valuation of debt issued in foreign currencies at the exchange rates in effect on March 31, 1988. With these adjustments, General Purpose Debt totalled \$5.3 billion on March 31, 1988. It should be noted that during the past six years, General Purpose Debt tripled and interest costs quadrupled, leaving correspondingly less available for programs needed by Manitobans.

Acceptance—and I am still talking about Phase 1—of the consultants' Phase 1 recommendations resulted in several accounting policy changes which will be reflected in the Public Accounts for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1988. These include:

- (a) A change in the way that foreign currency debt is presented in the Government's Financial Statement and a change in the amortization policy for recording the annual cost of currency gains and losses on this debt.

- (b) The recording of losses on loans and advances, investments in Crown corporations or agencies as an expenditure in the year that the loss is determined.

Mr. Acting Chairman, I digress for only a second to say that this is a major change. For the first time, this Government of Manitoba will be reflecting in the Budget the losses and the expected and the forecasted losses, just not the actual but the forecasted losses of Crown corporations outside of those Crowns which do not have a rate- or which do have a rate-paying base.

An Honourable Member: Just like reinsurance.

Mr. Manness: Like reinsurance. The Member for Interlake (Mr. Uruski) says "reinsurance." That is reflected in a sense because we do not have an opportunity to regain that loss. If the decision had been made by Government to stay within that service area, to stay within that activity, and we felt that we could have recouped that loss, then obviously we would not have reflected it in the Budget. But in the sense that the Government of the Day was making a policy decision to remove itself from that endeavour, we felt it was only fair to the taxpayers that indeed those losses be reflected within the Budget.

- (c) The recording of liabilities for losses or costs previously not recognized because they were considered to be outside the Consolidated Fund, such as MPIC Reinsurance losses.

They were never shown before in the Budget. They were, of course, showing in the Public Accounts but they were never shown in the Budget, and that became the *raison d'être* because Governments were hiving off more and more Crown activity, or activity that they thought they could cover by Crowns, and showing it, yes, as there were losses reflecting in the Public Accounts. I never ever indicated otherwise, but the people of Manitoba wanted to know what impact that had on the budgetary aspect for the most part, those losses, because they had to be directly supported by way of additional borrowing for those losses.-(Interjection)- Well, yes.

* (1700)

Mr. Acting Chairman, I want to get into my notes. If the MLA for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) wants to pursue that on Monday, I will be glad to do so.

- (d) The consolidation of the operation of Manitoba Properties Inc. and the financial results of the province can more fairly present the financial position of the province.
- (e) Some of the changes addressed long-standing concerns of the Provincial Auditor who will now be in a position to remove qualifications from his audit opinion on the Public Accounts.

Phase 2 of the independent review: The objective of Phase 2 is to identify opportunities for better management of Government resources by improving management practices, proper administration and program delivery.

In keeping with this stated objective, Phase 2 includes an overview examination of management practices and program effectiveness in specific areas of Government which were identified on the basis of information obtained from the Phase 1 examination of the financial statements, as well as from discussions with officials throughout Government, including the Provincial Auditor's Office.

A prioritized short list of projects was approved by Cabinet based on the Government's intentions to secure the best value for the taxpayers' money.

A tendering process was undertaken by my department in cooperation with representatives of the Provincial Auditor. Every reasonable effort was made to solicit proposals from all relevant management consulting firms located in Manitoba.

Consultant reports have been received for the seven projects approved for review. These reports are now being reviewed with the departments involved and will then be summarized for review by Cabinet.

Phase 3 of the independent review: The final phase of this particular review involves changes in policies and procedures to strengthen Government financial control and management and place Government operations on a sound basis for the future delivery of programs and services to Manitobans.

Other Initiatives: In addition to the wide-ranging independent review I have just described, this Government is pursuing other initiatives to enhance management accountability in the public sector. The Government's Budget for 1989-90 will include an additional year's fiscal projection in keeping with our commitment for multi-year budgeting.

The 1987-88 Public Accounts will have a third volume for the new Summary Financial Statements of the province. This is the first year that these statements will be presented in this form. The long-range intent of these statements is that they will reflect the consolidation of the operations of all organizations integral to the overall operations of Government performing its executive function. At this time, however, only the operations of Manitoba Properties Inc. and its related corporations are consolidated with those of the Operating Fund. The Department of Finance is working to reflect the financial operations of the other organizations in future Summary Financial Statements.

Mr. Acting Chairman, with these few remarks, I commend the Finance Estimates to consideration of the Committee of Supply. I will be pleased to invite questions from Members regarding these Estimates. Thank you.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Rose): The hour being 5 p.m. and time for Private Members' Hour, committee rise.

IN SESSION COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital): Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak), that the report of the committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Speaker: The hour being 5 p.m., time for Private Members' Business.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

BILL NO. 2—THE BUSINESS NAMES REGISTRATION AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 2, The Business Names Registration Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'enregistrement des noms commerciaux, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme). (Stand)

BILL NO. 3—THE CORPORATIONS AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood, Bill No. 3, The Corporations Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les corporations, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). (Stand)

BILL NO. 13—THE MANITOBA HYDRO AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), Bill No. 13, The Manitoba Hydro Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Hydro-Manitoba, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux). (Stand)

BILL NO. 16—THE REAL PROPERTY AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 16, The Real Property Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les biens réels, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Cummings). (Stand)

BILL NO. 20—THE WATER RIGHTS AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus), Bill No. 20, The Water Rights Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les droits d'utilisation de l'eau, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Woiseley (Mr. Taylor). (Stand)

BILL NO. 25—THE UNFAIR BUSINESS PRACTICES ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 25, The Unfair Business Practices Act; Loi sur les pratiques commerciales déloyales, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). (Stand)

BILL NO. 26—THE CONSUMER PROTECTION AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 26, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur, standing in the name of the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae).

Mr. Richard Kozak (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I believe the Honourable Member for Burrows (Mr. Chornopyski) has comments on this Bill.

Mr. Speaker: Would there be leave to leave it standing in the name of the Honourable Attorney-General? (Agreed)

Mr. William Chornopyski (Burrows): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I want to thank the Members for that encouragement.

Mr. Speaker, the function of the Consumer and Corporate Affairs Department is to protect the citizens of Manitoba from abuse by the private sector, and I think maybe the other way around as well. This Bill, of course, is attempting to do just that.

However, the Bill touches on a number of areas that supposedly are to give the public that protection, but I think it goes perhaps a little too far in one particular area. I maybe should speak about the good part that I can agree with, and that is the part that deals with the automobile dealers. I believe that the automobile dealers would not mind in the least if they were to provide a sticker on the window with the manufacturers suggested retail price and, of course, the price of all the options and so on and so forth. That would not cause anyone a real problem, I do not think.

However, the last part of the Bill which speaks about the 60-day trial period, if you will, you can purchase an automobile and 60 days later, if you are not totally satisfied with what you have purchased or if that sticker was not on the windshield when you purchased it, you can demand a full refund. The problem that I find with that is there are perhaps buyers or purchasers who would take advantage of this situation. I can just see the used car inventory go up by millions of dollars, because you could purchase an automobile, drive it for 60 days—and in 60 days, you can do a lot of driving—and then demand your money back. Although it attempts to resolve something, I think at the same time, it creates a brand spanking new problem and I have a problem with that.

The Member from Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), the Member who submitted this Bill, tells me that I am not

reading it right. I would like to tell the Honourable Member that I read it several times and I would venture to say that it perhaps was not drafted right.

The intent may have been a good one, I do not know, but it certainly did not turn out that way. This Bill would cause no end of problems. The unfortunate thing is that today an automobile—I recall buying a house for a lot less money than I can buy an automobile for today. You are speaking about a very expensive item, not only to the purchaser but to the dealer as well and, having spent seven years in that industry, I have a little knowledge of what a dealer has to go through. When there are miles on the automobile, he can no longer sell it as a new automobile. So, as I said previously, I can just see the used car inventory climbing by millions of dollars. By today's rate of interest on the dollar, the dealers would probably be going out of business one after the other.

* (1710)

I have received several letters from dealers who are no longer in business, not because of this Bill but because they have retired or chosen to retire and they would like to see this system come back where the sticker is on the window telling you exactly what you are going to have to pay for that automobile. That does not necessarily mean that the suggested retail price, manufacturer's suggested retail price, is what you have to pay. We all know that after you see the price that is where you begin to bargain and, if you can do better than what the manufacturer suggests, so be it.

There are many people who may be first-time buyers who are in great difficulty. The changes come about very rapidly nowadays and, as I say, I was in the industry for seven years but that was some years back and I find that I am very much lost today myself. So it would certainly help to have that sticker on the window for the people who are out in the car market and want to purchase an automobile.

I can see where the other part of the Bill, the 60-day refund time, can cause no end of problems, and not only to the dealer but to many people, to many buyers. I guess what the Honourable Member really had in mind was to be a good guy. I do not think that he is doing anybody any favours with this bottom half of this Bill.

I have a problem with this particular Bill. On the one hand, I can support a portion of it, but I can certainly not support the last half of it. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

BILL NO. 36—THE CONSUMER PROTECTION AMENDMENT ACT (2)

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 36, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (2); Loi No. 2 modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for St. Vital (Mr. Rose).

Would there be leave to leave it standing in the name of the Honourable Member for St. Vital? (Agreed)

Mr. William Chornopyski (Burrows): When I get going, there is no stopping me.

I see that this Bill 36 is another one of those Bills that has good intentions but somewhere along the way it goes perhaps too far. Again, it can cause a lot of problems to a lot of people, particularly the \$500 deposit portion of the Bill where a little businessman just no way could survive if he was to put \$500 in trust every time somebody wanted to make a purchase from him.

The problem again is—and I have to use myself as an example. I was in the sign manufacturing business and, if a man came to me and wanted me to design and manufacture an advertising sign for him that is worth perhaps \$3,000, \$4,000, \$5,000, it would be designed specifically for that particular business and for that particular individual. In other words, it is no different than a chesterfield or a suit that is custom made for a particular individual. There is a great deal of money that has to be laid out to manufacture, for example, let us say a sign. Then, by the time you manufacture it, he decides that he cannot afford it or whatever the reason and he decides to back out of it. You have \$500 in trust on a \$5,000 sign, for example, you cannot stay in business very long manufacturing too many of those kind of signs. I speak of the sign but that, of course, can apply to all kinds of merchandise.

That, Mr. Speaker, can cause a great deal of problem not only for the purchaser because now perhaps the purchaser wants to recover his \$500 deposit. There will be court action. The court action will probably cost more than the \$500 will cover. There are all sorts of problems that this Bill can cause if it is ever made law.

So if only for those reasons, I have a problem, enough of a problem with this particular Bill that I have to again confess that I cannot support it. Thank you.

SECOND READINGS— PUBLIC BILLS

BILL NO. 19—AN ACT TO PROTECT THE HEALTH OF NON-SMOKERS

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition) presented Bill No. 19, An Act to Protect the Health of Non-smokers; Loi sur la protection de la santé des non-fumeurs, for second reading.

MOTION presented.

* (1720)

Mr. Doer: This Bill presented before this Chamber, I believe, is a very important Bill for the health of Manitobans. It is a Bill to do two things. It obviously cannot correct some of the long-term habits of our smokers in our society. I believe that education and peer pressure perhaps will work over time, notwithstanding other comments.

But this Bill attempts to achieve two objectives. One, it attempts to achieve the very, very important objective of dealing with the sale of tobacco products to minors,

a practice that has gone on for years which has in some ways been condoned by the complicity of legislative action in our society by not amending Acts that I believe have been around since 1910 in terms of this country.—(Interjection)— I know, that the Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) was probably around at that period, and it certainly has not changed his philosophies of meeting the challenges of the Nineties.

But I want to get on to the content of this Bill because I think it is fairly important. Back to the future with the Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey), the minors are one of the groups that unfortunately are participating at a much higher rate than others in terms of joining in as smokers in our society.

Certainly, we know that the federal Minister of Health, Mr. Epp, in his advertising attempt was attempting to get at the youth with ads and campaigns. I believe Luba was one of the artists used in terms of the non-smoking efforts to counteract the very strong peer pressure and advertising pressure from the tobacco industry.

This Bill will raise fines dramatically in the Province of Manitoba for sale of cigarettes and tobacco products to minors. It will provide much higher financial penalty for any proprietor who contemplates and actually participates in the sale of tobacco products to anybody under the ages of 18 years. I believe that will be very, very important with some of our commercial outlets.

When the day we announced this Bill—and I believe it was July of this year, 1988—one of the media outlets had a child 10 years old go to nine outlets in the City of Winnipeg, and every outlet, I believe, if I recall the media story correctly, every media outlet sold cigarettes without requiring any documentation from that person of 10 years old in the City of Winnipeg. One knows that goes on right across the province, whether it is in Winnipeg, Brandon, Thompson or other communities.

So we believe that the penalties to commercial outlets should be raised to ensure that people think twice about selling tobacco products to minors. It certainly is not going to solve the cigarette problem with minors, but symbolically this Legislature should set the tone in very clear and unequivocal terms that sales of tobacco products to minors is unacceptable and that we, as a Legislature, will not condone it and we will put up the strongest penalties possible for the sale. This Bill calls on fines to be increased when the present \$10 in the federal legislation to —(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, the Member from Morris (Mr. Manness) knows full well that they have the right to bring Bills forward pursuant to their own philosophy.— (Interjection)— Perhaps, no, because you do not bring Bills through very quickly. You just sit on them endlessly.— (Interjection)— No, no, no, deal with everything on its merit.

The fine is prescribed at \$1,000, not more than \$1,000 for the first offence and not more than \$5,000 for each subsequent offence. It was quite a bit different from the \$10 that exists in the laws of Manitoba today.

We hope that a year from now when a television crew does an expose, if this law is passed—it requires two Parties to pass a law. We hope that when the next time there is an expose on the sale of tobacco products to

minors, and hopefully there will be enough education to commercial outlets, there will be a different story than the 10 out of 10 sale to a person at the age of 10 years old.

The second area that this Bill deals with is trying to deal with the whole area of second-hand smoke, an area that I know is very important to all Members of this Legislature, I am sure to even the Speaker himself in terms of this issue.

We are pleased that the trend in Canada is in a positive way. Smoking has declined from 35 percent to 31 percent in the last five years. Over 90 percent of Manitobans believe that everybody has a right to breathe air that is free of tobacco smoke and this law —(Interjection)— I know the Member is a little sensitive about his revenue figures and I would be as well. This law reflects the evolving and I think intelligent public opinion on the right of individuals to have as much as is practically possible, and I recognize it is not always practically possible to have a smoke-free environment.

The evidence is well-documented in terms of the effect of second-hand smoke. It represents a major hazard to both smokers and non-smokers. Inhaling smoke from other persons' cigarettes can cause lung cancer. It can cause heart and blood diseases and other chronic, obstructive pulmonary disease like emphysema and chronic bronchitis.

This legislation, we believe, represents a positive step forward in dealing with the involuntary exposure to the tobacco smoke in Manitoba. This Bill builds upon the experience of by-laws that have been established in Winnipeg and more recently in the community of Thompson. I am not sure at what stage it is in the community of Brandon, but I know that Brandon is also looking at a non-smoking by-law in terms of their community.

This is a Bill that just really, in all fairness to those communities, builds on their experience and builds on the advice we receive from the Manitoba Interagency Council. I would like to thank Dr. Richard Stanwick for his help. It builds on the experience of the director of education in Manitoba Heart Foundation, Ms. Karen Johnson, and other people who have been very active, a person named Ms. Skuba, I believe is her name, who is very involved also in the non-smoking lobby.

This is not a Bill that purports to outlaw smoking in every area of the province, but it does outlaw smoking in some very, very important areas, child care centres. It does provide a provision in the Act to prohibit smoking in our child care centres. I think we have all received or are aware of a petition that is circulating around our neighbourhoods in this province, a petition that I heard lately had some 35,000 names on it, in dealing with the smoking in our child care centres where children have respiratory problems and are affected by second-hand smoke that is contained within that facility.

Secondly, it deals with the smoking in schools and education facilities and does outlaw again smoking in our education facilities. I know, as a former student, that does not solve the problem of the odd person

going behind the wall. Actually, I could be rightly accused of a number of sins in life but one of them, I had two cigarettes in my life and gave it up. I imagine the cigarette package is still sitting in my father's garage rotting away where I hid it 25 years ago.* I will not divulge my sources, but I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that I did not have to go around the corner as some of my friends did, growing up, in terms in schools.

Certainly, it will not stop smoking but it will stop the effects of second-hand smoke in schools. I would ask for the support of the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) in this endeavour and other Members in this Chamber in this very important issue. It does provide for prohibition to smoking in educational or instructional facilities, in post-secondary educational facilities. It does not prohibit smoking in universities and community colleges in totality, because there are situations such as the hospitality areas, the residential areas that I think are best left for the universities and Red River Community College or the community colleges. So it provides for some instruction in the instructional facilities. It does allow Cabinet to set regulations on those areas if they so wish. I know how hard it is for this Cabinet to take any responsibility, but it does provide some greater discretion to Cabinet.

* (1730)

It does prescribe a number of facilities that will be considered in closed public places which will allow for designation of smoking and non-smoking areas. In other words, it does not prohibit smoking in these places but does provide for designation and that includes health care facilities. I know that, again, in a personal care home, there are people who have smoked all of their lives and want to smoke, but it does provide for a smoking and non-smoking area in those facilities. It does provide for a smoking and non-smoking area in restaurants and licensed premises. But again, it leaves a lot of discretion to the proprietor to determine those kinds of designations. I would think that (a) they will have good advice for us on second reading, at the committee stage if this Bill goes to second reading which I am sure it will, and (b) we can use that advice in terms of the practicality of this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, it provides for fines that are again consistent with by-law provisions for breaches of this policy but, of course, this is not intended to have lots of enforcement. It is intended to have some education, some designation and to have progress being made in terms of the rights of smokers and non-smokers. The experience since 1983 in the communities that have developed non-smoking by-laws has been a positive one. Ninety-eight percent of the people are voluntarily complying. There is another 1.5 percent that there is a gentle courtesy asked for in terms of those by-laws and very little people are very rarely required to have any further action. That would not be the intent of this Bill.

We know that other provinces have some restrictions on smoking. In fact, Ontario is even going further and maybe to the horror of Members opposite, I believe it is a Conservative Private Members' Bill in that province that is proposing even tighter restrictions than is

proposed in this Bill. So I would ask the Members to look at that provision in the Province of Ontario, which goes even further in workplaces in Manitoba that this Bill proposes. We think it is a good start in terms of the province and experience can allow us to refine it collectively in the future.

There are some 40 Canadian cities and towns that have by-laws. I mentioned the community of Thompson has just -(Interjection)- I did not hear the Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey). He has gotten a lot quieter in his older age. He used to really pounce on our comments. He has really become mellow in terms of his comments. It is really quite disappointing. There are over 40 Canadian cities that have by-laws. There are by-laws established in Thompson; there are by-laws established down in Brandon; there are by-laws that have been in effect in the City of Winnipeg since 1983. We think they work well.

We tried to design this Bill to deal with the two priorities and that was the sale of tobacco products to minors and dealing with the non-smokers' and smokers' rights. This is always an area that is never perfect to legislate. It is symbolically important, we believe, to have legislation on the books. Certainly our caucus is open to any advice any Members have on the practicality of this Bill. We are certainly open to any suggestions on amendments to the Bill to make it work in the way in which we intend on making it work. The essence of the Bill, we think, is positive and that is a symbolic message from this Legislature dealing with the sale of tobacco products to minors, and a symbolic message dealing with rights of non-smokers in our province. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I hope we can count on the support of all Parties on this non-partisan issue in this province.

HOUSE BUSINESS

Hon. James McCrae (Attorney-General): Mr. Speaker, before other Honourable Members get involved in the debate this afternoon, I would like to ask for the leave of Honourable Members to allow the Departments of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources to switch places on the list of Estimates to be considered in the Committee Room.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave to change Natural Resources and Northern Affairs? (Agreed)

BILL NO. 19—AN ACT TO PROTECT THE HEALTH OF NON-SMOKERS (Cont'd)

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is second reading of Bill No. 19—the Honourable Attorney-General.

Hon. James McCrae (Attorney-General): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that the debate on this Bill be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL NO. 31—THE CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon) presented Bill No. 31, The Child and Family Services Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services à l'enfant et à la famille, for second reading.

MOTION presented.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of these amendments was to correct a problem which became apparent some time ago, and most recently led to a situation where, despite the fact that individuals involved in a school situation did not report a case of abuse occurring in a classroom for a number of reasons, the Department of Community Services as well as the Attorney-General's Department became aware of the fact that the existing Child and Family Services Act had some flaws. It had some loopholes which created a situation where individuals under the control or supervision of a person where, by virtue of the fact that they were not deemed to be family members, ended up not being liable for reporting incidents of suspected abuse.

The circumstances in this particular case which occurred at the St. Charles Academy was that of young girls actually being abused, harassed by an individual classmate. Because The Child and Family Services Act did not require the reporting of third party abuses in any direct way, the abuse was not reported and the negligence in my opinion on the part of those involved in that circumstance could not be challenged in any way.

I started some three months ago, Mr. Speaker, to review the possibility of amending The Child and Family Services Act. I learned at the same time that the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae), I assume in consultation with the Minister responsible for The Child and Family Services Act, were looking at amendments. I believe that it required immediate action and requested the assistance of Legislative Counsel to draft the appropriate amendments to deal with the specific situation of the St. Charles Academy.

After receiving the amendments and a couple of drafts were provided, I met with the Manitoba Teachers' Society, the group who would be in my opinion the most likely to feel the effects of the legislation, to find out what their concerns were and how they would feel about such amendments. They reviewed my Child and Family Services Act amendments and indicated to me that they felt that the draft that I was proposing was a satisfactory one and would cover the circumstances where an individual teacher or teachers, those in supervisory positions in a school, would be required to report incidences of third-party abuse. Now we find that some months later the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae) and the Minister responsible for the Child and Family Services Act have introduced amendments that are quite consistent, I think, with the amendments that I had introduced.

In fact to give credit to the Attorney-General and to the Minister, they go somewhat further and are somewhat broader in scope than the amendments that I had introduced. I think that is to be desired. As I indicated, the amendments that we would be discussing normally, Bill No. 31, are somewhat more limited to the school circumstances because that was where the most recent incident occurred and the one which seemed to me to be likely to be important to close quickly. Clearly, the broader Bill, I think, obligates that many more people. I am not sure what kind of consultation has been done and I cannot debate Bill No. 46 because it has not been introduced for second reading but clearly, when this Bill does come up, I am going to ask these questions and perhaps the Minister can take them as notice as I introduce my own Bill No. 31.

Mr. Speaker, I will make it quite clear that if those questions will be answered satisfactorily, I would have no interest in proceeding with Bill No. 31. If the Bill, as I read it, I think it does cover the area which I had addressed and some others and, assuming that my reading of that legislation is accurate, then I would certainly not want to pursue discussions on Bill No. 31. We will pursue them in discussions of Bill No. 46 under Government business rather than under Private Members' Business.

But the questions that I think I asked and I think the Minister of Community Services should ask when approaching legislation of this kind is: (a) what obligation does it place on teachers, on others, in supervisory positions? Is it likely that we are going to be able to enforce the provisions of this Bill on those supervisory personnel, and I think one of the reasons I took my Bill to the Teachers' Society was because this is an onerous responsibility. Clearly, when you ask for intervention by an agency or the director of an agency, you are in effect making an accusation. You are making an accusation against a person or a group of people which carries with it significant stigma. It is too easy and I do not think Government should be asking people to be responsible to err on the side of caution and, at the same time, it will be a fact that any time they do act, they are going to disrupt, sometimes rightly so and other times in error, the lives of other people.

So, I am hoping that the Minister has done a considerable degree of consultation with people in the field and not only teachers, if we are going to proceed with Bill No. 46, but others, because anybody—it seems to me if my reading is correct—anyone who has responsibility for care and supervision of children, should they be bus drivers, should they be teachers, should they be day care workers, should they be people in a hospital, any number of settings where responsibility is deemed to be given to an adult would fall under the provisions of the legislation. Someone has to make sure that (a) people understand, and (b) that people can be held accountable in the way that we want them to be held accountable through this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, having said that, the intent of the legislation is fine. We have to be in a position to protect the interests of juveniles, of youths, of children who are in our care or in the care of other individuals. We

* (1740)

have to have that authority. We have to make it an obligation. It is not good enough for a teacher, a day care worker, a person in the position of responsibility to say, well, I did not think it was my responsibility. I did not realize the seriousness, I did not know who to contact.

We want responsible adults to have an obligation to report but, if we are going to do that, we have to make sure that there are some pretty clear guidelines about what should and should not be reported, what penalties are going to be applied for non-reporting, who is going to make the determination, the decision, about whether a reporting should or should not have occurred. We are putting a lot of people who are charged with the responsibility of caring for children in a very difficult position and we should know what we are about when we proceed with the legislation.

I do not have anything further to add on this Bill, other than to say that as we listen to the introduction for second reading of Bill 46, I will know better whether I want to pursue the provisions of Bill 31 in Private Members' Hour, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme), that debate on this bill be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): I wonder if I might have leave to make a few remarks on this particular Bill?

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member have leave? (Agreed)

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Speaker, I will hold off for now and then speak to the next one.

An Honourable Member: Go five minutes.

Mr. Alcock: Okay. Five Minutes? (Interjection) Five minutes, sure. I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing this.

I just want to make a few comments on the amendment that is proposed because it raises an issue that is a very difficult one. I note both in Bill 31 and in the Bill that was distributed today, there is a danger here. When The Child and Family Services Act was drafted, the question of third party assaults was discussed at some length, and the problem with the amendment that is proposed here is it defines a child as being in need of protection subject to a third party assault. Frankly, they are not in need of protection when they are subject to a third party assault. That is the dilemma.

The reason we have a Child Welfare Act is to provide some protection for children who are under assault within their family. If they are not receiving the care and the nurturing or they are being directly assaulted by their family, the state needs the ability to move in, take control and act in the place of the parent because the parent is unable to care for the kids.

In the St. Charles example, those children were never in need of protection from their parents. There was never a question of the adequacy of the parenting. To define any child who is the subject of an assault as being in need of protection creates a level of difficulty in the administration of that case that I do not think any of us want. I do not think that is the intention. The concern, in a sense, in the one example is the appropriateness of the management of a particular facility. Did the management act correctly in that they did not report a third party assault, an assault between children on the playground, a very serious assault?

When you have a third party assault, you can refer to existing legislation on sexual assault or physical assault. The police in fact will act and there will be court cases and all of those kinds of things. There will be proper redress through that process. If that takes place when a child is outside of the care and control of their own parents and in the care and control of another authority and power to be responsible for them, then should that authority be compelled to report or inform the parents that such an event has taken place?

I think the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) concurs and I certainly agree that professionals in that capacity should be compelled to report these incidents, but to do it to the vehicle of defining that child to be in need of protection, I think creates a separate problem that is perhaps more onerous than is intended. I think there is a different way to get to it. I do not think Bill 31—although I think Bill 31, frankly, is a more elegant way of attempting to address the problem than Bill 46 is, I think both of them run into this difficulty of dealing with protection as opposed to reporting.

I hope, in the debate on them, we can find some way of getting to a resolution of this problem. It deals with the reporting issue that moves us away from the removing of parental rights really, and taking it into the hands of the state instead of allowing parents to act on behalf of their own children when they are capable of doing so.

Anyway, I will pass the floor at this point. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

* (1750)

BILL NO. 32—THE MANITOBA INSTITUTE OF THE PURCHASING MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION OF CANADA ACT

Mr. Darrell Praznik (Lac du Bonnet) presented Bill No. 32, The Manitoba Institute of The Purchasing Management Association of Canada Act; Loi sur l'Institut manitobain de l'Association canadienne de gestion des achats, for second reading.

MOTION presented.

Mr. Praznik: This particular piece of legislation which I have had the privilege of introducing, I understand was to be introduced to the previous Legislature by the former Member for Kildonan. So I would hope that Members of the New Democratic Party who have made

their comments here today would continue to support this particular legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the Manitoba Institute of The Purchasing Management Association of Canada is an affiliate of The Purchasing Management Association of Canada, which is a 6,000 member national organization which offers educational programming and member services through local districts and a national office. Its membership consists of people in material management functions from a wide variety of businesses across Canada.

PMAC had its beginning in the early 1900s and is currently divided into 49 districts and branches representing the full range of public and private industry sectors. In Manitoba, there is one district in Winnipeg whose membership ranges from 150 to 175. The institute will offer an educational program which has been developed to meet the educational needs of people in purchasing and materials management, and to provide practitioners and their employers with a measure by which to judge purchasers' competency.

The program consists -[Interjection]- Mr. Speaker, if Members opposite have problems with the notes from which I am reading, I remind them that if it takes me longer there will not be time for the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) to move his particular piece of legislation. Mr. Speaker, my efforts here today are only trying to make this as brief as possible to accommodate one of their fellow Members, so I hope they would bear with me as I read from my notes.

The program that this particular institute wishes to offer consists of college and university courses, seminars and a working experience requirement. When the program is completed, the participant achieves the Professional Purchaser designation. The program is revised every five years to reflect the changing needs of the profession.

One of the objectives of the PMAC is to obtain registration of the professional purchaser designation across Canada. The process of registration of a designation varies from province to province, as I am sure many Members of this House are aware. In Manitoba, a Government Bill is the prescribed form of action.

A plan has been formulated by the national organization to achieve registration right across the country. One province, Nova Scotia, has already passed the required legislation. The process is currently under way in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario and New Brunswick.

Mr. Speaker, the institute wants to register the designation of certified professional purchaser and CPP for the following reasons: (1) Specialization: Society has become increasingly complex demanding more and more specialized training. The institute's professional development program is attempting to meet this particular challenge.

(2) Protection of the public interest. As purchasing professionals are spending large amounts of corporate and public funds, there should be some degree of protection or surety afforded so that these funds are

being spent wisely and in a corporate or public interest. The institute has developed a code of ethics to which its members must adhere, as well as an enforcement procedure.

(3) Degree of confidence in certification. An emergence of large-scale educational programs and courses, without any system of formal degrees or credentials, has created presently some degree of confusion in the business world. The formalization or certification of this particular program, through this Act, will be a signal to the business community that the holder is recognized as a professional and must act accordingly.

Mr. Speaker, for those particular reasons, I would hope that all Members of this House would join with me in this particular Act and see its passage through this Legislature to protect the public and provide that particular protection for people in the business world and in the public forum.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this particular piece of legislation.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL NO. 33—THE EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson) presented Bill No. 33, The Employment Standards Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les normes d'emploi, for second reading.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Government House Leader, on a point of order.

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): The other day, I raised the issue with respect to the Honourable Member for Elmwood's Bill on The Discriminatory Business Practices Act. I raised the issue that was a Money Bill, and I would ask you, Mr. Speaker, to consider also, with respect to the Bill being called just now, all the arguments I made respecting the proposed Discriminatory Business Practices Act and apply those arguments to the present Bill respecting employment standards. I make the point that this Bill as well is a Money Bill and, therefore, should not be brought forward by a private Member.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the Honourable Government House Leader. The Chair will take Bill No. 33 under advisement and seek advice.

The Honourable Member for Thompson, on the point of order.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): On the point of order, I have taken every step to ensure that this Bill is

legitimately introduced. I would like to indicate that we sought an opinion from Legislative Counsel who indicated that it was their advice that it was not in contravention of our research with regard to Money Bills.

I have done a considerable amount of research in regard to this particular area, both in terms of our rules, Beauchesne, particularly Section 539 of Beauchesne and also, since Beauchesne advises that the authority in regard to this matter is actually Erskine May, which deals with the experience from the mother of Parliaments.

I would like to also point to page 795 which deals with Bills of this nature and particularly outlines that a charge must be new and distinct in order for it to require the type of consideration that the Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae) referred to. I would submit that essentially this Act is dealing with amendments to an existing Act. It may change certain requirements of the Act, but it is certainly not a new and distinct charge.

I would also point even perhaps more directly—and I know our House Leader has done a considerable amount of research—to the fact that we have a precedent in Manitoba, which our House Leader (Mr. Cowan) will point to, which in fact the same Bill, Employment Standards, when a similar Bill previously did not require a message from the Lieutenant-Governor and, therefore, was not ruled out of order even though it did not have a message from the Lieutenant-Governor, a Bill that was very similar in terms of its impact in this particular case which the House Leader will outline, I believe, in his comments on the point of order.

* (1800)

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Churchill, on the same point of order.

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): Yes; Mr. Speaker, very quickly, the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) has done a great deal of research with respect to the precedences contained within the reference materials which we use as guidance for our work in this House, and I would suggest that they be very carefully considered. I think, on the basis of that consideration, one will find that this Bill is not out of order.

But I think there is an even more direct reference that one should consider. In 1982, the Government brought forward a Bill entitled Bill No. 41, The Employment Standards Act. That Bill dealt with the extension of termination and other activities which this Bill deals with, quite similar. That Bill did not require, nor was it presented with a message from the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council.

The purpose of the rule which is being referenced by the Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae), which would suggest this is out of order, is a rule that requires Money Bills or Bills which impose a charge upon the Crown to be brought forward with a message and backbenchers or non-Cabinet Ministers cannot bring forward Bills with a message from the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council. For that reason, they would be out of order.

Obviously, the case with this particular Bill and the precedent is that it does not, nor do these types of Bills require that message. Therefore, it is perfectly in order for any Member of this Legislature to bring that Bill forward.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank all Honourable Members for their advice and, as previously indicated, I will take it under advisement.

The hour being 6 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow morning (Friday).