

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, February 1, 1990.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Public Accounts Committee North Portage Development Corp.

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). We were encouraged yesterday by the Government's decision to ask the Provincial Auditor to explore the financial relationships among this Government, MHRC, and the North Portage Development Corporation.

Will the Minister go a step further to ensure full public disclosure and accountability by calling a special meeting of the Public Accounts Committee so that legislators can ask questions of the president and chief executive officer of the North Portage Development Corporation?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): The short answer to that question at this time is no. This morning my Deputy, Mr. Curtis, met with the Provincial Auditor and asked him to ensure that Manitoba taxpayers receive full value for their investment in the project that has received a fair amount of discussion in this House over the period of the last few weeks.

We have placed no restrictions, absolutely no restrictions, I emphasize that, Mr. Speaker, into what matters the Provincial Auditor is to look into. The Provincial Auditor will determine in his wisdom the best scope to put to the internal review. Once that is completed he will submit that to myself, after which time I will make that public to the Members of this House.

Provincial Auditor North Portage Development Corp.

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): The Auditor of course is a servant of this Legislature. Could the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) tell us what mandate he has given to the Provincial Auditor, whether or not there are written terms of reference, and if he can let us know what timetable the Provincial Auditor will be working under and when we can expect a report to this House?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I answered the first question in part. No specific terms of reference have been given to the Provincial Auditor. He is free to look at every matter associated with this issue at his call. We have asked him, and we have told him that there are no restrictions. Therefore, he will have full opportunity to review every aspect of the matter.

Mr. Carr: We appreciate that the Minister has taken this action after some weeks of questioning in the House.

Public Accounts Committee North Portage Development Corp.

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): We are still not sure why the Government will not go the extra step to ask the chairman and chief executive officer of the North Portage Development Corporation to appear in front of a legislative committee. We know that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) is particularly interested in accountability, public accountability and accountability by the politicians. So could -(interjection)- Pardon me?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Carr: Could the Minister of Finance tell us why he refuses to call a special committee of this Legislature?

* (1335)

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Firstly, Mr. Speaker, let me reiterate, for the memory of some that may forget, that we were not original signatories to the agreement at hand.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Auditor has tremendous powers. If he comes to conclusions that are a major concern to him, he has within his power to make a full report to the Legislature directly. If he does that, if he makes a full disclosure directly to the Legislature, I then will call Public Accounts Committee at which time the Provincial Auditor will ask to be in attendance and to give fuller explanation to any of his comments.

Mr. Carr: Half a loaf is better than no loaf, Mr. Speaker.

Canada-Manitoba Tourism Agreement Deadline Extension

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): With a new question to the Minister responsible for Tourism (Mr. Ernst). There has been a fair amount of confusion over the last number of days, Mr. Speaker, about the deadline for a federal-provincial project at The Forks.

Jake Epp, in a letter to the Minister, had said that January 31, yesterday, was the deadline for the Minister to raise \$4.2 million of funds from the private sector. The Minister has given us indications that Thomas Hockin, the federal Minister responsible for Tourism, had in fact said the deadline was March 31.

The Minister had some difficulty getting hold of Mr. Hockin yesterday. I wonder if he could report to the House and tell us if he in fact has gotten a hold of him and what the deadline is.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, there have been a number of discussions that have taken place with regard to this matter over the past day, evening and this morning.

Mr. Speaker, it has been indicated to me that February 28 now is an appropriate time to consider this particular project which then gives us a month, if it is not going to proceed by that point, to find additional projects before the agreement expires.

Mr. Carr: Mr. Speaker, I cannot help but think that somehow the wisdom of Solomon is at work here. They split the difference. One federal Minister said March 31, and the other said January 31, so February 28 it is. - (interjection)- I would never want to second-guess the wisdom of Solomon.

The Forks Development Visitor Centre Funding

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): Can the Minister report to the House how successful his fund raising efforts have been, and what the total of the commitments have been received to date, so we know how much further he has to go between now and the end of February?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, let me first suggest that while the deadline for the tourism agreement expiry is March 31, it would be inappropriate for any Government to leave any reconsideration, if some project is not going to proceed, until the last day.

It makes, Mr. Speaker, eminent sense to have a contingency plan, and this is not the only project contained in that agreement. There are many more, some of which may well not proceed. It behooves us to plan for some contingencies and to give us some time to put that contingency plan into place.

Mr. Carr: Mr. Speaker, I want to make it clear that we wish the Minister well, that we think the project has merit and we hope he is able to raise the money - (interjection)- Does the Premier not want our support on the project?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order.

Canada-Manitoba Tourism Agreement Deadline Extension

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): Mr. Speaker, my final question to the Minister of Tourism is, has he had any contact with Mr. Epp over the last 48 hours to discuss this project, and has the Minister had a chance to review with Mr. Epp the contents of his letter which now has been thrown out the window and a month's extension given to the Minister of Tourism?

* (1340)

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in the answer to the first question, a number of discussions have taken place yesterday afternoon and last evening and today.

Mr. Speaker, we are confident now that we have adequate time to proceed with this project.

Public Schools Funding

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, last year the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) announced that there would be some \$41 million additional funding for public schools. Today he announced that some \$31 million would be available, a 20 percent reduction in increase in funding to the public schools. This announcement has drawn criticism from the Manitoba Teachers' Society and—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, this reduction in increase has - (interjection)- that is what I said.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, we all understand nervous laughter when we see it. The fact of the matter is that the Manitoba Teachers' Society and the Manitoba Association of School Trustees have all decried this announcement as inadequate. In fact, I quote from the press release of the Manitoba Association of School Trustees when they say, Manitoba's public schools will be unable to maintain present service levels with the limited funding provided by the provincial Government. That is not me saying that.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Education. Where on this Government's list of priorities is the public education system in the Province of Manitoba?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I have to indicate to the House that I was very pleased to make the announcement this morning with regard to this Government's support of education in this province.

We did something that the former Government did not do. First of all, we did bring together an ad finance review committee that has thoroughly reviewed the finances of this province with regard to education and how we approach funding of schools. Based on the recommendations that came from that committee and between discussions with members of the education community, we have ascertained that this commitment to funding our public schools is indeed one where there is a balance to maintain the programming that we have throughout this province, and indeed it is not a burden on the overburdened taxpayer already, Mr. Speaker. I think this is a fair announcement. In our meetings this morning that was certainly indicated to us by many of the Members.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, what hypocrisy. The fact is that the trustees who deliver education and the teachers who deliver education are telling this Minister this is

woefully inadequate, that it is going to lead in a reduction of service to the education of students in Manitoba.

My question is to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). Can he now tell us where the money is going to come from to maintain services? How much increase are we going to see on special levies on taxpayers throughout this province on properties? How much is the education support levy—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The question has been put. The Honourable Minister of Education and Training.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting that all of a sudden the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) is asking, where is this money going to come from. He is asking for more money. Where does he think the money comes from? It comes from local taxpayers. That is where the money comes from.

I would also like to indicate—I quote from the news release which says: that the trustees appreciate the intent of increasing grants for transportation, special needs and for divisions with increased enrollment. Mr. Speaker, this is not a condemnation of the report. As a matter of fact, it is praising the report in terms of the balance that we have achieved and the fairness that we have achieved in supporting education.

Mr. Storie: I would recommend that the Minister start by reading the first paragraph of the press release where there is a condemnation of the level of increase which says: we are going to have cutbacks in service in the education area.

Education System Transportation Grants

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, my next question to the Minister is: given the announcement today that there will be some transportation grant increases, which is positive and particularly for rural school divisions, but given that we are introducing a new urban transportation grant, can the Minister tell me whether this is a move to get more in line with the Public Schools Finance Board's recommendation that we close community schools like Margaret Scott School? Are we going to now develop a policy where students are transported out of their communities and bussed to other areas away from their home community? Is this a consolidation of that policy?

* (1345)

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): First of all, when the Member was in Government and Minister of Education, at that time, school divisions in the urban centre came to him and asked for some transportation policy with regard to students who were living more than 1.5 kilometres from their school. His response to them was a flat no.

Mr. Speaker, we have many children, young children from Kindergarten to Grade 3, who have difficulty in

getting to schools, whether those schools are in the city or in the rural areas. We have made a commitment to treat young students equally throughout the province. For that reason we have implemented a policy where we will support them by offering transportation to all students from Kindergarten to Grade 3 regardless of whether they live in the rural areas or in the urban area.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, I think everyone out there knows, including the parents, that Margaret Scott School and lots of others that are having their schools closed, that this is going to lead to consolidation of elementary schools. This Minister is apparently ready to condemn community schools to oblivion.

School Year Length

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, my final question to the Minister, on a different subject, is: can the Minister indicate today when he will announce the fact that he intends to shorten the school year by three days at the recommendation of the tourism industry and at the expense of students and the educational system in Manitoba?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I really wonder where this Member is coming from. Let me indicate to you, first of all, that this Member is indicating that we should be building schools when there is adequate space in schools surrounding this particular school, in a half-mile radius, where we can accommodate 400 more students. He is advocating that we should build yet another school, and at whose expense? It is at the taxpayers' expense. He has no reason, no rhyme or accountability.

With regard to the school year, it was his Government that gave permission to northern school divisions to shorten their school year, not by one or two days, but indeed by three weeks. We implemented a policy where these students have to make up their time if their school year is shortened. They still have to put in the same number of hours. When we have developed that policy that he speaks of, I will be pleased to announce it.

Education Administrators Cross-Cultural Seminars

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): Yesterday, in his response to the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles), the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) waxed eloquent that, and I quote, "At our community college level we have promoted programs to assure that staff at those institutions understand the importance of the negative aspects of racial discrimination." Can the Minister advise the House if all administration and management personnel are required to attend these cross-cultural seminars put in place in April of 1989 as a direct result of an unfortunate racial slur?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): That is a matter that is up to the president of that community college to establish, but indeed we

have encouraged that the presidents have all of their administrative staff, all of their senior management staff attend such information sessions because they are valuable. They indeed will take away that distasteful kind of slur that has been made previously, and indeed it will help for better relations in our community colleges. Yes, Mr. Speaker, I encourage fully that each administrative person at our community colleges should take part in these sessions.

Red River Community College Racism Complaint

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): Why then do we hear that a formal complaint has been filed against one of the vice presidents of the college alleging the uttering of racial slurs, obscene and abusively sexist comments? Can the Minister advise us if there is an investigation in place, and as to what action has been taken and how is this investigation going?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Unfortunately in our society, from time to time things of this nature will occur regardless of whether we have in-service programs or training sessions, those things will occur. There has been no establishment whether in fact that event did occur. There is a formal complaint. I have instructed my Deputy Minister to investigate the complaint, to get the best possible person to investigate that complaint and to report back to me.

Cross-Cultural Policy

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): Will the Minister take some time now to rewrite the policy on multiculturalism at the Red River Community College in light of the obvious lack of success of the past policy?

* (1350)

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, there is an ongoing discussion with members of our society to ensure the policy that we have in place meets the needs. If that policy is not meeting the needs we will amend it as is necessary. Those discussions go on continuously to ensure that in fact situations of this nature do not occur. When they do occur we try to take the best possible action to investigate the authenticity of that complaint and to ensure that corrective measures are taken.

Repap Manitoba Inc. Environmental Lobbying

Mr. John Angus (St. Norbert): This is a question for the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings). Yesterday the First Minister, the Premier (Mr. Filmon), said in Hansard the relation to the contradictions between the Clean Environment Commission Report and the licence that was issued to Repap, but the fact of the matter is the licence was issued totally in accordance with the requirements of the Clean Environment Commission, their report and recommendations. We know that was not accurate. There were a number of changes.

My question to the Minister of Environment is, between the issuing of the report in November by the Clean Environment Commission and the issuing of the licence at the end of January, was there any lobbying or any interference or any action on behalf of the company or their representatives to you or your department in relation to the practicality of the requirements?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Well, Mr. Speaker, obviously when the Liberals do not have any facts they lean toward smearing innocent parties. I can assure him there was no lobbying that took place on behalf of the company involved to have this licence changed to any kind of standards that would suit them better.

Environmental Licence Changes

Mr. John Angus (St. Norbert): Mr. Speaker, then perhaps the Minister of the Environment can give an explanation as to why the drastic changes on the toxic emissions of acid rain—the difference between the report of the commission and the licence that was issued that seriously downgraded the controls?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Changes that are referenced when the licence was put on the public registry have explanations with them as to the reason for the changes being different from the recommendation of the Clean Environment Commission. In each one of those cases they provided reasoning why it would be proper to do so. For example, continuous monitoring of some pollutants is not reliable; therefore, the licence will require detailed stack sampling twice a year in conjunction with continuous monitoring. Those are some of the types of changes that were made.

In other instances, where it takes six weeks to turn around a test, why do you need a daily test at enormous costs of operation when it takes six weeks to get the results back? You are better to go to a weekly test because it takes six weeks before you know what is happening in the process.

Mr. Angus: Mr. Speaker, there is something that does not jive here. Presumably there are professionals in the Clean Environment Commission. They succinctly said they wanted the flow rate monitored, that is the amount of material that goes into the atmosphere. That part has been specifically dropped from the order and there is no explanation as to why. Why would they ask for a continuous monitoring of the flow and why would your department eliminate that very necessary requirement?

Mr. Cummings: The Department of Environment, after receiving any licence, goes through a very detailed process of consultation with technical advisory groups upon the recommendations that are received. In this case, this is simply a practical application in the best interests of protecting the environment. If the Members opposite think there is something wrong with being practical, then now we know why they are over there.

Occupational Health Centre Privatization

Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Workplace Safety and Health (Mrs. Hammond). The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health was created 10 years ago to promote the fundamental right of Canadians to a healthy and safe workplace. The federal Minister of Labour is now in the process of privatizing the centre which will have the effect of making workers and employers pay for health and safety data information on how to deal with the workplace situation.

Will the Minister of Workplace Safety and Health (Mrs. Hammond) indicate what action she and her Government will take to block the privatization of the centre in order to protect all Manitobans to accessible information on workplace hazards and how to protect themselves from those hazards?

* (1355)

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister of Labour responsible for Workplace Safety and Health): Mr. Speaker, we believe that the federal Government should have continued to fund the centre, but we have appointed a governor who is on a working committee of CCOSH to be sure. They are bringing in a working plan, and the federal Government has extended the funding until the end of March so that business plan can be brought in.

Provincial Funding

Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas): Mr. Speaker, according to a draft confidential business plan for the privatizing of the health and safety, which was being presented to the federal Minister today, that as part of the five-year plan the suggestion was made that funding for the centre could be partially provided by the provincial Government.

Will the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond) now commit to predating any financial supports in the province being a condition that the centre not be privatized?

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister of Labour responsible for Workplace Safety and Health): Mr. Speaker, I will await the report as it is given to me. One thing we know in Manitoba, something that is very important to workplace safety, and I think the Honourable Member knows this as well, that centre is very important to what is happening with hazardous materials, and we need that centre so I will await the business plan.

Free Information

Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas): Mr. Speaker, to the same Minister, what action will the Minister take to ensure that all working Manitobans will continue to have access to credible complete neutral information on the workplace hazards regardless of their ability or the ability of their employer to pay for that information?

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister of Labour responsible for Workplace Safety and Health): Mr. Speaker, that information was to be part of the plan.

Springhill Farms Limited Provincial Commitment

Mr. Laurie Evans (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) and relates to the recent announcement regarding Springhill Farms and the deal between the farm and the Olympia Meats in Quebec.- (applause)- Now I appreciate the applause because obviously they are applauding what is, in some respects, a significant loss of jobs.

I would like to ask the Minister, he and his colleague, the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Cummings) and Charlie Mayer seem to have had a very fine photo session during the announcement, but their role was not clear. My question is to the Minister: exactly what role did the province play in this and what obligations has the province assumed in this contract?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, we were very pleased to see that deal culminated in the Province of Manitoba. There was to be a loss of jobs and complete closing of the plant at the end of February. For the last six to eight months there has been an ongoing process of negotiation to attempt to find some investment or partnership for Springhill wherever it could be found in Canada. We participated in hiring a negotiator to facilitate that process, and are very pleased to see him bring that process to a conclusion with a very strong partner coming in to Manitoba to take the hogs from Springhill and process them in a brand-new market for Manitoba hogs, some 11,000 hogs a week going into the Quebec market, a market we had never tapped before.

Mr. Laurie Evans: I guess it is like the old adage, how is your life, and you say it is fine, looking at the alternative. This is what you are faced with here.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order, please.

Hog Price Guarantees

Mr. Laurie Evans (Fort Garry): Mr. Vaags, the Chairman of Manitoba Pork, has stated that this is a guaranteed long-term contract. I would like to know from the Minister what in fact is guaranteed in terms of the number of hogs and the prices that will be available for those hogs.

* (1400)

Hon. Glen Findlay (Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, in terms of long-term development, it is better to be alive than dead, first off. That is the first thing.

In terms of economic development, 11,000 hogs a week for three years translates into 1.6 million hogs or some \$200 million of economic activity for the Province of Manitoba. Those Members possibly want economic development, and we have delivered in spades for the long term of the hog industry in the Province of Manitoba.

Hog Market Implications

Mr. Laurie Evans (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, they seem to be taking a great deal of satisfaction in the loss of jobs and no guarantee of long-term security of that plant.

My question also to the Minister is: in the press release they are indicating that the contract is outside the normal auction process. I would like to know what that means in terms of the implications of the supply and the price of hogs to other processors in the province.

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, by and large, on the Manitoba market, there are about six bidders. Had Springhill closed, we would have been down to five. Keeping Springhill open, we have six. In the long term, that is strength for the hog industry. They have struck a contract with the Hog Producers Marketing Board and they are prepared to strike a contract with any slaughterhouse or processor if they bring an adequate process forward with regard to that contract. In the terms of long term, this company is the Canadian's largest exporter to the Japan market. I expect to see them in the long term use that Neepawa plant as a plant to process for the Japanese market, a pure export market for which there will be additional export opportunity, additional economic activity for the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, one is tempted to get into that debate. My question is -(interjection)- 80 value-added jobs go to Quebec and everyone cheers.

My question is to the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme). I am sure that all Members in this Chamber—

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Government House Leader, on a point of order.

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Honourable Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) could be reminded, as he has been reminded a number of times during this Session, as have a few other Members in this House, about what Your Honour has affectionately come to call post-ambles to your preambles. This Member does this quite often, and I wonder if he could be brought to order for that.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order, the Honourable Government House Leader is quite correct. The Honourable Member for Concordia.

Mr. Doer: I apologize to the House for using the flexibility of debate. I do.

Mr. Speaker: We accept the Honourable Member's apology.

Urban Planning Legislation

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, citizens, I am sure, are phoning all Members of this Chamber, concerned, and rightly so, about the proposed tax increase in the City of Winnipeg. My question to the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme) is: we have been saying for a long time that the legislation and planning legislation to deal with urban sprawl must be changed to deal with the total costs that are related to developers developing this city in an unplanned way that is costing taxpayers millions of dollars. Those proposals have come home to roost.

Why has the Minister not brought in the planning sections consistent with the White Paper under The City of Winnipeg Act to deal with the inadequacies of planning in the City of Winnipeg and the tremendous burden taxpayers will have to face this year, no matter what the final number is at the City of Winnipeg?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Urban Affairs): First of all, Mr. Speaker, this Government and every Government is probably concerned about tax increases. This Government has dealt with our responsibilities; however, in the question with planning I have instructed, and during the Estimates process I explained to both my critics, that Part 20 of The City of Winnipeg Act is being dealt with now. We are having people throughout the regional planning committee meeting, I am having meetings with the city, and my administration is meeting with them to come forward at the next Session dealing with Part 20 of the Act.

Library Closures Opposition

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Given the fact that we have Bill 62 in the Chamber now, I would ask the Minister (1) will he bring those amendments of Part 20 under Bill 62, which deals with partial planning with the additional zones, and secondly, given the fact that the province gives over \$100 million to the City of Winnipeg, will the Minister be outlining his strong opposition to the City of Winnipeg in the proposal to close four libraries in the City of Winnipeg, particularly in the inner city area of the city where of course literacy is one of our greatest challenges?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Urban Affairs): First of all, Mr. Speaker, the part he is referring to, the Bill that is before committee right now, is dealing with the additional zones. However, that has to be clarified, and we would not proclaim that part until the regional people come forward with solutions, too, around those additional zones that the previous administration did nothing about while they were in office. They knew that problem has been going on around the city for the last six, seven, eight, nine years. It has fallen apart as a result, and they did absolutely nothing.

To now talk about the libraries, I do not think the function of this particular Government is to interfere in the budget process at the time with the city. We

have various discussions with the city, and I do not think anyone likes to see libraries or pools or anything to be closed down, but the people at city hall have been elected, 29 of them there. They have to deal with their budget solutions by themselves.

Mr. Doer: This province gives money to the City of Winnipeg and is accountable to this Chamber. Departments give money to libraries in the City of Winnipeg through this Legislature. We have set conditions before as part of our grant to the City of Winnipeg to not close libraries in the inner city as part of our negotiations. Why is this Minister taking a hands-off approach to the possibility of closing libraries? Why will he not use the negotiating muscle, the provincial Government, to ensure that children and other people in the inner city are not denied their opportunities for reading and learning in our library system of Winnipeg?

Mr. Ducharme: First of all—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

Mr. Ducharme: First of all, the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) is asking this Minister to respond to an administrative budget. City councillors themselves politically have not determined what their rate increases will be for 1990. Also, I will not get involved in the same type of hands-on that the previous administration said that you can have your transit grants if you refrain from increasing bus tickets, like they did a couple of years ago.

Educational Facilities Inkster Constituency

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): I have a question for the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). A lot of the parents and children in my riding are very concerned about the overcrowding in the schools in my area. The Public Finance Board has caused a great deal of this concern.

Mr. Speaker, why has the Government failed to act upon the five-year plan for capital expenditures? I can refer to the need to construct a new elementary school and the need for a new high school in the northwest area. I am wondering if the Minister of Education can tell me what the Department of Education, through the Public Finance Board, is doing about the concern to alleviate the schools that are bursting at the seams in my constituency.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, the other day the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) I believe rose to indicate that why were we closing down schools in the inner city and building more schools in the outer regions of the city.

Mr. Speaker, we understand the need for schools. There is a responsibility for every division to list their priorities and make those priorities known to the Public

Schools Finance Board. There is a five-year plan that is supposed to be outlined by every division for the Public Schools Finance Board.

Mr. Speaker, that process is in place. It is followed to the letter of the law by the Public Schools Finance Board. There is no deviation from it.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the Minister should get who is asking the questions proper in the first place.

Mr. Speaker, will the Department of Education look into the overcrowding of the schools in the Tyndall Park, Garden Grove, Meadows West area and act upon the situation immediately, given that there are currently overcrowded schools in my constituency and that come this September we are going to be looking at a crisis situation? There is not a—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The question has been put. The Honourable Minister of Education and Training.

* (1410)

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, there is a system in place in the Public Schools Finance Board whereby school divisions who are experiencing extreme crowding in schools can apply for the facilities.

Mr. Speaker, we have what is called a high quality relocatable type of unit which can be constructed very quickly in areas where there is overcrowding. It is the school division's responsibility to make those known. If there is a situation where the Public Schools Finance Board has not responded to a school board's request for some reason, I would like the Member to bring that to my attention and I will certainly look into it.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Inkster.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) treats it as a joke. It is a serious situation in my constituency, and as the MLA, I—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order please.

Sisler-Rosser Committee Meeting Request

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Inkster has the floor. The Honourable Member for Inkster.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) meet with the Sisler-Rosser committee, which represents over 6,000 students in the northwest area, which is a significant portion of the total school population in Winnipeg No.

1? Will he sit down and address the needs of the north end?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, the school board of which the Member speaks has not made a request to meet with me with regard to that particular situation. I do not even know if they have requested to meet with the Public Schools Finance Board on that matter.

Mr. Speaker, what do the Liberals want? They want us to build schools where there are no children. They want us to build schools where there are growing needs. I wish they would identify their priorities and their policies.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Manitoba Medical Association Negotiations

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): My question is to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), and it is in regard to the impasse that has been reached in negotiations between the Minister and the doctors of this province. On Tuesday, November 28—this was outlined in the speech I tabled, the Government refused to release—the Minister indicated that he was issuing the Government's final offer to the MMA.

What I would like to ask the Minister is, what negotiations took place prior to Tuesday, November 28 and that final offer, and what negotiations have taken place since, since we are dealing with a very serious situation. The contract is up the end of March and we are faced with a possible strike situation.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend answered his own question. The contract with the MMA does not expire until March 31. Secondly, meetings are scheduled with the negotiating team, Civil Service Commission, and MHSC. Thirdly, if we follow the record set by the previous Government, we have 11 months after the expiry date of the contract in which to achieve a settlement.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, in the Chamber today the Estimates of the Department of Education and Training are under consideration, and in Room 255 the Estimates of the Department of Natural Resources.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of the Environment (Mr. Cummings), 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.

MATTER OF GRIEVANCE

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I would like to rise on a matter of grievance.

Mr. Speaker, today in asking the questions it has caused me a great deal of concern that the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) would belittle what I feel is something that is very important in my constituency.

I attend a lot of functions in my riding. I listen to what the residents that put me into this Chamber's concerns are, and one of the major issues that they continue to bring up to me, time after time after time, is the seriousness of the overcrowding in our schools.

The Minister of Education has said that it is completely up to the school division -(interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. Honourable Members wishing to carry on their private conversations can do so outside the Chamber. The Honourable Member for Inkster has the floor.

The Honourable Member for Inkster.

Mr. Lamoureux: The Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), as I have pointed out, has tried to belittle it by saying that it is not part of my responsibility to ask questions of this nature because in fact it is the school board that puts it in terms of a priority to the Public Finance Board.

The Public Finance Board, which is appointed by the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), has already caused a great deal of concern to the constituents in my area. Earlier in 1989 the school board, Public Finance Board, was to build and construct portables to Stanley Knowles School. Because of the late action taken by the Public Finance Board, many of the students who were attending Stanley Knowles School in 1989 were in fact attending that school for part of the day and having to go to another school for another part of the day, Mr. Speaker, because the Public Finance Board was not able to reach a decision in a much quicker fashion, not able to bring forward to the schools to meet the school's needs in order to accommodate the surging elementary population in my area.

Mr. Speaker, it is not in the best interests of the kids. We had Grade 8 children who were being bussed between Stanley Knowles School and Sisler High School, and there is a major difference between going from a high school to an elementary school. The reason why this was taking place was because of the Public Finance Board's inability to ensure that the portables were there in a better time period. As a result, we had things of that nature taking place. I want to go over this afternoon some of the options that the school board is now faced with because, in part, of what actions the Government has failed to take. I would like to go through a few of those options.

If we look at Option 1, it is suggested that they move Grade 7 and 8 French Immersion students from Stanley Knowles School to Sisler High School again. To bring elementary school children into high schools, it is a totally different atmosphere. It was not that long ago

when I was in a high school, just under 10 years, and the atmosphere in a high school is much more freewheeling. It can be extremely intimidating to those who are going there in Grade 9, but to put elementary or what should be elementary children into a high school situation, it is a totally different type of an atmosphere. This is one of the options that is being considered as Option 1. That is Component 1 of Option 1. Component 2 is that portable classrooms would be required at Garden Grove and Meadows West Schools also. That is in addition to moving Grades 7 and 8 over to Sisler High School.

(Mr. Neil Gaudry, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

Option 2 is to move Grade 8 English students from Stanley Knowles School to Sisler High, which will make available some six classrooms. Portable classrooms would still be required at the Garden Grove and Meadows West Schools. Mr. Acting Speaker, the portables that would be required under this particular option and in fact under Option 1 have not even been started yet. Will they in fact be able to have the classrooms in place come September 1 when the school year begins? We saw last year they were not able to do that, and as a result they had children going in different parts in different schools, to one for part of the morning and in the afternoon going to another school.

Mr. Acting Speaker, Option 3 is really something that a person must take with a bit of salt and grin with. This is what they are proposing as an option to the parents and children in the riding, and that is to postpone a decision regarding Stanley Knowles School and tolerate overcrowding for another year. They are admitting that we have overcrowding in the school, and yet they are going to have to put up with overcrowding for another year. That is not in the best interest of the children that are attending this particular school in my riding.

* (1420)

When the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) says that it has nothing to do with us in this Chamber I think it is irresponsible of the Minister of Education, especially when you take a look at what the Winnipeg No. 1 School Division suggested in July 4, 1988, in their five-year plan for capital building projects.

We will take a look at what they had suggested. In new schools, in buildings or additions to existing and demolition of old facilities the first priority, in terms of a new school, was to construct a new elementary school in the northwest end of the city, in the Meadows West development Phase 2, year of ministerial approval was to be expected in 1989. That was priority one in terms of a new school being built in my riding or in the northwest area.

Priority two in terms of additional new construction of schools was a new high school in the northwest area, Mr. Acting Speaker. If we take a look at the catchment areas and what is expected, or what Stanley Knowles and the other elementary schools are feeding into in terms of a high school after they graduate and then they go into the high schools, we are looking at Sisler

High with a population currently of 1,320 approximately has 10 feeder schools with a total population of 4,800. How does that compare with other school divisions?

If we take a look at Gordon Bell School, a high school that has 875 students, we have feeder schools with populations of 2,910. If we take a look at the combination of Daniel Mac and Tech Voc, Daniel Mac with 1,200 and Tech Voc with approximately 1,250, they have feeders of 6,018. Those are two high schools the same equivalent size of Sisler High. If we take a look at Elmwood High, 800 student population, it has five feeder schools with 1,370.

Mr. Acting Speaker, what I am trying to point out is if you take in terms of the proportion of Sisler High and the number of elementary schools that feed into it, it is way out of proportion in the rest of Winnipeg No. 1.

Why is this problem not being addressed? We can look at what is anticipated. It refers to the era in which the children attend these schools. We look at 1991, 1992 classroom requirements. New houses are continuing to be built in the Garden Grove, Stanley Knowles and Meadows West catchment area. It is anticipated that additional students from this area will begin to have a major impact on Stanley Knowles by September, 1991. Mr. Acting Speaker, what is being done with Stanley Knowles this year?

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): A great deal has been done.

Mr. Lamoureux: The Minister of Natural Resources says a great deal has been done. Mr. Acting Speaker, there is no doubt the school board is trying their best in order to facilitate the demand for new school facilities but the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), who appoints the members of the Public School Board of Finance, is not treating it in a manner in which it deserves. Why is this Government not recognizing or feel that they have no responsibility when it comes to the education of the people of Manitoba?

Mr. Enns: It is not true.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Acting Speaker, the Minister of Natural Resources says that is not true. He was here when I had asked the question from the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). The Minister of Education says that this is not maybe the best question to ask on this platform. Some of his colleagues suggested that I should run for school trustee. I find it unbelievable that as the sitting MLA representing this area, in raising an issue and a concern that is on the top of the minds or a priority in the minds of many of my constituents, that this Government would suggest to me that I have no business, no right, telling this Chamber what is their concern. That is unacceptable. It is unbelievable that a Government can take that type of attitude.

Mr. Acting Speaker, getting back, including in Option 3, it also has, portable classrooms would still be required at Garden Grove and Meadows West School. The Public School Finance Board is aware of the situation. I am hoping that if by chance they do not realize the

importance of this because of the Minister of Education who appointed them, that the Minister of Education will read what I have said and give a very strong message to the Public Finance Board so the Public Finance Board cannot say that they are not aware of the situation. That is in part the reason why I felt it was necessary to stand here and grieve today, to ensure that the Minister of Education cannot state that he was not aware of the situation in the northwest end.

Mr. Acting Speaker, if we take a look at the growth in the City of Winnipeg, we look at where housing is being built, you will find that in my riding, the Member for Kildonan's (Mr. Cheema) riding, which is right beside mine, that it is an area of the city in which there is a tremendous amount of growth. There is a responsibility for Governments, whether it is a civic school trustee, a provincial, to be aware of what is going on in the province. If there is a need, a real justified need, the Government should be taking action to ensure that whatever takes place is in the best interest of all the students in the Province of Manitoba.

It is not the sole responsibility of the school board to ensure that there is adequate education to the children of this province. It is not the sole responsibility of ours to ensure that there is adequate education to the children of our province. It is in most part, I hope and believe that it is the school board that ultimately will be making the decisions that will be putting forward the priorities. I believe Winnipeg No. 1 has done that.

In their five-year capital expenditure plan they have pointed out 17 priorities. The first two priorities in terms of new school construction was an elementary and high school in the northwest corner of the City of Winnipeg. The second priority overall was to replace Margaret Scott and demolish the building.

The Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) says that it is not the Minister of Education, it is not the Public Finance Board that decides the policy, that in fact it is the school board. How wrong the Minister is, because the Minister should know full well that it is the Public Finance Board that can very easily dictate policy if the Public Finance Board refuses to give the funds.

If the Public Finance Board decides that they are not going to provide the funds for a decision that is made by the school board, the school board can either opt on its own, and I am not even too sure if they can afford to opt on their own, or reverse the stand, or a preference that they would like to go to.

For the Minister of Education to say that the province has no role in terms of policy when it comes to the education system regarding the construction of new schools, the Minister of Education is dead wrong. The Minister of Education said that, he said that in a very roundabout way, he was implying, the Minister of Education was implying that it is the school board that makes the policy decisions. The Minister of Education was wrong, and if he had any—what is the word?—guts, he would stand up today and say that in fact the Public Finance Board does dictate what is going to happen when it comes to what schools are going to be built and what schools are going to be rebuilt.

The Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) is not doing the things -(interjection)- the Minister of Finance (Mr.

Manness) asked me if things are slipping. Under this Government I think maybe things have been slipping. I can assure the Minister of Finance that whatever does come up in the constituency, I will as the local representative ensure that this Government is aware. It does not have to be solely provincial jurisdiction. It can be municipal, it can be federal, it can be provincial.

* (1430)

What the constituents of Inkster want me to do is what I will do, because after all they are the ones that put me into this Chamber, and I plan to represent them in the best way I can. Contrary to what the Minister of Finance says, I feel that the best way to represent them is to ensure that the feelings of my constituents are brought to this floor so that the Government, and in particular the Minister of Education in this particular case, is aware of the problems, of the crisis that is going on in my riding in terms of overcrowding in the schools.

Mr. Acting Speaker, if we would like to go to the next option, option 4, requests portable classrooms from Public Schools Finance Board for Garden Grove and Meadows West School. Option 5, combination of options outlined above and options provided by the administration.

The school board is desperate. The school board wants the Public Finance Board to come up—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): The Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), on a point of order.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): I am deeply enthralled with my honourable friend's grievance, but I understand that Education Estimates are on right now and instead of wasting the time of the House, he could discuss all of these matters with the Minister direct and get answers during the Estimate process instead of wasting valuable time of the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): The Minister does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.- (interjection)- Order, please.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Acting Speaker, the Minister of Health is right in a sense that, yes, I can ask questions. My preference is that we have a concurrence, that the critic of Education has plenty of questions for the Minister of Education to answer. We would hope that the Minister of Education can keep his answers somewhat brief, but when concurrence comes there is no doubt I will have an opportunity to put forward these questions.

Let me give advance notice to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). The Minister of Education, after what he has heard today from my grievance, will be hopefully better prepared to answer the questions that I might put to him during concurrence. This is a

very good way so the Minister of Education can be very well prepared. When I put forth some questions regarding this particular issue, hopefully the Minister of Education will be able to bring forward some good, quality answers.

I must admit I have been listening to some of his answers, and the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) brings up a very good point. He sure knows how to baffle me. I am not too sure he is very good at answering the questions direct. Hopefully with the comments he has heard today, when I do put forward the questions he will in fact come forward with some good, legitimate, concise answers, because it is something that has to be addressed. I am glad to see the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) has agreed, in a roundabout way, that it is a valid concern to raise in this Chamber because he has done so by suggesting that I should be asking it in Estimates.

Mr. Acting Speaker, had we had unlimited time instead of a cap of 240 hours, I am sure we could ask 240 hours on education alone. I am sure we could. If the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) want to agree that we can do that, I am sure the Critic for Education on both the official Opposition and the third Party would be more than happy to accommodate expanding the 240 hours. I would love to be able to ask all the questions I could regarding this issue, and a multitude of other questions I would have regarding other departments that effect, not only the constituents in my riding, but also the constituents of many Members' ridings.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): Order, please.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Acting Speaker, if we look at some of the actual numbers—or before I do that, I wanted to highlight from the Act what I believe really does need to be improved in some manner. I am referring to The Public Schools Finance Board Act. It stipulates that the public schools finance board consisting of not more than five persons appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council continued as a body corporate.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I am not too sure if the Minister of Education—and maybe he could take this question as notice if he wants to take it as a question—is the actual makeup of this board, and in what way would they ensure that they are fully addressed? How are they aware of the actual things that are going on in different areas of the City of Winnipeg?

On what criteria did he use in selecting that particular board? I say that because the board does dictate policy to school boards. It does it through approving and disapproving requests from the school divisions. I am somewhat concerned about the treatment of School Division No. 1 and if the Public Finance Board, Mr. Acting Speaker, is really doing what is in the best interests of School Division No. 1.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I have learned a lot in this last week in trying to find out or get to the bottom of what it is that is really the problem in terms of schools that are being overcrowded. I have talked to Winnipeg No. 1 school trustees, I have talked to representatives from

the Minister's office, from the Public Finance Board, your special assistant. The Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) wanted to know who. I hope he was a trustworthy person to talk to. I trust he is. Actually, I believe his name was Dave McGill. I think he is a special assistant for the Minister of Education, a very nice person, and I commend the Minister of Education on what I think is a very good selection. He was very accommodating in terms of trying to help me understand what the situation actually is.

* (1440)

Mr. Acting Speaker, what I was really trying to do was to find out how a school capacity of schools can fluctuate depending on the circumstances. I have heard the capacity of Sisler High as high as 1,675. I have seen reports where it showed it at 1,300. It was beyond me how a capacity could actually change when the physical structure did not change, and through a combination of talking to several people, what I came up with is that Stanley Knowles School, the building itself can be at a capacity of 1,000 where it currently is right now. The exact same structure or facility could be in any other area of the province and the capacity could be at 900. The capacity, Mr. Acting Speaker, is determined in most part through classroom utilization. The classroom utilization is usually decided in part through the principal who submits it through to the superintendent and the capacity is decided, from what I understand, on that basis.

What I found somewhat interesting is, if we look at a report that I did receive, in particular on Stanley Knowles, we will see that they had a capacity of 1,113; that is full-time equivalents. If we take a look at what the Public Finance Board uses as capacity, you will find that industrial arts, music rooms and science rooms are not necessarily taken into account in using capacity. The Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) shakes his head. This is the Public Finance Board that gave me the information.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Are you suggesting we change our criteria?

Mr. Lamoureux: No, I am not suggesting at all that we change it, Mr. Acting Speaker. The Minister of Education should finish listening to what I have to say maybe before he thinks or tries to think what I am going to be saying.

If we have 1,113 students as a capacity and we use what Stanley Knowles is using to get that 1,113 capacity, you will see that in this particular document that I have before me, it shows that they are including four: industrial arts, home economic labs, elementary music lab, a computer education lab. That is some six rooms. Six rooms, and you can times it by 25 and you will find that its capacity, according to Public Finance Board, would likely be below 1,000. There are more than 1,000 students at that school.

If it goes over in terms of criteria, what type of criteria does the Public Finance Board require in order to have a new school built? It basically looks at the number of students, capacity and the viability. It looks at the

area, if there is growth. There is growth in the area. If we look at the near or at capacity, we will find that not only Stanley Knowles but other elementary schools in the same area are also in and around or over capacity.

From what I can understand in the information that I have received from the Public Finance Board and from the school division and from the Rosser-Sisler Committee, it appears to be that indeed there is a justified need to have a school now, a new school, an elementary school and high school in the area. That does not surprise me because in the five-year projection, as I pointed out, it was suggested that by 1989 construction of a new elementary school in the north west area. It singles out Meadows West development, the Phase 2, Mr. Acting Speaker, what was known as the Phase 2 component has not gone in the manner in which it was initially intended, but the construction of new homes around that area has proceeded so there is that need. The intent here, from School Division No. 1, was to see a new school in 1989, or at least ministerial approval for this school in 1989.

Mr. Acting Speaker, what has happened is that we will find that this year, come September, we are going to be in a very serious situation in the northwest corner, in particular the catchment areas of Stanley Knowles, Garden Grove and Tyndall Park schools.

Mr. Acting Speaker, there just is not enough space, physical space, in the rooms to accommodate what the numbers that I have been given. I believe that come September 1, we are going to have children and not enough classrooms to put the children into.

One option, even though it was not listed on this particular item, and the option that I was referring to actually comes from the chairperson of the Building and Transportation Committee of Winnipeg No. 1. One of the options that they did not list, but was included, was transporting children that live west of Tallman Avenue over to Lord Nelson School, which is a fair distance away.

When people move into a new area with anticipation that there are going to be schools, when they are given the impression that there are schools around them that their children are going to be able to attend, they invest what for most people is their greatest investment, their home. The single greatest investment is one's home. They are hoping that the children that they have are able to attend the local schools in that area.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we have a situation where the schools are in fact bursting at the seams, in particular, Stanley Knowles School. It cannot facilitate any more students. The request and the position that we are putting the school board, the principals, the teachers and so forth in is not fair. It is not appropriate.

One of the chairpeople of the local parent councils in the area suggested to me that when Stanley Knowles, as it stands right now and it has 10 portables, if they were to have a staff room meeting that all of the staff would not necessarily be able to fit in a comfortable fashion at all in the staff room, because the staff room was not built to accommodate the number of staff that are now at that school.

The reason for that, Mr. Acting Speaker, is because of the large number of portables. When the Public Finance Board agrees to have a school built they are supposed to take many things into account. One of those things is what they would believe or perceive is going to be the capacity of that core area, the area such as the gymnasium, your library and your staff room can facilitate. When that is taken into account the number of portables should not exceed that, because the moment you start exceeding the initial intent of that school's facilitation, the more you are going to take away class time for the gymnasium, library use, other labs and so forth.

When we build a school, that has to be taken into account. That is one of the answers that I have not been able to get yet. What was the initial intent of how many children were they planning on going to a particular school?

Mr. Acting Speaker, the Sisler High School was at one time a capacity of 1,675. Reverend Ray Cooper, who was a chairperson of the Sisler-Rosser group, was well familiar with the situation there. At the time, so I have been told—not only by him, but by others—that it was an intolerable number of children to have at one school, that there was literally chaos in the hallways. You can only have so many people in a hallway when that recess bell goes. You might be able to get and jam pack as many rooms, and take away the study rooms, or whatever might be the case, in order to accommodate more people into a school, but the hallways are only so wide and the facilities are very limited.

If we do not either increase or build onto the school, you cannot bring the school up to an unbearable number. Mr. Acting Speaker, the number that I have heard is in fact unacceptable, of 1,675.

I gave you earlier the comparison of other high schools in the catchment area. I do not know the actual square footage, but I believe 1,675 is in fact overdoing it—I only have two minutes left. I understand that the Premier (Mr. Filmon)—and maybe this is a good way to end—attended Sisler High School. I would suggest that the Premier of the province once again return to Sisler High, look at the conditions, and give his opinion on what he feels the population of Sisler High should be, and look at the facilities that Sisler High has.

* (1450)

Mr. Acting Speaker, in my last minute to conclude, I do believe that as the MLA representing the area that I am in place to bring forward what many of my constituents perceive to be the No. 1 concern. I am hoping by bringing it forward today that the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) and other Members of the Government will take this matter very seriously and work with School Division No. 1 or assist School Division No. 1, which is the largest school division. School Division No. 1 trustees have a tremendous load, and if we can be of assistance to them, I would suggest that we do that.

I would not want to walk over or suggest that the School Division No. 1 school trustees are doing a bad

job, but I do believe as the sitting MLA that I should be conveying the concerns, the real beliefs, and the problems in my riding. I hope I have done that in an appropriate fashion here today. Thank you very much, Mr. Acting Speaker, for the time.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the Honourable Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer) in the Chair for the Department of Natural Resources; and the Honourable Member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry) in the Chair for the Department of Education and Training.

* (1500)

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY—NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Chairman (Harold Gilleshammer): I call this meeting to order to consider the Estimates of the Department of Natural Resources. We will commence with item 3. Engineering and Construction.

The Honourable Minister.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I, for convenience sake, can recommend to committee Members to deal with Engineering and Construction and Water Resources in this same go-around. They tend to overlap in terms of their responsibilities, and I make that recommendation in any event.

Mr. Chairman: Item 3. Engineering and Construction (a) Administration: (1) Salaries, \$546,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures, \$248,700—pass; 3.(b) Technical Services: (1) Salaries, \$1,648,200—pass; (2) Other Expenditures, \$97,400—pass.

(3) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations, \$55,000—the Member for St. Norbert.

Mr. John Angus (St. Norbert): Is this recoverable from the federal Government? What is this recoverable from?

Mr. Enns: I am advised, Mr. Chairman, that in this case it is recoverable from other departments. There are other agreements though that are shareable by the federal Government.

Mr. Chairman: That item is passed. Item 3.(c) Regional Engineering Services: (1) Salaries, \$3,773,300—the Member for Selkirk.

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): When you are speaking of Regional Engineering Services, has any of this, salaries or monies, gone into preliminary studies for the Conawapa Dam?

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, none of these monies are in any way related to the hydro development specifically referred to by the Member, the Conawapa Dam. These regional services relate to water and water related

problems and assisting the municipalities who request engineering and survey and design information. There are some requests from us from forestry for assistance. We operate, for instance, among other things, two substantial greenhouses. So they are all related to our own governmental and/or municipal services when called upon.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass—pass. Item 3.(c)(2) Other Expenditures, \$1,017,300—pass; (3) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations, \$325,000—pass.

Resolution No. 107: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$6,951,300 for Natural Resources, Engineering and Construction, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1990—pass.

Item 4. Water Resources (a) Administration: (1) Salaries, \$395,700—the Member for Selkirk.

Mrs. Charles: Mr. Chairperson, there is no doubt that it makes it difficult in asking questions on this budget in that it was last year's budget in every sense of the word. Last year showed that in many parts of the province, especially the southern agricultural area, how limited we are in water resources. There have been many issues that have resulted because of that. Can the Minister indicate what the prognoses are for this coming year at the given rate of snowfall that has covered the land and what type of water supplies are we looking for this spring and summer, given the current trend right now?

Mr. Enns: The Member raises an important point. We are encouraged at this time of the year by the fact that we have better moisture conditions both in snowfall and rain, I guess. My department is particularly pleased that much of this snowfall and increased amounts of snowfall are in northern Manitoba, which hopefully will continue and will enable us to approach the coming summer season with a greater degree of confidence in terms of the overall fire situation which, even going into the fall, was still considered critical by departmental staff. We watch and monitor very carefully the amounts of snowfall that are being recorded throughout the province.

In general, all I can say is that I think a report from the weather office has indicated that we are at this particular time normal or indeed slightly above normal, and that of course has not been the case for several years running. We hope that will continue. The land needs it.

Mrs. Charles: Let us hope the trend continues. We do not want flooding this spring, which would be an obvious consideration, given the fast winter that we had, without much cover, and the deep frost I am sure we have. If waters come and snow melts quickly this spring, we could go into a flooding situation, but let us consider the best continues.

I would ask the Minister if it is appropriate under this general section to ask about such things as the Assiniboine delta aquifer in this section. The Minister indicates okay.

I understand that the Minister has met with the citizens groups out there, and they have formed a committee that the citizens seem quite pleased with. I appreciate the Minister's attention to the concerns of the residents, but an ongoing concern of the areas seems to be circling around the fact that irrigation is not taking place with full consideration for the impacts it has on the water table itself.

I wonder if the Minister could update us on what type of extended plans are going to take place to ensure that irrigation licences are sought in all cases, that they are approved for water quantities, that the times that the irrigation takes place is restricted to hours where there will be less evaporation, types of weather where less evaporation will take place in times of low water tables, and perhaps any other items that the Minister could expound upon in order to catch us up to date on the Assiniboine delta aquifer.

Mr. Enns: The Member touches on a point that is of considerable concern to the department and this particular division. We are the responsible Government department that, on the one hand, is responsible for and provides the licensing of, or the allocation of available waters, as we do throughout the province. When a commodity becomes scarce, as you would expect, then the competition for the same increases and its value increases.

The Member is correct that not so long ago I had the occasion to meet with a group of concerned citizens from that area. Part of the concern, of course, results from a proposal that is before us to divert some waters from the Assiniboine-Carberry aquifer to the Plumas area, where for several years running now we have had a critical water shortage.

I receive poignant letters from individuals who remind me of the fact that they are, and have been, hauling water not only for their cattle, but for their domestic use as well for the last several years. The situation cries out for some resolution. This department participated with others in the proposal that we felt could relieve that water-short area by a diversion of some waters from the Carberry aquifer.

* (1510)

This met with considerable concern, as the Member is well aware, of those citizens living on or near the aquifer that felt that under these circumstances of drought that they have experienced for the last several years that under no circumstances should any waters be diverted from that area to another area. They have requested Government to seek alternative means of supplying that area with water. I can report to committee Members, that is precisely what is being undertaken through the Department of Rural Development. An engineering firm is at this time studying the matter further and is scheduled to report, I understand relatively soon.

In the meantime, this department is also the department that provides the licences for the irrigators that the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) responds to. I am informed that all licensees are currently

operating within the conditions of their licence, and at this time there are no specific complaints before the department.

I must also advise Members of the committee that we are however not, and refusing to license some 20 to 23 additional operations who are actually waiting for this licensing approval. We just feel that under the circumstances we have to take into consideration the deep concern expressed by the different groups of citizens on both sides of this question. It is really my hope that the aquifer advisory or management group that I indicated and am in the process of establishing, I would hope within a relatively short period of time, mid-February towards the end of February, we would have that advisory board in place.

Officials of my department advise me that it has proven out to be successful in other jurisdictions, all too often implemented too late when it has become a problem to such an extent that ground water is harder and harder to obtain. We hope that we can, under the advice of this advisory board, institute the kind of conditions to existing licensees and future licensees that will meet the general approval of the citizen in the area and that will in the main also educate more people in the area as to the nature of the resource.

There is skepticism quite frankly on the part of many people who simply are not prepared to accept the advice of outside experts. It has been pointed out to me that outside experts, if proven wrong, only have their opinions proven wrong. People living on the aquifer may find themselves without water, and that carries some weight with me. I am prepared, even though I find myself and certainly officials within the department find themselves, between two kind of hard positions. On the one hand, we have allowed and encouraged indeed the development of wells with the prospect of having them duly licensed, and we have now placed a moratorium on them. I am working co-operatively with the other Minister involved, principally the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner), the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) to try to resolve this issue.

A great deal of this issue will eventually be resolved as we apply better management techniques to how we treat our water resources in a complete way. By that I mean that we do the necessary remedial work on small creeks that are in the area to ensure that not all is lost in the fast spring runoff, that we can demonstrate that we are recharging the aquifer to the fullest extent possible and indeed even maybe some, in the future, larger works that would increase the flows of the Assiniboine through that area that would increase the level of confidence of people who could then sit down and accept the kind of sharing of that resource within the broader community.

Mrs. Charles: I would like to congratulate the Minister and his department on slowing down this process and the willingness to take a second look at it. I know I differ with the NDP on this, but I do not think when you are dealing with the importance of an aquifer that if there is any doubt, you should rush ahead with it. I appreciate that this Government has in this particular case taken the time to give it a second look.

I hope this engineering study that comes out will be taken to the people and let them really know and understand what the study says before it is imposed upon them. Whether it be for them or against them they should really participate in the study and understand it before it goes through, because in attending the hearings, the Environment hearings in the area, it was very discouraging for the people there.

I could feel it myself in that we had a lot of your staff stand up and explain scientifically what was happening in the aquifer, and yet these people who live there and can see the results on a day-to-day basis, which always did not seem to jive with what the so-called experts were saying, trying to put their argument forward and yet having no statistics or figures and comprehensive studies to back up what they were saying. Yet they had their history and their knowledge behind them which should have had equal importance, but because of the process system, were not able to hold the same weight.

They went away feeling not as participant in the environmental hearing, and I appreciate that the Minister has taken the time to go back to them and allow them to have some input into what the Ministry will be doing, and as well on the way I think educating both sides, both the public and the department itself, and hopefully come to an understanding.

My question to the Minister though is on the present irrigation licences that are out there. What are the monitoring methods on the irrigation licences out there? Is there control on each irrigation pump that indicates how much water is being used, and does someone actually physically check the irrigation licence in order to make sure that no more pumps have cropped up, shall we say, under the one licence?

Mr. Enns: I appreciate what the Member is saying, and certainly that very point has been brought to my attention, that even under the given licensings and the conditions attached thereto, the degree of supervision, monitoring, in the minds of some citizens is less than adequate, and the suggestion that there have been breaches or illegal extensions to the licence in terms of amounts and how that water is being used. I have to believe that the department responds to specific complaints when they are received. I think there is always room for improvement, particularly in this area.

Obviously it is not possible to have a staff person from Water Resources sit on top or be in the proximity of every well while it is pumping, and situations can be abused. Experience has taught us that it becomes a much more understood and controlled situation when the local community is provided with a forum, in this case the forum is the one that I have already referred to—is there to immediately, at the local level, ensure that they have a hand in formulating and in writing the regulations and the conditions and the licensings.

These kinds of concerns are brought to me: is water being prudently used; is it necessary for them to use the amounts that even they are currently licensed for; should there not be restrictions put in place when we enter into prolonged drought periods; should irrigation take place, under certain circumstances, not at high noon because of the loss through evaporation?

There are many modifications, refinements, to how the precious resource water is used by irrigators that people are legitimately questioning. I will be attempting to make the to be formed acquifer advisory committee very much aware that these are the kind of broad things that I am looking for, their direct involvement.

We have staff monitoring the wells from time to time on a fairly regular basis. More specifically, we simply do not have the kind of staff to do more than to respond when a specific complaint is received.

Mrs. Charles: There is no gauge then on the pump for irrigation that you can tell how many litres, or whatever the measurement would be, of water used per season, or per whatever time frame you wished, so you could regulate and at the very least know what quantities these irrigators are using?

* (1520)

Mr. Enns: I am advised that many of them have, but not all—I think despite the fact that we have had irrigation in place for some time in Manitoba, but irrigation has not been a big thing in Manitoba, and as long as the question of availability of sourcing of water there were not those kinds of pressures on how that water was being used.

That is all changing and changing rapidly right now. I think we will see a considerably sophisticated and in some instances more restrictive but hopefully a more prudent use of those water supplies that we have.

Mrs. Charles: I just find it strange that as I recall, and correct me if I am wrong, but on the list of users of a water resource irrigators are one of the lowest, if not the lowest, on the levels of who gets to use the water first.

In this drought year where many of the farmers for agricultural purposes for feeding livestock were having to dig deeper dugouts out there or remove their cattle, especially when the irrigation pumps worked up, the irrigators in this opportunity seemed to be overtaking the usage of the agricultural purposes, which is contrary to the listing that is within your department.

I guess I am just wondering whether gauging it would not be more appropriate so you could at least have some standard by which to say who has used so much water, especially for the irrigators, that you could limit them or at least have some indication of their need.

Further from that I also hear that in many cases as their dugouts are going dry the irrigators are running water into ditches, that they have overwatered so much in some cases that it is running off. You can certainly, as a farmer yourself, understand the anger it must give you and certainly those people when they are having to have their cattle search for water and the farm next door is running water into puddles.

I am certain that does not happen all the time. I do not mean to indicate that the irrigators are irresponsible. That cannot be true for all of them for all times. Those type of circumstances do not help any agreement on an aquifer or any water usage when you have two people

trying to work a living and one seeming to abuse and the other trying to seek for that source and get adequate levels of it.

Mr. Enns: I really cannot take issue with anything the Member for Selkirk says. What it all points out to is that after several successive years of drought we have all become much more appreciative of water or concerned about the amounts and indeed the lack of it.

I am advised that to clarify an earlier question the Member had, that it is now required from each licensee to record the rate and total volume used throughout the year. That is an annual drawdown that the user, that licensee takes from the aquifer. I suspect that is what I mean when I say that this is the first steps to further regulation as to the use of water for the people that are concerned, watching how this resource is being used, that may not be good enough in the future, that they will want to have more refined and more specific regulations rather than simply recording the annual drawdown of a particular well or licensee from the aquifer.

What it does of course though, it provides the department with the kind of information that gives us the ability and the confidence to know what water withdrawals are occurring from that aquifer. We also have the kind of information as to the levels that it is being recharged. That gives us overall management capability of the aquifer on a year-to-year basis. It again obviously, and I know what the Member refers to, does not necessarily mean that there are not fluctuations within the year that cause concern and would in my judgment, could in some cases, be addressed.

In any event I am sincerely appreciative of my Opposition Critic's, what I believe to be, extremely responsible concerns, as she has expressed them. We will hopefully be able to assist that community to resolving their water problems.

It is a coin that has many sides. Many of these same people are acutely aware that a processing operation like the Carberry potato processing plant is extremely important, as indeed is any economic activity in rural Manitoba, and that these same irrigators who are sometimes cast as the villain in the role, are faced with the situation that unless they have sources of water to use they are not getting the expanded contracts that are available to fill the processors with the necessary potato product, which in turn employs people in the area, and I think is generally acknowledged as a very important economic activity in the area. It all ties together.

I recently had the opportunity of addressing the annual meeting of the vegetable growers association here in Winnipeg, and that point certainly was brought home to me that at certain times we were importing from out of province, potatoes, up to 12 percent and 15 percent of the volume of the plant required. That did not leave anybody too satisfied either. Certainly we had the capability of growing potatoes in Manitoba and our producers are there and ready and willing to do so, but in some instances, particularly in drought years,

they need the water to accomplish that, or we have special opportunities in different parts of the province that grow specialty crops that can only be grown with irrigated water. They do not need a great deal of water. We have a vegetable grower that grows the only Spanish onions grown in western Canada, and we in effect supply western Canada with western onions, but that sensitive crop requires relatively small amounts of irrigation water at a particular time in the growth of that crop or else there is no crop.

* (1530)

Mr. Chairman I think the Honourable Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus) is suggesting that I am now beginning to filibuster my Estimates. Knowing that we have unlimited time, I will cease and desist.

Mrs. Charles: Further to the same area, it is my understanding that part of the problem in the Plumas area is the fact that in past procedures that the diking that has gone on, and in looking at the map there is an intricate web of diking that has gone on in that system to take away water in the springtime, perhaps has caused a rerouting of water supplies and availability of water come various seasons. I am just wondering what work your department has done in looking into the various strategies that can take into account the channelling of water off the land and the diking and rerouting it around into streams and running it off where it could be saved and the channels could be culverted so that you could maintain and retain some of that water. Is there an equal amount of work going into the Plumas area in how to keep the water there rather than how to just bring water in from another source.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, just very generally there is no question that we have for understandable reasons in those years done a pretty good job of taking water off the land and maybe too good of a job in many instances. We have also taken a lot of other things off the land, like trees and tree cover. That has created problems for our wildlife. It has created problems for our waterfowl management in terms of providing the necessary sloughs and potholes for recovery of water and retention of water. All of that has added to, particularly again when under the stress of drought years, the fact that we have lost some of the capability of retaining water when it is there in the spring and it has left us too quickly.

I am pleased to indicate that that is being understood and we are changing the emphasis, have in fact in the last several years, to enhance the opportunities of retaining water in a variety of ways. In my budget this year there will be monies for several hundreds of small dam water retention projects. These are not Rafferty-Alamedas. These are small structures of a few feet. In some cases they are not a dam, they are simply restricters that slow up the water from running off a portion of the escarpment by three or four or five days, but all that helps. The Member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard) can tell you about the kind of work that is carrying on in some parts of his constituency.

We are quite frankly excited about some of the additional emphasis that the department will be able

to put in place with additional monies, not necessarily all governmental monies, whether they come from outside organizations such as Ducks Unlimited, the greater availability of some funds from an agreement that we have signed, that we refer to as the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. Much of this money is directed for specific reasons such as enhancing waterfowl habitat, but it has a spinoff or a subsidiary benefit of providing and maintaining more water on the landscape. I think that is the direction that we have to place our emphasis for the next decade. Hopefully we will achieve a better balance, still have the capacity to drain where required for modern agriculture, but retain more of that water on the landscape that will recharge our aquifers and generally help drought proof our province.

Mrs. Charles: Has your department been able to determine what amount of water in the Plumas area could be redirected to stay on the land and what effect that would have in replenishing the water supply, in that perhaps that is the best long-term strategy, is to make that area self-sustainable rather than always bringing in the neighbourhood benefits? We have to look after ourselves in our own regions if we are going to do proper land use and perhaps the type of farming, the style of drainage, all these items could be redefined over the next years to come in that the area could be self-sustainable.

Perhaps past practices have not allowed for or encouraged the farmers to farm the type of processing that should be done for the land type and water conditions. Also perhaps Government has been quick to take water off in times when it has been wet, and now when it is dry to pump water in and not look at the long term and figure out what is the average expectation for water in the area and proceed accordingly from that.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, I would have to make this comment, that Mother Nature has not always fairly distributed her resources throughout a region and we have regions of the province where, for instance, the ground water supply is not available. It is not potable, it is very saline and we have substantial regions of those kind. Other areas, because of their geography, do not lend themselves well to the capture of the amounts of water that are required in today's business of living and particularly if it happens to be associated with the heavier municipal industrialist use of water. In general, I do not take issue with it. I think that there will be policies within this department to retain what water can be retained in a manageable way, recognizing that we are not about to fill in the drainage works that were built in the '60s and the early '70s. We just have to manage them better and find those situations where we can retain water.

All of this requires money, of course, and I point out to my honourable critics, both of them, that the increase in this year's budget is not really adding to the general deficit of this province, and as such I could take this occasion to call on their support.

Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas): Mr. Chairman, I am pleased that the Minister would be speaking about this

subject at this time. It brings to mind one particular subject that has been raised before, and that is one that the department have put forward information, that one of the projects that have the greatest return of water retention project in Manitoba and I am speaking about the project in the Duck Mountains. I recognize that this year it was delayed because of the Clean Environment Commission hearings but the hearings have been completed and the commission has given down the ruling that they approve of the project and I am wondering if—and I recognize that this year's money is for all purposes spent—but is there any consideration being given to support this project in the coming year?

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, I want to assure the Honourable Members that I like to build dams and I have waited a long time to have the opportunity. You know, all those years that I was in Opposition and the Honourable Member was Government he might have built a few of them but chose not to. Unfortunately now I have come to the point where I maybe could influence the building of a dam but it is now questionable whether those things are environmentally appropriate to build. I say this with some degree of jest.

I appreciate the Member's comments on that specific project. He is correct. It has been certainly identified by our resource people as being a very plausible and good program that is very high on the list of cost benefit programs that the department looked at.

I can only assure the Member of this, that we are now concluding the budget year of '89-90. My officials and myself are currently, as the Member will recall—even now we are a little late—working and putting together final touches to the '90-91 budget.

I can only say to the Member that I have considerable empathy for the particular project, and I understand that the kind of monies that would be required to commence with that project are the kind that I believe that we ought to be able to find.

Mr. Harapiak: I hope there is no change of Minister then, because the Minister last year assured me that there was at least going to be money in the budget to build a road into the site, but unfortunately he was moved out of that position. In fairness, there was an environmental hearing, so he could not proceed anyway. I hope that some of that money can be used up this year to build a road, and then there could be some additional funds so that project could be staged. I wanted to—

* (1540)

Mr. Enns: I cannot forego this opportunity to remind the Honourable Member that he has a direct say in whether you or I will be here for a little while.

Mr. Harapiak: I will pass on the opportunity to—Mr. Chairman, there is one other project that I wanted to bring to the Minister's attention, and that is the Town of The Pas has been drawing their water from the Saskatchewan River for many years. That is not a

dependable source of drinking water because of the fluctuating level of the Saskatchewan River and the greater percentage of the water being used by the other provinces.

Just recently, there was a meeting held in The Pas, which was organized by the Local Government District of Consol who have an interest in starting up a water co-op, The Pas Indian Band, the Manitoba Metis Federation, on behalf of the Umpherville settlement, and the Town of The Pas have also expressed an interest of maybe forming a much larger co-op, and bringing in water from Clearwater Lake.

This deals with licences, and I realize it would have to take some further study, but this is a question that has been looked at before. I am wondering if the Minister is open to the suggestion of bringing water from Clearwater Lake to those four jurisdictions.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, I would think that not having had an opportunity of seeing the kind of overall costs involved and not having seen any engineering data on the project—but I can certainly express the view that having an alternate source of water like Clearwater Lake available to the community of The Pas and surrounding users certainly is very fortunate for that community. It would appear to be a source and a supply that would be very attractive to them.

Rough indications are that we are talking about a \$4 million to \$5 million project. It is a kind of a project that would be undertaken by the Water Services Board in terms of supplying and sourcing water for municipal use.

I would think that the project would qualify for some other federal governmental assistance, particularly with the support and involvement of The Pas Indian Band who have an appropriate and rightful claim to federal sourcing for funds. So I think that the project is certainly within the realms of possibility and doable.

I can report to the Honourable Member that the mayor of The Pas has been in direct contact, just in these days, with officials of my department. We would play a supportive role to Water Services and certainly would not, in any way, want to do anything other than be supportive of the project.

It seems to me that no matter how well we may, in the future, control emissions, industrial emissions, into the Saskatchewan River—not just by us but by upstream plants in Saskatchewan—that it is prudent for the mayor and the council of The Pas and our Indian brothers and Metis cousins to look to this other source for a future fresh and dependable supply of potable water.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass—pass. Item 4.(a)(2) Other Expenditures, \$113,300—pass; 4.(b) Water Licensing and Approvals: (1) Salaries, \$525,900—pass; (2) Other Expenditures, \$26,300—pass; 4.(c) Water Management: (1) Salaries, \$1,459,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures, \$274,500—pass; (3) Waterway Maintenance, \$3,820,000—pass; 4.(d) Hydrotechnical Services: (1) Salaries, \$1,143,500—pass; (2) Other Expenditures, \$836,900—pass; 4.(e) Regional

Management: (1) Salaries, \$340,600—pass; (2) Other Expenditures, \$38,500—pass. 4.(f) Canada-Manitoba Flood Damage Reduction Agreement: (1) Salaries, \$43,900—pass; (2) Other Expenditures, \$88,600—pass.

Resolution No. 108: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$9,107,500 for Natural Resources, Water Resources, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1990—pass.

Item 5 is Parks. Item 5.(a) Administration: (1) Salaries, \$519,100—the Member for The Pas.

Mr. Harapiak: Mr. Chairman, are park fees scheduled to be increased in the 1990 year?

Mr. Enns: There will be no general increase proposed in the parks fees for '90-91.

May I just take a moment to introduce our Parks Director, Mr. Gordon Prouse, and with him again Mr. Harvey Boyle from Regional Services whom you are familiar with.

Mr. Harapiak: I wonder if I could ask the Minister how much additional revenue was generated from the introduction of the seniors entrance and camping fees last year.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, not that we do not want to disclose that amount but our administrative officer will search for that. Maybe prior to the adjourning this afternoon we will have that figure for him. I just do not have it at the top of my head.

Mr. Harapiak: I do not imagine it is going to amount to be that much money, and I was very surprised.

I recognize that the Government was scratching for every source available for funding, but I think that is one area that should have been looked at a little more carefully. I think the seniors have made a great contribution to this country. I think that many of them were restricted from enjoying camping because of the fact that there was an entrance fee for them. I would hope that the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Downey) and the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) would get together and look at the possibility of eliminating that, because I think if you look at other jurisdictions most of the other jurisdictions in Canada are not charging their seniors to frequent their parks.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, just to put on the record, it should be remembered that there is no park entry fee for seniors and we continue to provide reduced rates for camping and for golfing, roughly speaking 50 percent of the regular fee. That does not take away the fact that their fees were increased somewhat this past year. A number of them took the time to let me know that they did not appreciate it.

Mr. Harapiak: Did you say that there was no entrance, because I was under the impression that there was an entrance fee introduced this year?

Mr. Enns: No, there is, Mr. Chairman, just to be clear on that, there is no park entry fee for seniors.

Mr. Harapiak: What representations have the Government made on behalf of the campers that are going to be without services in the area that VIA Rail serviced previously in the northeast part of the province that now with VIA Rail being eliminated in that area, has the Government made any representation on those campers behalf?

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, the Member will be aware that the campers involved have formed into an ad hoc committee. They have, my understanding, met with a number of people including of course as one would think a number of federal officials in the hope of retaining in the first instance the train service that they are dependent on, or some attempts to reschedule or to improvise some form of access to their cottage sites that is only available to them by rail.

* (1550)

They have also met formally with our Parks people. We have and are doing some preliminary work to get some idea ourselves as to what it would mean to provide some road access into the area. There is some access at an old trail there that perhaps with some minimal amount could begin the process, but we have not and are not quite frankly at this time in a position to offer them any immediate solution to their problem.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass—the Member for The Pas.

Mr. Harapiak: I would hope that the Minister or the Government would make some representation to VIA Rail because there might be still some opportunity for providing a service. I hope that the Government would at least make a representation.

One other area that I take advantage of in the park system is skiing. I enjoy cross-country skiing and I have frequented many of the parks and appreciate the grooming that is done in some of them, in the Sandilands, in Grand Beach and The Pas area, but there are two parks that are used I believe by more people than the others and yet they do not seem to get the same type of service. Those are La Barriere and Beaudry. I am wondering, is it up to each individual location to groom the trails? How is the decision made of what trails will be groomed and which ones will not be groomed?

Mr. Enns: La Barriere Park of course is essentially as I said a responsibility, but the Member raised the issue of Beaudry Park. Beaudry really has not had the advantage of Parks finding the necessary budget to do some of the things that perhaps ought to be done there. It was one of the newest additions to the parks system. In the first instance the efforts and monies available for it were for acquisition of the property itself and for some of the preliminary work, in particular in terms of trail making, but the short and simple answer is that at this point has not found the priority within the Parks budget, the limited Parks budget.

As I have in fact reminded Honourable Members of this committee throughout these Estimates, I ask them

and I refer to them at the overall budget made available to me. They will note that we are doing our very best with no increases in funds and yet, as the Member points out, and as he has personally experienced, we have a growing population of users. We have people who are increasingly more appreciative of what our park system has to offer throughout Manitoba.

I was given the figure once that some 4 to 5 million people annually visit our parks. The Parks director confirms that figure. I can indicate to you that of those 4 or 5 million people, a goodly number of people drop into either his office or my office to tell us that we could do a better job of it if we had a bit more money here, or they want us to do a better job of it. They want the facilities constantly up to acceptable levels, or they want new facilities.

Of course with the expansion of winter activities, the Member points one out—cross country skiing. It really was not that greatly pursued 10, 15 years ago, but is being pursued more and more every year, and we need the wherewithal to provide those services.

Mr. Harapiak: The Park planner's position in the North was eliminated, and I am wondering is there any thoughts to putting that position back in. Are there any plans to upgrade the park at Clearwater Lake, because it does get a lot of use in the summer months? It is a very popular spot, Clearwater Lake, but the facilities are certainly lacking there.

Has there been any consideration of opening up Hugo Bay once again, because I know it was closed down because of the fact that it was kind of in a remote area? I think there have been some improvements made on the road now, and I am wondering if there has been any consideration of opening up Hugo Bay.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, there are no plans to doing that at this time. In response to the question of the park planner's position, there has been a structural change in Parks that we have gone to Regional Managers and in fact have been able to provide a slight increase in field staff throughout the park system, but the position that the Member alludes to has been changed to Regional Planners. We have Regional Planners in the Interlake and the different portions of the province.

Mr. Harapiak: At what stage is that sewage lagoon now for Clearwater Lake? What stage is that sewage lagoon at?

Mr. Enns: The engineering report and environmental input report are available. They have been sent to the interested community, The Pas Indian Band and the Moose Lake Indian Band, Clearwater Cottagers Association, and all have expressed an interest in the project. We anticipate that we will be submitting the project for approval under The Environment Act in mid-to-late February. If all goes well, my Deputy advises me that we would be in a construction process this summer.

Mr. Harapiak: I hope that all goes well because there has been a lot of pressure on the existing facility right

now, and I believe that it is not working up to specifications, so really it requires a new facility.

One of the questions in that area is where is this Government in dealing with the difficult question of park residents in Clearwater Lake?

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, the Park administration has, as they have in the past, raised that issue with me shortly after I assumed the ministry. We had in fact hoped to introduce the necessary measure that would introduce some measure where permanent residents in parks pay a fair share of the taxation burden that is imposed on the local community or LGD. It was my hope to have in place a program whereby a minimum of \$500 would be applicable to all permanent residents of parks - (interjection) - arbitrary if you like, but nonetheless a fairer contribution to the tax load to the local Governments.

(Mr. Edward Helwer, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

It was necessary to amend The Parks Act. I am advised to do that. That advice came to me just relatively recently, and it is doubtful now, under the pressures that we face in this particular Session, whether that will be proceeding forward for this coming year. Nonetheless, the indications that I have given are clearly that this Government wishes and will do something about it.

* (1600)

We also wish to include, not only park residents, but all park properties and structures, including lease properties, under the overall reorganization of property assessment that is and will be occurring with the implementation of The Assessment Act that this Legislature has just passed. We are working in reasonably close liaison with assessment people of the Government to bring that about. We were prepared, because we do not have that assessment in place, it would take us a two- to three-year period to gather that information, as an interim measure, to introduce this \$500 flat fee that would at least acknowledge what communities and community leaders have been bringing to our attention, not just to this Government, to preceding Governments for some time.

Mr. Harapiak: I was a Member of Government who was willing to deal with that difficult subject, and it is unfortunate that it was overlooked, that we had to change the Act. I thought that it would be in place by now. There has been tremendous pressure within that community to bring those people in under some kind of a system. Quite often, the people who are permanent residents are called freeloaders. They want to pay their fair share, but there is no process in place now where they can.

I know that it is not going to be a popular decision when the Government does decide to do it. I know that during the last election, the mayor, who was a candidate for your Party, and myself, both lost that poll because of the fact that I was a Member of Government who was moving in that direction to deal with the subject, and he was also pursuing it as the mayor of the adjacent

community. That is the one poll that the Liberals did win in The Pas constituency. They did win one poll in that constituency.

Mr. Acting Chairman, it is not going to be a popular decision to make, but I think it is the right decision to make. I would hope that the Government would have the courage to come forward with it as quickly as possible.

Mr. Enns: I accept the Member's comments. I am pleased to have them on the record. I know that staff will appreciate that at least there is support for the measure, and hopefully we will be able to move in that direction as quickly as possible.

Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet): I have a couple of questions, Mr. Minister, for you and your staff. One of them has to deal with the operation of the Can Am Trail in the eastern part of Manitoba.

First of all, I would like to start off by just thanking you and your officials for their co-operation in dealing with the various snowmobile groups out of Lac du Bonnet and Pinawa district in developing that trail system, and the assistance you provided, particularly with the connection to the border.

One concern that I have, and I wanted to raise it today because your staff is present. I understand there has been some difficulty in dealing with Manitoba Hydro, who have not been willing to allow passage of the marked trails on Hydro lands. That has created some difficulties because the lands have been used, et cetera. I would hope that your staff would work with those people and Hydro in correcting that problem, because it has led to some situations of dangerous areas not being marked, et cetera. I hope I could have that commitment.

Mr. Enns: Yes, that has been brought to my attention as well by some of the user groups themselves. I thank the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) for raising the question. I understand, and I am sure he understands, that the thorn or the problem seems to be a liability question. They have asked, and in fact they have approached the department, to see whether or not we could not somehow blanket cover them with the insurance capability that the province has.

(Mr. Parker Burrell, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

The difficulty is, I am informed, that we do not really have insurance. We are, in fact, self-insured. I would be hopeful that we could convene, and I have asked the chairman of Manitoba Hydro to see whether or not he cannot find some ways of overcoming this particular problem. It seems a natural, in many ways, that these cleared areas provide the kind of terrain that particularly lend themselves to this activity.

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Minister, I thank you for that. My main concern, and I raise it today because so many of your staff are in one place that it makes it easy to do it and to get that message, is primarily the problem with Hydro at the present time not allowing the marking of trails on their property. You have areas that are Crown land

and marked, a stretch of Hydro in-between, and then Crown land and marked, the consequence being that dangers on those trails are not marked, because Hydro will not allow the marking, so you have a greater potential for any kind of accident.

I think it is going to take some co-operation at the bureaucratic level amongst departmental people and people in Hydro, and I raise this today simply because so many of the staff are here.

Mr. Minister, I note the comment by the Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus), and I noted his previous comment about who won the poll in The Pas. I am glad to see the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak), and his Party and our Party are always prepared to deal with serious issues, and that there are those who cater to everybody—but beside the point.

Mr. Acting Chairman, my next question is one of some criticism for your department, and that has to deal with operations, particularly in Nopiming Park, and the policy dealing with outfitters, operators and tourist operators. I know there is a specific case that we have had a meeting on and some discussions on, and I do not think this is the forum to raise it.

What concerns me is the general principle, when we have your department with authority in the parks, and the Department of Tourism in promoting visitors to come to our province, promoting our tourist trade, when we do not seem to have, often, co-ordination between those two departments, and even in your department, letters going out on one hand to operators inviting them to discuss future operations in parks, and then on the other, decisions being made, saying there will be no future development. I think we have to get our act together as a Government, and the two departments involved have to get their acts together in dealing with operators.

The biggest frustration I get in my riding—and granted there are always some who will abuse the rules, I do not deny that—is that they get told different messages, at different times, often, at the same time from different people in different departments. I think we really owe it to those people to get our act together. It has not just been a problem in the last year or two. I think it has been one that has existed since we have had a Department of Natural Resources and a Department of Tourism with that joint responsibility.

I would appreciate your comments, Mr. Minister?

Mr. Enns: Mr. Acting Chairman, I am of course not in a position to comment about what the difficulties in this area were in the past. I acknowledge that when there are overlapping responsibilities at any time, here is always the opportunity for mixed signals going out to the general population.

I also remind, and it has been my experience as well that the clients have a habit sometimes, I should not say habit, but on occasion work the system both ways hopefully to their advantage and I accept that. That is fair game, you know, from their point of view.

(Mr. Neil Gaudry, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

I have to indicate that my staff people tell me they are particularly pleased with the relatively recent

changes in the senior management at Tourism. I am referring specifically to the Deputy Minister, Mr. Paul Robson, who has in the months that he has been on board, developed a good rapport with our people. Hopefully, some of the difficulties the Member alludes to will diminish and will be able to be handled in a way that is more acceptable to constituents of his that have difficulty.

* (1610)

I invite the Member to keep bringing incidents to my or senior staff's attention. Although, I know that invitation is hardiness, for if there is one Member in the Legislature today who does not hesitate to bring a concern of his constituents to the attention of this Minister or indeed any other Minister, it is the current Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik).

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): Any more questions? The Honourable Member for Selkirk.

Mrs. Charles: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): I thought you were surrendering.

Mrs. Charles: You would have to have a fight in order to surrender and I do not want to get into the fight. The Parks policy, for the province, as I think the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) was mentioning really does not seem to be definable.

We have wilderness parks and parks that we can mine in, and we can do almost everything in. We have small parks, we have medium-sized parks, we have tourism parks. I am wondering if there are various standards of parks and if perhaps, the Minister could or the staff could give me the overview of what the definitions of parklands are at some time.

I feel at times that—I think the most continual problem I have given to me by constituents and by all Manitobans is that—I seem to get a lot of people from the Beausejour area into my constituency office, and I do not know why that would be the case, but they do come over—in the summertime, when parks are more in use, the climate of the parks is more for partying than it is for enjoyment of parks.

I believe there have been some efforts over the years to cut down on the rowdiness, but there is still somehow in Manitoba, because we sell them through tourism that you go there and have fun. We are not selling parks for what it should be, enjoyment of the environment, but just enjoyment of a lifestyle. That usually ends up being the enjoyment of partying and drinking too much and putting the music on too loud. I think that is very unfortunate so perhaps, I am just leaving it over for the Minister to comment on his policy on parklands and perhaps, his philosophy on where a park should go to in the province.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Acting Chairman, I think that in our Manitoba Parks plan, and we have a Parks plan, we can honestly say that we can virtually accommodate the fullest and the widest range of use that individual

Manitobans, visitors, tourists, would hope to experience in a park and that varies widely. One group's concept of enjoyment in a park is to be accompanied with a ghetto blaster and case a of 24, hot sun and close proximity to a beach. Another one's, of course, is to enjoy the pristine wilderness of nature and the environment, maybe a lake that is virtually—in which he or she or the party that happens to be on it are the only ones on it and enjoying a bit of quiet fishing.

What I am trying to say is that I do not suggest and I am pleased that I have not inherited, nor am I responsible for a kind of rigid concept of what I, as a Government, or what senior bureaucrats believe ought to be a park and how visitors and more importantly Manitobans ought to behave in that park. We have different experiences available to them in different parks.

We have the wilderness park where we exclude totally the use of mechanized vehicles, for instance, that are available to the serious canoeist or skier. I am referring to Atikaki. We have on the other hand, parks that are generally and truly multiuse, such as our Whiteshell Park, where many regions of the park still offer virtually total wilderness experiences but at the same time where those who enjoy a more organized recreation can find it in the different facilities that are available throughout that park.

We have parks, particularly those that are more closer to our urban setting such as the Birds Hill Park, that can accommodate what has become a practice in the late '60s and the '70s, that is the large musical festivals of one kind or the other or indeed simply large extended-family reunions or religious gatherings. They have been accommodated within our park system, such as the visit of the Pope some years ago, which we were able to accommodate in our park system.

So there is an extremely wide range of opportunities within the park system. We have and I hope that we will continue to, perhaps in a more sophisticated way, look at how some of the resources of those parks can be shared for other uses.

I know the Member referred to specifically that in some instances we allow certain levels of logging, mining, harvesting of rice. I am hopeful that in the first instance the level of these activities that have been allowed have not been injurious to the environment of the parks involved and more importantly we are undergoing that kind of review right now.

We announced yesterday, the all-encompassing review in the developing and strategy of forests and that is not inclusive of simply the consumptive user, that is the logging company or the major pulp and paper companies, that specifically will deal as well with the recreational requirements of our forests. It is quite likely that as a result of these reviews, the refinements of policies, we will re-examine the kind of policies in this instance that apply to forests and how they ought to be applied in the future in our park system.

I am not at all apologetic about the kind of park system that we have. In fact, I think it is geared to provide the broadest appreciation by the general

population and not to be exclusive to anybody. For those who enjoy the partying that goes on in our parks, I think there is a responsibility on us, and it is a heavy responsibility, to keep some control of it. We spend a considerable amount of our resources doing precisely that. On the other hand, we also certainly provide and are pretty careful with our zoning regulations, and so forth, so we can provide the quiet cottaging experience that many, many Manitobans enjoy.

We have maintained green spaces in our park system, have resisted temptation to overload by additional cottaging, very often at the regret of segments of our population who think, gee, that lake really could carry another 40 or 50 cottages. We feel that would be extending the particular lake in question. We have aggressively, quite frankly—well, aggressively is perhaps too strong a word—opened up the sale of recreational land on Crown land other than parks in the hopes that this will offer additional opportunities for recreation of this kind for more and more of our Manitobans.

Mrs. Charles: It has been one of my regrets that I have not had the opportunity to have a lot of experience in enjoying the many parks of Manitoba. My family is from southern Ontario, and the only holidays we have been able to afford in the past is to camp down and meet with them and then camp back. So most of my experience of camping has been through Ontario.

* (1620)

The limited amount of experience I have had camping in Manitoba does not measure up to the quality of parks that I have experienced. I think we have almost hit everyone from here to Toronto. The quality of parks they have in Ontario is excellent. You are in there, you are welcomed by volunteers shortly after you arrive, you are invited to go down, quite often, to an amphitheater and enjoy the programming. It is quiet. Noise is the exception in those parks. I cannot really say that I have had the similar experience in Manitoba. I have heard experts who have worked for the parks program in Ontario compare it to what we have in Manitoba. We are sorely lacking. I suspect a lot of it is lack of funding rather than dedication of the staff or the various Ministers to that.

Even with the Minister's reassurance that we have so many variables in our parklands, if you drive out of Winnipeg, it is very hard to find a beach where you are not going to find the party atmosphere there. The opportunity to enjoy nature is something that is not immediate to people in the area. You have to really backpack to find it, it seems like, which is unfortunate in a province with so few people. We seem to use all our available beaches just for the sheer enjoyment of people instead of the enjoyment of the environment.

I would hope that perhaps more of a focus could be put in the parks program and to programming the people themselves into enjoying what is there rather than enjoying what they have brought there. I hope that could be a focus for this Government and all future Governments. We have so few available parks. We are taking some out and not replacing them with, in all cases, new parks. We are behind the numbers that

various federations ask us to have in the province for land set aside for wilderness and lifestyle parks.

As a country we lead and have always lead in putting aside parkland. I think that is a tradition we should never break. I do believe that we cannot just think we can bring all of our world into park land and enjoy them and go home, that we can do that anywhere. If you have a beach that is remarkable, if you have space that is remarkable, we should enjoy what is there, as I say, rather than enjoying what we brought there. That is certainly my philosophy on where parklands should be. The Minister may not agree with it, but I hope he is—(interjection)—Yes. He will briefly give us a response. As long as we do not grow onions again, we are all set. Further to that, I would ask that those cottages that have been in parklands when Parks have taken over, in particular the Whiteshell, and I understand that the fee structure has been greatly increased, can the Minister tell me whether the amount of fees taken from the owners of the cottages go directly to the park or whether they are put into the general revenue and not set aside for the parks themselves?

Mr. Enns: Mr. Acting Chairman, to the Honourable Member for Selkirk, last question first. No, it does not go directly into the parks revenue. It, as other Government revenues, goes into the consolidated revenue.

Mr. Acting Chairman, I wish to deal with her overall comments very, very gently. I want to say to her that as a native Manitoban, we are accustomed for anybody coming to us from Ontario to tell us that things are of course better in Ontario. We happen to think that our parks are better than theirs. I accept that. That comes from being part of the big scene, the Big Apple, Toronto, we know that all too often happens.

I also want to be very careful about this, Mr. Acting Chairman, I would like to invite her to come and visit some of our other parks. Perhaps the occasion will arise where some of the other parks that she has not had an opportunity to visit would more favourably impress her with the diversity, and in the quality of our park system.

I think if I understood her comments correctly, that her experience has largely been on trips to the east, and consequently that may well have happened that they coincided with particular weekends that have use of the park was involved, but to visit some of the parks that are not under somewhat the same pressure in northern Manitoba and the northwestern part of the province, Lake of the Prairies Park, Asessippi Park behind the Shellmouth Dam, the natural desert that we have in the Spruce Woods, and it is, quite frankly, quite remarkable the diversity of experiences that are available in our park system.

Mr. Acting Chairman, as I have been doing throughout these Estimates, I simply believe that we as a Department, in this particular branch, are being asked to maintain facilities and hopefully improve and enhance facilities at a level that currently the public is, if anything, demanding constant improvements in. If you check these Estimates, we are doing it essentially with the

same dollars and that is getting more difficult for our department to do. Whether I get in trouble with my Minister of Finance or with my Premier, I have no hesitations to inviting your support publicly in the Legislature, that this particular Minister and these particularly deserving senior staff ought to be treated more kindly in the future.

Mr. Harapiak: Mr. Acting Chairman, I cannot help but put a comment on the record. I guess I have had the opportunity to travel in Ontario as well in my younger days when I had five children. That is the only way I could travel, was by camping. Let me assure the Member for Selkirk that I had to move on several occasions in Wawa and Sault Ste. Marie because of the noise level at night from the partying. Also, in the French River area, I had to move on one occasion. I note that there was lots of partying going on in our parks, but I think that Ontario is not immune from that. I have experienced both good and bad parks in both provinces. It is not all roses in one area. The federal parks system has changed its policy on charging for firewood in their parks. I am wondering if the province is considering changing that policy.

Mr. Enns: I am advised that we are in fact staying with the policy that is currently in effect, that we do charge where we have no suppliers available to provide that service. In instances where in fact private suppliers have shown a willingness to provide the firewood, we are not providing that service, and of course they are charging.

(Mr. Parker Burrell, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

Mr. Harapiak: This has led to some difficulty in quite a few cases, where the people claim that it is penalizing the honest people who come and tell you they are going to be using firewood, whereas in some particular cases it is bundled by the private entrepreneur. That seems to work better than when there is an open pile. It is sort of on an honour system. I think that has led to some bad feelings. I would hope the department would look at that policy and see how it can be handled in a better way.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Burrell): Any more questions?

Item 5.(a)(1) Salaries. Shall this item pass?

An Honourable Member: Mr. Acting Chairman, in the interest of saving time, could we just pass the entire Section 5, Parks?

* (1630)

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Burrell): Yes. (Pass)

Resolution 109: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$14,243,900 for Natural Resources—pass.

Item 6. Lands, Provides for administration of all Crown Lands and the maintenance of a Crown Lands Registry System. (a) Administration: (1) Salaries \$91,700—the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Acting Chairman, I have a couple of brief comments. I thank the indulgence of the two other Members at the committee here today from the other Parties to allow me to go first in order to make a meeting.

My question for the Minister has some specific elements to it and some general ones; the general rose out of the specific. Sometime ago, last fall, it was brought to my attention in the Local Government District of Alexander that the Crown Lands Branch wanted to subdivide some Crown land in the Silver Falls area. On approaching the LGD of Alexander, which is the local municipal authority, I received a host of complaints locally and from the new councillors in that area and raised the matter with yourself and Mr. Golden from the department. I received in early December, to my satisfaction, a letter from you, indicating the matter had been put on hold. I understand that is its present status.

What concerns me though is the operation of the local officials of the department out in the area. In my conversations with the LGD of Alexander, this matter, as I understood it, was to be put on hold. I had requested that the local government district, in adopting their planning, make the decision as to how they would like to see that area develop. I get reports back continually from members of council there that it is almost as if the department, although they know it is on hold and want them to make the decision, is pushing to see that property developed.

I am a little concerned about that, Mr. Minister, as you can appreciate. That obviously should be a decision that is made locally, particularly given the number of back lots that are available along the Winnipeg River. I raise that because your staff is here. I would hope that messages could get down to the departmental level. That should be a decision of the LGD without the kind of continued persuasive arguments that are made by departmental officials.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Acting Chairman, I of course recall a couple of the specific incidences that the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) raises. As he himself has noted, at his request we have responded in a manner that he desired, insist that we put the matter on hold and not proceed further until such time that the local elected officials in their planning for the area can have their input into the matter.

I want to assure him that a) the comments he now makes have been received as information that we have no difficulty with. The department, understandably, from time to time has requests for—we get quite an isolation from other groups, in this case the LGD involved that inquire or make inquiries—the use of and the sale of Crown recreational land. I want to assure the Honourable Member that there is no push, as he puts it, from the department. If indeed the Member has that impression, I suspect that his comments now being transmitted directly to the director of lands will confirm that we have no hidden agenda that moves this along. We are prepared and anxious to co-operate with the LGD. We will leave the matter precisely that way.

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Acting Chairman, I do not want to leave the impression that I think there is any hidden

agenda. I just think we have some very overzealous people in the region. The impression they have conveyed to the LGD after receiving a copy of the Minister's letter put on hold was that there was still a great deal of personal support among staff for that kind of development. That has been expressed in their discussions. I would not say improperly, but certainly I would hope that decisions that are made at the top level in the department are respected entirely at the local level.

Why I raise this issue in the general sense is with respect to Crown land policy in the Lee River area and the Lac du Bonnet area and the east side of the Winnipeg River. As the Minister is well aware, there is a fair bit of Crown land, pieces recently been sold after some very lengthy negotiations with developers in that area. I would like to commend the staff who worked on that agreement. It took a great deal of work; it was new ground for the department. I think that will prove to be an effective policy.

My concern is the reports that I am getting from councillors in the Lac du Bonnet area—again as they develop their planning for that particular part of their municipality—about an impression they have. Again, these things are very difficult to deal with, because they are not often on paper but in the dealings with departmental staff, of an urgency to see a lot more Crown land put up for a cottage lot division in that area. What of course I am somewhat concerned about it is that there are a lot of lots either developed in that Lee River area now or about to be developed. There is obviously a strain on infrastructure and resources as we work toward a new Winnipeg River bridge and Lee River road reconstruction, et cetera. The concern that I expressed is not that there should not be development, but that it has to keep in pace with the ability to develop infrastructure and the ability of the market.

I would hope that in dealing with municipalities we do not see an overzealous approach in putting land up for development quickly when there may not be the market quite yet, or when the infrastructure is not there. So again, not something that I can come with a specific letter of policy but more in line with the kind of impressions that are being left with municipal people. So I would again appreciate if departmental staff could ensure that we are in fact not moving toward dumping or making available large pieces of Crown land for cottage lot development when the market may not be ready to bear it, nor the infrastructure, Mr. Minister.

Mr. Enns: Well, Mr. Acting Chairman, allow me to make it very clear to the Honourable Member that, while I think we are legitimately responding to some pent-up demand, if I may say so, for availability of some of this Crown land for private development, a policy I am sure that he is in touch with, we have no desire to, in doing so, do it in an unplanned and disorderly way that would create the kind of problems for local or municipal Governments of the nature that he describes.

(Mr. Chairman in the Chair)

I perhaps should take it as a compliment, the Minister and the staff, that when the Member now has on two

occasions talked about overzealous staff. That is an adjective that is not always applied to civil servants, and I do not take umbrage at the fact that it is applied to public servants that are on my staff. But I know what the Member is saying, and again, for the record, let me invite the Honourable Member to certainly make us aware of specific instances where he feels that things are moving at pace, that cannot be properly absorbed at the local level.

On just another matter, it is somewhat unrelated, but nonetheless we ourselves have an inventory of subdivision lots available within our system. While we try to pace our own expansion of that within the park system, we are constantly aware, that as long as we have unsold inventory in place, that in itself is a bit of a lid on the pace of development. The fact of the matter is that there are areas that are more choice than others. So we cannot always move our inventory around to where the demand is, but I make these comments in a general way to assure the Member that we are proceeding with the development of these kinds of lands in a pretty cautious way.

The fact that some increased Crown land is being made available for private sale should not in any way negate the facts of the matter, which are that any such lands that are made available for sale go through a very, very intensive search and examination by the land classification committee, which houses all disciplines of Government that virtually every possible Governmental user of land has first kick at it, if you like, in terms of if it is a site that could be of some concern to Government agencies. By that, I include Hydro or Telephones, and then it is looked at from an environmental point of view. If it is the kind of land that ought not to be sold, it will not be sold. It is looked at from wildlife point of view.

There are many, many criteria conditions that it has to meet before it is in fact considered advisable to put up for sale. Those are the kinds of relatively restrictive guidelines that we operate under when we make this land available.

* (1640)

Mr. Praznik: First of all, if I just may add that generally speaking the staff at the Regional Lands Branch in Beausejour, who cover the eastern region, have been very co-operative to work with. I think that some of these things are just a matter more of perhaps misjudging local councils and some of the local politics, but the impressions, obviously, that come back to the local MLA is that there is a little bit of an overzealousness on the part of some staff to push land into development. It is not a major problem, but one because so many of your senior staff are here today, I just wanted to appraise them of.

The last issue that I raise is a general question, Mr. Minister, with respect to Crown lands. Again in the Lee River area, and given the forest fires we encountered last year in Abitibi's cutting rights—I wondered, and I may be a little off the mark here, but it is Crown lands that we are talking about—are there any changes in cutting patterns or cutting rights in that Lee River area

expected this year or next where additional lands are being made available to Abitibi for cutting to the detriment of other, smaller private wood cutters.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, the department is constantly aware that this matter needs to be treated with a great deal of sensitivity. The fact that we have two big operations, Abitibi-Price in the eastern portion of the province and Repap in the other one, and that they tend to dwarf the some 1200 or more, I understand, smaller and individual operators in the forestry business makes the department constantly try to, if anything, insure that they have every consideration shown to them when quota allocations are being made. Now it is never an easy particular job when you are portioning out allocations of a resource that people depend on for their livelihood or a portion of their livelihood. It is made more difficult when we have to do that after accommodating a sizable loss of that resource as a result of a fire.

There are other policies that come to play. From a resource-use point of view, we deliberately attempt to salvage the largest amount of that damaged resource, so we will in some instances deny new cutting areas and direct into salvage operations of burnt-out areas because there is a time frame wherein that timber can be salvaged. I am not suggesting that we do not run into difficulties in this area from time to time but certainly one that the department is constantly aware of.

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Chairman, one final comment before I give up the floor and that is, I just would hope this, Mr. Minister, I appreciate fully those difficulties. Representing both small woodcutters and a large paper company in my constituency, Abitibi-Price, I realize that balance. All that I would ask from your department officials is that all that is possible be done to really accommodate both, as practicable as is possible, because certainly there are many families in that Lee River area of whom a substantial portion of their yearly income comes from their quota or their permit allocations that they are able to get.

Given these difficult times, sometimes we have to be as accommodating as one can possibly be to ensure that both interests are maintained and that individual families in that area are not necessarily losing their livelihood simply because they get cut off a program. We really have to go that extra step, and I know that is tough. I would certainly urge your officials to do all they can to accommodate both those needs.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass? (Pass) The Member for Selkirk.

Mrs. Charles: It is my understanding in the giveaway of the lands to Repap to take the forestry rights of, that, particularly in the Pukatawagan area, the Indian land claims have not been settled, or contrary, I guess, to that, the area that they have had given to them and have had the rights to trap and hunt in is now under the management of Repap Limited. I guess I am asking the Minister if this is the case, and if so, are there any negotiations going on with the Indian bands in the area in settling their rights as opposed to the rights that have been given to Repap.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, let me be very clear, I cannot accept the premise in the Honourable Member's question. We have not given away anything, least of all any land. We have made it possible, through relatively complicated lease and conditions attached to the sale of certain physical properties, the use of some of our forested land for prescribed period of time for an industry that, hopefully, will employ many Manitobans, perhaps find the kind of money that even this department may get part of through the economic activity generated, the taxes generated might help keep a hospital open a little longer, or send our children to schools in places where we otherwise cannot do that. But we have not given away anything.

We are, under prescribed conditions, allowing a company to operate and, having said that, these Indian land entitlement claims that she refers to have not been settled, not just in this area but in other areas. I am advised, particularly by my colleague, the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), that in the last 18 months considerable progress has been made toward resolution of many of these claims, and there are many. They are going to present some very substantial problems to not just this department, but to all resource users and people that have some claim on that land.

It varies, it can be a mining claim, it can be forestry leases, it can be land set aside for wildlife purposes and wildlife management areas, it can be lands that have been designated to be set aside for national parks as, for instance, in the Churchill proposed northern Arctic Churchill park system, and the same applies to the lands that are included in the forestry management area, the lease arrangements made with Repap. They will be negotiated as they proceed. Other departments are involved in the negotiations than the Department of Natural Resources.

The fact that these land claims existed, were known and acknowledged by the previous operator, Manfor, which operated as a Crown corporation for some 18-19 years, and were certainly acknowledged or known to the new owners, the present owners, Repap. But I am not able to answer that question more specifically, but that is the best I can do.

* (1650)

Mrs. Charles: Well, with all due respect to everyone here, any idiot knows that if you take all the trees off a land the -(interjection)- No, any idiot, not an honourable idiot.

An Honourable Member: Not a specific idiot. Oh, okay, that is acceptable then.

Mrs. Charles: Okay, and I was not directing it to anyone. But if you cut down all the trees, you are going to impact wildlife and habitat of the peoples involved that depend upon the wildlife, but of obvious concern is the habitat itself. Therefore, I would expect that this Minister, knowing that the trees and much of that area will take 100 to 120 years to regenerate to a harvestable size again, and that the habitat will likewise take that length to regenerate to the condition it is in as well,

if ever, depending upon the influence of the change in habitat at the time.

Then, is this Minister, with his great concern I know he has for these Treaty claims, in touch with the Minister for Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey) to meet with all these bands and make sure that those that were overlooked—and I would not hesitate to say insulted—by Government taking away what they would see as their rights that were outstanding rights, and giving them in some way, and it is an arguable way, we can argue anyway to a large corporation, that is this a priority of this Minister to meet with the Indian bands and make sure these claims are at least discussed at the earliest possible date and, hopefully, come to some conclusion as soon as possible?

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, my colleague, the Minister of Northern Affairs and his department, of course, is the lead ministry in dealing with Northern and, more specifically, Native Affairs, but certainly my department because of the nature of our involvement and our mandate with respect to wildlife, forestry, fishing, has a long history and tradition of working with our Native brothers. I have no doubt—if you were to check my log in the last eight or nine months—carried on that tradition of working with our Native community.

We see some positive challenges in trying to meet their growing needs for a feeling of greater involvement; they call it self-government. This department is prepared to assist and work co-operatively with them. It is not going to happen overnight or without some difficulties and without some failures, and recognizing all the time that all Manitobans have a keen interest in our resources. We see some very encouraging opportunities developing with particularly some of our Indian leaders and bands with whom we already have achieved considerable levels of co-management, in such areas as moose management, such area as reintroducing of the wood buffalo in the Waterhen area, and in the fisheries in the area of The Pas, and this particular Minister considers that a particularly high priority.

Mr. Harapiak: There are several questions I would like to ask in this area, but I will just restrict it to one. Because of the development of Repap and interests of the small wood lot, private lot development, would the department consider changing their policy and allow Crown lands for silviculture? There are Crown land leases for pasture, and there are some people who have an interest in developing the wood lots in a similar way as a business. Would they consider changing their policy to allow such a development?

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, I think it is a very appropriate question. I would encourage the Honourable Member to take advantage of the news that I introduced just yesterday, that we are going to hold hearings, a number of hearings, throughout the North. I think The Pas may well be cited wherein we hope to deal with the kind of issues that the Member raises, ought we to be encouraging silviculture leases on Crown lands.

I can answer the Honourable Member that I think that is a positive suggestion, but we need to hear these

kinds of suggestions coming through this process. I can inform the Honourable Member that the meeting scheduled for the discussion on forestry strategy will be meeting in The Pas on February 26 at seven o'clock at the Wescana Inn, that is if the strike is no longer going on, I suppose.

I am very serious, because among other things, we have and we acknowledge, although we have had a modest program available, but we have not done a great deal to encourage the wood lot, you know, farming in southern Manitoba. With agriculture facing the difficulties that they have, with President Bush's announcement of increasing the subsidy support for wheat by 60 percent, we really have to start looking at offering some other alternatives for some of our southern prime land.

Quite frankly, turning it back so that wildlife can flourish on it, that trees may grow on it, will become an attractive alternative in some instances and if, in the North, the concern is for availability for some Crown lands that are suitable to the practice of silviculture, we will look at it. This is an open and enlightened Ministry that will look at all possible and commendable suggestions.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass—pass; item 6.(a)(2) Other Expenditures \$26,200—pass; (b) Crown Lands Administration (1) Salaries \$734,300—pass; (b)(2) Other Expenditures \$182,600—pass; (c) Regional Management (1) Salaries \$318,000—pass; (c)(2) Other Expenditures \$87,800—pass; (d) Crown Lands Registry (1) Salaries \$233,000—pass; (d)(2) Other Expenditures \$183,000—pass.

(e) Northern Development Agreement - Provincial - Wild Rice (1) Salaries 0 and (2) Other Expenditures 0— the Honourable Minister.

Mr. Enns: If I might just indicate to Honourable Members for their own information that this activity of the department has been transferred to the Department of Northern Affairs.

* (1700)

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass—pass.

Resolution No. 110: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding 1,856,600 for Natural Resources Lands for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1990—pass.

What is the will of the committee? The hour being 5 p.m., committee rise.

* (1500)

SUPPLY—EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Neil Gaudry): Would the Committee of Supply come to order, please.

This section of the Committee of Supply has been dealing with the Estimates of the Department of Education.

We are on item 5. Post-Secondary, Adult and Continuing Education and Training. 5.(c) Red River Community College, Salaries, \$28,387,800—the Honourable Minister.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Acting Chairman, now that we have finally gotten to the Estimates, I would indeed like to put a few comments on the record with regard to some allegations that were made just recently by the Member for—where is he from, Inkster?—with regard to Winnipeg 1 and the capital building programs in Winnipeg No. 1 School Division. First of all I would like to indicate, because there have been several questions asked regarding capital facilities throughout these Estimates, I would like to indicate that the topic of Margaret Scott School has been one that has been before us now for some days.

Mr. Acting Chairman, the Liberals, I do not know where they are coming from, because one day they are asking us to build schools—

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): Order, please. The item that the Minister is discussing right now is not before committee. Is it the wish of the committee to proceed? Proceed. The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): I will proceed. Mr. Acting Chairperson -(interjection)- Who has the floor?

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

Mrs. Yeo: Thank you. I would like to ask some questions about the allegations that were made.- (interjection)- We did say no.

An Honourable Member: Who said "yes" louder?

POINT OF ORDER

An Honourable Member: On a point of order, Mr. Acting Chairman.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): On a point of order? We need unanimous consent, and we have not got it.

An Honourable Member: Yes.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): No, we have not.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, are you ruling that there was not consent for me to continue with putting some information on the record? These are questions that have been asked. We have allowed them to be asked in previous questions regarding the public schools in this province.

Mr. Acting Chairman, I had indicated that I did not have all the information, that I would provide it at my earliest convenience. I have that information now and I know it goes back to what we had allowed before in

questions with regard to the public school system, and I would indeed like to put some of these comments on the record and bring that information forth.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): The Honourable Minister, I rule that we were in Committee of Supply on item 5.(c), and we do not have unanimous consent to deviate from that. The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

Mrs. Yeo: I would like to ask some questions about the allegations of one of the vice-presidents of the community college uttering, for some time now, racial slurs, blatant sexual sexist types of jokes in which I understand he is the only one who laughs. I realize that there was a cross-cultural seminar arranged for administration and managerial people to attend at Red River Community College. I applaud that.

I am wondering if these cross-cultural seminars are in fact mandatory for all administration and managerial staff and if in fact all managers, all vice-presidents, in fact the president himself and the Assistant Deputy Minister have attended these seminars.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, in Question Period the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) rose to talk about the racial slur that she has heard about. In Estimates now she is making allegations about a rumour that she has heard maligning an individual.

I indicated very clearly during Question Period that this indeed is a very, very serious matter. Formal complaints, as have been lodged to my attention against an individual, are certainly going to be taken in the most serious way.

I indicated also in Question Period to her, and I do not think she was listening, that I had instructed my Deputy Minister, John Carlyle, to secure the services of the best possible investigator to indeed investigate this matter. She does not seem to accept that. She seems to indicate that we should be doing something more immediately on this matter before we hear whether in fact there was any substance to it to begin with, to ensure that in fact there were grounds for the complaint, and before we hear the entire evidence on the case, she wants us to act.

On the other hand, Mr. Acting Chairman, when it comes to the allegations against teachers about abuse of children and the certificates were suspended, or the matter is referred to the Certificate Review Committee, she comes back to me and says that I should not be doing anything at that point in time; that I should be waiting until the courts deal with it and then I should act. This is the typical way that she and her Leader have been conducting themselves in these very serious matters.

I have to make mention of one other thing. Yesterday, at about a quarter to six, I was walking by the Liberal Caucus Room when the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) stepped out, and she said: Mr. Derkach, I would like you to meet somebody. I acknowledged,

I said: certainly. I walked over and said, hello. Immediately there was a flood of people coming out of the caucus room, and when I got there she said: these are people who have concerns about the way you suspend certificates.

I do not know who these people were, I had never seen them before in my life. I asked: are you teachers? If you are teachers then you have a Teachers' Society that should be representing you. I have already talked to your society and there has been agreement made on how we should handle these cases. We have adjusted our guidelines and our policy with regard to dealing with these cases so that the Teachers' Society understands and agrees, so that the Manitoba Association of School Trustees agrees. All of this was all handled.

We had also agreed on the process that should be followed, with regard to teachers who had been dealt with prior to that time. Mr. Acting Chairman, that goes beyond our administration because teachers were dealt in a consistent way, in the way that we had been dealing with them in the former administration. It was acceptable because this was a very serious matter.

Now they want me to unilaterally move to do something different when these teachers are not the employees, they are not the employees of the Government of Manitoba, and they are not the employees of the Minister of Education. They are the employees of school divisions, school divisions who have responsibility to ensure, yes, that these individuals are dealt with fairly.

When they are suspended without pay by a school division, the Member even suggested that perhaps I should do something to maybe give them another job and maybe pay them. What kind of system would we have then? These are individuals who are under the direct jurisdiction of school boards.

If in fact they are cleared of the accusation, then there is recourse through the courts to ensure that they can regain the salaries that they have lost. The Manitoba Teachers' Society has agreed that they will fight on behalf of these individuals to ensure that they get their fair treatment before the courts of this province.

I think that the approach that was taken not only was underhanded, by accosting a Minister in the hallway and trying to get some information out of him, to embarrass him while she stood beside and gloated at the scene. You know I have never seen this in this Legislature in the four years that I have been here, by anyone. There has been mutual respect and understanding of what is proper, what is decent, what protocol is and what it is not. For that reason, that certainly annoyed me and it upset me. That is the kind of conduct that I do not think we should be tolerating in this Chamber.

Today the Member asks about this particular racial slur. I have indicated that in the previous accusation that was made, we did do an investigation on that matter. We did ensure that the president of the college did in fact take immediate action not only to deal with that particular situation, but to ensure that staff, that

management, that vice-presidents would have the opportunity and indeed would be encouraged very strongly to attend those kinds of racial sessions that would teach them how to conduct themselves, how to do what was proper, how to ensure that they understood what was proper and what was not.

(Mr. Edward Helwer, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

Mr. Acting Chairman, I do not condone any kind of racial slur, especially in our institutions. I think it is disgusting, I think it is distasteful. I think that an institution such as the education institution should show leadership. Therefore when matters of this nature, these serious matters, and I do not think anybody in this House would condone that kind of action, when matters of this nature come to our attention, we take the most appropriate and the most proper action at our disposal. If, after this investigation, it is deemed necessary to launch into some compulsory programming to ensure that staff that work for Government, to ensure that staff that work for our community colleges, know what is proper, know how to conduct themselves, then we will do that.

* (1510)

Mr. Acting Chairman, I cannot tell you whether in fact the comments that were alleged in the letter of complaint that I received have any substance to them until such time that an investigation has been conducted. There is a proper procedure to do that, and we are following that procedure to the best of our ability. I have not heard any complaints about the process that we are following, but if the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) is asking me to intervene and to act before that investigation is complete, then I think that is inappropriate. I do not think that is the proper way to conduct ourselves as Government or as legislators.

The matter is before us. The formal complaint has been laid. I do not think I want to go out to the world and indicate who has made the complaint, the nitty-gritty of the complaint, what kinds of comments were made, whether they were laughed at or not. The matter is serious enough for people not to be hurt any more, whether they are the victims, or whether they are in fact the people that have allegations against them.

Yes, we want to erase this kind of conduct. We want to erase this kind of action from all of our institutions to ensure that we in this province can live with one another in harmony and understanding, and so that there is no discrimination of people who may want to enter any kind of a work experience or a workplace, whether they are constructors, whether they are managers, whether they are students or whether they are just ordinary citizens.

Mr. Acting Chairman, since we have come to Government, we have indeed taken a pro-active approach to all of this. Yes, there are going to be—and I indicate this very openly—times when this is going to occur. When it does, we have to be in a position to be able to react. I might also indicate that our community colleges, by and large, have been pro-active in ensuring that there are some cross-cultural awareness programs.

KCC, as a case in point, is ensuring that because of the mix of people in there that they are taking a very pro-active approach to cross-cultural awareness programs in that area. That is just not sufficient for that area, Mr. Acting Chairman, it has to be done throughout.

Yes, this is a very serious matter. Yes, I think that it is important that we act on it immediately, but I do not think that it should become a matter for us to debate in this House, especially when the investigation is going on, especially when we know that this is a very emotional issue, and especially when it could, as a matter of fact, interfere with the logical and the appropriate measures that are being taken by us in our department.

Mrs. Yeo: I have never heard anything so ridiculous in my life as some of the comments that were made, some of the allegations that were made, some of the motives that were imputed, and I did not stand up on points of order—absolutely ridiculous.

At no time did I suggest to the Minister that he hang and quarter anybody or intervene in that light. I asked a simple question. Have the managerial staff, have the administration, attended these cross-cultural seminars? That is all I asked him. He stands up for 15 minutes and regurgitates old facts—absolutely ridiculous.

I would like to ask the Minister, and I think it is a fair question in light of the fact that it is not just one instance of allegation. I mean we had last year a dreadful racial slur occurring there, and they tried to cover that up, and sooth that over and create these rhetoric types of things that will address this situation, and obviously they are not working. I think it is a logical, legitimate question to ask this particular Minister.

He talks about, in his response to my question, interfering with the autonomy of the college. I suggest, and I think I am not alone in this, that there is no autonomy at the college. The college comes directly under the thumb of the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). I cannot go and meet with Mr. Ray Newman, the president of the community college. No, I cannot, because the Minister or his designate has to be there to screen what we ask this individual.

I asked legitimate questions and I did not get legitimate answers—not that I am surprised. I could also go into an explanation on his diatribe last night in the hall. There was no setup at all. Our meeting was over. People were leaving and the Minister happened to come out of the House. I mean, we were not standing there waiting. This Minister, Mr. Acting Chairman, is so paranoid, it is sad. It is sad to the point of being somewhat tragic.

I will ask the Minister if the managerial people, all of them, if all of the vice-presidents, if the president of the community college has actually attended, if the ADM has attended, one of these cross-cultural sessions? I would also like to know who initiated the investigation. What is its legal status? Is it public? Who is going to be doing the questioning and who is going to be questioned? I think those are legitimate, fair questions.

I am totally consistent with our previous statements on teachers who have been charged with sexual abuse.

That is something I will not back away from, because I believe that there have been a few people who have been unfairly treated. I do not think it is masses of numbers, but unless there are great numbers of bodies this Minister does not react. I am not so sure that he would react then. I care about one individual, about one family. You do not have to have great numbers to demonstrate injustice in society. One incident can demonstrate injustice. I have asked a few questions and I hope that I will be able to get a straight answer.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, once again the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) indicates the flip-flop approach that they take to matters. On one hand, she is willing to say that we should not do anything to teachers who have been accused, that we should just wash our hands of it and allow the process to first of all go to court, and then maybe we should send their certificates to the Certificate Review Committee. We should not do anything beforehand. In this matter, I am not sure what she is suggesting. Should we simply throw the person out? Should we call him guilty before he is? What is she suggesting?

Mr. Acting Chairman, she asked the question and I answered it before, whether or not racial or cultural sessions have been held. I say to her, yes, they have been held. It is mandatory for all managers to attend them, 55 percent of our management staff have now attended these classes. There are more scheduled where the rest will be required to attend them. The president has attended, the ADM has attended, and as I indicated 55 percent of management staff have attended.

I think we are following the correct process. She asks, what kind of an investigation is this? My Deputy Minister has secured the services of a lawyer to ensure, and it is a one person investigation, he will investigate all the facts and then will report to my Deputy Minister. At that point in time we will know what further action is required, how we should conduct ourselves, and at that point in time I think there will be many more decisions made about the need for cross-cultural sessions and how often they should be held, whether this is a kind of inservice that should go on as a regular situation, or whether or not they should be mandated and whether that becomes a compulsory issue for staff beyond management as well.

I hope that I have brought to light what action is taking place, and I am certainly prepared to answer these questions even in more depth if she so desires.

Mrs. Yeo: Just a comment, that in fact during the process of Estimates the last time, during the last Session, during this Session and during the beginning of the Estimates process this time, and when we came into this particular appropriation, I indicated as I did a year ago, that I have had more concerns raised to me about Red River Community College than any other education area. It is not something that we are pulling out of the air, not one little fly-by-night incident.

There is tremendous potential, I have taken several courses at Red River, I taught there for a period of time, I believe in the potential there, and I believe that

the majority of the individuals working there, certainly the president and some of the vice-presidents, one of the vice-presidents taught me, and it was the best course I have taken anywhere, better than University of Saskatchewan courses, better than U of W courses, absolutely outstanding.

* (1520)

Therefore, I believe very strongly in this particular college and I feel a sense of sadness when I listen to people who have concerns. I have relayed some of the concerns to the Minister, and will continue to do so if he wishes me to do so. I would rather do it in a non-confrontational way, because I prefer that style of dealing with things. There has been no intent to yell and shriek and—

Decentralization is something that this Government has discussed and has applauded and talked about, and yet we saw that half the area affiliated with Red River Community College and the Town of Portage la Prairie, a fine town indeed, was closed. I would like to know if the people of Portage la Prairie are still being well-served by the satellite program from Red River, and if this cutting of the facility in half has hampered in any way, the programming that is in place in Portage.

Mr. Derkach: Again this matter is one that the Member raised in Question Period and, at that point in time, I had indicated to her exactly the action that we were taking and the course that we were embarking on. Indeed we are not going to pay for space that is not required and space that is not used completely. We indicated that by reducing the space we would indeed put that money into programming and since that time we have expanded the programming at the satellite site in Portage la Prairie.

I believe that the programs that can be delivered through the school system should be delivered through the school system. That is why we have those schools in these localities and the courses that are being offered in the evenings can be certainly offered very easily through the school system. We have to make arrangements. I do not think that we, as a Government, or any Government, can afford to continue to build fancy buildings, red-fancy buildings, just because it is fashionable or because we want to create a separate entity somewhere.

Mr. Acting Chairman, it is what we do with personnel, it is what we do with programs, that is important and as I indicated we have expanded the programming at that particular site—more people are taking programs, in terms of numbers.

Secondly, there was a retirement of the manager of that program. The manager decided to retire at Christmastime and this position, at that time, was a term position, which gave the community some concern. I met with the Advisory Committee from Portage la Prairie and we discussed many issues. They were concerned about the fact that we may be eventually closing that site. I indicated to them very clearly that we were not closing the site. We have had a needs assessment conducted by Red River Community

College within that community to ensure that we were addressing the needs of the community.

It gives us some concern that the air base is going to be closing and that there are going to be job losses there and there are going to be requirements for retraining. In addition, we are seeing new industry move into the area and that gives us hope of employment, and also a need to train people.

So for those reasons we met with the Advisory Council, they met in turn with Red River Community staff. As I said, a needs assessment was conducted in conjunction with the people from the community, and since that time we have offered a permanent manager for the area in the name of Janet Henstock, and this again is not a term position any longer, it is a permanent position so that also ensures that there is some permanency to the delivery of programs in the Portage area.

Mrs. Yeo: It is my understanding that the current President of Red River Community College—this was an interim appointment. I am wondering how much longer he is expected to retain that particular position and would hope that when a search is done for a new president that there will be very stringent criteria and a very careful search by a wide cross-section of individuals because, as many have indicated, not just this particular Member, but many have indicated, there is a need for innovation. Other community colleges across the country operate in a much different sort of a way, and I would hope that there would be a careful search done when the time comes.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, when the former president of Red River Community College left we were in a situation where we needed to have some continuity at the college because we had just formed Government at that time. Indeed, there were some changes that needed to be made, and we needed someone who understood the college and had some management ability.

Because of that situation, we asked Mr. Ray Newman to be acting president for the college for that period of time. Later we decided we needed that continuity for a longer period of time and we named Mr. Ray Newman as permanent president, if you like, of Red River Community College. Since that time, Mr. Newman has assisted us in the College Governance Committee, he has brought his expertise to that committee, and indeed we are thankful that he did stay with us during that time.

Mr. Newman has indicated his intention to retire. He has served the college for many years in a very commendable fashion and indeed the job search will begin for a new president. As with all our senior staff the job search will be Canada-wide. It will be one where we are going to use indeed a very thorough screening process to ensure that the individual that we select for Red River Community College will be one who can fill the shoes of the retiring president and can indeed assist us in the development of the college in the future.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer): We are dealing with the Red River Community College. Shall the item

pass—pass; that was the salaries \$23,387,800; (2) Other Expenditures, \$6,872,900—pass; (3) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations, \$413,000—pass.

(d) Assiniboine Community College: (1) Salaries \$7,406,400—the Member for Sturgeon Creek.

Mrs. Yeo: There was some concern raised re Assiniboine Community College with the Child Care Worker II course in the ability to obtain sufficient practicum spaces. Can the Minister advise how that is progressing?

Mr. Derkach: Yes. To that question, there have been sufficient spaces obtained for the practicum and indeed the program is going very well.

Mrs. Yeo: How many students are enrolled in that particular program at this time?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairperson, maybe I could ask the Member to proceed with another question. Staff are just coming down, and I will have that information as quickly as I can.

Mrs. Yeo: I wrote a letter to the Deputy Minister re the BUNTEP program. Is Assiniboine Community College, if you will, the broker for the BUNTEP program?

Mr. Derkach: I can indicate that the letter is going back to the Member for Sturgeon Creek as of today, and the BUNTEP program is being delivered from Brandon University, not Assiniboine Community College.

* (1530)

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Acting Chairperson, I have a couple of questions really that relate to the operations of all the colleges, and I realize that—the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) is pointing at my snack food. I checked the list of ingredients on this. There is no food in this, I can assure the Minister.

Mr. Acting Chairperson, could the Minister table, for our information, the programs that are offered off campus for Red River Community College, Assiniboine Community College and Keewatin Community College? Could he particularly reference the operations of the regional offices of Red River in Selkirk and Winkler and perhaps as well give us an indication of the courses that are being offered through the Parkland Campus of the Assiniboine Community College?

While that is being prepared—and I do not expect that in the next few minutes, as long as that information would be forwarded to myself and the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo), if she is interested. I think that would be sufficient.

I would just like to offer my apologies to many of the branches in the Department of Education who are going to get very short scrutiny this year because of the very limited time we have to deal with Education Estimates. In fact, last year we spent some 40 hours reviewing the Estimates of the department. This year I thought we had an agreement to spend approximately

10 because there are so many departments to be reviewed.

So I just leave that on the record. It is not because of lack of interest certainly on my part and I do not believe on the part of the Member for Sturgeon Creek, but there are many other issues that need to be addressed over the remaining Estimates period. So if I could just have that information in due course.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, I am prepared to give that information out right now. First of all, let me say that the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) indicates it is too bad that we do not have sufficient time to spend on the Estimates. We bear no responsibility for that, because the two Opposition Parties have squandered their time and now they are short of time and they are scrambling. I am prepared to spend the next 11 hours or 10 hours or whatever is left on Education Estimates if they really want to do a thorough job at this.

I would like to indicate that the Parkland Campus, there are—

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer): The Member for Flin Flon, on a point of order.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I was not going to get into response to the Minister's diatribe, but the Minister is at least 50 percent responsible. I asked him to table the information. He insists on reading it into the record line by line. It is because he has nothing more imaginative or creative to say. It is very unfortunate.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer): The Honourable Member does not have a point of order.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, the Members opposite want the information, but they do not want it on the record. If he wants that information why did he not write me a letter and ask me for the information instead of bringing it here to the House? If he does not want the information let him state that.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer): The Member for Flin Flon, on a point of order.

Mr. Storie: If he tables the information it is part of the record. He has been saying this consistently. He still does not understand how the Legislature works.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, I do not suppose he has a point of order, he never does.

Mr. Derkach: In the Parkland Campus I am happy to say that we have several programs going on there. There are 25 courses. There are 505 students in the programs. We have basic training for skill development, business administration, basic skills refresher courses

in Swan River, cooks' training programs, decision making, developmental studies, general business certificate, motor vehicle mechanics, welding, and we have 16 flexible funding programs or what we call market driven programs.

With regard to other colleges, I can indicate that we have outreach colleges at Winkler of course, Selkirk, the Parkland Campus from Assiniboine Community College. From Keewatin Community College we have several locations, Thompson and also many of the smaller communities in and around KCC. Mr. Acting Chairman, there are indeed volumes of programs that are being offered in these three divisions, and if the Member wanted them tabled, I would certainly be prepared to table them in the next day or so. I can table them today, for that matter, if he needs them immediately.

(Mr. Parker Burrell, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Burrell): Item 5.(d)(1) Salaries—(pass); item 5.(d)(2) Other Expenditures—(pass); item 5.(d)(3)—(pass).

Shall item 5.(e)(1) Salaries pass—the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

Mrs. Yeo: I just have one question re Keewatin Community College mainly because we were permitted an audience with the president of Keewatin Community College, the Deputy Minister and the executive assistant of the Deputy Minister. I would like to say that it was in fact a very enlightening meeting. Had there been no representatives from the Minister's department with us, the questioning would have been absolutely identical, and I am convinced that the answers of this loyal and dedicated servant of the Minister would have been absolutely identical as well.

It was unfortunate that the meeting started some 20 minutes after the time that was stated and it was brought to an abrupt halt before all of the questions were able to be answered. We certainly can write to the Deputy Minister or the Minister and ask that the president be permitted to respond after it was passed through the hands of those people who want to scrutinize the responses, because there appears to be some lack of faith.

I would like to ask the Minister, there was a news release that was released in April of '89 talking about the renovation of the student residence at The Pas, and the contract was awarded to Foresight Constructors of Winnipeg. I am wondering if this award was made on the basis of the tendering process.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, I have to indicate first of all—and I have indicated this to the Member on so many occasions I thought it might have sunk in by now—that there is an appropriate protocol to follow when MLAs want to meet with staff from any department. That is a process that is followed by Government, has been followed by former administration as well, and it works very well. All it does is ensure that we do not have the kind of political attack on staff that might occur.

Indeed, as a matter of fact, I understand that in the session that was held there were questions that had to be scrutinized simply because some staff were getting involved, not from our side, from the Liberal side, in political discussion and policy discussion.

With regard to Keewatin Community College, yes, there has been renovation work done to the residences at Keewatin Community College. The project is complete. There are still some small outstanding aspects that have to be finished up. The official opening of the new residences on February 14—and indeed I extend the invitation to my critics to join us at that opening. Incidentally, it is also the day of the Trappers Festival, I believe, the opening of the Trappers Festival. In terms of the contract, Mr. Acting Chairman, it was tendered, but this is handled through the Department of Government Services and not by Education.

* (1540)

Mrs. Yeo: I have just one question in response to the very kind and generous invitation of the Minister to join her and Members of his staff. Does that include a plane ride on the aircraft that I am sure the Minister will be using?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, we are always happy to take Opposition Critics with us if there is room on a plane. Unfortunately, the preference, as the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) knows, is always given to Ministers who may be travelling up there at the same time. In addition, I could indicate that the Lieutenant-Governor and his wife will be going up to the opening, and Mrs. Carol (phonetic) will also be going up to that opening. I cannot give an indication right now whether there is going to be any available space on the aircraft, but if there is I can assure the Members opposite that I would only be too happy to extend to them the invitation. Indeed, you know, they are Members of the Legislature, and I am only too happy to take them along.

(Mr. Neil Gaudry, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

I just wanted to make one more comment regarding the child care program. This is in answer to a question that was asked before that I did not have the answer to. There are 40 students involved in the ACC Child Care Program at this time.

Mrs. Yeo: I must admit the reason I asked about the ride on the plane is that it is an expense that comes out of our pockets. I do not have much left in my access money at this stage of the game. As a matter of fact, this summer when I received an invitation from the Members of The Pas Band to attend the sod turning of the new school on the reserve up there, a beautiful, beautiful facility that is being constructed, I requested from the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey) and the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) if in fact I could go on the plane and was told, no, I am sorry, the plane is full. I missed another appointment that I would like to have attended in Kenora, and certainly it is a good thing that I did not, because the rest of my caucus nearly died. Perhaps the good Lord is watching over some of us at some of the time.

I did have to, out of my pocket, go to The Pas on the commercial aircraft. I had to go the evening before because there is not a plane that goes in the morning and comes back in the afternoon. The opening was on a Tuesday, so I went Monday night, paid for the room, walked over to the reserve and did enjoy the walk and the people of The Pas, got to the reserve and met the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey), who said why did you not come on the plane with us? There was loads of room.

I am just putting it on the record that, you know, sometimes we are told and it is our comment about rhetoric, words are great but actions speak much louder than words. If there is room, I will await some command from the Minister and would be pleased to go.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, the sod-turning ceremony was one I did not even get to, but had I gone, certainly I would have extended the invitation to the Member. As I indicate, the invitation is open. If there is room on the aircraft when we are flying up there, by all means after the Government Members have had their opportunity to express whether or not they will go, I can assure the Member opposite that I will be extending the direct invitation to her and to the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie).

Mr. Storie: A couple of questions, particularly with respect to the Northern Training and Employment Agency, and I am wondering (a) if the Minister can indicate whether the money that is indicated, the \$3.6 million, is all provincial money, or does that represent funds as well from the CEIC or other cost-shared agreements with the federal Government?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, it is all provincial money.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Acting Chairperson, could the Minister indicate what projects were completed by the NTEA during the last fiscal year? Could he give me a list of those? He can recite them if he wishes.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, I guess in a general sense I could indicate that, first of all, the budget was increased from \$3,330,000 to \$3,700,000 which indicates that we did indeed commit to the program of Northern Training and enhance the training program, because as the Member knows, we did save some dollars as well from the move of the administration to the North.

All of that money went into training, Mr. Acting Chairman. There is a list of programs that have been delivered, and I will table it for the Member. I would like to indicate at the outset that the number of students this year had increased from 245 last year to 348 this year. So there has been an overall increase in program delivery to students of Northern Manitoba through the Northern Training and Employment Agency.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Acting Chairman, perhaps the Minister could indicate how many of those students were trained in the facilities in Thompson and The Pas, and how many were trained on community-based projects?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, maybe I could ask the Member to proceed with another question, we are just gathering the information. That way we will make better use of the very precious time we have.

Mr. Storie: I appreciate the Minister's co-operation. My only other question is directed to a specific request that has come from the community of Snow Lake to the Northern Training and Employment Agency with respect to a project to be completed, hopefully, this summer, and it has to do with the continuation of a project that was started by the Limestone Training and Employment Agency, and is the completion of an airstrip which is extremely important, if not vital to the community of Snow Lake. I am wondering if the Minister can indicate whether that project will be receiving support, whether it is one of the community projects that will be proceeding in the coming year.

* (1550)

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, I can indicate that this year's community-based project, with regard to that, was completed and the extension that the Member for Flin Flon speaks about is one that is being requested for next year.

Mr. Acting Chairman, I can indicate to you and to the House that we are doing an evaluation of the community-based training programs right now and this is something that the Member will have to wait for, for the 1990-91 Estimate process because indeed no final decisions have been made with regard to those specific projects. Our purpose in Education is to ensure that we deliver the best possible type and quality of training that we can and for that reason we are evaluating, not just this program, but indeed all of the programs that are being delivered through NTEA and through all our colleges.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): Item—

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, the Member asked about community based training programs and how many were being delivered out of Thompson and how many were being delivered from the college. There were 161 students from Thompson, 187 from Keewatin—I am sorry this is a community based program.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): Item 5.(e)(1) Salaries \$5,440,400—

Mr. Derkach: This is the community-based number here.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): —pass; 5.(e)(2) Other Expenditures \$1,606,700—pass; 5.(e)(3) Northern Training and Employment Agency \$3,630,000—pass.

Item 5.(f) Co-operative Training Programs: (1) Salaries \$79,900—the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

Mrs. Yeo: I just have a couple of questions re the South Winnipeg Technical Centre. When it was put into place, there was some comment about it being a 24-

hour operation. Is that in fact what is happening? Is it functioning on a 24-hour basis?

Mr. Derkach: The South Winnipeg Training Centre is not operated by us directly. It is operated by three school divisions in the city. The technical centre is first of all under the jurisdiction of the school divisions so, therefore, they set the times of operations, but it is my understanding that it is not operating on a 24-hour basis at this time.

Mrs. Yeo: It has also been brought to my attention that there is some concern re taxes and back taxes from this particular centre. Are the taxes owed to the provincial Government, or are they in fact collected by the school divisions?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, it is not a provincial Government tax issue, I do not believe. I think it is a city tax issue, and I do not have any information on that because of the fact that they are not tied to the department. Therefore, it is a matter that is handled through the three divisions, through South Winnipeg Technical Centre and the city. It is not something that I have jurisdiction or information on.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): Item 5.(f) Co-operative Training Programs: (1) Salaries \$79,900—pass; 5.(f)(2) Other Expenditures \$1,655,400—pass.

Item 5.(g) Student Aid: (1) Salaries \$1,416,100—the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

Mrs. Yeo: I say that my No. 1, No. 1 as far as numbers of calls and letters I receive, is probably Red River Community College, No. 2 is Student Aid. I received a call just the other day from an individual who is trying to go to the University of Manitoba actually and she receives—she said, I think—\$600 a month and she cannot survive on that.

Are there specific criteria that are being worked upon to keep the level of Student Aid in line with inflation, more in line with inflation is one question? The other question, I guess, is in the next area, so I will wait.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, we have been working on the regulations for student aid, if you like, or the policies with regard to student aid for some time now. We were successful in changing some criteria on student aid with regard to rural students, and considering farm assets as part of the criteria for student aid. One of the other problems that has come to our attention is the use of vehicles, especially where that vehicle is a necessity, where perhaps a parent has to drive a child to child care, or if a student is from the rural area and requires the vehicle to go back and forth.

Indeed there is consideration for such things as living allowances, room and board and miscellaneous; that is indexed at 5 percent. The local transportation is indexed by five percent to recognize increases in costs of the transit passes, and as I indicated there was the elimination of the farm net worth in the assessment for student aid. So those are the kinds of considerations

that have been accepted. There is a need to continue to review the way we apply student aid, but every time we make a change to it, Mr. Acting Chairman, it means that the costs of student aid increase substantially.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): Item 2—the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

Mrs. Yeo: We have discussed several times in both Health and Education the need for speech pathologists, and in Family Services. The Minnesota-Manitoba Agreement is one step in the right direction, and as I said, North Dakota is another university setting where speech pathology is offered and where many people from Manitoba are going.

Can the Minister tell me if he will entertain or is considering looking at some special grants, some enhancement grants if you will, to assist students to go to the universities across the border where living expenses may be greater, where their opportunities to return to the nurturing of the home setting would certainly help their studies, perhaps some grants whereby the student may be required to return one year and get so much back, after two years' service a little bit more? Are there considerations, some innovative steps being taken, to address this shortage.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, I have to indicate that in as far as the Manitoba-Minnesota Agreement is concerned any students that are going to Minnesota now would have the same treatment as students in Minnesota, and would be eligible for student aid, et cetera. Students coming to Manitoba from Minnesota would be given the same opportunities and the same privileges here in Manitoba. With regard to North Dakota and South Dakota, with those jurisdictions, we have not arrived at an agreement like we have with Minnesota, and indeed we do have numbers of students travelling to North Dakota to take programs especially in speech therapy or speech pathology.

We are at the present time looking at how we can attract more speech therapists to the Province of Manitoba, and some of the suggestions that the Member raises are indeed ones that have been looked at and are being considered. It should be noted, however, there is a general shortage of speech therapists throughout Canada, and, in fact, Alberta has just decided that they will indeed increase the salaries and increase the remuneration, if you like, to those people coming to Alberta. For that reason, it puts us in somewhat of a difficult and disadvantaged position. Nevertheless, staff from my department have been very active in recruiting people into Manitoba. I guess the bottom line is, yes, we are looking at ways in which we can perhaps help to attract more students, more therapists into this province.

* (1600)

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): Item (g) Student Aid: (1) Salaries \$1,416,100—pass; (g)(2) Other Expenditures \$260,300—pass; (g)(3) Assistance \$10,597,300—(pass).

Item 5(h) Student Aid Appeal Board: (1) Salaries \$125,100—the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

Mrs. Yeo: I wonder if the Minister could tell us how many of the 1,050 appeals for student aid that were processed were wholly and how many were partially successful.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, the appeals received in 1989-90 were projected at 1,000. The appeals approved were 550. In a percentage sense about 45 percent of the appeals are successful.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): Item (h) Student Aid Appeal Board: (1) Salaries \$125,100—pass; item (2) Other expenditures \$7,700—pass.

Item (j) Northern Development Agreement - Canada-Manitoba - Post-Secondary Career Development: (1) Salaries \$306,900—the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

Mrs. Yeo: The Northern Development Agreement in one in which the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) has been quite interested—and my colleague, the Member for Niakwa (Mr. Herold Driedger). I have had letters and conversations with some individuals who are licensed practical nurses and who wish to upgrade and take courses that will give them the opportunity to become registered nurses in the North. Are there courses that are available, sufficient courses that are available, are there any courses that are available to LPNs who wish to be given some credit for their previous educational experiences and to upgrade to become registered nurses?

Mr. Derkach: There has been an expression by many practising nurses in Manitoba right now, especially in the North and in the rural area, who wish to upgrade from an LPN to a RN. As a matter of fact, in the area that I come from there is not only an expressed desire for many of them, there is a need. There is a shortage of about 40 positions within the next two years of registered nurses in that whole area.

In the North we do have two programs that are going on right now. There is a registered nurses' program in Thompson where students who are LPNs can enter into the program and become upgraded. We also have a program in The Pas, at Keewatin Community College, which is an LPN-RN program, and then, I guess, the third program is one that is just getting off the ground, and that is the Bachelor of Nursing Program where RNs can apply to become registered nurses for services in Northern Manitoba.

Mrs. Yeo: Of the students who are involved with these programs, how many of them actually complete the programs that they begin, what is the attrition for these particular students, for the programs that are offered under the Northern Development Agreement, all programs?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, this is an area where we see some need for evaluation. As a matter of fact, there is an evaluation going on in programs, and there is a range of graduating students from these programs and it depends on the program, but it ranges anywhere from a low perhaps of 30 percent to a high of 80 percent, depending on the course.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): Item (j) Northern Development Agreement - Canada-Manitoba - Post-Secondary Career Development: (1) Salaries, \$306,900—pass; (2) Other Expenditures, \$617,900—pass; (3) Grants, \$2,522,500—pass.

(k) Canada-Manitoba Winnipeg Core Area Renewed Agreement - Employment and Training: (1) Grants, \$2,320,000—pass; (2) Less: Recoverable from Urban Affairs, \$2,320,000—pass; (m) Adult and Continuing Education: (1) Salaries, \$508,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures, \$527,800—pass.

(3) Grants, \$2,461,400—the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

Mrs. Yebo: I just want to put on the record that I do have some questions to ask re literacy, but I think because of the time that I will—

An Honourable Member: Lots of time.

Mrs. Yebo: No, there is not lots of time, the Minister says. The time has been utilized by all three parties and I think that I will wait until concurrence because I do have a fairly significant bundle here. I know that the Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko) would like to ask some questions.

Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks): On this matter, I am just wondering if the Minister could provide us with a list of the recipients of the grants, \$2.5 million that have been paid out in this Section. We do not need to necessarily read them in the record. If the Minister would oblige us by simply, in a few days' time, if he could provide me with a list of the recipients and the amounts they have received.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairperson, can I ask the question whether the Member is asking for the literacy grants that have been allocated or the entire listing of the \$2.4 million?

Mr. Minenko: Well, if the Minister would provide me with a copy of the list, I would appreciate it instead of having to read it in the record. If the Minister would agree with that, I would like to—both lists, the \$2.4 million—I could wait for a couple of days for a written response. It does not have to be formal; it can just be a photocopy of what the Minister has before him.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I will be pleased to provide a list of the grants that are provided, and I will table that for the Member.

Mrs. Yebo: Just a question, some of the vocational colleges that are around the province, is this the appropriate appropriation to ask a few questions on these colleges?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairperson, we are already by that section, but indeed, if the Member wishes to ask some questions, I am prepared to answer them.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): Item (m)(3) Grants \$2,461,400—pass; item (m)(4) Task Force on Literacy \$70,000—pass.

Item (2)(n) Post-Secondary Career Development - Southern Programs: (1) Salaries \$319,600—the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

Mrs. Yebo: I would like to ask how many med students have graduated from this particular program. How many medical students?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, that question was more appropriately placed in 5.(j), but there are three medical students who have graduated to this time.

Mrs. Yebo: I would like to know how many students are in the three-year RN program for special needs clients and the criteria for selection.

Mr. Derkach: In the southern nursing program there are currently 57 students attending.

Mrs. Yebo: And the criteria for selection?

* (1610)

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, there are several items which make up the criteria. First of all, the socioeconomic aspects are considered. The students must be in a, if you like, disadvantaged state. There is a very thorough selection process that is done to ensure that students fit the criteria, the economic background of the individual, and also the social situation that exists within that person's environment. I might add the other criteria that is associated with this: they have to be southern rural and/or inner city individuals.

Mrs. Yebo: The term disadvantaged is a very subjective term. What may be disadvantaged to one person may not be to another. I have been in contact with an individual, and I certainly call her disadvantaged. She has applied, I think, three times for the nursing program and been rejected. As a former registrar, where I interviewed a couple of thousand candidates per year who applied for nursing programs, in my humble opinion this individual would have been quite a logical candidate for that particular program.

The Winnipeg Education Centre, I believe, is one of the centres that comes under this particular appropriation. Although the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) and I have asked a couple of questions in the past few days, I guess, re the Winnipeg Education Centre, we have not received an absolute response to their request for assurances that in the next short while—and by that I mean by the 28th of February. Some of the individuals at this centre do believe that there will be (1) some loss of promised funds to them if they do not get the green light to begin building; (2) they have models in their dilapidated centre on Chester Avenue of the new facility.

The lot is there and has been empty for some period of time. There are people who would like to be able to access the program. They want to be able to plan. They want vision beyond the end of their noses, and they are awaiting, in fact, some direction from the powers that be. Can the Minister give them any

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assurance that he will take some time in the next week or two to sit down with those responsible for that decision-making to see that these people do hear very shortly regarding this new centre?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, I can indicate to the Member that we have done the program review of the Winnipeg Education Centre. She has a copy of that program review. I am sure she has read it, and indeed we have discussed this with members of the Winnipeg Education Centre staff, the University of Manitoba, and plans are proceeding along.

I am not going to make any announcement here today with regard to whether or not we will build the Winnipeg Education Centre or what form we will build it in. The most important concern, by those who were interviewed, was to ensure them that in fact there would be some permanence of program so that these people would not be working in conditions where they would not know whether or not the program would exist in the coming year.

Mr. Acting Chairman, additionally, I have been to the Sir Sam Steele School, the centre that is being used for the Winnipeg Education Centre. Yes, it is an old building. It is well maintained, though, and it is not the biggest concern on the part of those people attending that institution. The biggest concern to them is the assurance of programs, of the quality of programs, and to ensure some stability in this whole issue. Yes, Government is considering the entire issue, and when we are in a position to make the announcement, I am sure the Member opposite will be apprised of it quicker than anybody else.

Mrs. Yeo: Does the Minister have any concern for these people who are hoping that they will not lose this \$50,000 that has been promised to them? Is he similar to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst), who has a deadline, and says, ah, well, it is only money? Does the Minister have some thought to perhaps the urgency that these individuals feel for the new building that was on the plate some two years ago. They have been talking about it. It is not something that has just sort of come up over the last few weeks that we have been asking about the status of the report. It is something that has been around for a long time.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, once again it is just spend, spend, spend, open cheque book mentality. Do not ask any questions, just write the cheque. That is not the way responsible Government works. Indeed, we have to ascertain whether or not it is a wise investment of dollars. I have no indication at this point in time—and I have talked to my colleague, the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme), about the alleged loss of funds—that that has even been suggested by the organizations. It is my understanding that if the project goes ahead, the funds are in place that have been committed, and we indeed are proceeding as quickly as we can in the hope that a positive decision can be made somewhere down the road in the near future.

Mrs. Yeo: Can the Minister advise us as to the actual cost of this particular study that was done by Coopers & Lybrand?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, can I ask the Member to repeat the question? I really did not catch it.

Mrs. Yeo: It is very difficult to hear questions when his colleagues to his right are prattling away.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): Order, please.

Mrs. Yeo: The question was: can the Minister tell me what the cost of the Coopers & Lybrand study was to evaluate the Winnipeg Education Centre?

Mr. Derkach: Yes, I can, Mr. Acting Chairman. The total cost was \$56,000.00. I should add that it was money well spent.

* (1620)

Mrs. Yeo: I could not agree with him more. I think it was money well spent. I think it certainly demonstrated that here is a program that is offered, which has in fact proved to be, by the people who were doing the study, more successful than by taking these people and placing them in the tremendous third largest city of Manitoba, the University of Manitoba, or in fact sending them to the University of Winnipeg. The success rate is much, much greater from the Winnipeg Education Centre. I applaud that.

The programs that are listed here—and I asked questions about how many medical students have graduated because in fact it talks about special medical studies programs. I am wondering if any of these programs that are offered are watered down in any way. Do these people have the same curriculum to study and work from the same test to do? Is the only difference the length of time which they can spend in these programs?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, there are only two programs offered at the Winnipeg Education Centre, one being the education program, the other one the social work program. They are exactly the same programs that are being offered at the regular university campus. It is just that students who are attending there may require some extra supports in terms of tutorials or upgrading programs so that they can continue on with programs. Usually it takes a little longer to go through the program than it does at the regular campus.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): (n) Post-Secondary Career Development - Southern Programs—the Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Acting Chairman, I would like to spend a bit more time on the Winnipeg Education Centre and the proposal that is before the Minister. The Minister indicated that the money that was spent by Coopers & Lybrand in preparing this report, which is by its own definition a comprehensive audit of the programs of the Winnipeg Education Centre, which is overwhelmingly positive in its review of the goals of the programs, the success of its graduates and thereby the success of its programs.

I am wondering now, given that the Winnipeg Education Centre is on the brink of a major crossroads—they have, as the Minister well knows, arranged for support from the Core Area Initiative, Community Places, and other programs, to the tune of some \$670,000.00. They have been told that these grants may be in jeopardy, if an indication of support from the province is not forthcoming, a very serious matter for the students and the staff at the Winnipeg Education Centre.

I am puzzled as to why the Minister, who said he was awaiting confirmation of the value of the programs, would hesitate, after receiving this kind of information, to immediately announce that yes, the province would find the money to support the Winnipeg Education Centre, to support the development of a new facility which is long overdue and sorely needed. I am at odds to know what is keeping the Minister from making this commitment to the students, staff and the programs at the Winnipeg Education Centre.

Mr. Derkach: Here we have another individual, Mr. Acting Chairman, who simply wants to open up the cheque book and just keep writing cheques. First of all, replace a school where there are enough spaces in a surrounding area to support them. A project that he sat on, or his Government sat on, he wants us to move ahead with immediately. We will only move ahead with a project like that, Mr. Acting Chairman, when we have completed our thorough and proper analysis.

Mr. Acting Chairman, the kind of approach that we are seeing from the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) and the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) is extremely irresponsible. I say that to act as a responsible Government, we will do a complete analysis before we move ahead with any project. We will set our priorities appropriately.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Acting Chairman, the Minister told this House, told the people at the Winnipeg Education Centre, that what he was awaiting was the result of the study that he himself commissioned. That is what he said. Now we have the results of the study which are unequivocal, positive, support the program, the staff, the concept of how these kinds of professional training programs should be offered, and the Minister now says, we are going to make sure that this is analyzed.

For the Minister's information, it has been analyzed. This is not asking for a blank cheque. This is saying to the Minister, how can he turn his back on a program that is working? If the Minister says, we are not turning his back on the program, and the Winnipeg Education Centre says, by February 28 we need to know or we are going to lose a major chunk of the money that we have available to us to complete this project, he is turning his back. These people have to know. They have a right to know. It is not a question of opening a blank cheque. It is a question of trying to get this Minister to commit to projects that are of obvious value. We have seen this Minister let too many projects slip by the boards, because he did not perceive any value in them. MCALC is only one example.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, the Member does not know what he speaks about. First of all, MCALC

was bought by the private sector, and it is still functioning, functioning very effectively, I might add.

Secondly, Mr. Acting Chairman, I said that we were doing an analysis of the programs to ensure whether or not these programs should continue. The former Government did not place enough faith in those programs to give any indication to them whether they would continue from year to year. People are all on term over there and, in other words, they could cut it out if it was so desirable in their X budgets, in their Estimates. Fortunately they are not in Government any more, and people can breathe with a sigh of relief that indeed there is some permanence now given to the programs that are there. The former Government never did a review of those programs. They did not know whether they were successful, whether they were not successful. The former Government made all of their decisions based on their political whims. That is not the way Governments should operate.

Mr. Acting Chairman, there are several issues that still are unresolved. The value and effectiveness of the programs I think has been addressed. The aspect of location and the type of facility is still being talked about, and once we have established whether or not the facility that was proposed is indeed the best, or whether there is a better type of facility and a better location, we are not going to be forced into any kind of a haphazard decision because the decision that is going to be made is one that will serve the needs of people of the inner city in the best possible way.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the Minister says the former Government made its decisions on a whim. The Minister's Government made the decision to support the Winnipeg Education Centre, this Government decided to have that review—

An Honourable Member: How many permanent staff did you have?

Mr. Storie: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the Minister says, how many permanent staff? The fact is a commitment was being made to build a facility, a new facility, which indicates a great deal of commitment, unlike this Minister, unlike this Minister who is still just giving lip-service, just giving lip service to the kind of program that served the inner city well for decades, for more than a decade.

The Minister says that he is going to continue to study this. I think that means to the students at the Winnipeg Education Centre and the staff there that this Minister still has not shown any confidence in that program, and the Minister is simply stonewalling. There is no reason for further delaying this process.

* (1630)

The Minister says we make these decisions on whim. Well, Mr. Acting Chairman, the Minister is being asked to contribute a very small fraction, a small fraction of the total cost of this integrated project, both the housing component and the educational facilities component. The Government of the Day, and the Minister of Education, wants to talk about funding on a whim. This

Minister added \$15 million to the budgets of private schools without once consulting with the thousands of trustees, the 12,000 or 13,000 teachers, without once considering its impact on the public school system. This Minister is the Minister who (a) acts on whim, or when he has the information that he has asked for refuses to act on it, and he asked for this information. He has been told by his consultants what the value of this program is, and yet he refuses to act.

Well, that is an act of bad faith on the part of the Minister and the people at the Winnipeg Education Centre will see that for what it is, and see that for an undermining of a program that has been very successful.

Mr. Acting Chairperson, it is unfortunate that we cannot get a commitment from the Minister. I can only hope that prior to the deadline of February 28 the Minister has the intestinal fortitude to meet with the Winnipeg Education Centre and tell them face to face whether this is going to proceed.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, the Member for Flin Flon gives me an opportunity to put on the record some of the bunglings of his Government. First of all,—

An Honourable Member: I do not think you have enough time for all of them.

Mr. Derkach: No, I certainly do not because Private Members' hour is in half an hour, maybe we can waive Private Members' hour today.

Mr. Acting Chairman, let me say that the former Government—the Member was Minister—were approached by Swampy Cree Tribal Council to indeed enter into a training program that would graduate Bachelor of Nursing individuals to serve the needs of people in northern Manitoba. For three years that Government sat around—

An Honourable Member: Sat on their duff.

Mr. Derkach: —yes, sat on their duff, twiddled their thumbs and did nothing, absolutely nothing. When we took Government in 1988 they had gotten nowhere with this program. All they did was stand up in the Legislature or wherever they could in front of a camera and blast the federal Government, because they were not living up to their commitment. Yet federal money was in place, commitments were made.

There was some danger of losing that federal money if we did not act quickly and efficiently. We did act - (interjection)- the Member chirps from his seat as he usually does, about what, I do not really know, it does not matter, but let me say to you that we did act on that program, we implemented it. That program is going, so when he makes accusations he should be careful about them.

With regard to this particular project he says, this small amount of money. It only amounts to \$2.7 million. That is all. He says, this small amount of money. That is the mentality of that individual, that is the mentality of his third Party, and that is why this province has a

looming debt and the kind of deficit that we inherited from that bunch, because they did not know how to run anything; \$500 million a year is what Manitobans inherited. That is the legacy that was left to Manitobans, our grandchildren, by that administration.

The decision this Government makes with regard to the Winnipeg Education Centre is one that is going to be based on prudence, it is going to be based on need, and it is going to be based on the best possible kind of delivery of program to inner city people that we can make as a Government.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): Item 5.(n) Post-Secondary Career Development—Southern Program; 5.(n)(1) Salaries, \$319,600—pass; item 5.(n)(2) Other Expenditures, \$988,500—pass; item 5.(n)(3) Grants, \$2,906,700—pass.

Item 5.(p) Market Driven Training; 5.(p)(1) Salaries, \$1,875,000—the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks.

Mr. Minenko: I welcome the opportunity to discuss training and job training with this Minister. I am not sure if his counterpart in Industry and Trade was at all acquainted with this area from some of the answers we were getting, I think.

I would like to ask, in this area what kind of activities in the last 20 months, what kinds of programs has this Minister and this Government put in place to deal with older worker retraining? We know that many businesses have been closing over the last 20 months the Government has been in place. Many businesses were closing before under the previous Government. We certainly did not see any action from the previous NDP Government on assisting older workers in training for possibilities of new employment.

I am just wondering if the Minister can outline not for myself, but for my constituents and I am sure his constituents, what action, what programs does he have in place for older workers?

Mr. Derkach: The Member unfortunately is somewhat confused, because this is not a program that is within this department. It is a program that is within the Department of Family Services. I do not know why he was referencing the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, because that is not in his department either.

Mr. Minenko: Does the Minister say that in the market-driven training, which states as its objective to provide residents with opportunities to access training programs which are responsive to market-driven training needs, they have nothing in place and he has had no discussions with other Ministers and he has no knowledge of any kind of programs for older workers? Older workers are looking to get back into the market place.

Mr. Derkach: Again, Mr. Acting Chairman, the Member confuses things. First of all, Market Driven Training programs are under the jurisdiction of our colleges and this department. Whether they are older workers, younger workers or anybody, Market Driven Training is such that if a sector of our society or an industry

wishes to purchase training from our community colleges then we enter into those agreements. The specific department of older worker training is not within this department it is within the Department of Family Services.

Mr. Minenko: Okay, well seeing this Minister is also the Minister of Training I would anticipate and expect that he would be—even if we are not talking about this specific section of Estimates, and if there is another particular section of Estimates that perhaps I should have commented on, if this Minister is saying that he only deals with sections that come before him I am a little concerned if he does not show any understanding for other areas.

I would like to ask the Minister, why does he not have, as part of his training aspect of his responsibility, anything to deal with older workers? I am a little concerned and confused, yes, confused, that training for older workers is restricted to the Family Services Department. I do not quite see that connection. That could perhaps be discussion for concurrence.

Can the Minister outline any programs that he might be aware of?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, first of all, let me try and enlighten the Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko). If there are programs that industry or any sector of our society wishes to enter into and if that agreement is made between the federal Government and that organization and then they seek training we are always prepared to provide that training, regardless of whether it is for younger workers, older workers or whoever, we take that responsibility. The training is delivered by a variety of sources. It could be delivered through our colleges or through our PACE division.

Let me say to the Member opposite that the program for older workers, that specific one that he refers to, and the initiatives to ensure that these older workers are looked after is not a function of this department. So if you are going to ask me why I do not have jurisdiction over that there has been a delineation of responsibilities among various departments, and that responsibility is not within the framework of this department.

* (1640)

Mr. Acting Chairman, I will not comment on any initiatives, on any specific projects that are the responsibility of another department. The Estimates of that department I think are complete. The Member had an opportunity to ask those questions. He has the supplementary Estimates before him, and if he would do his homework he would have known that is when the questions should have been asked.

Mr. Minenko: Well, I could add some further comments, but perhaps that could be pursued further in debate. I would like to then ask the Minister, again, has his department sent any representatives to the 11th Annual Canadian Training and Development Conference that was held last year entitled Dawning of 2000 in Montreal? Did he, as Training component of his department, send any representatives?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, I did not have responsibility over Training at that time. Therefore, last year, that question would have been more appropriately placed to the area of Economic Security where this department was housed.

Mr. Minenko: Does the Minister anticipate sending any staff, or himself, or representatives to this year's conference?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, staff from my department attend a variety of conferences throughout the country, and indeed outside of the country, with regard to professional development, with regard to ensuring that we are kept abreast of new initiatives, new issues, and so forth. So if the Member is asking me if we are going to be attending that particular conference, in the future, certainly that will be one conference that will be given serious consideration, and the decision will be made as to how many or if any will be attending at that time. I cannot tell the Member right now who is going to be attending, whether we are going to be attending, because I do not even know the content of the conference. That is something that is important to evaluate before a decision is made as to whether or not we will send anybody to any conference.

Mr. Minenko: All right, undoubtedly then, the Minister might be prepared to answer some questions on the Skilled Training Advisory Committee. Ah, here we go. Eureka! I wonder if Members on this side will be as successful as Archimedes when he said "eureka." Can the Minister then advise us, over the last several months that this committee has been in place, how many meetings the committee has had?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, the main committee has had four main meetings, but the subcommittees have had numerous meetings each. I do not know whether they are five or six meetings for each subcommittee. There are ongoing consultations with industry, with business, so it is not a matter of formal meetings so much as it is consultation with business and with industry to ensure that all the information is gathered. But the main committee itself has had four major meetings.

Mr. Minenko: Has this committee or any of its components had the opportunity to identify key skills and occupations that they feel are critical to improving Manitoba's economic performance, and can the Minister advise us even if there is a preliminary suggestion of what these are?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, once again, the subcommittees are meeting, the committee is deliberating, they are meeting with different groups, different businesses. That report is due at the end of February, so therefore I cannot respond at this point in time as to what their recommendations will be at that time. But certainly I am waiting with some enthusiasm at some of the recommendations that they will be making.

Mr. Minenko: Does the Minister have any ongoing contact with this committee and its work?

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Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, I have met with the Chairman of the committee on several occasions. My staff indeed have contact with the committee. So there is constant liaison between the committee and between the

Mr. Minenko: Would the Minister advise us as to what industries and sectors may be critical to improving Manitoba's economic performance?

Mr. Derkach: The four subcommittees that have been established were based on a sectoral basis. First of all, there are the resource industries and the related manufacturing; manufacturing industries excluding wood, paper and primary metals; the construction, transportation, communication and utilities industries, and the trade and service industries.

Mr. Minenko: What involvement does the Department of Industry and Trade have with respect to the various matters that this committee is deliberating on?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, the department itself is represented by the ADM on the committee itself but there is not any direct involvement or overlap between the two departments besides what I have just mentioned.

Mr. Minenko: The Minister has advised that he expects the report, I presume a final report, from this committee to this Minister by the end of February. Can the Minister advise us what he plans to do with this report? Does he intend to then take it like the High School Review and send it on to further study, or can we expect action based on those recommendations of this advisory committee?

Mr. Derkach: We will be able to deal much more effectively and much more expeditiously with this report, because the criteria was set down by this Government and the report will be received by this Government. We will act on the recommendations that are presented to us by the committee.

Mr. Minenko: The Minister is then providing us assurance that it will not go into further study then. Is that what the Minister is saying after he receives the report?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, I cannot speculate on what the recommendations are going to be because if there is a recommendation that there is indeed a formulation of another committee, then I will take that under advisement. At this point in time, I think it would all be speculation.

Mr. Minenko: I appreciate it is all speculation, but I hope the Minister is not saying that as in the situation with Rural Development, where the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner) advises us, wait for an economic development policy for rural Manitoba in the next budget. I hope that Manitobans do not have to wait to some future time while the businesses are closing, for whatever reason around them, for this Government to take it on, let us study it again. I can

appreciate that in some situations further consultation needs to be happening but this Minister has certainly been in this Legislature longer than I have, and Members of the Government have been around.- (interjection)-

The Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) suggests something otherwise, suggests that it would be longer. We will wait and see for that occasion. What is of concern is, while businesses are being closed, people are being let go, jobs in manufacturing are being exchanged for service jobs which oftentimes pay less. The Minister of Training (Mr. Derkach) is continuing on a review. I would certainly encourage him very strongly, considering those guys were in Opposition for many years and perhaps will be in Opposition soon again, they certainly, I would have thought, had enough time to put together some platforms. If they would have lived up to some of their platforms in the last election, I think we would certainly be further ahead. I would promptly suggest to the Minister that he consider seriously implementing some of those things as quickly as possible. Manitobans have been waiting for 20 months already, and maybe even more, depending on what the previous Government was doing, which I am sure was not a heck of a lot either.

My next question then is dealing with the report - (interjection)- Well, the Minister wants to respond, but perhaps that could be a debatable thing under concurrence. I would encourage the Minister to continue that discussion. I am just wondering if the Minister could comment on the strategy paper that he released in early November of last year, calling on the federal Government to participate. I am just wondering if he can advise us as to if there have been any developments as a result of the "Partners for People" document. Can the Minister advise us if there have been any concrete developments as a result of this initiative?

* (1650)

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, we have to go back to the first comments the Member put on the record just a minute ago. He talks about us dragging our feet with regard to the Skills Training Advisory Committee, and he talks about my taking 20 months to do this. I have to indicate that business, the industry, have welcomed the establishment of this committee. I can tell the Member that I did not have that portfolio 20 months ago. Indeed it was as of April that this was established. Therefore, it has not been 20 months at all. We moved on it because of the recommendations that were made to us by industry, by chambers of commerce, by people throughout Manitoba.

He is suggesting that we should move ahead with the development of programs right now. That is the shotgun approach that the Liberals used. We are going to ensure that we hear the report first before we start moving in any direction where we are going to be committed for any long period of time. I think it is important, and I think that the Skills Advisory Training Committee would want us to wait until such time that their report is handed down.

Mr. Acting Chairman, with regard to "Partners for People", indeed that is a collective approach of this

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province. It was the Province of Quebec that took the lead on that. I might say that at the present time we have two staff people from the department who are in Quebec City, I believe, meeting with federal officials regarding that particular pamphlet or that particular approach that was set out by all Ministers of Education and Training in Canada.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): The Honourable Member for—

Mr. Derkach: Pardon me, Mr. Acting Chairman. The Member also referenced the Rural Development Minister (Mr. Penner). I think he has something to add to this. I would just like him to make some comments with regard to his area of responsibility.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): The Honourable Member for Rural—on a point of order, the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks.

Mr. Minenko: The Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner) had his opportunity in Estimates and undoubtedly will continue in concurrence. If he has other comments—I did not ask him any questions. I simply put some things on the record that I am sure he himself would find in Hansard.

I rise on a point of order suggesting that he had his previous opportunity, concurrence is coming before him for him to put any comments further on the record, and he should not appear in Education Estimates.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): On the same point of order?

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Rural Development): Well, Mr. Acting Chairman, on the same point of order, if it would please the Chair, I would like to respond to the Member in references that he made to my department and some of the indications that he left. I would like to, for the record, clarify some of those things.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): It is not a point of order, but we are considering the Estimates of the Department of Education. If it is the will of the committee to listen to the Minister of Rural Development, we will entertain. Is it the will of the committee?—(interjection)—No, it is not.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Acting Chairperson, just for clarification, the Member for Rhineland (Mr. Penner) needs no leave to speak during the Estimates debate. The fact is Members of the committee are certainly free to debate. Under normal circumstances, Members on the Government side have the courtesy to refrain from asking lengthy questions, or lengthy comments to the record, because it detracts from the legitimate time of Opposition to ask questions. There is certainly no prohibition from Members of the committee asking

questions.—(interjection)—I do not want it now, I want him to keep quiet; but you cannot change the rules just because you want him to be quiet.

Mr. Penner: Mr. Acting Chairman, the reference was made to the Department of Rural Development and specifically myself, and it appeared to me that he was indicating that there were some specific areas that were lacking in approaching problems in rural Manitoba. I accept the fact that the reference that was made to rural Manitoba is true, by the Honourable Member.

There are in fact many areas of rural Manitoba that are suffering today economically, as well as otherwise, because I believe of actions that we are now feeling the brunt of that were taken by the federal Government, in many instances, some number of years ago. Pierre Elliott Trudeau in his wisdom implemented policies that led to the economic situation that western Canada is facing today. I believe the educational system in rural Manitoba reflects in many ways the actions that were taken, the policy direction that was given at that time. I believe it is dependent on those of us that sit here today that make consideration of policies or make consideration of monetary expenditures that are going either through education or through economic initiatives that are going to have to reflect those decisions that were made many years ago.

I remember well when the farmers of western Canada went to Ottawa and asked the Prime Minister to consider the difficulty that they were in at that time. They said simply—the Prime Minister at that time said, why—

An Honourable Member: On a point of order.

Mr. Penner: —should I sell your wheat? Why should I sell your wheat?

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): Order, please; order, please.

Mr. Penner: He talked about—

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member for Inkster, on a point of order.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Acting Chairman, the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) was quite correct in saying that the Member for Rhineland (Mr. Penner) does have a right to stand up and put forward a question. It appears that the Member for Rhineland is not going to be putting forward a question. He is rather responding to some comments made by the Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko), and I would suggest if the Member for Rhineland does not have a question for the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) that he give the floor so that other Members of this Chamber can proceed with asking questions of the Minister of Education.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): The Honourable Member does not have a point of order, but I think I

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will remind that we are in the Estimates of Education and we will continue with the Estimates of Education.

Mr. Minenko: Mr. Acting Chairman, I see our time is quickly winding down. I am just wondering if the Minister of Training (Mr. Derkach) can advise us as to how he and his department have applied some of the recommendations and suggestions coming out of the de Grandpre Report with respect to training in Manitoba. Has his department first looked at the report, has he himself looked at it and reviewed it, and what action has he and his department been taking since March of last year? Yes, I appreciate the Minister has only recently taken over the department, but can the Minister outline the initiatives he has taken as a result of that report?

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): The Honourable Minister has time for a short answer.

Mr. Derkach: Thank you, Mr. Acting Chairman, and I will certainly try to abide by your wishes. I would have to indicate to you that the de Grandpre Report that was issued does certainly affect us in terms of how we look at training, but in the analysis it would appear that the training programs that we now have in place are certainly adequate to take care of any effects that there might be as a result of the agreement. Might I add that to date there have been no significant sectors coming forth to ask us for specialized training as a result of the agreement.

* (1700)

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

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Neil Gaudry (Acting Chairman of Committees): 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 Fort Garry (Mr. Laurie Evans), 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. 4—THE HIGHWAY TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT (2)

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake), Bill No. 4, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant le Code de la route, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing?
Agreed

BILL NO. 10—THE BEVERAGE CONTAINER ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch), Bill No. 10, The Beverage Container Act; Loi sur les contenants de boissons, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing—the Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, we do not want to believe, in the Opposition, that Private Members' Bills are going to be treated with disdain. These are important matters or they would not be brought forward by Members of the Legislature, and the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) has had Private Members' Bills standing in his name for a considerable length of time and, as a courtesy, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae), on the same point of order.

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, we are asking that Bills stand out of respect for such Honourable Members as the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) with respect to Bill No. 25, The Corporations Amendment Act, so that the Honourable Member for Elmwood might have a chance to introduce his Bill.

We are asking to have Bills stand so that Bill No. 55, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus), can have an opportunity to be introduced by that Honourable Member.

We are standing out of respect for the Honourable Member for Interlake (Mr. Uruski) with regard to Bill No. 85 so that he might have an opportunity to introduce The Elections Amendment Act.

We are attempting to stand matters out of respect and admiration for the Honourable Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), who wants to introduce Bill No. 91, The Public Health Amendment Act. Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 94 standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Elmwood—

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Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) has lost his right to speak on Bill No. 4. The Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

Mr. Storie: I am prepared to give leave. I would hope to get a response from the Government House Leader about their intentions. If the Government's intention—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. There was no leave granted. Leave was denied. The Honourable Government House Leader.

Mr. McCrae: On a point of order. I wonder if you were to canvass Honourable Members once again, you might find that there is leave to allow that Bill to stand.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave that Bill No. 10, The Beverage Container Act, is there leave that this matter can remain standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard)? Yes, there is leave, very clearly, there is leave.

BILL NO. 13—THE MANITOBA INTERCULTURAL COUNCIL AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles), Bill No. 13, The Manitoba Intercultural Council Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le Conseil interculturel du Manitoba, and the motion of the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) that the question be now put, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing?
Agreed.

BILL NO. 16—AN ACT TO PROTECT THE HEALTH OF NON-SMOKERS

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), Bill No. 16, An Act to Protect the Health of Non-Smokers; Loi sur la protection de la santé des non-fumeurs, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave.
Agreed.

BILL NO. 17—THE EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), Bill No. 17, The Employment Standards Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les normes d'emploi, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Government Services (Mr. Albert Driedger). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing?
Agreed.

BILL NO. 20—THE MUNICIPAL ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT ACT SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: The next item of business before the House is Bill No. 20, The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'évaluation municipale, introduced by the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo), which, as I advised the House, I have been holding pending receipt of advice from the Law Officer.

I recognize that the apparent similarities between certain provisions in this Bill and Bill No. 79, The Municipal Assessment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi sur l'évaluation municipale et modifications corrélatives, present the House with procedural difficulties.

I therefore consulted with the Law Officer of the House respecting the differences and similarities between the two Bills and have been advised as follows, with respect to Bill No. 20, and I quote:

"This Bill purports to amend The Municipal Assessment Act which is now repealed. Further, the property tax exemption it purports to grant to the Catherine Booth Bible College is already granted by Statutes of Manitoba, 1989-90, Chapter 24(Bill 79)."

Beauchesne's Citation 624.(3) provides that:

"There is no rule or custom which restrains the presentation of two or more bills relating to the same subject and containing similar provisions. But if a decision of the House has already been taken on one such bill, for example, if the bill has been given or refused a second reading, the other is not proceeded with if it contains substantially the same provisions and such a bill could not have been introduced on a motion for leave. But if a bill is withdrawn, after having made progress, another bill with the same objects may be proceeded with."

Manitoba Rule 31, which states in part that, "No member shall revive a debate already concluded," also applies to the situation in which the House currently finds itself in.

Bill No. 79 has received second reading; that is, the debate on the principle of the Bill has been concluded. If the House now continued to debate Bill No. 20, it would be reviving a debate already concluded because of the similarity in content.

Combining advice obtained from the Law Officer of this House with the authorities just quoted, it would be procedurally improper, therefore, to permit any further debate on Bill No. 20. To do so would contravene the authorities cited.

The Honourable Member has two courses of action open to her. Bill No. 20 can remain on the Order Paper, not be proceeded with any further, and die when this Session is prorogued. Alternatively, she may seek the unanimous consent of the House to withdraw it at this time or at a future sitting.

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BILL NO. 22—THE CONSUMER PROTECTION AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 22, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Agreed.

* (1710)

BILL NO. 23—THE CONSUMER PROTECTION AMENDMENT ACT (2)

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 23, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae).

Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Agreed.

BILL NO. 24—THE BUSINESS NAMES REGISTRATION AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 24, 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 Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey).

Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Agreed.

BILL NO. 26—THE REAL PROPERTY AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 26, The Real Property Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les biens réels, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns).

Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Agreed.

BILL NO. 37—THE MUNICIPAL ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT ACT (2) SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: The next item of business before the House is Bill No. 37, The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur l'évaluation municipale, introduced by the Honourable Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch), which I advised the House previously that I was holding pending receipt of advice from the Law Officer.

I recognize that there are apparent similarities between certain provisions in this Bill and Bill No. 79, The Municipal Assessment and Consequential Amendment Act; Loi sur l'évaluation municipale et modifications corrélatives, presented to the House with procedural difficulties.

I, therefore, consulted with the Law Officer of the House respecting the differences and similarities between the two Bills and have been advised as follows with respect to Bill No. 37:

"This Bill purports to amend The Municipal Assessment Act which is now repealed. Further it purports to limit a property tax exemption with respect to certain lands. Statutes of Manitoba 1989-90, Chapter 24 (Bill 79) makes no references to such an exemption. The Legislature addressed the subject of the particular exemption in the course of reviewing Bill 79 and elected to adopt the approach proposed in Bill 79."

Beauchesne's Citation 624(3) provides that:

"There is no rule or custom which restrains the presentation of two or more bills relating to the same subject and containing similar provisions. But if a decision of the House has already been taken on one such bill, for example, if the bill has been given or refused a second reading, the other is not proceeded with if it contains substantially the same provisions and such a Bill could not have been introduced on a motion for leave. But if a Bill is withdrawn, after having made progress, another Bill with the same objects may be proceeded with."

Manitoba Rule 31, which states in part that, "No Member shall revive a debate already concluded," also applies to the situation in which the House currently finds itself. Bill No. 79 has received second reading; that is, the debate on the principle of the Bill has been concluded. If the House now continued to debate Bill No. 37, it would be reviving a debate already concluded because of the similarity in content.

Additionally, I am advised that the matters addressed by Bill No. 37 were considered and dealt with by the enactment of Bill No. 79. Combining the advice obtained from the Law Officer of this House with the authorities just quoted, it would be procedurally improper, therefore, to permit any further debate on Bill No. 37. To do so would contravene the provisions of Beauchesne's Citation 624 and would also be contrary to our own Rule 31.

The Honourable Member has two courses of action open to him. Bill No. 37 can remain on the Order Paper, not be proceeded with any further and die when this Session is prorogued. Alternatively, he may seek the unanimous consent of the House to withdraw it at this time for a future sitting.

**BILL 41—THE HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
AMENDMENT ACT (4)**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake), Bill No. 41, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (4); Loi no 4 modifiant le Code de la route, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Agreed. The Honourable Member for Seven Oaks.

Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to participate in debate in the House on this particular legislation. I greet with enthusiasm the enthusiasm shown on the opposite side of the House in my addressing this particular legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to the House and submit that the Honourable Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake) is indeed one of the hardest working Members, second to none in this Chamber. As the Transport and Highways Critic of the Liberal Party he has indeed devoted much of his effort and time to consulting with people on various issues across this province. He has taken the time to view many of the locations throughout Manitoba that should be addressed by the Government, any Government, in operation.

He spends much time away from home and his family to provide a good service to Manitobans, to his constituents first and indeed to all Manitobans. As we indeed know, we simply do not—in addition to representing our own constituents, we represent all Manitobans in this Chamber. It is indeed unfortunate that in opportunities before, Members of the Government have taken the opportunity of chuckling at the Member's propositions before this Chamber. I think that does a disservice to this Honourable Member and indeed all Manitobans. He is certainly a very hard working Member of the Legislature, second to none.

In listening and reviewing his comments with respect to this legislation, we see a sliver of that hard work, where he discusses—and before he proposed this legislation, consulting widely with various police forces throughout Manitoba and other Manitobans. He even reviewed—when commented on by the Member for Gladstone (Mrs. Oleson) as to what the previous Tory position was on this type of legislation, he was prepared to quote from Hansard of June of 1986 as to what the now Government had to say at that time about this legislation.

We certainly look for the opportunity of support, because it is in all of our interests to ensure that our highways are safe. Safe for our constituents, safe for the many tourists who come to Manitoba, and safe for the many industries that use our highways and roads, that transport goods and provide the employment that we so need in this province.

Looking at the record of this Government, we certainly look forward to seeing even more greater efforts on their part to ensure that all Manitobans are provided with an opportunity of employment, in an area of

employment, in an area of this province, more importantly an area of this province in which they choose to work and live.

We have seen the out-migration of Manitobans and yes, the statistics do show that since 1931, if you look to decade portions, every decade since 1931, we have seen a net migration from Manitoba. This Government certainly does not seem to have in place policies to address that.

With respect to this legislation further, we see that with consultation and co-operation we can indeed look to dealing with this particular problem. These particular problems of speeding happen even in our local levels.

* (1720)

I have taken the opportunity—not simply speaking about police protection and not simply commenting on people writing to me about problems with police and police protection and the fact that we have too much crime and we need more police protection in our areas—but I have taken the opportunity of going out and speaking to the police in my area and discovering their concerns and raising concerns that have been brought to my attention.

Even such a local problem as speeding down a back lane, although it might not seem a very important issue for people, but indeed for the people who live on both sides of that lane, that issue is indeed important. It affects the safety and health of themselves, people that are visiting them. I have taken these opportunities of visiting with the police headquarters in my area, indeed of walking the beat with the local police constable and discussing with him, as we were walking along through the neighbourhood, the many issues and concerns that he has seen, that people have talked to him about. I think all these aspects are very important.

I think that again when we look to this legislation, we see that the Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake) has consulted widely, has reviewed the legislation before him, has reviewed the practical situation on our streets and highways in this province. One of the important aspects, as I mentioned earlier, of ensuring safety on our streets and our highways is the tourism trade. We have seen under the previous NDP Government the rating that we have received, not only in the environment issues but certainly in aspects of tourism. We certainly look to greater opportunities that this Government might have been able to bring in. We are still waiting.

Just like Jean Chretien remarked some time ago, that sometimes it is like a car when you are trying to rock it out of a snow bank. You go a little forward, you go a little back, you go a little forward, you go a little back, but we know that Jean Chretien's ultimate objective was to get out of that rut, move forward, and carry on. What has been happening with this Government is we see that rocking motion back and forth, but I do not see them moving out of that rut. I do not see them moving forward -(interjection)-

The Minister of Natural Resources says, patience, patience. Well, Mr. Speaker, we have seen what this Government can do, Manitoba has indeed seen, and

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are indeed concerned about what this Government is not doing.

When we look at some of these important aspects, some of the things that they were addressing when they were in Opposition, where are they now? Where are they now? Well, when we look to some of the campaign promises in the 1988 election, it seems like this Government has simply set them aside—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. I would like to remind the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko) to be relevant to the question which is before the House, which is Bill No. 41, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act No. 4, and it appears to me that the entire Bill, entire content of this Bill, deals specifically with radar warning devices, so I would ask the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks to keep his remarks relevant to the question before the House.

The Honourable Member for Seven Oaks.

Mr. Minenko: I think when we deal with the principle of any Bill that certainly the roadways aspect to this legislation is important and I think that we need to look at what some of the—(interjection)— Well, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) says he is not even sure what a radar detector is and, well, perhaps he could speak to the Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake), because I am sure that the Member for Assiniboia could point and direct the Member, the Finance Minister, the Member for Morris (Mr. Manness) to some of his own Members and perhaps his own comments dealing with this particular legislation that we have before us.

I think that we look forward to the participation of the public of Manitoba in committees to hear their comments on this legislation—

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): I want to hear their comments, why do they not stand up?

Mr. Minenko: — to consider—well, and as the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) says, we certainly like to hear the comments of the Government on the various legislation before us because again they were prepared and willing to put indeed their comments on the record some few short years ago.

Mr. Speaker, I would certainly encourage Members opposite and Members to the left to deal with this legislation as quickly as possible in order that we can pass it on to committee for further review and consideration and most important to consider and to continue the consultation that the Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake) has begun.

Mr. Speaker: As previously agreed, this matter will remain standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness).

SECOND READINGS PUBLIC BILLS

BILL NO. 55—THE CROWN CORPORATIONS PUBLIC REVIEW AND ACCOUNTABILITY AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. John Angus (St. Norbert) presented Bill No. 55, The Crown Corporations Public Review and Accountability Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'examen public des corporations de la Couronne et l'obligation redditionnelle de celles-ci, for second reading to be referred to a committee of this House.

MOTION presented.

Mr. Angus: Mr. Speaker, for your information and for the information of the House, this deals with the Manitoba Hydro Corporation, The Crown Accountability Act and the capital expenditures which are commonly referred to as mega projects.

First of all, let me say that I think this is a very important piece of legislation. I recognize that partisanship politics is played in this House on a regular basis. I recognize there are different philosophical positions that are taken by different interested parties, and I respect those differences.

This particular item has such a magnitude in terms of its importance to all of the people of Manitoba and, because of the size of these mega projects, tends to spread over a series of administrations. It is extremely important that all of the information that is relevant to the specific mega projects that are being proposed from time to time be laid before a body which will review the factual information independently, without any political interference or any political representation, and will report on the viability on the various bits of information required. Mr. Speaker, that is the underlying principle and the fundamental reason.

I think I would like to see this particular Bill referred to the committee, and I would like to see it thrashed out at that level. I am prepared to accept and work with all Parties to put in amendments and/or changes that will make this necessary piece of legislation an important component, because I believe that it is necessary.

Mr. Speaker, we have had a case earlier that was referred to the courts for interpretation. While that is a right that was available and exercised by the parties involved, I do not believe that legislation should be so vague that we allow it to the interpretation of the courts to clearly indicate what is required.

Mr. Speaker, if I can just go through several specific portions of this particular Bill, perhaps I would be able to persuade all Members that the Bill is reasonable and that there is room for a common ground to be found on the importance of this legislation.

What it says is that Manitoba Hydro, prior to making a major capital commitment, will submit the cost-benefit justifications, plans, estimates, and the schedule for the development in respect of which the major capital commitment is to be made to the Public Utilities Board

for examination and for review. The Public Utilities Board shall report its findings, comments, and recommendations to the Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro and to the Legislature.

* (1730)

Mr. Speaker, the very first thing that I want to make absolutely clear is that the determination and/or the decision for mega projects should, must, continue to remain with the Government of the Day. They must have the right to make the decisions as to whether or not they are going to proceed with a mega project. Of that I have absolutely no doubt. This Bill is not meant in any way to circumnavigate the legislative process that will leave the decision-making with the appropriate legislative responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, it is designed to put the corporation into a position of justifying and identifying the various cost-benefits, the plans, the estimates and the schedules for development. This is called planning. It is called looking at the information. It is not coming to the Legislature so that we can say, why are you spending this, why are you spending that? It is going to a body of individuals, the Public Utilities Board, that have a high degree of integrity, that have a high degree of respect in the community, that will understand the various bits of information. They will have no authority to alter the proposal that Hydro is putting before them in this case. They will have no authority to change the proposal that is being made by Hydro. They will simply comment on their findings and the recommendations, and they will provide this information to the Minister and to Manitoba Hydro and to the Legislature.

They will make their comments and their recommendations to the Executive Council for their deliberation and decision, and that information will come to all of the legislators and through them will go on to the people, the consumers of Manitoba Hydro, who will provide the ultimate watchdog aspect to this particular type of project.

Mr. Speaker, we have all seen the development of projects along the Hydro river, where there has been hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars invested on these electrical projects. While I believe that they are in the best interests of the people of the Province of Manitoba to take this type of action, I think that I would appreciate the additional security and the comfort of having this information reviewed and scrutinized and gone over in a public forum, in an open manner, as to what is intended to be done, why it is being done, how long it is going to take, and how much it is going to cost, and finally and most importantly, what the ultimate benefits are going to be to the individual consumers and/or the owners of the hydro corporation?

Mr. Speaker, it is a reasonable piece of legislation, it is not meant to cut the pins out from underneath anybody. It is not meant to embarrass or put anybody in any sort of an anti-political position. It is designed to take the process of consideration, of \$5 billion in the case of Conawapa, out from the locked boardroom doors on Taylor Avenue of the hydro corporation and

put it into a public forum where every member of the public will be able to legitimately ask questions, scrutinize and become fully aware of the information that is being proposed.

Mr. Speaker, let me just suggest that this particular suggestion that I have been making, and that we have formalized into a Bill in fact is being done through The Crown Accountability Act, to the Public Utilities Board by the current chairman of the Manitoba Hydro. He has voluntarily agreed to take the five-year capital development plans of Hydro to the Public Utilities Board. I have no idea whether that will include all of the Conawapa development phase, the number of years that it is going to take, and I have no idea as to how much detail is going to be provided. I really believe that it is totally unfair to leave an administrator dangling without specific rules as to what he should be taking for public scrutiny and what he should not be taking for public scrutiny.

In this particular case, what I have tried to do in this Bill is identify the elastic parameters of what I want Manitoba Hydro to do. Mr. Speaker, let me go a little bit further. We have a process in place right now that an individual who has a large amount of experience in the legislative procedures of this province has agreed voluntarily and willingly to take this particular project to the Public Utilities Board.

Mr. Speaker, that is a bonus. We may not always have those types of people. We may not always have Ministers that will want to—while they will always be honourable, they may not have the same philosophical belief, the same political belief, that information should be shared in this fashion.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that it becomes incumbent upon us as legislators to set in place good legislation regardless of who represents the position. Far too often, we fall into the trap of forgetting and losing sight of the fact that we are here for good legislation and good Government. We get into partisan politics, name calling, finger pointing, and innuendo and suggestions that are inappropriate for serious business.

Mr. Speaker, this very, very serious Bill, it should be given the utmost consideration with absolute respect. Once again, a willingness and an assurance that I am prepared to amend this particular Bill when it gets to committee. I am prepared to look at the legislation and entertain amendments that will make it stronger and make it a better piece of legislation. I would urge all Members of this Legislative Assembly to forward this particular Bill on to the committee so that it can be dealt with in a fair fashion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines): I move, seconded by the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), that debate on this Bill be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

An Honourable Member: Mr. Speaker, I think the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources wanted to address this Bill.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. I have another Member attempting to get his Bill on.

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BILL NO. 85—THE ELECTIONS AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Bill Uruski (Interlake) presented Bill No. 85, The Elections Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi électorale, for second reading, to be referred to a committee of this House.

MOTION presented.

Mr. Uruski: I want to thank Members of this House for giving me the opportunity to introduce Bill No. 85. It is likely one of the shortest pieces of legislation in this Chamber, but it certainly begins and extends the tradition that this House has pioneered in the appointment of members of a public service in areas such as the Clerk who is sitting in this House. His position is one where all Parties who are represented at the time when a vacancy occurs participate on the Committee of Privileges and Elections of this Assembly, appoint and agree to do the interviews and make recommendations to this House on the appointment of Members or those incumbents who apply for that position.

As well, Mr. Speaker, the position of the Ombudsman is one that—when we were in Government during the early '70s, we brought into this House, setting up the Office of the Ombudsman. His or her position, that position was one that was approved by the unanimous agreement and position of Members who sat on the Committee of Privileges and Elections. That position was filled through this process that I am recommending, Mr. Speaker, that the Chief Electoral Officer for the province be in fact appointed through this process.

We have had some acrimonious debate in the past about positions such as this being political and not being fair and the like. This province has historically pioneered in the area of non-partisan appointments in areas such as I am recommending.

We have had the unfortunate passing and untimely death of Richard Willis, who was the Chief Electoral Officer of the time. All Members I am sure were shocked by his untimely passing and we share and grieved at his loss. He was a good civil servant, had very close, initially, political ties but did attempt and did do an excellent job for Members of this Chamber, all Candidates who ran in the Election and proved himself to be very clearly non-partisan in the carrying out of his duties. That took a lot of work and a lot of time over the period of years that he was in that position.

What I hope I can urge to Members of the Government and the Official Opposition—and I am not sure that the Government has as yet appointed a Chief Electoral Officer to replace Mr. Willis. If they have not, Mr. Speaker, this would be clearly an opportunity to follow along the course that was started in this Chamber.

I guess I could go back to the '50s when the D. L. Campbell Government of the Day passed legislation to set up the Independent Boundaries Commission, the electoral boundaries commission. That was the beginning of setting out a process whereby the charges of political meddling could be avoided by having

people—and in that Bill, you have the Chief Justice of Manitoba, whoever he or she may be at the time; I believe you have the president of the University of Manitoba, whoever he or she is at the time; and the Chief Electoral Officer, who would have been the chief civil servant who would bring about the data and the information for that committee.

This would follow along that tradition. I would like to hear from somebody on the Government side whether they have moved to advertise, Mr. Speaker, maybe you may know, I have not seen the ads, whether there have been any postings. If there have not, I suggest, and I am sure that the Liberal Opposition would have no difficulty and I am sure most Members of the Tory Caucus would have no difficulty in following this course of action.

As being one of the, not the oldest, because the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) is the elder statesperson of this House—they call it the dean of this Chamber, the daddy of this House or the mother of this Assembly—being the Minister of Natural Resources, serving since 1966, but clearly I and the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) are I guess almost next in line; 1969 was when I came to this Chamber. I ask all Honourable Members to consider as part of the tradition of this Assembly to move this position into one of those that we have agreed to in the past of appointment by consensus, generally by consensus of all Members of the House who would be appointed to serve on this committee.

With the shortest ado, I recommend this legislation to all Members of this House in the hope that it could be passed this Session and the process of filling the position of Chief Electoral Officer could take place by all Members of the Chamber. Thank you very much.

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern and Native Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld), that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL NO. 91—THE PUBLIC HEALTH AMENDMENT ACT

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns) presented Bill No. 91, The Public Health Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé publique, for second reading, to be referred to a committee of this House.

MOTION presented.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have the opportunity to introduce this Bill in some detail at second reading stage.

This Bill is more clearly described in terms of its ability to begin to solve the very serious problem of solvent abuse in our many communities. It is more properly referred to as anti-sniff legislation. Mr. Speaker, it comes out of a very significant involvement at the community level. It is not a bill which has come out of

a few Members in our caucus, but it emerges from a very strong community movement and a real interest to ensure some mechanism is put in place at the community level to deal with a very serious problem.

It is a bill which, in essence, seeks to prohibit the sale of inhalants to minors, and it is based on the view that legislation is urgently needed to discourage solvent abuse among young people, which, in our view, is a widespread and serious problem throughout Manitoba. I am sure many Members in this House will realize that the results of sniffing are often tragic, involving permanent injury or death, and that collectively we must ensure that every step is taken to limit the sale of toxic inhalants and to help prevent solvent abuse.

* (1750)

Mr. Speaker, I said this Bill comes out of a community movement. It comes out of a group of people who have been involved over a long number of years in a coalition in an organized effort to try to curb the sale of solvent products. Members in this Chamber may be familiar to some extent with the Winnipeg Anti-Sniff Coalition which grew, came to be in the early '70s and focused that decade and used that decade to try to seek change at all levels with respect to solvent abuse. In fact, Members may be familiar with the efforts to seek legislation at all levels and with their success, their limited success, in seeking some change at the municipal level with the by-law that came into effect in 1979. However, it was a short-lived by-law in that the law was challenged by corporate interests in our society and was struck down.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill is an attempt to begin to deal with the problem, to move in the direction of curbing the sale of solvents so that our young people's health is not put in such great risk and jeopardy.

There is no pretension that this Bill solves the entire problem. There is a clear-cut realization that in order to deal concisely with this very serious problem, one has to deal with the roots of the problems, the roots being economic circumstances, the roots being difficult family life, the roots being abuse, the roots being chronic unemployment, the roots being terrible housing conditions and so on. There is a real consensus in the community that if we can begin to at least, through legislation, curb the sale of these products for our young people, then we will have taken a responsible action, and we will have done something good for the young people in our society.

I think the concern is best summed up in a recent letter that came to all of our attention by the president of the Northwest Child and Family Services Agency who wrote to us in support of this Bill and said: We are pleased to see such a Bill, as it carries forward concerns brought to your attention by us in a previous correspondence. The issue of solvent abuse is one which plays havoc in our community; the tragic toll for which comes into our agency on a daily basis. We are the agency and the community which has to deal with the family disruptions when solvent abuse becomes rampant with parents and children. We are the agency which has to attend to newborn babies requiring

medical attention and subsequently has to find special foster parents to care for these children. That is one indication of the concern throughout our community. There are many others.

Mr. Speaker, let us do work together on this piece of legislation and do it for our young people, best summed up in the words of a young person, who made the following statement: I have learned that sniffing is a lot more dangerous than I thought. I never knew sniffing was such a big problem in Winnipeg. I also never knew that it can cause brain, liver and heart damage. I never knew it can cause suffocation. So what am I going to do about it, says this individual: since I have learned so much about sniffing that I never knew, I have quit. I will try my hardest to prove that I have quit. Also, many people have said, I have a good future ahead of me—and I agree with them—If I had been dumb enough to continue sniffing, I could very easily ruin that future.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that sums up the concerns from those who have been unfortunate enough to have turned to sniff and to turn to these kinds of products to get some sort of a high. I think it reflects the kind of responsibility that we as legislators have. I think we have a responsibility to do whatever is possible to make those products less available to young people. We have a responsibility to make some small steps on behalf of communities working to help themselves.

I look forward, Mr. Speaker, to a thorough debate in this Legislature and to a consensus on the part of all Members to moving forward with this small step to end a very serious problem in our society. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I too was wanting to put a few words on the record on this particular Bill. I agree with the Member for St. Johns and the comments that she has made to a certain extent. The abuse of sniffing is a very serious thing in our society. I think if we go out into the north end, in particular the north end and some of the areas where a large component of this abuse actually is you will find that it is as serious an issue as the Member for St. Johns tried to portray.

The question mark, Mr. Speaker, that I would have is that it appears to be good legislation that we would like to see go to committee so that we can possibly enhance it, make it better legislation. We would suggest that it should go to the committee stage. What I find most unfortunate is that this is not a problem in the last 18 months. This has been a problem that we have had for a number of years. The Member for St. Johns had an opportunity to bring in legislation, badly needed legislation, that could have addressed this issue while she was in Government.

Mr. Speaker, when you are in Government, especially in a majority type situation, you have an opportunity that you can bring forward legislation, you can ensure that it will go into the committee stage, and it would be thoroughly debated, it can go back in for third reading and be voted upon.—(interjection)—The Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) says, it is easy to say. Like

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the Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), he has a large number of Bills that could have been brought forward while they were in Government. I question why they did not do that, why the Member for St. Johns, if she is so sincere about the issue, that she did not bring it forward when they were in Government? That is what I find so hard to believe. It is not an issue of the past 18 or 19 months. It has been there for many years. The Member for St. Johns could have stood up in her caucus, in Cabinet, and brought forward at that

time, and we would have the laws in place today had she had the principles to do that back then.

As I say, I just want to put a few words on the record. That is basically all. I would suggest that a Bill of this nature should—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the Honourable Member will have 12 minutes remaining.

The hour being 6 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow (Friday).