

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, November 6, 1989.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Today my Advisory Council on Agri-Food released its discussion paper on the Impacts of Change in the Method of Payment of the federal Crow benefit subsidy.

I announced the establishment of this council, chaired by Dr. Bob Parker, Associate Dean of Agriculture at the University of Manitoba, in May of this year. This paper represents their first step towards developing a provincial policy on the method of payment issue.

* (1335)

The Crow benefit subsidy, worth approximately \$700 million annually to western grain producers, is currently paid directly to the railways. The method by which the subsidy is paid, along with other national agricultural policies and programs, is under review by the federal Government. This paper, prepared by Deloitte Haskins & Sells, examines the implications of the existing Western Grain Transportation Act rate structure and the change in the method of payment.

Producers and their organizations, elevator companies, municipalities, and other interested parties, will be given the opportunity to examine and comment on the discussion paper.

The role of the advisory council is to incorporate these and other comments and develop and forward their recommendations for preparation of a Manitoba position on the method of payment.

Now is the time to ensure that we and the producers in the Province of Manitoba have all the necessary information so that our province can best prepare itself for future discussions regarding the payment of the annual federal Crow benefit subsidy.

Release of this discussion paper is the first step. The process of open consultation has begun. Now we are encouraging farmers and farm organizations to become informed and respond and comment on the method of payment issue. Open discussion is invited, and I urge all of you to encourage the public to participate in this important process.

Mr. Speaker, I have two copies here, one for each of my critics, which I will table today for their perusal. Thank you very much.

Mr. Laurie Evans (Fort Garry): Certainly we are pleased to see this initiative being taken by the advisory committee to the Minister.

One has to question I would think, Mr. Speaker, whether this may not be in fact too little too late,

because there has been a tremendous amount of activity in this regard by other provinces. I do welcome the opportunity to see the report from the consulting company, and certainly would support the Minister in his request that all those who are impacted by this Crow benefit change will in fact have their voices heard. It is my hope, Mr. Speaker, that their voices will be heard prior to a federal decision being made that may in fact make their input rather meaningless.

So the time is of the essence and I would hope that Manitoba would take a very immediate and pro-active stand to ensure that Manitoba is adequately represented in the decision that is finally made on this very important issue.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, there were two things, two very important matters, that the federal U.S. Government stated would be achieved by the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement under agriculture. One was to get rid of the transportation programs in Canada, which they felt would greatly prejudice the American agricultural sector, and the second area would be to dismantle the marketing boards in the agricultural sector in Canada.

Since the time the Free Trade Agreement has come into play, and passed in this country, we have oats that have been taken off of our marketing board. We have had unfavourable decisions to our marketing boards in this country, and now we have the other part of the U.S. agenda coming in place to take away transportation programs in this country.

Mr. Speaker, we do not need advisory committees. We need a backbone to start standing up for rural and western Canada in this country with the federal Government and the U.S. Government.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct Honourable Members' attention to the gallery where we have, from the Garden City Collegiate, fifty-three Grade 9 students. They are under the direction of Mrs. McCormack and Mrs. Cairns. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema).

On behalf of all Honourable Members, I welcome you here this afternoon.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I wonder if I might have leave to revert back to Tabling of Reports.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable First Minister have leave to revert back to Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports? (Agreed)

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a document entitled: French Language Services in Manitoba, which has been adopted as Government policy.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Goods and Services Tax Government Position

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the First Minister. This is a very important week for this country as the First Ministers meet in Ottawa to discuss constitutional issues, the whole issue of the Meech Lake Accord, and the state of the economy.

* (1340)

This meeting is particularly important to the people of this province because we all acknowledge that Manitoba has been dealt a harsh blow by the federal Government with the closing of military bases, the termination of regional development agreements, UIC cutbacks, VIA Rail cuts, the goods and services tax, the loss of jobs as the result of free trade. Often our province has been more adversely affected than all others.

As a result, Mr. Speaker, will the Premier today outline, in the most specific of terms, exactly the position he will take with the federal Government with respect to the goods and services tax?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I will take the same position with the First Minister that I did as part of a communique that was signed by all Premiers at the Quebec City Premiers' meeting in August of this year, which was that we are opposed to the goods and services tax, and we want the federal Government to withdraw their proposal from the table.

Impact on Manitobans

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, in notes released by the Department of Finance reference was made of the Conference Board analysis of the impact of the GST on Manitoba, which is ready for the First Ministers' Conference. Will the Minister today share this information with the people of the Province of Manitoba?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, that is a report to Premiers that is not mine to share. It is one that has been given to the chairman of the Premiers' Conference, who is Premier Bourassa. He has seen fit to share it with the Premiers, prior to us attending that meeting, so we all have the information available to us for that meeting. I am sure that subject to Premier Bourassa's tabling it at that First Ministers' meeting, it will then be made public.

Indexing

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, indexing is an issue which this provincial Government has never addressed in a serious way with respect to the goods and services tax. Low-income Manitobans will receive drops in their rebate of 3 percent each and every year that this tax is implemented.

Will this First Minister of our province go to Ottawa armed to fight the indexing provision, as presently outlined by the federal Government, and will he insist that in any goods and services tax acceptable to him indexing of rebates to low-income earners will be an essential part?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, let us begin by saying that we as a Government oppose the imposition of the GST as it has been put forward by the federal Government. We want to see the federal Government withdraw it. We do not want to begin now to start negotiating a GST on behalf of the federal Government, saying that we are prepared to accept it provided that it has got all of these different things.

We have said that it has to be revenue neutral, if there is any such thing. We have said that it has to be visible. We have said that it has to protect low-income Canadians, but we have also said that the proposal that has been put forth by the federal Government is unacceptable, and we are going to fight it.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, I am glad the Minister is going to fight it, but I and Manitobans, particularly those earning very low incomes in this province, want to be assured that this Government will stand tall on their behalf. Will this Minister clearly indicate his objection to any tax imposed by the federal Government that does not have an indexing benefit for low-income earners?

Mr. Filmon: I have a little difficulty accepting the sincerity of the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) for low-income people when she does not want to pass along \$61 million of tax cuts, personal tax cuts, which she voted against in the last provincial budget, Mr. Speaker. The majority of those tax cuts went to low-income families in this province, and she voted against it. I have great difficulty accepting her concern for low-income Manitobans when she voted against those tax cuts for those very low-income Manitobans. When she had an opportunity to do something within her control, she chose to turn her back on low-income Manitobans, and I find that to be reprehensible.

* (1345)

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, the low-income Canadians and Manitobans that I am referring to do not pay income tax, but they will pay GST, and they need to be protected from that GST. Why is this Government unwilling to take a stand and defend those low-income non-presently paying taxpayers in this nation from a GST, which will not be indexed?

Mr. Filmon: The indexing is there up to 3 percent, Mr. Speaker. I presume what she is talking about is it is not fully indexed. I take another position, and that is that we do not like the tax at all. We think it ought to be withdrawn, and that is the position that I will be taking.

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Goods and Services Tax Consumption Tax

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, he obviously has a major disagreement with his Finance Minister who has said over and over again that he likes consumption taxes; that he thinks they are fair and equitable taxes.

Will the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) tell us today if he has now agreed with the First Minister of this province, and opposes any form of goods and services tax?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted that the Leader of the Liberal Party has finally seen fit to pose some questions on this very relevant issue, given that Department of Finance staff, indeed myself, had a meeting last week where we invited Members of the Opposition into the office in which we laid before them all of the Department of Finance's working papers, indeed a lot of their conclusions with respect to the goods and services taxes. So I am happy that her Critic of Finance has shared some of that information with her so she now can ask some coherent questions on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, let me say that there is no difference of views, between the First Minister and myself, on this issue. Let me say also I have said for the public record that given as a province, indeed nine provinces in this country that have mature consumption taxes as one of their main sources of incomes, that one would look pretty foolish in saying to the federal Government, thou shalt not have a consumption tax, because we do indeed have one here. We said though that the GST is basically and seriously flawed. We said that over and over again, and that is the stance that the First Minister will be taking to the First Ministers' Conference in Ottawa this month.

Goods and Services Tax Cost to Manitobans

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is also to the First Minister and, unlike the Liberals, we are not proposing any indexing of the rebates, we are opposed to the tax.

We have sent 30,000 coupons and petitions to the federal Minister of Finance from Manitobans on this tax, and we are proposing an alternative. We are proposing that \$38 billion in deferred taxes, most of which are from corporations that have been created in our federal tax system over the last 25 years, with the loopholes that have been developed by the Trudeau, and now the Mulroney Government, be plugged.

I would ask the First Minister whether he has calculated the average cost per family in Manitoba of this tax—we have done calculations on those numbers, not just the cost to the provincial Treasury—and whether he can confirm it at \$629 per year per family, as we have alleged, and whether he will therefore take a position for a minimum corporate tax to the First Ministers' meeting, rather than this insidious federal

goods and services tax that is being proposed by the federal Government?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, may I say that first I believe that the number that is quoted by the Leader of the New Democratic Party is within the ballpark of information that the Minister of Finance and his officials have. It is roughly in that order of magnitude.

We have been consistent in saying to Ottawa that they ought to plug loopholes within the tax system, that there were many, many schemes that were developed by the discredited Liberal Government of Pierre Elliott Trudeau that absolutely destroyed the credibility of the income tax system in this country, and created all kinds of -(interjection)- perhaps the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs), having taken advantage of many of those loopholes herself, wants to defend them, but I will tell you—

Mrs. Carstairs: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order, please. The Honourable Leader of the official Opposition.

Mrs. Carstairs: I would like an apology from the First Minister—

Mr. Speaker: On a point of order?

* (1350)

Mrs. Carstairs: —for putting on the record information which is absolutely false, and which he would not have any knowledge of in the first place.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member does not have a point of order. A dispute over the facts is not a point of order.

Goods and Services Tax Corporate Contribution

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): The fact of the matter is corporations paid 20 percent of the taxation in 1965, and when Mulroney came in they are down to 11 percent of the revenue in 1984 and now, under Wilson's own budget, they are down to 9 percent of the share of taxation in 1989.

My question to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) is given the fact that his Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) in this Chamber said he prefers consumption taxes to a minimum corporate tax -(interjection)- the Minister from his seat—I would suggest he should read Hansard.

I would ask the First Minister to emphasize to people in Manitoba that the primary priority for tax reform in this country federally will be a minimum corporate tax not a consumption tax.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I have to rise because there was an error in

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the Leader's preamble. I never said I preferred a consumptive tax, relative to a minimum income tax. Indeed this Government is on support as requesting that all -(interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order, please. The Honourable Minister of Finance is answering the question, as posed by the Honourable Member for Concordia?

Mr. Manness: Yes, Mr. Speaker, this Government does support that all taxpayers, indeed corporate taxpayers, make a full contribution, as a relationship to their profitability, to the taxpayers' coffers of not only the province, but the nation as a whole. I can tell the Leader of the NDP that the federal Government has taken some move over the last three or four years to begin to address that problem. We would agree with him that they could begin to speed that up, and we would hope particularly the financial institutions in this country will now begin to pay a fairer contribution to the revenue needs of all Canadians.

First Ministers' Conference Federal Equalization Payments

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, it reminds me of the Brian Mulroney debate in 1984 when we said, oh we will make them pay handsomely. My question is again to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon). The last federal budget cut \$100 million out of our Medicare programs and cut \$48 million out of post-secondary education over the next five years. The Government also cut a considerable amount of money in equalization.

Will the First Minister be fighting to reinstate those cutbacks, which I believe is the insidious downward slide of our health care and post-secondary education system, at the First Ministers' meeting? Is the Premier aware that the federal Government is planning, in the next budget four months from now, to introduce further major cuts in equalization to poorer provinces, or smaller provinces rather like Manitoba, and what is he going to do about it at the First Ministers' meeting this week?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I will do as I have done, and that is to tell the federal Government that they have a responsibility to every region and every province of the country, to the people in Manitoba, equally to the people in Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes, to maintain vital services such as health care, post-secondary education and all of the other things that federal Governments have committed to in the past; including regional economic development, including provision of services to people throughout this country in the areas in which we share jurisdiction. We will hold the federal Government to that task and to that responsibility.

Mr. Doer: Last year we raised the issue that this sales tax would not be revenue neutral and today the Premier (Mr. Filmon) confirmed that \$629 in the ballpark per family. That is not revenue neutral. Last year we were given the same speech: oh, we will fight, we will do this, we will do that, and the tax came rolling down.

Mr. Speaker, we are giving you four months notice, and we would like the Premier to stop the Prime Minister. He is going to again cut billions of dollars out of the economy of Atlantic Canada and western Canada in major cutbacks. We will have no Medicare left. We will have no post-secondary education left. We will have no equalization left, if you let this Prime Minister.

* (1355)

I would ask the Premier what specific action plan will he take to the First Ministers' meeting four months before the federal budget is tabled again so he can actually stop the Prime Minister for once, instead of just complaining about it.

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, the greatest threat to Medicare and social programming would be the irresponsibility of people, such as the Member for Concordia, making statements of that nature, or the Party that he represents in Ottawa, that as spendthrifts have us dump hundreds of millions and hundreds of billions of dollars that the economy could not afford and drive this country into ruin whereby then we could not support social services.

The fact of the matter is we saw what happened to services in this province as a result of the debt that was driven up by the New Democrats. The fact of the matter is we will commit the federal Government to stand by their responsibilities that they have in all areas, health, education, social services, regional development and the areas that are the jurisdiction of the federal Government.

Red River Community College Student Affairs

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, we know that on June 26, 1989, the advisory committee to study the community colleges held its first meeting. We are anxious to hear of the recommendations outlining the most appropriate organizational operating models for our three community colleges and their satellite services. The observations of this committee may well merely duplicate the previous Chamber of Commerce study, but we are anxious to see what the recommendations are, although we have heard that there are piecemeal, capricious methods attempting to solve the problems already.

Will the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) tell the House why he removed the acting vice-president of student affairs from Red River Community College, removed him from his job last month, yet he still occupies his office and still receives his salary with no apparent duties assigned to him?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me say that I did not remove the vice-president who was responsible for student services at Red River Community College. The individual occupied an acting position, and certainly it was within the purview of the president of the community college to make changes where he sees those changes are fit. That is part of giving the

community colleges their flexibility and that is what the role and responsibility of the president is. It is not my role to remove a member who is in an acting position from his role. Indeed the individual in question is now performing other duties at the community college, and in fact is going to be moved into the area of PACE where he will be doing work as is going to be assigned by the PACE ADM.

Mrs. Yeo: Mr. Speaker, how can the president of the community college, and the vice president of academic affairs, be expected to take over the role of student affairs? How can they maintain neutrality, given that their first priority is academics and their second priority is administration? Is there not a conflict of interest?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, once again the Member for Sturgeon Creek is wrong in her assumption and her information because the duties for student affairs have been assumed by one of the vice-presidents, and clearly there is no conflict of interest in the vice-president assuming that responsibility. Once again that is a duty that is assigned by the president of the community college, and certainly I am not going to interfere in overriding a responsibility that is really due and is a credit to the president of the community college.

President Reporting

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, who gives direction to the president of the community college? To whom does the president report, Mr. Speaker?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Well, if the Member for Sturgeon Creek would take a look at the chart she would find out that the president of Red River Community College or Assiniboine Community College or Keewatin Community College report to the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Post-Secondary and Adult Continuing Education Division.

Churchill, Manitoba Rental Units

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Housing. In the mid-1970s, MHRC built the Tundra Block Rental Complex in Churchill. It was then leased to the federal Government who in turn rented it out to the federal employees.

The federal Government has given notice that effective April 1, 1990, they will no longer be renewing that lease. The reason given was that federal jobs have been transferred out of the province over the past few years.

Mr. Speaker, what compensation has MHRC received from the federal Government to help cover the future operational costs of the 42 units of the Tundra Block?

* (1400)

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, I will gather up the specifics, give him the

totals, and I am sure we will be going into Estimates shortly. At that time I will give him the list, and I will supply him with all the up-to-date information.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, again to the Minister of Housing. The operating costs of Tundra Block are estimated to be approximately \$300,000 a year. This cost should not have to be picked up by the province or MHRC alone.

Will the Minister of Housing negotiate with the Conservative Government in Ottawa for a cost-sharing agreement to this particular project?

Mr. Ducharme: Mr. Speaker, in the procedure our negotiations are not with the Conservative Government. They are with CMHC on cost-sharing arrangements on all our blocks and all our projects.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question again to the Minister of Housing. This Government has decided to take over the operation of the late Jack O'Connor's apartment complex. What is this Government intending to do with these 20 rental units and how much money has been lost thus far in that particular complex, this complex located in Churchill also?

Mr. Ducharme: Mr. Speaker, as the Member appreciates, in the Town of Churchill in particular MHRC controls most of the rental units. We felt that we accomplished to supply the people in Churchill with proper housing.

As I mentioned to him earlier, there are specifics in regard to this and I will give him those totals when we sit down at Estimates. It would be easier and probably better to put them on line at Estimates and I will make sure that he has all the figures. I will give him the complete background on what our cost figures are from our financial experts and I will give him all those cost figures at Estimates time.

Pit Bull Restrictions By-law Amendments

Ms. Maureen Hemphill (Logan): My question is for the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme). It concerns last week's vicious attack by a pit bull terrier on nine-year-old Candace Allard. I know that we were all sickened by the brutal attack and also sickened by the possibility of other children being at risk.

Mr. Speaker, in January of 1988, the City of Winnipeg introduced by-law changes designed to curb the rise in dog attacks, but the amended by-law did not either include a ban on pit bulls nor did it have a serious heavy increase in the restrictions. Would the Minister of Urban Affairs, in his deliberations with the City of Winnipeg and the City of Brandon, recommend a by-law that would require increased dog licence fees for the animals that would act as a disincentive, liability insurance in the amount of half a million dollars as part of their homeowner insurance, and the requirement that these dogs be muzzled when walked and kenneled with roof and lock when they are in their yard.

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Urban Affairs):

First of all, Mr. Speaker, we have to remember in this legislation, it is up to this legislation to draft enabling legislation so the City of Winnipeg and another city like Brandon to operate. If we are now going to be the final appeal mechanism for everything down at City Hall, why did we go through all the municipal elections and the 29 councillors that we just elected last week?

**Pit Bull Restrictions
By-law Amendments**

Ms. Maureen Hemphill (Logan): Mr. Speaker, I think that we are concerned not just for the children and the citizens of Winnipeg, but throughout the province. My question is to the Minister of Rural Development. Would he consider providing the municipalities with a draft by-law that would increase the restrictions and give the same protection to children and adults in the towns and villages as we need in the city?

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Rural Development):

Mr. Speaker, it is certainly something that I would like to discuss with municipal organizations and the municipalities to see what their reaction to this would be.

**Candace Allard
Surgery Costs**

Ms. Maureen Hemphill (Logan): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health. I wonder if the Minister of Health would indicate to us that all cosmetic surgery and reconstructive surgery that will be required now, or perhaps five or even 10 years from now, by Candace Allard, will be fully covered by the Health Services Commission.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I have absolutely no hesitation in saying that will be done. That is the policy of this Government. I believe that has been the policy that has been in place for a number of years. Those unfortunate accidents will not be at the expense of the individual.

**Off-Road Vehicles Act
Medical Submissions**

Mr. Ed Mandrake (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, on July 26, 1989, the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) announced that remote communities will be exempt from The Off-Road Vehicles Act. My question to the Minister of Highways and Transportation is this: when he introduced these amendments exempting age restriction and the use of helmets, was this decision based on medical statistics or other studies that his department had conducted?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, when we came forward with the exemptions for the remote communities regarding The Off-Road Vehicles Act, I had three of my colleagues, the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), the Minister responsible for the Manitoba

Public Insurance Corporation (Mr. Cummings), and the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), the four of us actually met and we discussed this at length. We had grave concerns about it and part of the reason why we have made that exemption was because of the problems in application of the legislation. It was very difficult. We ran into some serious problems there.

However, I might indicate, Mr. Speaker, that since that time, we met with the MMA and have discussed the program. The process that, possibly together with my colleagues, we are looking at doing a training program so that we can probably develop a scenario out there that would be acceptable to the people in the communities.

Age Restriction Amendment

Mr. Ed Mandrake (Assiniboia): I appreciate the Minister saying that a training program will be conducted, the question being, when is this going to be done?

My first supplementary question is to the same Minister. Dr. Hasselback, who is a general practitioner at the Hudson Bay Medical Group at Hudson Bay, Saskatchewan, in his report, "Accidents Involving Off-road Vehicles in the Northern Community", which I will table for the Minister, states that children under the age of 18 accounted for 45 percent of the people involved in off-road vehicle accidents.

My question to the Minister is: will he now introduce an amendment to this Act placing an age restriction in the operation of off-road vehicles in these remote communities for the protection of our children?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): First of all, the Member does not have to table that report because I have a copy of that. I would like to also indicate we have much more information than the Member is supplying or trying to supply today. We have gone extensively into this information. We know of a situation between Bakers Lake and Eskimo Point where there have been statistics brought forward in terms of what has happened. The problem that I indicated before is a matter of applying the legislation to the remote communities.

We are consulting with the chiefs on this aspect of it to see whether we can develop safety programs to make the awareness of the communities and the people involved. Certainly safety is a major concern. We want to do it in such a way that will be acceptable and be meaningful for the people in the remote communities.

Mr. Mandrake: Again, reactive as opposed to being pro-active.

Mandatory Helmet Amendment

Mr. Ed Mandrake (Assiniboia): My final supplementary is to the same Minister.- (interjection)-

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

Mr. Mandrake: Native children accounted for 93, or 13 percent, of the hospital admissions even though they constituted only 4 percent of the provincial population. Forty percent of the injuries were head injuries, Mr. Speaker. My question to the Minister is, now will he reverse his decision, to implement the use of helmets for these children in these remote communities?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, in our discussion with the MMA, one of the problems that we were discussing was how to get factual information forward from the various hospitals that we have in the North in terms of establishing how many accidents have basically taken place because of using off-road vehicles. We have statistics as to how many children come to hospitals. We do not always know, we do not have reports in terms of what is the reason for their appearing in the hospitals. We are trying to establish jointly with the MMA, a system of doing this kind of tracking.

* (1410)

Mr. Speaker, the suggestion of reversing something at this stage of the game is not there because we are looking at ways of improving the legislation that we have and looking after the safety of the people up north in a way that is going to be acceptable to everybody.

Winnipeg Education Centre Construction Delay

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): My question is to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). Mr. Speaker, the Winnipeg Education Centre has over the years trained literally hundreds of Natives, visible minorities and adult special needs students to become teachers and social workers in the inner city of Winnipeg. This Minister in his wisdom has chosen to delay, perhaps stop construction of a new Winnipeg education centre and a housing component with a total value of approximately \$3 million. Can the Minister of Education explain why he is not supporting the Winnipeg Education Centre and why he is delaying unnecessarily this important project for the inner city of Winnipeg?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): I am very happy to be able to rise on that question because certainly over the last number of years we see that the Winnipeg Education Centre has provided a very important function for many of the residents of this province, but I must say that the former Government never did a review of the Winnipeg Education Centre to see whether or not the programs that were being delivered were effective; whether the programs that were being delivered should be expanded; whether the programs that were being delivered should be built upon, Mr. Speaker.

When we came into Government there was a proposal to build a new Winnipeg Education Centre without any studies of any kind being done to establish whether or not the programs there may need to be expanded. So therefore, we have launched into a study to ensure that in fact the kind of centre that is going to be built

is going to meet the needs of the people of the inner city in the best way possible.

Review Tabling Request

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): I recently spoke to the Winnipeg Education Students' Association and they know this review is a sham. It is an attempt to withhold support.

On August 2, in reply to a letter to me, the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) said this review, this sham, was going to be completed by the end of the summer. Will the Minister now table the results of that study? Will he provide that for the Legislature and the people of Manitoba so we can come to our own conclusions about the success of the Winnipeg Education - (interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, once again I am very happy to be able to rise on that question, because when we started the review there was a reluctance on the part of the Winnipeg Education Centre people to share information with us. It was obvious that Members of the third Party were trying to influence the Winnipeg Education Centre personnel from withholding information from us.

I am happy to say that once they realized the information we were trying to obtain was going to do nothing but to help establish better programming in that area they were happy to comply with the requests that were being made by the task force, and the report will be ready very soon.

Housing Complex Construction

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): I do not think anyone can blame the students and the faculty of the Winnipeg Education Centre if they do not believe this Minister is there to help.

My question is, can the Minister of Education today announce, or indicate, to this Chamber that the Winnipeg Education Centre facility and the housing component will be constructed in the coming year? Can he indicate today whether that will happen?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, it would be silly for me to announce anything today when I do not have the final report in my hands. I have to tell you that I have seen some of the preliminary findings of the report. I am very encouraged at the positive things that the task force has found, and I am looking forward to announcing the findings of that report very soon.

Group Homes Staffing

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson).

The Wiens Report, which was commissioned by this Minister, spoke of many problems in the group home

system for the mentally handicapped. It spoke to poorly trained staff, alarmingly high turnover of staff and very poor wages which resulted in staff leaving their jobs every two to three months. A priority of this Government and this Minister, by her own admission—

Mr. Speaker: Is there a question here, please?

Ms. Gray: My question is, given that this Minister has placed a priority on the stabilization of the residential care system, can the Minister indicate to this House today how this will be accomplished when the group home operators are indicating today that the staffing component in group homes is chaotic, resulting in client risk?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): The Member should be aware that last week I announced a \$2 million increase actually amounting to \$3 million when you consider initiatives that will start next week. We are starting on the process of stabilizing that whole area.

Client Safety

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): Mr. Speaker, given that I met with the residential service providers, who as well have seen that announcement, can the Minister indicate to us—again she has put more resources into a program and obviously it is not addressing the problem—

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member have a question? Kindly put your question now, please.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister indicate to us why she has been putting resources into a program, which has not been addressing the problem, and why she still has group home operators today, even after the announcement, who are very, very concerned about the client risk?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): The funds that were injected into the system are designed to help the very problems that the Member is mentioning, also the training that has been initiated this year. Whereas everyone would like more money, we feel this goes a long way to addressing the long held problems of those organizations.

Policy Breach

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): I have a final supplementary to the same Minister. Can the Minister indicate to us what she plans to do to take corrective measures about the policy breach where she knows group home operators are forced to use food and program money to pay their staff more than minimum wage? She is aware that is against policy. Can she indicate what immediate steps she is going to do to correct that?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): As I will repeat again, the funds that have been injected into the system are designed to help some of those very issues that the Member speaks of, and the boards decide what salaries the employees will receive.

Parent-Child Centres Funding

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns): The situation facing parent-child centres is getting more serious as each day goes by. They have now received information that they are not eligible this year for compensatory education support. They have also been turned down by their bridge funders since the two Ministers responsible did not contact them with any assurances.

My question to the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson) is, is she prepared to give parent-child centres an assurance of long-term involvement on the part of the provincial Government so the interim funding, bridge funding, from other agencies can be guaranteed at this time so these centres have a future beyond November 17?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): The Member calls these funders "bridge funders." These were the initial funders of these parent-child centres that are under question. My department had not directly funded those centres. We have no money in the budget for these centres.

Core Area Initiative were the primary funders, and it is the feeling at present that after review, perhaps these centres should really be seeking compensatory funding from the Department of Education as the other parent-child centres in the City of Winnipeg do.

Government Involvement

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns): Will this Government get involved to ensure that these centres do not close their doors and this valuable service to families staying at home with their children is cut off? Will this Government get involved? Regardless of the history, regardless of the funders, will she now make a commitment?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): The departments, both Education and my department, have been involved in discussions with the funders of these particular centres in trying to encourage them to fund these centres till some other arrangements can be made.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Will this Minister take some action involving this valuable service to try to change the perception that this Government is anti-family in its policies?

Mrs. Oleson: I utterly reject the Member's insinuation that this Government is not interested in families. Unfortunately these centres were not the responsibility of my department. They were funded by other agencies, and we are asking those other agencies to continue to fund them.

Group Homes Meeting Request

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): I have a new question to the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson). Can the

Minister indicate to us if she will immediately meet with the Residential Coalition of Service Providers to sit down and rationally discuss the funding allocations in regard to group homes, because this particular group is very, very concerned that we will have another tragedy in a group home because of the staff turnover?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): My staff have met consistently with that organization to discuss the priorities for the service to mentally handicapped people in our province. I see no problem in meeting with them myself, I have met with them before. They do continue to meet with staff and make them aware of the problems.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

NON-POLITICAL STATEMENTS

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): May I have leave to make a non-political statement?

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

* (1420)

Ms. Gray: It gives me great pleasure this afternoon to recognize that November 6 to 12 is Manitoba 4-H Week. The 4-H organization has long been a vital and progressive force in rural Manitoba for some 76 years. Having grown up in rural Manitoba, 4-H certainly offered me and other youths opportunities for personal growth and development. Not only does the 4-H and youth program teach leadership skills, parliamentary procedure, public speaking and organizational abilities, but this program affords youth the opportunity to explore many crucial issues facing our province and our country. The symbols of 4-H—Head, Heart, Health and Hands—and the accompanying 4-H pledge signify the spirit of the 4-H Program.

In honouring this special week I would be remiss if I did not recognize the many hours of dedication and commitment of the 4-H volunteers, whether they be parents, leaders, junior leaders, local business people, and the 4-H staff such as specialists, home economists and agriculture representatives, it is their dedication -(interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am having some difficulty in hearing the remarks of the Honourable Member for Ellice.

Ms. Gray: It is their dedication and timeless effort that has made the 4-H Program one of the most flourishing programs in this country.

As a final message to all 4-H members, 4-H volunteers and staff we hope they celebrate this special week with their various club events. We hope they spread the word about 4-H throughout their communities, and we hope they remember that the work of the 4-H Program can only contribute to a better province and country.

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

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I would also like to rise and pay tribute to the 4-H participants and the 4-H leaders in this province. As everybody well knows, the 4-H movement has been around for a long period of time having celebrated its 75th anniversary last year.

It has involved many participants in the youth area. In this province at this time we have a little over 5,000 4-H members and about 2,000 4-H leaders. Those 4-H leaders make a major commitment to helping our youth meet the challenges of today—today's society—and train them for being leaders of our community in the future.

Mr. Speaker, we are pleased to have this week as 4-H Week and that the Member saw fit to recognize that in this House. Thank you very much.

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

Mr. Bill Uruski (Interlake): As well, Members in the New Democratic Party would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the thousands of Manitobans who both are participants in the 4-H Program in the various areas, the leadership, especially the volunteer leadership at the community level, and of course the resource personnel in the area of staff from the Department of Agriculture and other staff in the Department of Health.

To all those groups who really make up the nucleus of our future leadership in rural Manitoba and in many small communities, we as well want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to all their efforts and wish 4-H, for Hands, Heart, Health and Head, a future that is filled with growth and opportunities for our young people.

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, it may be somewhat unusual but I would also like to make a non-political statement on the same issue.

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

Mr. Storie: I want to thank the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray) for raising this issue. Many of us obviously had received notification and were aware of this important event, or series of events actually, and as someone from rural Manitoba—

An Honourable Member: Your calf ran away on you.

Mr. Storie: The Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) was obviously at my first fair. The calf ran away on me.

The experience was nonetheless one that was worthwhile. I know many of my friends who were involved in 4-H activities over the years look back on those moments with a great deal of fondness.

The message we should bring as individual Members is that certainly for rural Manitobans, but not exclusively

rural Manitobans, the 4-H has been a remarkable organization in terms of the development of the talents and the abilities of young people in rural Manitoba. The experiences they have gained from them have ended up, I think, contributing to the life, and even the political life, of our municipalities, our towns and our villages throughout Manitoba.

We all join in recognizing the efforts and the activities of 4-H, and credit should be given to the thousands of people who volunteer their time in this organization, like many other organizations, but the impact should not go unnoted on rural Manitoba. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HOUSE BUSINESS

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Rule 65(6.3), I am seeking the consent of the Assembly to modify the sequence for the consideration of the Estimates outside the Chamber for next week in order that the Estimates of the Department of Housing precede the continuation of consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Health.

This change is required in order that the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) may attend to important Government business outside the province. I should note, Sir, that the remainder of this week the Committee of Supply outside the Chamber will continue with the Department of Health and this change is only for next week.

Mr. Reg Alcock (Opposition House Leader): I would like to just say one thing on this. We are prepared to give leave to accommodate the Minister of Health making this trip. We have certainly been willing to give leave to accommodate others, the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) who was away last week, and in fact a similar leave was given to one of our Members.

We do have a concern, however, and that is the Capital Estimates in Health have not yet been before us. There have been some serious concerns that have been raised about that. I understand the Minister of Health is prepared to deal with that this week, so we would be quite supportive of this change. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Thompson, on House business.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Second Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, this matter has been discussed between House Leaders. We in the New Democratic Party have taken the same position in regard to Estimates we took earlier in the Session in regard to the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger), and indicate that we cannot support the change midstream in Estimates as we did with the Minister of Highways and Transportation earlier. We feel that the Health Department Estimates are probably the most important item that we should be dealing with at the current time. We wish to proceed with them next week as is standard.

It is the option of the Government to call only one committee or to call Bills if they do not wish to deal

with that. It is their option. We regret to indicate that we cannot support any change in the order of the Estimates that was previously agreed on for this particular case.

Mr. Speaker: Obviously there is no leave to change the sequence in the order in which the departments are to be brought forward. The Honourable Government House Leader, there is no leave. House Business.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, did I hear correctly that the Members of the New Democratic Party are going to deny leave for this to happen?

Mr. Speaker: There is no leave.

Mr. McCrae: I did hear correctly that the NDP have denied us leave? Okay thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thought I did.- (interjection)- I just wanted to make sure I could believe what I was hearing in this House, Mr. Speaker.

* (1430)

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the Honourable Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer) in the Chair for the Department of Health; and the Honourable Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch) in the Chair for the Seniors Directorate; and the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation.

* (1440)

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY—HEALTH

Mr. Chairman (Harold Gilleshammer): I would like to call this committee meeting to order to discuss the Estimates of the Health Department.

When last we met we were discussing item 2.(b) Communicable Disease Control, 2.(b)(1) Salaries, \$715,000.00. Shall the item pass—the Member for Thompson.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Chairperson, when I was in committee last, I raised a number of questions in terms of sexually transmitted diseases. I would like to shift to the other communicable diseases for which this section of the Department of Health has a number of programs in place. I am not sure if the Liberal Critic had raised some of these issues as I had to leave unfortunately a few minutes early from the last time.

I would like to get into some of the detail in terms of what probably can best be described as vaccine-preventable illnesses and some of the current

immunization programs that are in place to deal with some of these particular illnesses.

In particular I am dealing with the DPT, Diphtheria, Pertussis and Tetanus Program. This is an area I know in the past where there has been only one case of diphtheria I know, 1987. Perhaps the Minister can provide an update in regard to that. Of course, this disease can be fatal; in fact, the case in 1987 was fatal. It is also one of the diseases that can readily be prevented by immunization.

In terms of pertussis, better known I guess as whooping cough, there were 28 cases I know in terms of 1987, and one of the factors that have been indicated as being the reason for its persistence in Manitoba is because of the lack of a thorough immunization in Manitoba. In fact, immunization rates as I understand it have declined in regard to a number of other areas.

Tetanus is also another factor in this particular area. My understanding is essentially dealing with—I think we all know what tetanus is—something that is not a communicable disease perhaps in the traditional sense, but something that can be caused by contamination, by a contaminated cut for example, entering the blood stream.

I would like to ask the Minister what the experience has been in terms of these three particular areas, what the current immunization program is, and what the percentage of immunization is for these three diseases in Manitoba, diseases or illnesses I should say, because a couple of them are really better described as illnesses.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Chairman, I have to ask my honourable friend, pertussis is one, diphtheria?

Mr. Ashton: And tetanus.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, that is the DPT Vaccination Program which is available all in one and is available to every child throughout the province. What is happening—and my honourable friend is probably leading to a recent newspaper article indicating an outbreak of whooping cough in the southwest region of the province, and an apparent reticence on the part of parents to have their children vaccinated because of some fairly wide-spread concern over the vaccination process, and its potential effect on children, in other words, adverse reaction effect on children.

As a result, we have had approximately 100 cases of whooping cough in the southwest corner of the province, or in the province, and the majority of them, I think it is fair to say, out of that southwest corner. That follows on numbers for '86 that my honourable friend has of 70, and '87 of 28. In 1988, I simply do not have that number close at hand but we will provide it.

Mr. Ashton: What information can the Minister provide the committee in terms of the current status of DPT immunizations, because I know one of the concerns that has been flagged in the previous years is the fact that outbreaks of these particular illnesses are readily

preventable. The Minister indicated a very recent example of where there was a particular outbreak, one of the more severe outbreaks in recent years. I am just wondering if the Minister has conducted any review of the current status of immunization programs and, since they are obviously not at the level that they should be, given the outbreaks of these three different illnesses, what action will the department be taking to improve those immunization programs?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, before my honourable friend makes the link that he may well be wanting to make in terms of the outbreak and the immunization program, let me indicate to my honourable friend that for complete immunization for pertussis, it requires four separate vaccinations over a period of 18 months to achieve immunization status, if you will. A number of the whooping cough cases have been in children under the age of one year where that complete vaccination has not been possible to achieve. It is not necessarily linked to no vaccination but rather incomplete vaccination.

Mr. Ashton: Is there any indication of the extent to which there has been a drop-off? Presumably full immunization would be 100 percent. Are there any statistics indicating the extent to which there are people, children in particular who have not been properly vaccinated for DPT? If it is not 100 percent, what level of immunization are we dealing with?

Mr. Orchard: I am informed over 80 percent.

Mr. Ashton: What is the department's analysis of the other percentage, the people who have not had the full immunization for their children in particular? Is it because of lack of availability, is it lack of information, is it parental choice? What are the factors behind the 20 percent of people who are not having this vaccination for their children?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, that is what I alluded to in my first reply. It is in the majority, not exclusively, but in the majority I think it could be attributed to parental reluctance because of some very high profiled negative publicity about adverse reaction to the vaccination process. We have even had a resolution I believe currently on the Order Paper to that effect in the House right now where there are some serious concerns expressed by some parent groups. That concern leads to some confusion, no doubt, in the parents' minds as to whether it is worth the risk, and some are choosing that they would not use the DPT vaccination process for their children. That is primarily parental reluctance that is the something less than 20 percent who are not achieving vaccinated status.

Mr. Ashton: I realize the parental reluctance factor with any immunizations because I think everybody is aware of the fact that there are side effects. There can be serious complications as a result of a number of immunization programs that do exist. I am wondering though what information the department is providing to parents in terms of the balance of factors because presumably it has been departmental policy, it has been

provincial policy for the last number of years that the benefits outweigh the risks of immunization. I am just wondering if the statistical background, the health factors have been—that information is being properly provided to parents in Manitoba.

* (1450)

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, I can provide, possibly for this evening's sitting, the fact sheet that is used by the health care professionals. We encourage use of it by physicians and other practitioners who provide the vaccination service, so that my honourable friend knows the position and the information provided by the department in terms of attempting to explain the benefit of the vaccination and the fact that it is a low-risk circumstance.

I might at this time indicate to my honourable friend that the development of the MIM System—the computerized tallying or record keeping, if you will, of the immunization program across the province is very helpful and is of growing assistance in terms of identifying those children who might potentially be vaccine-adverse reactors, and also for physicians to understand the physiological underpinnings which might cause an adverse reaction, so that they can make more informed choices with the parents and the children. Our efforts are to point out the benefit of the DPT vaccination, but parents still have the ultimate right of choice in regard to this vaccination process for the children, and some are exercising it for whatever number of reasons they choose personally.

Mr. Ashton: I appreciate the Minister's comments and the offer of that information. I recognize it is a concern with some parents and I think our main concern should be to ensure proper information is made available.

I would like to just shift, in terms of immunization programs, to the current status of the polio vaccine. We have always been fortunate in the last number of years, I do not believe we have had a case of polio—1987 certainly was the last report I was able to see. There was no case in Manitoba. It does exist elsewhere and I know it has been a concern expressed because of drop-offs in the number of people who are being immunized, that it is beginning to re-establish itself as a major health threat. It is I guess fresh in the minds of many people who in the 1950s either suffered personally or knew of people or a family and friends who suffered from this debilitating disease.

I would like to ask the Minister, first of all, what the level of immunization in Manitoba is in regard to poliomyelitis and also if the Minister can indicate the current medical technology, the current vaccine that is being used. I know there has been development in the last number of years of an injection that can be given with DPT. I am wondering if that has been approved for licensing yet or if the Minister is aware when that will be introduced or available for introduction?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, I am going to have to either start taking point-form questions because I do not remember all the questions my honourable friend asked.

In terms of the poliomyelitis vaccination, I am informed that it would exceed 90 percent which is a very high rate. The recent infections apparently, the two of them in Canada, have been related to the vaccination process itself. I do not know whether that has been identified to a given procedure, process or product. That is currently under review by the federal-provincial technical advisory committee level where they are attempting to ascertain medically the reason for. Both oral and injection polio vaccine have been approved nationally and that recommendation has been provided by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization, which makes the recommendations to the provinces as to which new vaccination processes are acceptable, safe and effective.

Mr. Ashton: In other words, the next step would be in terms of consideration of that recommendation in Manitoba with the possibility of introduction, is that the stage we are at?

Mr. Orchard: Currently we are using only the oral vaccine and under discussion as to the implementation of the injection.

Mr. Ashton: I appreciate the information. I would like to shift to another area in terms of vaccine preventable illnesses, and that is in regard to the general area of measles, mumps and rubella. Once again, the concern has been expressed. I know that the immunization levels have dropped off allowing epidemics of these diseases in a number of areas. I am certainly aware of that in my own community, it has been a particular case in recent years in terms of measles.

I would like to ask the Minister once again for the most recent information on the outbreaks of measles and the lesser but existent outbreaks of mumps and rubella that have taken place over the last period of time.

Mr. Orchard: Measles, mumps, virtually no outbreak and I am informed a small outbreak of rubella in the Parklands region. That was several months ago. Other than that we are so far in reasonably good health.

Mr. Ashton: I know one of the factors presumably resulting in the reduction was the increased awareness in terms of the immunization factor following a number of outbreaks I know last year. I am just wondering if the Minister can indicate what the level of immunization is, in regard to these particular diseases.

Mr. Orchard: Eighty-five to 90 percent, I am informed.

Mr. Ashton: I appreciate that information. I assume that once again information is provided to parents in this regard, and I would appreciate perhaps if the Minister could provide that to the committee this evening, because I think in the general area of immunization we generally want to make sure that information is fully available to parents. There will be some parents, obviously, who will choose not to have their children immunized. In the case of some school districts that choice is really not that operational because school districts have been refusing admittance

to children who have not been immunized against measles, but I certainly appreciate that information.

I would also like to ask the Minister for an update in regard to the situation with rabies in Manitoba. I know in 1987, the most recent year I have information available for, there were no cases of rabies. I would like to ask, however, given the fact we have a number of animal populations where rabies is clearly in existence whether there have been any cases either in 1988 or 1989, and if the Minister could provide any further information on the current risk of humans contacting rabies in Manitoba.

* (1500)

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, apparently we have never had a case of human rabies in the province. That is not to say that some have not taken the treatments when they have been bitten by an infected animal, but there has been no case of human rabies. The incidence of rabies amongst animals is no different in the last two years. There is a steady and rather, I suppose, expected outbreak of rabies amongst skunks in particular and other wild animals, but there has been no unusual incidents this year.

Mr. Ashton: That is certainly a positive news item. Another question I have is in regard to hepatitis, both hepatitis A and hepatitis B. I am wondering how many cases of hepatitis A have been reported. The figure for 1987 was 160. I am wondering how many were reported in 1988, and if there is any information on 1989.

Mr. Orchard: I will have to get 1988 and '89, or '88 I think we can get those as completed figures and then we will have to get preliminary indications for '89 on year to date.

Mr. Ashton: I am also wondering if the Minister can provide any information on what programs, what will the department—what this department has in terms of preventing exposure to hepatitis B in the workplace. That has been a focus of departmental concern in the past. I am wondering if the department either directly or through Workplace, Safety and Health has any programs to deal both with the control or investigation of any outbreaks of hepatitis in the workplace, particularly hepatitis B.

Mr. Orchard: The workplace environment, and particularly the health care field, is the area that my honourable friend, I presume, is most concerned about and basically any incidence there is treated in a fashion of reporting and investigation and containment advices to the best and most current technology that is available. I must say though that I do not think that the advice of the medical profession in terms of containment or preventive spread, there has not been any significant breakthroughs in terms of how that should be accomplished over the last several years. If one can say this with accuracy, the routine or the process, the policy has been effective and state-of-the-art for the last number of years.

Mr. Ashton: I am just wondering if the Minister can update in regard to the current status of the Manitoba

immunization monitoring system. I know, he did reference earlier in terms of the information that was being gathered on a one of the reasons for moving to computerization, establishment of a mainframe actually from previous mini-computer system was to help deal with information in terms of immunization levels, in terms of individual information involving patients as well as recording some of the adverse reactions to vaccines that the Minister indicated certainly do exist, and allow physicians to have a better information base and help professionals have a better information base. I would like to ask the current status of the MIMS program.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, it is complete and I think it is important that we share the whole genesis of MIMS. It will only take a second to do it.

MIMS was introduced on a pilot basis in Westman and in St. Boniface-St. Vital in 1980. As a result of those two pilot project initiatives, one rural, one urban—this is obvious—a decision was made in 1985 on the basis of the success of those to introduce the program province-wide and that since has been accomplished and as of January 1988, the process has been completed; and MIMS, which is linked to the Manitoba Health Services Commission registry, provides a computerized record of all childhood immunizations provided to Manitobans, and this information is available through the public health offices to all immunization providers in Manitoba.

In addition to providing a current record, MIMS also notifies parents and immunization providers of children who require additional immunization. Thus, immunization levels in the province will be improved. Implementation as I said is complete in all provincial health regions, the City of Winnipeg and federal nursing stations. Immunization records on all children born since January 1988 and for the majority of children born since January 1980 are available. Physicians presently access the system through public health staff. In the future it may be possible for them to have direct access.

Mr. Ashton: I just have a couple of other questions in regard to some of the other roles that this particular section in the department, particularly in regard to other diseases, meningitis for example, gastroenteritis. I am just wondering if the Minister has any statistics on the number of cases of gastroenteritis and meningitis that were reported in Manitoba in 1988, and '89 if there is any information available.

Mr. Orchard: We will—do we have that here—1988 actual, I will give you 1986 gastroenteritis, actual 1986, 557; 1987, 443; and 1988, 420; and we are projecting for 1989, 450. What was the other one my honourable friend wanted? Meningitis—I will give you central nervous system cases which is meningitis—1986, 122; 1987, 90; 1988, actual cases was 61 and we are projecting 60 cases for 1989.

Mr. Ashton: I would like to ask just one other question before I turn it over to the Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema) and that is in regard to Lyme disease. I know it has been an increasing concern. There have been

a number of outbreaks. It is a particularly worrisome disease. It breaks out in patterns. It has hit a number of small communities I know in eastern Canada and while I am certainly no expert on it I know that it has basically been transmitted by fleas. It is something that I know has been an increasing concern across the country. I am just wondering if we have had any outbreak in terms of Lyme disease in Manitoba.

Mr. Orchard: In the summer of 1988 we had four cases and this summer none. Apparently we have the right kind of tick present in Manitoba but to date there is no evidence that we have that the tick is carrying the Lyme disease and is capable of transmitting it.

As of today, for instance deer hunters, I guess it is fair to say could proceed with some confidence, that the tick if even present is not necessarily carrying the disease. That can always vary so everybody has to take due caution and care, but because of the incidents south of the border and in other provinces, particularly east of us, we are dedicating a fair degree of investigative effort to make sure we know if and when the infection reaches the tick population, hence the deer population in Manitoba, hence potentially to the human population.

Mr. Ashton: Just one point on that and it certainly is a matter of concern. I appreciate the fact that we have been fortunate this summer from the information the Minister has provided. But it is a particularly scary prospect in terms of with the existence of the tick in Manitoba, and I am wondering if the Minister can indicate if there is anything that can be done from the experience of other provinces to, not just monitor the disease, but prevent its spread in Manitoba and whether there are any programs that are in place that can do anything other than really monitor its existence.

* (1510)

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, that is one of those diseases that we have no way of preventing its eventual progress into Manitoba. At least it appears as if we have no way. The tick is here, and if the disease gets in the tick we simply have no method of preventing that from happening.

The one thing we did do this summer is provide an information bulletin on Lyme disease so that if one is bitten by a tick and they develop certain—as I recall, a red ring around the bite area, the encouragement is to see a physician immediately because, as with any other areas, the earlier one seeks treatment the more 100 percent curable without adverse effects it is. That is particularly the case with Lyme disease, so we put out the information package and I will provide that to my honourable friend this evening as well, so that you can recognize, if you have any enquiries on your own, what kind of information is available.

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan): The Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) has asked a number of questions on the immunization and I will not repeat the questions. I would like to add a few comments that I think the present immunization program in Manitoba

is probably the best in Canada right now in terms of this program.

Each and every person is probably spreading, the parents, teachers, the physicians, all of the health care professionals, so there is less likelihood of missing any person unless they have cultural or personal reasons. Most of the people go for immunization and I think the credit goes toward Dr. Fast and her staff who have been very up-front on this issue. I think they need applause.

I have a question in terms of, as the Minister was saying earlier, the polio vaccine is not available in the injectible form. It is available right now and it is being used in association with diphtheria and tetanus. That is being used right now.

My question comes with the influenza vaccine. Dr. Fast puts her monthly notes on the epidemiology notes in Manitoba and has indicated that Manitoba health may not be able to fill orders placed after October 30, 1988. I would just like to know why that deadline has been placed when we know that these vaccines, if they are given in time, will definitely help seniors and other people who are vulnerable to influenza and definitely help to cut out costs to the health care system.

Mr. Orchard: Let me deal with my honourable friend's last issue first. That indication was given to encourage advance ordering, simply to assure that because of the lead time from ordering to delivery that we did not run out of supply. There is no shortage providing the lead time for supply is given. My honourable friend is right. We are encouraging influenza shots because the degree of success is quite high, particularly in our seniors population, very effective in preventing hospitalization, et cetera.

My honourable friend is right that the injectible poliomyelitis vaccine is available but what the province routinely provides is the oral vaccine to date. In cases of request or other circumstances, the injectible is available.

Really, my honourable friend is right in his first comments where he indicates the Manitoba system of vaccination is probably the best in Canada. That in part is due to the encouragement of staff and the full knowledge that is made available to parents, to physicians, to public health nurses, et cetera, on the advantages. We are very upfront about the potential risks in certain cases because that is important for parents to know if they can recognize some potential risk factors in their own children. That is important for them to know as well. I think that what makes it clearly the best system in Canada, is of course the MIM System because starting from that pilot project in 1980 that showed a fair degree of insight into developing a system of information tracking monitoring that now fully implemented is clearly the best amongst the ten provincial jurisdictions and two territorial Governments. There is no question about it. That has meant a lot of work by a lot of people over the last decade.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, my next question is in regard to the increased awareness of food sanitation

in the food industry in situations with the general public and students. What specific initiatives have been put in place to make aware—in terms of having seminars or any ads in the paper or any other communication developed to teach the public that sanitation for food is extremely important? It can prevent a number of problems and ultimately it can save us a lot of tax dollars.

Mr. Orchard: I guess the department has developed something of a pro-active approach to the education process through sponsoring of seminars. Seminars for instance for the Restaurant Association, the prepared food industry if you will, and in addition to that provides I guess equivalent to lecturing services at Red River. There are other community colleges where food preparation is one of the training courses available. Our staff makes available information and lecture time.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, can the Minister provide us the information of how many times these seminars are being held? Also what is the target population, other than the institutions, and to be more specific I think the general public has to be made aware and must know that a number of problems can be saved potentially if we treat the food in the best possible way and try to prevent some of the communicable diseases.

I think even the trend is very clear that some of the gastrointestinal disorders like diarrhea or vomiting or some of this stuff can be saved. It is definitely very helpful for the children and for the elderly age group. It will save us money in the long run, because it does help to teach the parents.

Also I think we could add another phase to that to teach the parent how to deal with the common things at home, like if somebody is having gastritis, how to handle it at home rather than running to a doctor or phoning emergency all the time, which is already causing a lot of burden on the tax dollars. I think programs should be developed in such a way also to prevent and also to provide the initial treatment that can be easily given at home, because it is very successfully done in a lot of other countries and they save a lot of tax dollars. How to prevent and how to treat the minor ailments at home, because I know the pediatricians in Winnipeg are doing a wonderful job and the children go to them.

Their parents are explained about how to treat fever and how to treat nausea or vomiting or some of the other minor ailments, flu and how to treat them at the initial stage and that does really help to save us tax dollars in the long run. Can the Minister update, at what is being done so far?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, I think my honourable friend is wishing two separate streams of information. The first one is a specific seminar approach or lecturing approach, if you will, that the department has been utilizing in terms of information to the food services industry who are currently in the business of food preparation, the Restaurant Association and others.

* (1520)

Secondly, the lecture and instructional capabilities that we do to the students going through various

courses of food preparation so that we can provide that information.

I think the second area that my honourable friend is getting at, and I take the liberty of indicating this, is in terms of public awareness of causative factors and for instance the most unfortunate one by example this summer is of the E. Coli outbreak, again attributed to inadequately cooked hamburger, which caused one family in the city just an incredible amount of grief.

I am sure if they only had to do it over again they would never be in the circumstances they are but, as a result of that we put out as much public service information as practical, not as practical, we put out a lot of public service information forewarning and we had good co-operation from the various media outlets forewarning Manitobans in the barbecue season to make sure that hamburger in particular was thoroughly cooked.

That is a responsibility we take very seriously. Unfortunately it often takes some tragic circumstances of individuals getting in the paper because of the outcome of eating inadequately cooked hamburger like it happened this summer. That is such a tragic preventable circumstance, but we do as much as we can in terms of public awareness, but you know unfortunately from time to time there is not 100 percent attention, I guess it is fair to say.

Mr. Cheema: I think it is extremely difficult that the Minister has said there are large—that Winnipeg is famous for more restaurants than anything else, there are a large number of outlets either for fast food or other food and it is difficult to get them all the information at all the time.

My question is: how often do the health inspectors go in other than inspecting? Is there a rule of only inspection or also guiding the various restaurant owners to how to take all the precautions, and what is the schedule? Is this being done on a regular basis or random wise or somebody complains and then only they go and check?

Mr. Orchard: Well, I think there are two answers to that. Complaints are investigated immediately, but in terms of an inspection routine, it is a shared jurisdiction between the City of Winnipeg and the province. The province undertakes, give or take, an annual inspection, the city inspectors are biannual, but complaints, there are the two streams, the regular inspection and then there is the specific complaints action. The specific complaints are investigated immediately.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, this is interesting that this is only in the area of Health. One of the areas I suppose the city has some role to play—but that is why a number of complaints come and people phone their city councillor. Then sometimes as a local MLA I get some inquiries and most of the people did not know which way to go.

Our city officials will say, phone the ministry of health. The ministry of health will say it is not their right, it is not their job. We have had a few in the past, but it

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was not a major thing so it was solved, it did not need your attention, but it was some of the other people who solved the problem. Probably we should look at having more communication develop between the health inspector from the city and the Department of Health on a regular basis so that information is given to the public as a joint effort by the Department of Health from the provincial Government rather than giving it isolated responsibility to the city official.

If they are just dealing with the one inspector of health care and the rest is being addressed by the provincial health care, it makes their job difficult and certainly it does leave room for problems in the present and in the future and I think we should look at that in a more serious way.

Mr. Orchard: I accept my honourable friend's observations because although we have the Act, the inspectors are in the Environment Department which adds another sort of step to the process, and my honourable friend might also know that when it comes down to being the mean person it is the Minister of Health that signs the ultimate action. We did that in the case of a water supply of a trailer park just a year or so ago. I mean, that is fair, when action is needed action is taken.

I appreciate what my honourable friend is saying. There is a potential for overlap even though there is an attempt at, and I think fairly successful, quite successful in fact, degree of co-ordination between city and provincial inspectors. I guess like any other system, it is not fail-safe and 100 percent foolproof.

Mr. Cheema: My next question is with regard to the lifesaving drug program. As I also asked in last year's Estimates, can the Minister update what are the lifesaving drugs available right now and how many people are using those drugs? What is the cost per drug per person who are using them or the overall cost for these drugs to the taxpayers of Manitoba?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, there are lifesaving medications which can be prescribed under this program. We agree to provide them where the normal family provision of the lifesaving drug, even with the assistance of the Pharmacare program, can cause financial difficulties for the family. That is where this program triggers in. I will just give you the ones that we have. There is injectible insulin, oral insulin, pharmaceuticals for rheumatic fever, and cystic fibrosis, as the major categories of pharmaceuticals.

I will also give my honourable friend, because I know he is going to ask it next, the numbers, in 1986 there were 779 people actually on the program, that grew to 870 in December 1987, to 1,000 in 1988, and we are projecting a growth again in 1989 to approximately 1,200.

Mr. Cheema: This is another interesting question now because if a number of these individuals are on social welfare, and I think it is, for my clarification, an important question, it may not be from the Minister's point of view. If somebody is on social welfare they hope

everything is covered. If somebody is on social welfare and is under using these drugs, who covers the cost then, is it the city or the Health Department?

Mr. Orchard: Let me be clear. This program is not here for anyone who is on social assistance. Their pharmaceutical costs are covered under appropriations through economic security. These are individuals for whom the provision of these lifesaving drugs would be a financial burden to the family, under the normal reimbursement circumstances of the Pharmacare program. They are not social service recipients.

Mr. Cheema: What is the normal period if somebody has to apply today and needs those drugs and they are under financial distress. How long do they have to wait?

Mr. Orchard: Usually approval is given within a month.

Mr. Cheema: What kind of means test or financial resources are being looked at when you are assessing a person for the lifesaving drugs?

Mr. Orchard: The questions, or the information sought, is similar to the information sought for instance for access to legal aid or to CRISP as an income support program. It is not putting them through the hoops. We are just wanting to make sure the program is there to serve those that need it and not those that want it.

* (1530)

Mr. Cheema: That brings my question finally that if somebody is making \$15,000 to \$16,000 a year with a family of two at \$30,000 with four kids, and somebody who needs the insulin or the medication of cystic fibrosis, and there have been a couple of circumstances and people have complained that they are not covered under the lifesaving drugs even though their incomes may sound, you know, \$32,000, but if you look at the family structure as a whole, they may qualify on a moral basis but not on a financial outlook. Is there any appeal mechanism if the decision is made that the individual can go to an appeal board and apply for the lifesaving drugs medication?

Mr. Orchard: Anyone who has been refused can obviously request a review of those circumstances and sometimes the decision is to uphold and sometimes to modify. That varies, depending on individual circumstances.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, the other day I asked a question to the Minister of Health, and he said that I should maybe ask the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) about the AIDS curriculum in school boards. I will leave that to the Minister of Education—but what is specifically being done, other than the AIDS education in terms of the various school boards to let the children know about all of the communicable diseases, if there is any specific seminars going on a regular basis and who is in charge of that program?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, I guess the fairest way I can answer that is that there is in some of the health

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education curriculums, information on transmission of the STDs, but not the other communicable diseases, the measles, the mumps, those types. There is no formalization of those, because those are not sort of activity awareness communicable diseases.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass—pass.

Item (b)(2) Other Expenditures \$4,941,800.00. Shall the item pass—the Member for Kildonan.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, can the Minister give us the information about the funds given to the various external agencies for communicable disease?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, the Sanatorium Board of (interjection)- there are just two. The Sanatorium Board of Manitoba is a \$128,600 assistance grant and the Winnipeg Gay Community Health Centre, Village Clinic, is \$73,300 for the total of \$201,900.00.

That is up to that amount, and then they are required to account—so that they have spent the money in accordance with the terms and understanding of how the monies would be used.

Mr. Cheema: Can the Minister give me information on the Sanatorium Board of Manitoba and was there activity?

Mr. Orchard: That is monies provided to the Sanatorium Board to run the tuberculosis program in Manitoba.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, can the Minister tell me, there a few beds at the Rehab Centre also for the patients with tuberculosis at the Health Sciences Centre, and is this a separate program, because then the Manitoba Health Services Commission is still looking after those patients and paying all the bills. What is the role of the Sanatorium Board of Manitoba and how do they spend their money to help these patients with tuberculosis and their families?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, the support funds to the Sanatorium Board were part of their funding arrangement. The federal Government also provides money and that is to provide the community support side of the tuberculosis program. The formal care side of someone stricken with tuberculosis is carried out in the acute care hospital side. So this is the community flow, if you will.

Mr. Cheema: So, Mr. Chairman, that means this program is strictly for the person at the community level? Can the Minister of Health tell us how much money, if they have information from the previous audit of the Sanatorium Board of Manitoba, how much money they are spending in the North and the rural communities because that is where it seems to be the more prevalence of the tuberculosis as compared to the City of Winnipeg?

Mr. Orchard: I am informed that the monies for the program that is offered in the northern reserve communities is provided by the federal Government as

part of their share. Part of the \$128,600 that we are providing this year does allow delivery to some southern, if you will, reserve communities, it paid for by the province.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, it is my understanding that the patient with tuberculosis get free medication from the tuberculosis clinic at the Respiratory Centre at Health Sciences. Is that a separate fund?

Mr. Orchard: Yes.

Mr. Cheema: So that is covered by the Manitoba Health Services Commission?

Mr. Orchard: Yes.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, then can the Minister tell us what is being done? The other day I asked him a question, to have the breakdown of the number of the tuberculosis patients and the origin, and what is being done to help those target groups?

Mr. Orchard: To help those which?

Mr. Cheema: Target groups.

Mr. Orchard: Okay. While we are on the topic I would like to pass out to members of the committee and to my two critics, the information was requested how many cases of tuberculosis are there in Manitoba and who is most at risk? In terms of the Native community where we have—as my honourable friend will see from the statistics on the first page for 1988—111 cases of tuberculosis and the number of Treaty Indians were 76, so say roughly two-thirds of the cases. Now, hold it here. That does not make sense. I will tell you what, let us not deal with those numbers because those numbers could be down wrong. I may have to pull those back if we cannot get it figured out.

There is as much education as we can do in terms of our nursing station involvement and certainly the federal Government thrust on particularly the northern communities where the incidence appears to be higher is emphasizing the living condition, the dietary and the other areas of education to the respective Native communities. I think it is fair to say that, although not perfect, there is a reasonable degree of success there in terms of identifying fairly quickly and attempting to prevent the spread of tuberculosis, but it is very much an individual one-on-one type of effort. I am just going to check for my honourable friend whether we have one of our tuberculosis pamphlets translated into Cree because we do, do that provide to further education in the Native tongue.

Mr. Cheema: Can the Minister, or if he has the statistics of the PCG vaccination in those communities, and what is being done to promote the PCG vaccination in those communities?

* (1540)

Mr. Orchard: First off, those numbers are not correct so we are going to have to replace that sheet either

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later on today or tomorrow. The vaccination is recommended for all Native children at the time of birth.

Mr. Cheema: I did not ask for recommendation. I was just asking what is the end result and how many people are vaccinated, and what is being done to make sure that the vaccination is a successful one.

Mr. Orchard: I will have to see if I can provide the specifics to my honourable friend's question, but I am informed that it is still a recommended vaccination procedure. How be we just use our pencils and stroke out—just two numbers are in error on the information I tabled. Total number of Treaty Indians ought to read, not 76, but 31; total number of non-Treaty ought to read, not 187, but indeed 80, and that will total the 111.

Mr. Cheema: I think the vaccination is an important component and certainly in those reserves, and it can definitely help. It is not a 100 percent total protection like any other preventable illnesses, but as the program for other immunization in Winnipeg has been so successful, I think everything should be done to encourage the vaccination and, more specifically, all the people who work in that area, like the public health nurses, the physicians and band members, and everyone should be made aware that this thing can be prevented, and in the 1990s we will not have this kind of situation if we can attack the tuberculosis in the best way possible. It should be done. I think I would certainly request their Minister find the information and what is being done and why there has been—again, the numbers are clear, there are 111 cases. Total number of Treaty Indians are 31. I am not personally aware of the total population so I cannot calculate the statistics but still the number is 31; it seems quite high. Can the Minister first of all answer my question in regard to PCG vaccination and when can I expect the information?

Mr. Orchard: Providing we can have it because, bear in mind, the split jurisdiction. We will put together the best information we have, but I just want to indicate that, and I am sure my honourable friend knows this, the vaccination does not prevent TB, it only reduces the severity of it. But you know, I just want to share with my honourable friend some of the statistics, and I will pick given years just at random as I go through, and then I will give you, say, '82 and on, or '83 and on, or whatever. In 1965, there were 56 cases among Treaty Indians, of new cases, 214 new cases in total. Then you can get into reactivations where there were 49 reactivations in 1965, 20 of which were Treaty Indian. There were a total of 214 new cases, 56 were Treaty Indian in 1965.

Let us go to 1985. There were 131 new cases, of which 39 were Treaty Indians. Reactivations: there were a total of 13, five of which were Treaty Indians, for a total of 144. So from 1965, in roughly a fairly straight trend line down with bumps up and down, as one can expect, we reduced from total cases 263 and 65 over a 20-year period down to 144, and currently 111 for 1988. The trend line is, I think, the one we would want

to be on, where there is a declining incidence. Particularly significant, I think, is the number of reactivations which indicates a better follow-up, because reactivations are down from 49 in 1965, down to nine in this current year. The number of actual new cases is 214 down to 102. So one is cut roughly in half in terms of new cases and the other is cut down to one-fifth in terms of reactivation.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, I thank the Minister for the answer, but at the same time, as any health program when they are split within the two Parties, the federal and provincial Government is always overlapped and I think that maybe again just the view—any statistics that when two people are doing the same job you can not achieve the best possible goals. There should be some co-ordination from the provincial health department to look at the BCG vaccinations so that at least the severity of the illness can be decreased and ultimately, I think, it would save taxpayers a lot of dollars.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, let me indicate to my honourable friend that probably we are already doing as he so suggests because one individual heads up the program. Funding is streamed, federal funding is targeted actually to some of the northern Treaty communities and southern funding pretty well across the board, but the program is centrally co-ordinated by one individual to prevent, just as my honourable friend says: duplication and overlap and subsequent ineffective program delivery.

Can I just, before we get going—can I indicate to my honourable friend, the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), that there are two figures I would like you to change on the tuberculosis—oh, they were changed already. Have you got the pencilled-in 31 and 80?

An Honourable Member: Yes.

Mr. Orchard: Fair enough.

Mr. Chairman: Item 3, External Agencies \$201,900—pass.

Item (c) Maternal and Child Health: Promotes health and well-being of childbearing women and expectant families, infants, children and youth by providing health information, health assessments, program services and family planning supplies. (1) Salaries \$286,700. Shall the item pass—the Member for Kildonan.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, can the Minister of Health tell us how many positions are vacant in the managerial and professional and administrative support?

Mr. Orchard: We have no vacancies, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, can the Minister of Health tell us what are—can he provide me with the—if he does not mind, the name of the external agencies getting funding under this program?

Mr. Orchard: Planned Parenthood Manitoba—do you want me to give you the numbers as well?

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Mr. Cheema: No, if it is possible to have a total copy then, because I will—

Mr. Orchard: There are seven agencies: Planned Parenthood Manitoba, Serena Manitoba, Youville Clinic Inc., Committee on Unplanned Pregnancy, Clinic Inc., Women's Health Clinic Inc., The Manitoba Association for Childbirth and Family Education Inc.

Mr. Cheema: Can we have the breakdown of the funds given to those agencies please?

* (1550)

Mr. Orchard: Planned Parenthood, now again the same rules apply, this is what their maximum budget is. To achieve this level of funding they are subject, of course, to the year-end audit: Planned Parenthood Manitoba \$168,000; Serena Manitoba Inc. \$10,000; Youville Clinic Inc. \$217,007; Committee on Unplanned Pregnancy \$62,700; Clinic Inc. \$15,700; Women's Health Clinic Inc. \$47,000; and Manitoba Association for Childbirth and Family Education, \$20,900.00.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, what is the average increase of the funding for these agencies this year?

Mr. Orchard: Averages of 4.5 percent, with some that are higher.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, can the Minister of Health tell us, under the U of W, they are giving . . . for the external agency and what are the terms of reference for that agency?

Mr. Orchard: Youville?

Mr. Cheema: I think that is what you said. The University of Winnipeg or?

Mr. Orchard: Oh, No. Youville Clinic.

Mr. Cheema: I did not follow that.

Mr. Orchard: Y-o-u-v-i-l-l-e Clinic, and that is \$217,700.00.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, I am not familiar with that clinic. Can the Minister of Health tell us where that clinic is located?

Mr. Orchard: They are in the little shopping centre. They are on Marion and Tache, just as you go across the river. You have to go around the block so to speak, and they are in the shopping centre where Howie's Drugs used to be.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, if it is in Winnipeg—the name was confusing to me so that is the reason I asked; not to know the exact street, or the crossing where the clinic is located.

Can the Minister of Health tell us: during the last year's Estimates, we asked a number of questions on the role of family planning out of these clinics, and can

he tell us now what is being done out of all these external agencies? What is their mandate? How are they helping the provincial health care system implement the family planning, and teaching the public in terms of what can be done to have a planned parenthood, and to achieve the size of the family they would like to have, and also to teach them in the various illnesses of the various health issues affecting the women of Manitoba?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, there is a number of programs, and the basic I suppose approach to each varies somewhat depending on which organization. For instance, let me deal with the smallest funded agency first: Serena Manitoba, which provides information on natural birth control. Primarily I think it is fair to say that is their educational role, and they are quite proactive on a volunteer basis in that regard.

Others provide direct advice through their own created pamphlets, et cetera, et cetera. I think COUP launched, what was that their second comic, first comic, in, if my memory serves me correct, about January, or was it last summer even? They launched a comic, which was I suppose situation and language appropriate, for the target market of youth, particularly teenage girls, and I think it served a pretty useful purpose in bringing the information to that target group if you will.

The Youville Clinic provides a fairly substantial service to mothers, both pre and post partum in terms of planning and information for the expectant mother in terms of diet and lifestyle et cetera, et cetera, in preparing particularly first-time expectant mothers with the information necessary for them to enjoy and successfully go through the wonderful experience of their first childbirth.

I guess that is similar in a number of other organizations, but several organizations try to target and focus sexual activity information, birth control information, to target groups particularly single women and teenage single women.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, even though all these clinics are continuing to serve Manitobans in a variety of ways, my question is, by reading the recent reports and the problem with the drug abuse and teenager pregnancy, what are the specific programs that for the last 18 months have been initiated by this administration to deal with that specific problem?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, I guess I could take credit for the comic, but I would be wrong in doing that. The comic was a product and a creation of our continued funding of COUP, for instance. Now I guess if I was a good politician I would say, well, golly we did that. In reality, the Government did not do that, and it has not with these funded agencies.

We have been supportive of some of their activities, and the comic book was in some ways controversial, but then so was the AIDS advertising. The important key is to deliver the message in as understandable and realistic a circumstance as possible so that initiatives are ongoing. We are essentially dealing with a moving target, in terms of the information group, in that, what rings a bell if you will, or what information is important,

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can change from year to year. The agencies tend to reflect that in the style of programming that they bring forward with support from Government.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, I think the Minister has not answered my question. I am asking him specific information that is initiated by his department to deal with the teenager pregnancy.

Are there any counselling procedures or mechanisms put in place through his department and in co-ordination with all these agencies? How are they assessing the situation, and what is being done to make sure that this is given their priority because this is a major concern among the Winnipeg population? The teenager pregnancies are on the rise and a number of problems associated with this, social problems, medical problems, also the long-term effects on the family structure.

Can the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) tell us what policies, initiatives they have started for the last one and half years?

* (1600)

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, in the last fiscal year there were—this is through the various funded agencies so this is an all up number of, I am sorry, I stand corrected. This is public health nursing statistics where information regarding reproductive health i.e. teenage pregnancy, there were almost 2,200 individuals provided with that information. There were slightly over 800 individuals involved in family planning clinics and in terms of classes, that was individual and reproductive health at top, in terms of classes some further 18,000, almost 300 individuals were into reproductive health information at the class level.

Mr. Cheema: Can the Minister of Health tell us what are the statistics in Manitoba, as compared to the other provincial jurisdictions?

Mr. Orchard: This is on teenage pregnancies?

Mr. Cheema: Yes.

Mr. Orchard: We have that, we will just get it for you. We have an interprovincial comparison between the three prairie provinces and we are the second highest with Alberta being lower and Saskatchewan being higher. Quebec has the lowest teenage fertility rate, Ontario the second lowest. The prairie provinces, the Yukon, and the maritime provinces, all have higher rates than the Canadian rate. I do not know where B.C. fits into that. We are in the high end of the Canadian range in Manitoba.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, what is being done to evaluate why we have more teenage pregnancies in Manitoba, as compared to the other provincial jurisdictions? What is being done to—as the Minister has already indicated a few clinics are going and there are 2,200 pregnancies as he has indicated for the last one year, that is in the teenager pregnancy and they have talked to about 18,000. Is that correct, 18,000?

Mr. Orchard: Through family planning or reproductive health classes.

Mr. Cheema: Yes, about 18,000.

Mr. Orchard: The information I have given my honourable friend deals with fertility rates among females aged 15 to 19, and that is all-inclusive, that is both wedlock and out of wedlock, if you will.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, I think it is still worthwhile to have separate statistics to see the teenage pregnancy, the so-called unwanted pregnancy, and what are the statistics and what is being done to discourage that, to reach the target group?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, I guess we have no significantly different program than other provinces, in terms of an outreach program involving counselling, education and in cases of financial need, provision of family planning supplies to individuals.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, the Minister is saying that all the family planning things, like the birth control pills, the education, and all that is given free of cost to all these individuals. Is that correct?

Mr. Orchard: Well, the education, the outreach, yes, that is of no charge. In certain instances, and I believe the number is what? Upwards of \$120,000 per year, through our various funded agencies, is made available for the provision of family supplies, family planning supplies.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, if I could get—if I am correct we could ask, for the Minister has said right now, and for the last few minutes, that they do not have an outreach program. Is that the correct statement?

Mr. Orchard: We do have an outreach program.

Mr. Cheema: Do we have outreach workers to reach these teenagers on the street?

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

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, the public health nursing teams provide that service and also we fund four outreach workers in the community health clinics.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, can the Minister of Health tell us what is being done to discourage the use of drugs during pregnancy and to be more specific during the teenager pregnancy? Do we have any special programs?

Mr. Orchard: The program involves direct education in a group environment forewarning of the dangers to all expectant mothers and followed by one-on-one counselling for particularly high-risk individuals.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, is that true what the Minister is saying, excuse my language here, that each and every individual is being followed after the pregnancy if they are in a high-risk factor, for example, if they were having a drug abuse, or smoking, or other risk factor, or do we follow each and every individual?

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Mr. Orchard: I am going to have to give my honourable friend a yes and a no answer. Yes, when they are known to us. No, when they are unknown to us. It is always with the identification that some may not receive any counselling whatsoever, simply because they have not come forward to seek same or we have not had the form under which to provide them information, because we simply do not know who they are.

Mr. Cheema: Are there any special pamphlets prepared to deal with drug problems during pregnancy and given to all these teenagers?

Mr. Orchard: Yes, we do have one pamphlet in particular that we use for the education, either group, or one on one.

Mr. Cheema: Are those pamphlets available to all the clinics and hospitals and also the community clinics?

Mr. Orchard: I am informed they are, yes.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, can the Minister of Health tell us are those pamphlets available in french also?

* (1610)

Mr. Orchard: Yes, some are indeed available in french version and others are in the process of, some are in the process of, being translated to minority languages, and as well an audio-visual presentation is being prepared for those who need that service.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, before I further go into the other question in the Maternal and Child Health. There was the issue last year that created a lot of confusion. That issue was the Health Sciences' in vitro fertilization program. Unfortunately, due to the various circumstances, that program was discontinued, and I would like the Minister to tell us, the couples who were in that program, who were registered in that program, what has been done to them, are they being referred to the other states and who is paying for the expenses, who is paying their bills?

Also, there was information sent by the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) in regard to the financial status of the agency of the program last year. Why was it not very clear from that report how much money was spent on legal fees by the Health Sciences Centre? There was some problem within the department itself. Can the Minister of Health answer all those questions, one by one?

Mr. Orchard: I am not aware of any problem within the department itself, as my honourable friend indicates. I will have to wait, I will have to beg my honourable friend's indulgence until Manitoba Health Services staff are here during that line of the Estimates to find out whether they can ascertain the specific disposition, or what specific individual clients did in the program.

I just want to indicate to my honourable friend that in terms of the cost to the individuals, that cost, whether they went out of province to access a program for

instance in Toronto say, that cost is borne entirely by the sponsoring couple, as was the cost at the Health Sciences Centre. There was no provincial contribution of funding, and that was understood from Day One as that program was brought on by the Health Sciences Centre. It was with the clear understanding that the provincial Government would not participate in any level of funding. For decisions by the Health Sciences Centre that program was discontinued by them, and anyone who went elsewhere to access the program would do so at their own cost, because it is not an insured service.

Mr. Cheema: Can the Minister of Health tell us if he is aware that the program in Ontario is paid by the Ontario Health Services Commission?

Mr. Orchard: That was my understanding a year and a half ago.

Mr. Cheema: Can the Minister of Health tell us how he can justify that these individuals go on their own and pay for all their expenses? It is not one visit, they have a number of visits, a number of tests have to be performed before they can qualify for their programs. How can they justify not paying some of the costs?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, before we get too far into this discussion, my honourable friend is going to have to tell me whether the Liberal Party of Manitoba is advocating this as an insured service, because it was not an insured service at any time in the Province of Manitoba? Individuals who availed themselves of the program at the Health Sciences Centre did so under the full knowledge that they would pay the entire program costs. That circumstance was consistent through the change in the Government and after. It was a decision by the Manitoba Health Services Commission that they discontinue the program because their costs exceeded projections, and a number of other factors which mitigated and precipitated the decision by the Health Sciences Centre board and management to discontinue offering the program even though it was to be self financing and self supporting.

My honourable friend I hope would understand because he has made some of these requests himself, on behalf I presume of his Party. Just recently my honourable friend and his Leader pointed out where they think we need to spend, I presume in their estimation, substantially more resource in youth drug education and prevention, in terms of providing speech pathology services. My honourable friend is correct and we have been doing exactly that, but as has been often said in this committee, and even by my honourable friend on Halloween night, that tax money does not grow on trees. We simply have not made, given the demands on the system right across the board, the decision to include in vitro fertilization as an insured services program to pay for out-of-province costs.

I have to tell my honourable friend I had a most delightful experience over noon today. I presented a cheque at the International Centre to help pay for the medicals for Chinese students. Some 180 Chinese students and their spouses have been disenfranchised by this summer's events in their homeland. They have

chosen not to return to China, and they have been granted, through special circumstances and process by the federal Government, the ability to become Canadian citizens. They nevertheless have to have their medical status verified or if you will a complete medical examination. They do not have the resources to pay for that so we have provided up to \$25,000 for that, and that was done at the International Centre.

The reason I bring this up is that I met a very delightful young family man and his wife and his year-and-a-half-old daughter. He has just come back from London, Ontario, as what appears to be an extremely successful liver transplant patient. I mean the individual is doing extremely well and that is only about seven, well maybe nine, weeks ago that the transplantation took place. Those are the kinds of services that we have elected on behalf of Manitobans to attempt, and we have not, nor has it been one of the priorities that we have acceded a request for funding in terms of making provincial tax dollars available for an in vitro fertilization program. That was a decision that was not just made by ourselves. That is fairly consistent with the policy that we inherited as well, policy I have to say that given scarce resources I have to concur with at this time.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the Minister has given his own philosophical views about the number of other programs, but how about the in vitro fertilization program? These are the unfortunate couples who have no other way of conceiving. It is not something with choice, and the program which was discontinued after how many, nine to 10 months? There were two to three months of breakdown in that total system, so it was not even given a good chance to prove or disprove that this program will or will not work.

I think it was not a good decision, because hundreds of thousands of dollars were already spent and put into the whole program. I think that decision was made on very short information, without thinking that it may have been successful, and since all the couples who were in the program were paying for some of their main expenses, but for someone to go out from Winnipeg to Ontario or some place else and go through all those tests, and stay in a hotel, it is very expensive. You are not just sending one person, you are sending the whole family. It is costing them their own money, and they did not have any problem of paying some of their own expenses here. We want to enhance this research and upgrade the Health Science Centre into one of the world-class centres, and the program, when we have all the expert opinions here, was discontinued prematurely I would say. That was the opinion of many professionals, it is not my opinion only. It is a lot of people on the street who would have the same opinion. Also there was a lot of arguments, again what the Minister has said right now, and people would argue why we pay for example for therapeutic abortions then, why we pay for family planning, why do we pay for other tests, why are we paying for all the tests being done out of Manitoba?

* (1620)

So that is just a small sector of the population. They do not constitute the major number of the population

of Manitoba. They are unfortunate circumstances. I think it was a premature decision, and we will wait for the Health Services Commission to give us the full information. They should compare it with the other provincial jurisdictions that it took them a little longer time to make sure that this program will work. I think the Minister, whether he agrees or not, but politically he may not because it is not something he has to admit is his fault here. I think he has been very reasonable for the last few days in Estimates, but I think this thing has to be looked at in a view which will save taxpayers' money in the long run, plus get people a hope of those individuals who had no other way of conceiving, that is the only one possible method of having their own child, and I think it is unfortunate that program was discontinued.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, we are again going over this issue, but I just want to tell my honourable friend that it was not Government's decision to discontinue the program. It was the Health Sciences Centre's decision to discontinue the program. My honourable friend says that there was a lot of expertise that said that was a premature decision.

Well, I suggest to my honourable friend that maybe he is questioning the professional and medical judgments of the vice-presidents of planning, and medical services, the entire board and all of the people who participated in that decision at the Health Sciences Centre. If my honourable friend thinks that they picked the decision out of the air without consideration, then he does not understand decision making at the Health Sciences Centre. If he is saying that they made the wrong decision, according to his professional opinion, then I suggest he take that up with his colleagues, his confreres, because physicians were involved in the decision to discontinue the program at the Health Sciences Centre and take his argument to them. Government made no decision in the in vitro fertilization funding at the Health Sciences Centre. Government made no decision to discontinue funding because Government did not fund the program. I want my honourable friend to know that.

When my honourable friend is talking about the costs, again, of sending a family out of province, that does not really make sense because my honourable friend is encouraging the in vitro fertilization for childless families. So you would hardly go down there with your wife and kids because you do not -(interjection)- okay. Then my honourable friend is clarifying it that it is the husband and wife that go down, and that is correct. But I want to tell my honourable friend another event that took place at the Health Sciences Centre last week wherein we announced bringing home the bone marrow transplant program to develop a made-in-Manitoba program, one that currently we carry out out-of-province in Vancouver. One of the individuals that was there made the very real case that when she was in Vancouver to receive her bone marrow transplant, her husband and five children moved for the entire six-week period at a cost of approximately \$10,000 for which we, as a province, did not fund, but service clubs in Beausejour and other parts of the province fundraised to provide that kind of assistance so that the husband and the children could be with Mrs. Jacobsen for that operation.

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Now, we are bringing home that program, Mr. Acting Chairman, just to provide that kind of service and to avoid that kind of stress, expense, and we believe firmly that the program, now that it is mature and we have the ability to deliver it in Manitoba, that (a) we can do it within current cost estimates and build a program in Manitoba by which Manitobans can receive very excellent treatment and be at home with their loved ones and family and friends for that program.

So maybe the Liberal Party policy is to have in vitro fertilization as an insured service in the Province of Manitoba. I have not heard my honourable friend say that. When he does say that, then we can debate the merits of the Liberal Party policy, but I think he may not put that on the record as Liberal Party policy because I do not think that he can.

We did not have it as an insured service in the Province of Manitoba, namely, in vitro fertilization. It was not a program that was paid for in any way, shape, or form by the province. The Health Sciences Centre made a decision based on information they had at their disposal to no longer continue the program. Now, my honourable friend wants to say the Liberal Party would bring in an in vitro fertilization as an insured service in the Province of Manitoba; now is the time to state the Party policy.

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): The Minister was earlier referring to outreach work done by the public health nurses, and I am wondering, before we get into some specific questions about that, and maybe I have missed this in this piece of the Estimates, but does this Minister have information on the breakdown of the types of services and the percentage of time that the public health staff spend in various activities. I understand that that information is collected through computerized statistics that the public health staff do fill out.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, I am informed that we have some information that we can give to my honourable friend, and if she wishes to move on to other questions, we will certainly provide them.

Ms. Gray: The Minister indicated that the public health staff do outreach work with pregnant teenagers. I am wondering if the Minister could indicate exactly what that—is there a particular program, or is this just something that happens randomly, if in fact the nurses get a referral, perhaps he could clarify the program and/or activity.

Mr. Orchard: I am informed that the public health staffing, when they either have referred to them or they find out in the course of their duties of an adolescent, single individual who is pregnant, that they refer the individual to the outreach classes for all of the information that my honourable friend is much more knowledgeable, that is presented to adolescent, single parents and first-time mothers at those classes. Secondly, that primarily this process is by and large, I think it is fair to say, an urban process rather than a rural process.

Ms. Gray: Are these outreach classes something that is carried on throughout the City of Winnipeg, and I

am assuming that it is not in rural or northern areas, or is there any work done in northern or rural areas? What type of outreach classes are they?

Mr. Orchard: Well, the basic class's program, outreach educational program, is available outside of Winnipeg as well, but from time to time sheer numbers do not allow a regular schedule, et cetera, and in those cases it is done in either very small classes or on an individual basis.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer): The Member for Ellice, do you have another question?

Ms. Gray: Are these classes done throughout Winnipeg or are they only done in certain parts of Winnipeg or is it consistent throughout every district?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, west central on a regular basis and as needed in the other two regions.

* (1630)

Ms. Gray: The Minister indicates as needed. Now, if statistics have not changed a lot in the last few years, I would assume that one of the highest percentage of pregnant adolescents is in the North region, particularly East Kildonan area. Can the Minister indicate, if that is the case, what is the reason for holding the classes regularly in some areas and not regularly in others? What I am trying to get at is we know the numbers are there, we know that the potential clients are there, are we not reaching these people?

Mr. Orchard: I think, Mr. Acting Chairman, that the Winnipeg west central is regularized because of the longevity of the program there and the program they provide. Other regions have frequent, and I guess we can provide you with how frequently if that would be of interest to my honourable friend, but they are provided on a regular basis as well, west central being the longest and most mature program, I guess it would be fair to say.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairperson, given that with birth statistics the department would know the number of teenagers having babies within various regions of the city, does the Minister or his department have a comment about how results oriented the classes are, and my question is: does the department feel that they are adequately reaching these pregnant teenagers and providing them with the appropriate education and resources that they require during their pregnancy?

(Mr. Chairman in the Chair)

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, maybe my honourable friend could be—get right down to it, are you saying that they are not getting appropriate outreach education, because of the sensitivity and the need for knowledge of adolescents who are experiencing pregnancy for the first time a special curriculum has been developed targeted at that group of individuals. I am told that 90 percent of all potential individuals receive the prenatal course and often for target groups of higher risk, it is often one to one counselling.

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Ms. Gray: Would the Minister clarify, when he said 90 percent, is he referring to teenagers or is he referring to total numbers?

Mr. Orchard: First-time mothers.

Ms. Gray: Does the Minister have statistics on teenage pregnancies, how many people that public health reaches in terms of education during the pregnancy, specifically teenagers?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, apparently that is the best information we can provide is 90 percent of first-time mothers. The breakdown as to age is not available through the agencies. Hospitals and others are providing some of that education.

Ms. Gray: Is the breakdown available for the classes and the education that the department directly is providing?

Mr. Orchard: I am informed not by age group, but we will try to come as close as we can to giving my honourable friend the best guesstimate on it.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister indicate, does the department feel that they are adequately reaching teenagers who are pregnant, in terms of providing them service? Given that they know the numbers across the city, do they feel that they are doing what they would consider an adequate job in reaching these people? I am not saying once they get the people there, I am saying do they feel that they are indeed reaching these people and are able to provide educational resources through whatever means?

Mr. Orchard: I am sorry, I was distracted there. Would my honourable friend repeat the question?

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell us if he feels that his department is doing an adequate job of reaching pregnant teenagers in the City of Winnipeg, because that is where the programs seem to be? Does he feel that his department is doing an adequate job of reaching those teenagers and providing them with education and resources, whether it is through structured classes, individual home visits, counselling, et cetera?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, I always like my honourable friend's line of questioning because generally she tries to get one to say XYZ, and then as some blockbuster piece of information.

In my estimation, the people who we know and get into the classes, yes, I believe the information given to them is very, very good. If my honourable friend is saying, do we reach 100 percent of the adolescent women in this province who are pregnant and unwed, I would say no we do not. In those we reach, I think the information, the counselling, there is every effort to provide one-on-one, I am told, so that the individual understands and it is a non-offensive large group area. It can be individual outreach to these adolescent women.

From that standpoint, I think the job done is good, but if my honourable friend is asking are we reaching

everybody, I think the answer clearly is no. If my honourable friend is asking me why not, it is because you simply cannot reach some individuals. There has to be a two-way street on it, that individuals have to become a part of the process and you cannot force an individual to become part of the process, to my knowledge. Maybe my honourable friend knows some way to do that, or maybe my honourable friend has some policy suggestion on how to accomplish that, but where we provide the information and where we have the individuals into the educational seminars and programs, I think the information given to them is very effectively communicated.

Ms. Gray: I can certainly appreciate that in fact for those individuals that the department is reaching, the job that is done is probably a very good job and that is not my question. I also would appreciate that I am sure we are not reaching 100 percent of individuals.

What my question is: is it not of interest to the department to know within a certain percentage, how many of those pregnant teenagers we are actually reaching in terms of programs and services given that to me this is certainly a large area where there is need for education and resources for teenagers, and they tend to be very vulnerable. I would think that the department would be interested to know how many people that they are reaching and for those people we are not reaching when you say you cannot force an individual to be involved in a program. Yes, that is very true, but there certainly are many methods and ideas that probably have been used in North America that will give you an idea of how you reach some of these people in terms of motivating them and in terms of ensuring that there is opportunity there for them to participate.

* (1640)

My first question is: does the department have any idea what percentage of those teenagers that the department is reaching or is not reaching, whichever way you want to look at it?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, the general thrust of my honourable friend's question is what percentage. Well, we cannot give you anything but an educated guess on that. I do not know what that is right now, but I simply tell my honourable friend that the referrals which occur are handled by individuals in the department and the funded agencies to provide that kind of information. It is not 100 percent, and I do not know how you make it 100 percent, because the individual is under no obligation to become part of a program, if they choose not to avail themselves of the educational programs, and let me again say that it is not as if we have regularly scheduled classes and you must be part of a larger class environment, one-to-one information advice, educational services are available.

That is why I say when we have the referrals and when we are able to identify the individuals, I think the program works quite well, but we have no way of—the information systems simply do not exist to tell us how many adolescent pregnancies are there and,

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therefore, of the numbers we reach, what percentages it is, because we do not have those first numbers.

Ms. Gray: Well, there would be information on the number of adolescent pregnancies. We know that that information is available, correct?

Mr. Orchard: Apparently so, yes. We have total known pregnancies, but from the total known pregnancies we do not know how many have taken prenatal classes.

Ms. Gray: Does the Minister feel that the statistic gathering in regard to this whole area of pregnancies and age and number of adolescent pregnancies, number of people we reach, et cetera, et cetera, is adequate?

Mr. Orchard: It would not be adequate until one had, for instance, all 59 teenage pregnancies age 10 to 14 in 1982 part of a prenatal class. That is not the reality. Until it is, it is not adequate. I do not know what methods my honourable friend would think appropriate and workable to assure that is happening. I indicate to my honourable friend referrals when they are made to us are followed up and the individuals are given the prenatal educational counselling, but there are individuals undoubtedly, and I cannot tell you how many, who do not access that kind of services, but until it is 100 percent, certainly it is missing some people and therefore open to critical review.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister indicate to us what formal communication channels are utilized between the Department of Health and the Department of Education, and the Department of Health and Department of Family Services or with the various Child and Family Services Agencies in terms of making aware to these other two agencies or departments the types of services that public health staff and home economists can provide in the area of working with teenagers who are pregnant?

Is there a formal system that has been established or structured so that at least from the top down and from the bottom up that there is a very formal system and very much an awareness level of what services are provided, so that in fact appropriate referrals are made?

Mr. Orchard: The formal contact would be via the counsellors at the school level dealing with education with the various agencies and/or public health officials that could provide that counselling and outreach information.

Ms. Gray: How do the counsellors know that services and programs are available? Is there a specific strategy that is part of Government policy in regard to reaching counsellors, and principals, and superintendents, and school board officials, to let them know that these programs and services are available?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, two areas of information, first of all through the regional staff, and the assumption is made, and I cannot tell you whether it is 100 percent, and it was all done yesterday, as opposed to last month or six months ago, but regional staff are responsible

for the ongoing communication contact with school divisions and counsellors.

There is a directory of services available and it is in the process of being updated, which provides the available services within the department and its funded agencies for those adolescents who are expecting, and that directory of services has been circulated to regional staffs, public health staff, as well as school counsellors and appropriate school officials so that they are aware of the services available and how to access those services.

Ms. Gray: Does the Minister have information as to the percentage of time that the public health staff spend in schools program or in the schools, excluding any immunization that is carried out?

Mr. Orchard: I think it is fair to say that would vary substantially division by division.

Ms. Gray: Is there not some range of statistics that is collected through—

Mr. Orchard: We will attempt to find out whether there is a range of statistics and make any available to my honourable friend.

Ms. Gray: Does the Minister indicate he does not have those statistics today in terms of the breakdown and the various activities and percentage of time public health spend on various functions?

Mr. Orchard: What is my honourable friend asking for now? You were into the school divisions at one time. You asked whether I could provide the information as to the percentage of time spent by public health officials in the school system providing various functions. I indicated to my honourable friend that would vary significantly school division by the school division. My honourable friend then asked if we could provide that, and I said to the best of our knowledge we will attempt to provide that information. Now is my honourable friend now asking for a different kind of information?

Ms. Gray: No, I am asking for that information, and it may vary from school division to school division, but you would not have statistics broken down, I would imagine, on each school division.

Mr. Orchard: Well, that is exactly why I indicated to my honourable friend that I cannot provide that information now. We will make best efforts to put together that information which will vary school division by school division. If it exists, we will provide her with the most detailed information in that regard that we can possibly lay our hands on.

* (1650)

Ms. Gray: The reason for the question in regard to the amount of time that public health staff would spend in schools is that unless resources and time allocation have changed substantially over the last few years, what one often finds is that with a limited public health staff

available, a large percentage of the time is spent on maternal and child health activities and that in fact sometimes the school-age program, which would involve working in the schools, becoming credible in the schools as a resource person, which then can lead to guidance counsellors, principals, et cetera, feeling comfortable in referring cases such as pregnant teenagers to those public health staff, and that is what I was trying to get at in terms of the amount of time public health staff have available to them to spend in schools.

The Minister had said earlier, if I had suggestions on how we reach more people. Well, one way to reach more people is to make sure that every avenue of referral is utilized, and the more formal communication, and the more structure that there is with the Department of Education and the Department of Health, working with school divisions, meeting with superintendents two or three times a year and outlining what the programs and services are and encouraging school personnel to refer students and working with Child and Family Services Agencies, and encouraging Child and Family Services Agencies to make sure when they know of a pregnant teenager to refer her to their local public health nurse—the more communication there is in that area, not just informally, because I think it is done in some cases at the field worker level, but if there is an impetus that comes from the department, from the top down, and it is seen, and it is known that in fact this is a priority in regard to teenagers and teenage pregnancies, then I think that in fact the referrals would be more frequent.

The more referrals that you have the more chances you have of following up with those individuals. I agree with the Minister, you are never going to have 100 per cent participation, but the question is, which does not seem to appear to be answered, is the department satisfied that they are doing a reasonable job and are reaching what would be a reasonable number of teenagers who are pregnant?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, with all due respect, I think my honourable friend got into two different programs in her last statement, or question, or observation, or policy suggestion, because I think it is fair to say that, and again I will be hung on the intent and meaning of a single word, but I think that where there are pregnancies among adolescents in the high school system, those individuals are referred to the appropriate outreach educational courses that are available. That is being done. Now my honourable friend, I think mixed that up with counselling to avoid pregnancy in the school system. Oh, now she shakes her head that she did not.

Well, maybe I better let my honourable friend explain what exactly she was getting at because, you know, as I said to my honourable friend earlier on, we may not be able to get her the information school division by school division because it varies significantly. There may well be—and I am saying this from more of an intuition of the program rather than direct knowledge—some school divisions who handle their program in this regard entirely without asking for or receiving assistance from public health nursing or the department or regional services, or any of our funded agencies. That is the

decision of the school board, but that varies significantly because in some areas public health nurses or others in terms of funded agencies and the four positions that are funded are available and participate in family planning education at the request of the school divisions. That varies obviously from school division to school division, so if my honourable friend was saying something different than that in her last question, I simply seek clarification because I misunderstood what she was saying.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, if the Minister assumed that I was speaking about counselling to prevent pregnancy, no, I was talking about counselling during pregnancy, if that clarifies it. That is another area which I would like to move into.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, before we leave there, I simply indicate to my honourable friend that counselling is available and references are very frequent from the school system. Counselling can in fact take place depending on the circumstance, in small groups or individually, and that is what I was indicating earlier on.

Ms. Gray: Have there been any comparisons that have been done with the programs and services that the City of Winnipeg public health staff provide in regard to pregnant teenagers, as compared to the services that the province provides?

Mr. Orchard: No, I am informed we have not done a comparison between the city program and ours.

Ms. Gray: I am just wondering if that is something that would be worth looking at. I do not know how successful the City of Winnipeg programs are but certainly the numbers, I would think, of pregnant teenagers that they potentially would have might be larger than some of the other areas, looking at the way the statistics break down. I am wondering if perhaps the city public health staff have had any creative ideas or any more successes on how to reach some of those hard-to-reach pregnant teenagers.

Mr. Orchard: That is not an unreasonable suggestion and apparently in discussions that we have had with the City of Winnipeg, they indicate that they are amongst the high risk population, if you will, and that may not only be adolescents. They have found their counselling to be most effective if it is one to one and I think, in general, that is time available. That is what we have found, too. Now, I do not know whether my honourable friend is asking, but certainly it would be a legitimate question to seek an answer to: are we providing counselling to the same individuals? I do not think that is the case.

Ms. Gray: No, I was not asking if we were providing counselling to the same individuals. I agree with the Minister, that probably is not the case. Looking at the Parent Child and Health Directorate and the fact that it provides program support to public health staff in regard to prevention programs are now getting into the area of how do we provide adequate education to

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teenagers so that in fact we can prevent pregnancies, I am wondering if the Minister could tell us, are there any specific prevention preventative educational programs of that nature?

Mr. Orchard: Yes, there are. I would have to beg the indulgence of my honourable friend if she wants to know the specific details of each of them because I would have to provide that to her. But some of the agencies, as I indicated in discussions earlier on with her colleague, the MLA for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema), when he asked me what specific new initiatives has this Government done, I said to her colleague, well, I would like to take credit for COUP's Comic, for instance, because it came out during the time of our administration, it came out about nine months ago, whatever, 10 months ago. But that would not be a fair assessment because they used the global funding of the province to develop that communication vehicle. That is as a result that the province funded that organization, so I suppose it is a case of six of one and a half dozen of another.

As I indicated to my honourable friend's colleague, the Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema), there are innovations, if you will, in terms of the education process, or the attempted education process that is coming forward from time to time. The funded agencies are the vehicles under which some of these newer approaches, or differing approaches, are tried. But I think the department's role is to attempt to provide a consistent educational message across the regions and across the City of Winnipeg so that we provide, through public health nursing and indeed through some of the funded agencies, a fairly consistent program of education and outreach to those individuals expecting their first child, whether married or otherwise.

We attempt to do that through our staff directly, but certainly through the funded agencies, the seven of which I referred to earlier on when her colleague was asking questions.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell us, what does he see as the balance between outreach work and education that his direct departmental staff could or should be providing and that to which the agencies that he funds could or should be providing? How does he see that balance, or where does he see that partnership?

Mr. Orchard: As functioning.

Mr. Chairman: The hour is now 5 p.m., I am interrupting the proceedings for Private Members' Hour. The committee will return at 8 p.m. this evening.

SUPPLY—SENIORS DIRECTORATE

The Acting Chairman (Gilles Roch): Committee, come to order. We shall continue the discussion of the Seniors Directorate. Item 1, the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): Mr. Acting Chairperson, in the Estimate line under Grant/Transfer Payments, there is a \$10,000 figure. Can the Minister tell us where that \$10,000 will go?

Hon. James Downey (Minister responsible for Seniors): Manitoba Society of Seniors, Mr. Acting Chairman.

Mr. Carr: Is that grant earmarked toward a specific project, or is that just an operational grant for MSOS?

Mr. Downey: Special project, Mr. Acting Chairman.

Mr. Carr: Mr. Acting Chairperson, one of the major items that faces seniors today and one in which they have said a great deal is the price of pharmaceuticals which have gone up quite dramatically over the last year or so. We have also the increase in deductibles for pharmaceuticals that seniors now pay which is actually tagged onto the cost of living so they know, as they look forward, that they will be paying more and more.

Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am interested in the whole process whereby certain drugs are put on the formulary, which is a list that is approved by appointed people, appointed by Order-in-Council, that establish which drugs can be substituted as generic drugs, which has a substantial influence on the price that seniors pay for their pharmaceuticals. It seems that Manitoba has fewer drugs on the formulary than in many other provinces, particularly in Ontario. Has the Minister responsible for Seniors had conversations with the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) about the way in which generic drugs find their way onto the formulary and whether or not this may not offer the Government an opportunity to provide substantial savings, not only for seniors who purchase pharmaceuticals, but also for Government, which is the third party in the social services and through Pharmacare?

Mr. Downey: Mr. Acting Chairman, I will accept that as a worthy recommendation from my colleague, the Member for Fort Rouge, and when I have some information from the Minister of Health, if that would be satisfactory to him, then I will provide it to him.

Mr. Carr: I think we may have an opportunity here to save senior citizens money and to save the Government money at the same time, because by including generic drugs on the formulary list pharmacists are able to sell these drugs at a much cheaper price to consumers. As I say, the Government itself could be one of the major beneficiaries. Has the Minister had a chance to have a look at the formulary and to study ways in which seniors may save some money on drug prices?

Mr. Downey: Mr. Acting Chairman, I have not had an opportunity to, however, I will avail myself and the Seniors Directorate of that. As well, we will discuss it with the Department of Health. I say most sincerely that the objective point of view, which the Member brings forward as being able to save the seniors money and as well the Government money, is one which is very worthy and will be looked at very seriously by the Seniors Directorate in conjunction with the Department of Health.

Mr. Carr: On the issue of the Elder Abuse Paper I know that the Minister has initiated a net of consultation

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with seniors groups around the province, and he tells us that will take us into the New Year, sometime in January or February. Will he make public the presentations that the Government gets from seniors organizations and individuals so that not only the Government but also members of the public and Members of the Opposition will have an opportunity to have a look at the good advice the Minister is getting from seniors groups and organizations?

* (1440)

Mr. Downey: Mr. Acting Chairman, let me respond to the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge as it relates to the seniors Abuse Paper and the consultation process that is going on. It would be my hope when the information comes forward from a group, where that group is in fact providing it with the knowledge that it could and will be in fact made public, I have no difficulty in doing that.

Secondly, Mr. Acting Chairman, let me put a caveat forward, that because of the sensitivity of some of the situations that may be out in our society and individuals who want to bring forward their personal concerns, I can say no I will not make that available. We do not want the public to feel a reluctance on bringing forward their issue as it relates to abuse in case they have retribution to deal with from either the facility that there is abuse and/or a family abuse situation that we have to have some protection there for those individuals.

Where it is by a group and there is clear knowledge that it could be and would be made public I have no problem. In fact, it would be my hope to make all supporting documents available to support the next move that may have to be taken and will be taken, if necessary, by the Government. It would be my intention to make all information available to the public that is within the realm of possibility and not disclosing private and confidential information that could deter people from either coming forward with that information and/or put in jeopardy the individual who put the information forward.

Mr. Carr: Just to be clear, is the Minister saying that he will undertake to make the judgment on whether or not a brief will or will not be made public, and he will use as his guiding criterion whether or not that brief, if made public, would endanger confidentiality, the protection of citizens, et cetera?

Mr. Downey: That is correct.

Mr. Carr: Has the Minister yet received briefs from seniors organizations across the province?

Mr. Downey: Yes, I have, Mr. Acting Chairman.

Mr. Carr: Is the Minister prepared to make them public?

Mr. Downey: On behalf of those individuals who have provided the information I would double-check with them to see if they have difficulty in doing so.

Mr. Carr: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I note there is no Minister's salary as a part of the Seniors Directorate.

Not to suggest that the Minister is not working at earning one, but just to wonder when it is time for us to make a closing statement, and if that time is now I am prepared to put a few thoughts on the record.

Mr. Downey: As it relates to my salary, that comes within the Northern and Native Affairs Department, and we can deal with my salary that I am paid for all the different responsibilities I have. I would like to note that I do have a Deputy Minister who is not listed and is not paid any additional money to carry on the administrative work that is related to the seniors, Mr. Acting Chairman.

There is no additional salary either for the Minister and/or for the Deputy Minister who carries out the administrative role on behalf of the Seniors Directorate. I want that acknowledgment on the record, and I appreciate the support I get in that area.

Yes, the time is now for the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) to give his concluding comments.

Mr. Carr: I think I will take a moment or two to put a few remarks on the record. I think the kind of answers we have had from the Minister, over the last number of days, is really indicative of the problems that this Government is having with its own commitment to the Seniors Directorate.

The problem is that the answers were wide ranging, they lacked focus, they referred problems to other ministries, they lacked a sense of commitment or a sense of direction from this Minister and from this Government in the whole area of the Seniors Directorate.

The reason is not because the Minister does not care. I believe the Minister does care. I believe he cares about drug prices and how they affect seniors in Manitoba. I believe he cares about the effects of the clawback. I believe he cares about the effects of the GST on seniors because he tells us he does, and the Minister is an honourable man, but he does not have any power to do anything about it.

The reason he does not have any power is twofold. One is that the Seniors Directorate has fuzzy objectives, a fuzzy mandate. It is not clear in the mind of the Minister so how could it be clear in the minds of those that the Minister seeks to serve?

The other reason is the Minister has not taken the power upon himself to advocate persuasively on behalf of seniors to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) when the issue is the price of pharmaceuticals, to the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) when the question is a court challenge by the Manitoba Society of Seniors and the federal Drug Patent Law, or the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) when the issue is rental subsidy in the SAFFR program.

All of these require attention, and they require focused attention from a Minister who demands to be heard in the councils of his Government. Symbolically we thought it was very significant that this Minister was left off the Human Services Committee of Cabinet. What more important function for this Minister than to be

at the table when issues of human services and therefore, issues of interest to seniors are being debated among his own colleagues. When we ask him questions both in the Estimates process and in the House that are important to seniors he does not take any responsibility for it.

The reason he does not take responsibility is because the Seniors Directorate's mandate does not give him the responsibility he thinks he needs, and we object to that, Mr. Acting Chairman. We object to it, because we think the Minister can be far more vocal, far more pro-active, far more visible on behalf of seniors in their fight to make public policy more sensitive to their interests in Manitoba.

So it has been a frustrating experience for us in this Chamber, in these Estimates. We cannot pin him down, and I do not think the Minister should take any wry or sly satisfaction from that, because the responsibilities given to him are grave and serious ones, and people are watching the progress this Government makes on seniors issues, and I know the Minister is anxious to help and anxious to serve.

May I just gently remind him that he will be doing a greater service to the seniors of Manitoba if he can be more specific in his replies, if he can take the time to research the issues more carefully so when they are raised in the House, either during the Estimates process, during debate or during Question Period, he can bring a more refined sense of the issues, backed up by more research, background and perhaps even a little more thinking time, so the answers we get from the Minister are a little more informed than the ones we have had over this last week or so.

It was also an opportunity for us to debate some of the broader issues, some of the issues which are important in a changing society. We know that the demographics of our province are changing, that we are an aging population. That fact, which is inescapable, has an impact on public policy in general and particularly public policy that affect seniors.

We are looking for a little more rigorous analysis and sense of direction from the Minister that I am afraid I did not get. I enjoyed some of the sparring. It is always fun to spar with this Minister who is better than the average politician in standing up on his feet and throwing and stringing some words together, often with a rhetorical flourish.

The rhetorical flourish is not always substantiated by sober and careful analysis of the issues, Mr. Acting Chairperson, but that is what we hope will result from a rigorous and vigorous opposition to make sure this Government is doing what it can on behalf of seniors in the province. Thank you.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Acting Chairman, it is a pleasure to see you in the Chair, sir. You must feel—

An Honourable Member: Awkward.

* (1450)

Mr. Doer: Yes, somewhat awkward. I rise in the place of our Seniors Critic who is involved in a major

constituency item dealing with the hopeful, positive, conclusion of the Lynn Lake situation. I know that all Members in this Chamber, notwithstanding any partisan politics, hope to bring that last tenth of an inch that seems to be apart together for a possible long-term answer to Lynn Lake and the people of that community and what it means for northern Manitoba as a symbol. So I give you our apologies for that, sir, and I am sure you will recognize the priority of the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) at this point in this crisis point in his responsibilities.

Mr. Acting Chairman, the Member for Churchill did outline 10 items of concern for seniors. This is not a high school debate. This is not a debate about items on a line on an Estimate sheet. There are things we could point out in terms of radical increases in advertising, and some decreases in somewhere else. That is not the issue for seniors. The issue for seniors are the flesh and blood issues that they feel in their communities across the province. Housing, health, transportation, the quality of their life, and the security of their person are very, very important issues for our seniors.

I want to talk a bit about these things, because I think they are very, very important. The GST has been mentioned today in the Chamber. I sent over a copy of the Minister of Finance's (Mr. Manness) own comments two weeks ago, when I raised the GST, where he did say he was indeed in favour of consumption taxes contrary to what we heard today.

I believe we should have one united voice going to the First Ministers' Meeting in Ottawa. I believe one united voice should be opposed to the GST, but with an alternative. We believe the best alternative for seniors is a minimum corporate tax. Our tax system has developed into an absolute disgrace, particularly since 1965 where we have a system where the revenues from corporations have gone down from 20 percent of the revenues in Canada—which was even again below where they were in the early '50s at 37 percent—they went down to 11 percent when Trudeau left office and now they are down to 9 percent, and those are issues facing seniors.

Everytime Cadillac Fairview gets a zero percent income tax it means that the seniors pay more in their consumption tax. Everytime Xerox pays zero dollars on a \$95 million profit sheet it means that seniors pay more. You cannot escape the impact of the GST without looking at the alternatives, and at that point I agree with the Prime Minister, because we believe the GST should not only be scrapped, it should not be replaced with a 7 percent tax, it should not be replaced with a 6 percent tax, with food it should be scrapped totally and get rid of the loopholes.

In fact, I believe even the provincial taxes are too high, and I believe that we were part of (interjection)-Mr. Acting Chairman, we always balance corporate taxes with personal taxes. I believe if we were able to have a minimum corporate tax system on page 1 of the income tax form even provincial taxes could go down a lot further than where they are now, and they would not have been required to go up as the federal Government offloads its programs in the '80s.

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We have not heard very much from the Government on pension clawbacks. I have not seen a fightback campaign on pension clawbacks. I asked the provincial Government whether they were going to join in with the legal case that the seniors network in Canada had established on pension clawbacks as an intervener, but no, we have not heard whether the provincial Government would get actively involved in seniors networks across the country.

You know we have a situation where the Premier is saying he may get involved in a legal case on telephones after the Supreme Court has come out, August 14, and given us absolutely no opportunity to have a legal case. Where we might have a legal case we have heard nothing from the Government to join with seniors in a real tangible way in a court case on the pension clawback program.

Health care is a seniors issue, as well as, an issue for all Manitobans. We have talked time and time again about the cutbacks in the home care program. Every time we raised it last year many of the people we raised it with, Mr. Acting Chairman, were seniors. Every time we raised it we were told, oh, there was no change, no cutbacks. But when we found the final statement to be tabled for Manitobans in July of this year, we did indeed find well over \$4.5 million was cut back from the programs that we had approved in this Chamber. It was cut back for seniors across this province as we had alleged for month after month after month in this Chamber. We want the Minister responsible for Seniors to be fighting in Cabinet with his colleague, the Member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard), for fair home care and health care services.

The Elder Abuse Paper has been tabled some 18 months after it was promised, Mr. Acting Chairman. I am sure that got a lot of debate in these Estimates as it should have, and I will not be redundant in terms of our concerns on the elder abuse situation.

The waiting list, Mr. Acting Chairman, in health care facilities is an issue for seniors. When we talked about the eight beds that were closed in the intensive care unit at Misericordia Hospital last week, that is also a seniors' issue because intensive care beds are primarily used by seniors following critical operations and critical health care situations. We all know hundreds of stories where the waiting lists are getting longer. The beds are piling up more in the emergency wards. Health care facilities are being acutely hurt, nurses are feeling the pinch in a more radical way, and that, too, is a seniors' issue. It is a health issue but it is also a seniors' issue because those are the most vulnerable people in our health care system.

Transportation is also an issue, Mr. Acting Chairman. We do not know where the Government is going in terms of urban transportation. We had a three year agreement with the City of Winnipeg, we do not know where that stands because it really does affect the quality of living for seniors in our major communities, and yes, we wanted the expansion of services to be outside of just Lloyd Axworthy's former federal riding.

I thought that patronage on that announcement of the STS quite frankly was deplorable, and every time

we tried to expand it we were criticized. Why should not seniors in Transcona have the same rights as seniors in Fort Rouge? We believe therefore that they should take a comprehensive look at transportation for seniors. But we need a lot more funding and a lot more joint effort with the City of Winnipeg, and we have not yet heard of a tangible real program—a three year program which was tabled originally with the City of Winnipeg and needs funding and political commitment at the senior level of Government to make it work at the other level of Government in the city and across the province.

Mr. Acting Chairman, Via Rail is a large seniors' issue. The fact that Winnipeg will go from 40 trains to 12 trains is a seniors' issue. Go through those trains and see who takes them, it is seniors and youth primarily. The fact of the matter is that people in Winnipeg will have to take a bus down to Grand Forks and take an Amtrak train across the United States to take a bus back up to Calgary to take a train from Winnipeg to Calgary. That is an absolute disgrace for seniors. The Brandon station closing is a disgrace for the seniors in western Manitoba because seniors like the train, they take the train, they trust the train, and they have been radically denied with a move by the Mulroney Government just to take the money back and take our money for our national transportation system and give it to Amtrak to build cars out of Quebec for Bombardier.

I have not heard the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs responsible for Seniors (Mr. Downey) really get out on the soapbox, which he is good at doing, about that issue. They sort of have a damage control system, you know—we will sort of act like the other Parties on these issues. Mr. Acting Chairman, I would like to see the Minister responsible for Seniors give the same kind of fire and brimstone speech about clawbacks and pensions, GST, Via Rail and other cutbacks that he gives so often in this Chamber on more partisan or what he perceives to be a partisan issue. Look at the speeches he gives and the wind that moves through this Chamber when the Minister is answering a question in a partisan way. I would like to see that same kind of commitment, which I have not seen, on those very same issues that are definitely directing the quality of life by the changes from his federal cousins in Ottawa. The same people he campaigned for are cutting back the senior services, and I would like to see a little feistiness and not this kind of damage control strategy, the Tories, in dealing with real issues for seniors in our province.

Housing is another major issue for seniors, Mr. Acting Chairman. We would rather have money for infill housing and other housing programs for lower income and senior groups than corporate developments like Ladco or the Tuxedo project. Seniors who are going to buy \$250,000 of condominiums in Tuxedo do not need the support of the public purse. Seniors who need housing in the inner city and other areas of the city need the support of the Government. We do not need this housing for the rich which we see in Ladco and Tuxedo with the Liberal, Tory developers going crazy in the City of Winnipeg. We need real good so-so housing for seniors.

Our Pharmacare policy from this Government is abysmal. We saw that when the Tories—and I know

the Minister responsible for Seniors spoke against the United Church of Canada, spoke against the seniors of Canada, spoke against the Consumers Group of Canada, spoke against all the veterans groups of Canada. I know the words from the Members opposite when we had a resolution in this Chamber on the Drug Patent Law. I remember and I have read back the words of the Members opposite on the Drug Patent Law. That is where they stand with seniors, the same position as the former Member and the Minister for Seniors had. They stand with the drug companies, not the seniors. That is clear, that is on the record, and that is indisputable in terms of the record.

* (1500)

That is why we have such a great problem when we deal with pension clawback, because it is just damage control, not real commitment. They believe in a Darwinian policy, the survival of the fittest. That is the Tory philosophy, survival of the fittest. They may be able to couch their words in damage control language because of the minority Government situation, but when we really had a crunch issue we knew where they stood. They stood with the drug companies, Mr. Acting Chairman, they did not stand with the consumers and seniors of this province. Even the United Church could not turn them around. The record will clearly show - (interjection)- Well, the Member for Winnipeg west somewhere, Sturgeon Creek—Kirkfield Park, sorry—those are developing ridings for the NDP. They are called developing ridings for the NDP.

An Honourable Member: You do not know the names of them.

Mr. Doer: Yes, but we are looking at St. Vital. I would ask the Member to look at the results in the Norwood Flats in the civic election.

An Honourable Member: Well I want to say your candidate did not do very well in the civic election.

Mr. Doer: Anyways, Mr. Acting Chairman, on seniors we agree with the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) and his considerable, legitimate and focused criticism of the Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey). The issues for seniors are the issues and services and quality of life they are receiving back home.

In the 18 months since this Government took office, it is indisputable that their drug prices have gone up, their security of housing has diminished, their long-term ability to consume goods and services in this province with the goods and services tax has been diminished, their ability to take the rail on January 15 to other places in western Canada has been totally nullified. Home care has been drastically cut, and when you look at the bottom line we have a lot of challenges ahead for seniors, because those challenges I believe are not being met by the collectivity of decisions from the federal and provincial Governments. Thank you very much, Mr. Acting Chairman.

Mr. Downey: Mr. Acting Chairman, not accepting any of the criticisms from the Leader of the New Democratic

Party but concerned about all the issues dealing with seniors that have been raised by the Second Opposition Party in this House and by the Opposition Party, I want to thank them for their positive input. As I say, I do not accept the criticism, Mr. Acting Chairman, as stated by the two opposition Parties, and I am prepared to pass the Estimates.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Roch): Resolution No. 135: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$207,300 for Seniors Directorate, for the fiscal period ending the 31st day of March, 1990—pass.

This now concludes the Estimates of the Seniors Directorate. We will now be turning to the Estimates of Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation in the Chamber.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Roch): Order, please; order, please. There will be a recess for five minutes so the Minister and the appropriate critics can be here.

RECESS

* (1510)

SUPPLY—CULTURE, HERITAGE AND RECREATION

The Acting Chairman (Gilles Roch): Committee will come to order to begin consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation on page 25 in the Estimates Book. We shall begin with an opening statement from the Honourable Minister.

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation): Thank you, Mr. Acting Chairperson, and I am sorry for the delay. I have my speaking notes hot off the press and copies for the critics.

Mr. Acting Chairperson, I welcome this opportunity to present my department's 1989-90 Estimates. In addition to providing an overview of the department's activities and accomplishments, I also want to talk about the direction the department is taking in its policies and programs.

Our province has a proud history of working together as a community while encouraging Manitobans to preserve and share their unique cultural heritage. In my 18 months as Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation, I have gained a real sense of the vibrancy of the people and organizations we serve. Each one makes its own contribution to Manitoba society, but each one is also part of a society which is dedicated to some common goals.

My department's Estimates demonstrate that the Government values the dedication Manitobans have for these goals: continued cultural growth, protection and development of our heritage, and leisure and recreation opportunities for all. My department will continue to actively support community-based efforts, while maintaining the Government's standards of responsible fiscal management.

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In early October Manitoba hosted a very successful conference of federal-provincial-territorial Ministers responsible for culture and historic resources. At this conference all provinces expressed support for a two-year federal-provincial study on the marketing of cultural products. The proposed study will analyze the challenges of changing demographics in our society. We believe this initiative is a very important one and one which will assist organizations in planning for the future.

The Manitoba Government is committed to long-term planning for the arts. In the Speech from the Throne, we promised to undertake a long overdue review of the province's arts policy. In June I appointed an eight member Arts Policy Review Committee to recommend policy guidelines for Government funding of the arts. The committee is now holding province-wide public hearings and I expect to receive a report by February.

This is the first provincial review of arts policy in Manitoba since the last one conducted by a Conservative Government in 1979. The recommendations we receive will guide arts funding into the 1990s. Our efforts to plan for the future, however, will be greatly hampered by the federal Government's proposed goods and services tax. This tax will have grave effects on the health and viability of our cultural organizations. Although we feel it is necessary to gather more information about the tax, we have a major concern about its effect on our cultural community. Our initial assessments indicate that those groups that have done the most to reduce their dependence on Government will be the hardest hit.

We also fear that the GST will put increasing pressure on our provincial resources. Manitoba took on the responsibility to research the effects of this tax and raise the subject with our provincial colleagues. On the basis of our research, provincial and territorial Ministers unanimously expressed concern to Communication and Culture Minister Marcel Masse who agreed to raise provincial concerns with his Cabinet colleagues.

* (1520)

We recognize the important role Government has in supporting cultural organizations for they help to preserve and promote our cultural heritage. There are also many agencies which carry out the department's mandate, either by operating provincial facilities, or by distributing lottery funds on our behalf.

In 1989-90 we were able to provide an increase to six major agencies to support this work. At the same time the department has taken steps to strengthen accountability with the major agencies we fund. We have also initiated consultation with these agencies on fiscal management issues.

There are other needs to be met at our provincial institutions. Most of these facilities are more than 20 years old, and we have reached a critical period where major repair, renovation and updating is desperately required. In the Speech from the Throne, our Government committed to providing additional resources to ensure Manitoba's major cultural facilities are properly maintained. In 1989-90, the department

will spend \$3.2 million as part of a long-term commitment to improvement.

For the past five years, Manitoba has had a very successful Federal/Provincial Cultural Agreement. Film and video production alone has given a real boost to Manitoba's economy. For example: the \$1.1 million spent by the province in 1988-89 has leveraged \$7 million from other sources. We estimate that \$1.6 million in income tax was generated, exceeding our annual contributions for that year.

The direct and indirect impacts of this cost-shared agreement have meant 219 person years of employment, and \$17.8 million in economic activity for the province. The programs of this agreement have also provided key support to Manitoba publishers and our recording industry. Our present agreement runs out in March 1990. We have advised the federal Government that we want another agreement which will provide similar economic and artistic benefits to Manitoba. I have told Mr. Masse that the province has its money on the table. Now we need a similar commitment from the federal Government. I assure you that this is a matter that we are actively pursuing.

As stated in the Speech from the Throne, the Manitoba Government is committed to the principle of multiculturalism, ensuring support to community organizations to achieve their goals.

In 1989-90, we expanded the Multicultural Affairs Committee of Cabinet to include the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). It is now our intention to add the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme), to this Cabinet committee. We also appointed a multicultural co-ordinator in 1989-90.

These two actions have put us in a position where we can proceed quickly with development of a comprehensive policy and subsequent legislation in support of multiculturalism. One of our guiding principles will be that multiculturalism is a responsibility of every department of Government. Our target is to have a provincial policy ready for distribution within months. We will then consult with Manitoba's multicultural community to develop a provincial Bill for introduction into the next Session of the Legislature.

As part of the developmental work we have done so far, we asked the Manitoba Intercultural Council to tell us what should be included in the provincial policy. MIC has put a lot of effort into analyzing this subject. I am very pleased with their work and would like to thank them for their contribution and for their co-operation in taking on this task. The recommendations they have made to me will greatly assist in the work ahead.

Another development in multiculturalism was the appointment in September of a 15-member Multicultural Grants Advisory Council, which is responsible for providing funding to multicultural organizations. I am confident the new council will ensure fair and equitable distribution of Lottery money to the community. In fact, we have had positive responses from the multicultural community, which indicate the first round of grant approvals was successful.

We have also increased the overall amount of Lottery money available for distribution to multicultural groups by 3 percent this year to approximately \$1.3 million.

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In further support of multiculturalism, I am pleased to say the department has committed \$60,000 to commemorate the 20th anniversary of Folklorama in 1990. Folklorama is the largest multicultural festival in the world and undoubtedly one of Manitoba's most successful summer celebration. The grant program will provide up to \$1,000 for each participating pavilion to develop or improve its cultural display. The total commitment also includes a \$10,000 grant to the Folk Arts Council of Winnipeg to assist with co-ordination, training and workshops on displaying art and artifacts.

As announced in the throne speech, I appointed in June the First Public Library Advisory Board since 1969. The Members are preparing a strategy for development of a multiyear plan for public libraries, including such matters as library automation. Early in 1990, the board will consult with the library community and the general public. The result of this public consultation will be a report with recommendations for action to improve Manitoba's library services.

* (1530)

We have improved provision of library services in the City of Winnipeg library system by increasing support by 8 percent, a total of \$1.7 million for 1989-90. Since 1985 we have increased funding to the City of Winnipeg by 49 percent. Our level of support is comparable with that provided in most major cities of similar size in Canada. My department is also developing plans with Manitoba's library community to share resources and support automation. At the Legislative library, ability to provide information through the Legislative reading room was enhanced. The sharing of printed materials with libraries across Manitoba and Canada was actively promoted.

In the area of heritage there have been many exciting developments. Late July marked the beginning of a six-week pilot program in public archeology at an excavation site located near the historic junction of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers. Under the guidance of professionals, several hundred volunteers, including 200 elementary and high school students, were involved in the scientific recovery of their heritage. In that six-week period some 36,000 visitors toured the dig site.

Another development concerns the Churchill West Peninsula. Recently I had the pleasure to see first-hand the archeological field work on the peninsula which has uncovered evidence of six cultural groups demonstrating 3,500 years of land use. The department is now working with the community to develop a management plan which will protect the heritage resources and enable the local people to use the site.

In August, special status as regional museums was awarded to the Dugald Costume Museum in Dugald, the Sam Waller Little Northern Museum in The Pas and the Mennonite Heritage Village in Steinbach. Our department has committed \$72,000 to each of these museums over the course of this three-year pilot project. The funds will assist with special projects, including school programming. This program demonstrates the Government's commitment to developing museums and museum services throughout Manitoba.

Archival storage of records is an important means of protecting them and ensuring Manitoba's heritage is passed on to future generations. The province has therefore committed a Canada-wide strategy to protect our archival heritage. Manitoba is providing strong leadership in this area with one of the most fully developed conservation programs in Canada. Our department has also assisted the Manitoba Council of Archives with the publication and distribution of a plan for development of archives in Manitoba.

I am also pleased to note that over the past fiscal year we have significantly increased the number of designated heritage buildings in Manitoba. One of the most significant buildings designated this year was the Manitoba Legislative Building which was proclaimed a provincial heritage site on Manitoba's 119th birthday, May 12, 1989.

Our Government believes that recreation is vital to our physical and mental well-being. One of the major areas we will begin to address in 1989-90 is the inequitable distribution of recreation services and opportunities throughout Manitoba.

In most larger communities there are many opportunities for recreation. In remote and rural Manitoba, however, this is not the case. Northern residents, community leaders and Native organizations relate the high level of social problems in the North to high unemployment, isolation and excess idle time. While recreation can help to divert activities currently directed to antisocial behaviour, the communities lack organized recreation programs and the leadership needed to motivate participation in them.

In mid October, Northern Affairs Minister, Jim Downey and I committed \$500,000 over two years to employ eight recreation directors for up to 21 northern communities. The grant will come from the fund for recreation development which was allocated when changes were made to Manitoba's lottery distribution system last May. The two-year program will begin to address some of the problems outlined by our community leaders. It will commence in April of 1990. We are also finalizing the recreation policy statement and I will be releasing it in this fiscal year. Following release of this policy, we will be working closely with municipal officials and community volunteers to implement it. In May, I released a consultant's report on Manitoba Government communications. Some structural changes have been made to the communication and information resources division of my department as a result. Central services have been realigned to create a management and purchasing branch and a new Queen's Printer. We feel this organizational structure will improve service delivery. The restructuring has been accomplished with close to a 10 percent reduction in the division's communication related expenditures in 1989-90.

In closing, I would like to express my appreciation to the organizations, institutions and communities across Manitoba that are working with my department to promote our province's rich cultural heritage. I also want to take this opportunity to recognize the contribution of the 321 employees of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation whose commitment

and dedication to the department's goals and objectives is unsurpassed. These are difficult times for the Canadian public sector, and it deals with increasing demands in an era of fiscal restraint. Departmental staff have risen to this challenge and continue to provide excellent services, not only to the public, but to the Government as well. I want to publicly acknowledge their service and dedication. Thank you.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Roch): As is the custom, we will now allow the opposition Critics to also give opening statements. The Honourable Member for Selkirk.

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): Mr. Acting Chairman, having listened to the speaking notes and to the speaker, the Minister, I am very disappointed, not in the programming that the Minister has put in place, but in the lack of heart and policy that is indicated by these notes that have been given to us.

In these last few months and over the last half a year, we have been witness to a very sad state of affairs in the Province of Manitoba where racism has shown its ugly head throughout many parts of our community, indeed, into the fibre of our community, and I would have liked to have seen in the speaking notes and heard the Minister say some dedication to the cause of defeating the idea of racism, of making every Manitoban equal, not only in the policy programming of the department but in the heart of the province. We cannot afford to waste one more day at taking action on this necessary cause.

Our Department of Education has not shown any leadership in this committee of bringing forward programming to combat the stereotyping of racists within our community. The Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) has not shown any leadership in bringing forward programming to ensure that all are equal and perceived to be equal under the law. We may know that ourselves, in reading our books, with our white persons' backgrounds, that we are equal, but it has to be seen and shown and indicated in the workplace, in the home, and on streets. We cannot afford any more time to be lost, and I find it very disappointing that not one word was mentioned in the Minister's opening remarks.

We continually hear of the song and dance aspect of multiculturalism, and indeed there is a very considerable aspect to multiculturalism that we can learn from the various backgrounds of all Canadians, whether they come from England or Ireland, whether they come from France or Germany or Spain or India or South America, Africa, Australia, wherever they may be, we each have our culture. It is a belief in multiculturalism that we have to hear from this department, not just a tokenism, that we can give out grants and hope that is enough. They need to preserve more than just their heritage of language and folklore. They need to preserve the dignity. I do not see any programming coming forward or any policy being set out by this Government to protect the dignity of Manitobans in the multicultural Canada.

I am also disappointed that in the arts community as well we do not see a programming for all of Manitoba.

Indeed, although I support money being given to such areas as the Dugald Costume Museum, it is not just a regional costume museum, it is a world-class costume museum. We would not appreciate it if the Museum of Man and Nature were called the regional museum and given a token amount of money when it is a world-class museum, so why should we allow out-of-town museums to be held in any less respect.

I do not see the arts policy being extended to our rural areas and to the North. There is no diversification of the department past the Perimeter Highway. In fact when we see \$500,000 given to the North for recreation, I wonder where is \$500,000 being given for arts development when we know that the Natives, Eskimos and Inuit are very artistic and perhaps that is as much recreation to them as what we consider to be recreation here in downtown Winnipeg.

It is not always our background that should be imposed on people. Let us find out what their talents are and ask them to develop what type of recreation they need. We cannot keep our blinders on, on the arts and culture and the heritage portion of Canada. Unless we know a firm, stable backgrounding we will never know our future.

Arts is not just the capital projects, although indeed it is capital projects. We can be proud of the services we have, but we can also fear for those we have yet to develop. Our artists and our artistic community are below poverty level in support, and we have to address that in some factor.

We have to address that many school systems outside of the Perimeter and even inside the Perimeter Highway have no arts classes whatsoever, no mandate or ability to learn and develop their artistic talents, no programming for heritage preservation in our schools to develop, through other programming, and it could just be a sideline, what our heritage is—no dedication to show in our choosing of textbooks what our multicultural fabric could be. It is not just the programming of giving out funds of grants and expecting that to be enough. It has to be a policy of integrating all that we can be into our system.

* (1540)

I am very disappointed by so very much in this document, not for what it has because in most respects we have to be able to support what is here, but let us be always wanting to improve. I look forward to a multicultural policy and I congratulate the multicultural council for developing the backgrounding for that. I look forward to share that with the Minister and congratulate her on developing that type of program and policy. Unless we put that into our hearts and take it as a policy for the future, it will only be a piece of paper.

I think when it so easy in these days to look at multicultural groups only as political supporters, that we are getting on very soft grounds when we continue to hand out grants and then say you are not capable of looking after your own money as we have done with the MIC. It is just incomparable to me to understand why every other group can give out money but not the

multicultural groups because the Minister said that they would be too tempted to spend it unwisely. I think that is indicating some lack of support for—the Minister mentioned this in her speech on Bill No. 13.

It is unfortunate when we cannot give them our full support in this House, when side remarks said by Members in this House indicate how the heart of the Government is. I understand that we will have re-learn and think our back histories because we all have been taught to make fun of those in lesser positions and weaker circumstances than our own.—(interjection)—

The Minister for Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) says he was not taught that way. Unfortunately, society has made us part of the system where we find that white Anglo-Saxons tend to be the dominant and it is filtering in and I hesitate to remind the Minister that we are all guilty of that. I would be very hesitant to say that any of us can claim complete innocence. I wish we could and I hope our children will and that will be our challenge for the future, to provide through this department services to all Manitoba, to all Manitobans as well wherever they may be and whatever their dreams of a future may be. We want equality and this is a major department to give us equality.

I look forward to discussing this further with the Minister, with the department, and will take this time to give my appreciation to all Members of her staff who have worked hard throughout the year and I know are dedicated and I hope together, as we three Parties in this building, will be able to form a better future for Manitoba with an understanding that we are all here to serve all Manitoba.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Roch): As is the custom, we shall defer consideration of item 1.(a) Minister's Salary until we have considered all other items in this department. I will now invite the Minister to bring her staff in at this point.

Mrs. Mitchelson: We start I suppose with Finance and Information. I leave the questioning open to my colleagues in the Opposition.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Roch): Perhaps the Minister would like to introduce her staff to the House.

Mrs. Mitchelson: All right, I would like to introduce my Deputy Minister, Tom Carson, Assistant Deputy Minister for Culture, Heritage and Recreation; and Lou-Anne Buhr, the Executive Director of Administration and Finance, Dave Paton.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Roch): We now go on to item 1., Administration and Finance (b) Executive Support: (1) Salaries—the Honourable Member for Selkirk.

Mrs. Charles: Could the Minister outline the policies and programs that the Government is planning for multiculturalism and that it indicates here in the Activity Identification that the policy of multiculturalism is going to be viewed throughout the Government? Does she have a policy statement on multiculturalism that her department works through and by?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, we have over the last year hired a multicultural co-ordinator. We have strengthened the Multicultural Affairs Committee of Cabinet to include the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and very shortly the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) and I believe it is a very important and positive step to be including the Minister of Housing because there are a lot of housing projects which are Government funded that address some of the needs of our multicultural community.

The policy for the Government of Manitoba on multiculturalism will be coming out very shortly. As I indicated in my opening remarks, we have asked for and received the co-operation of MIC in working towards bringing to us recommendations that they would see included in a multicultural policy.

If I may just go back to the Multiculture Affairs Committee of Cabinet and the multicultural co-ordinator, who is Sandra Damiani. She has been working very aggressively. She serves as a secretary to the Multicultural Affairs Committee of Cabinet and has just recently established an interdepartmental committee of staff from all of the different departments that are represented on the Multicultural Affairs Committee of Cabinet, and that committee has met.

It is very important that Government have a co-ordinated effort to see what initiatives are taking place in each and every department, that there is sharing of that information between departments, so we know that there is not going to be any overlap or duplication, that the resources we have available are resources that are going to be used in the best way, the best manner to develop and formulate, to know what each department is doing with respect to multiculturalism, the new initiatives and sort of a working committee I guess to determine what has happened in the past, where we are at now, and where we are going in the future.

Mrs. Charles: Yes, could the Minister provide, and I do not expect it today, a breakdown on the statistics that are being gathered through the multicultural co-ordinator as to our multicultural groups, the new immigrants and refugees that have come to Manitoba? As I understand, there has been a lack of that in the past, and if she could just break down what areas that that information is being gathered I would appreciate it in the future.

To go on, under managerial staff, it says one SY for \$115,000.00. Could the Minister indicate why a \$115,000 salary is going to this person, who it is and what the functions of that person's position are?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, that managerial staff, that line is for the deputy minister for the department, but I can assure you his salary is not \$115,000.00. In that line there is a provision for severance pay for the former Deputy Minister who was on educational leave, and we have not settled that severance package, but there had to be provision put in this line in the Estimates for that severance pay, should that have to be negotiated and required.

Mrs. Charles: Would the Minister indicate when that staff person was released from the position and what the terms of severances is expected to be?

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Mrs. Mitchelson: It is too early to tell right now whether there would need to be severance pay, but this was a Deputy Minister who was under the previous administration, allowed educational leave, so there was leave for a period of one year—two years, I am sorry, two years educational leave as negotiated and dealt with under the former administration. We do not know as yet and it is too early to tell whether there will in fact need to be a severance agreement negotiated, but it had to be put in this line.

Mrs. Charles: If you are speaking of leave and a severance, I assume then that there is some agreement that this person would be rehired or taken back on by Government, and that if not you were looking at a severance decision—severance pay decision. What situation is that at?

Mrs. Mitchelson: It is my understanding, Mr. Acting Chairperson, that those were the terms of the agreement when she was given the educational leave. We understand right now that she is employed elsewhere so we do not know as yet whether there is going to have to be a severance package negotiated with her, but the money is there in provision that that may have to happen.

* (1550)

Mrs. Charles: Would the Minister indicate whether this is a usual agreement where the severance pay is still on the books after a year? I do not believe the Minister indicated what year that person was released, if she could give me that information, please.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, it is my understanding that it was just two years and a few months ago that she was granted educational leave. She has come back and requested an extension to that educational leave and I believe that request has been granted.

Mrs. Charles: I do not understand if you said that she was presently employed but she is on an educational leave and you are holding a position for her. This seems a very convoluted way of management.

Could the Minister give us a copy of the agreement of the educational pay and what rate she will be taken back on should that occur?

Mrs. Mitchelson: These Estimates were prepared in April with the anticipation or the expectation that there would be a severance package that would need to be paid out at this time when she came back.

I can check. I believe that the agreement under the former administration with her for two years of educational leave would have been an agreement that was negotiated between the then Clerk of the Executive Council and the Deputy Minister, and if it was an Order-in-Council that was prepared, we can certainly provide that information. I do not have it here with me right now but we can attempt to get that information and bring it back. Otherwise, we are going to have to check through Freedom of Information, whether it is an

infringement upon the former deputy's rights to provide any sort of information. Whatever information can be provided, we will get for you.

Mrs. Charles: Thank you, Madam Minister, for that information or seeking that out, but can you clarify, is this job being held for this person?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Is it being held? We have a Deputy Minister in place in Culture, Heritage and Recreation that is not acting. He is a permanent deputy.

Mrs. Charles: Can the Minister indicate, have other agreements been in place where the severance pay has been held from year to year in such a manner or is this precedent-setting?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, it is my understanding that it was budgeted in this year's Estimates because her two-year leave was up in this year. We have not determined as yet whether or not this amount will have to be paid out or not.

Mrs. Charles: We are still finding this kind of strange. Why would you not know if you need severance pay? Like, why would you put it in there not knowing whether you need it or not? Either she is coming back or she is not coming back. I do not understand why you are holding open a position not knowing whether you have to pay out severance pay and yet you are not going to rehire her. Either she is being rehired and she will be on staff, she is not being rehired and the contract either applies or does not apply, in which case the severance pay will either apply or will not apply.

Mrs. Mitchelson: This is a little bit confusing. I wonder if I could provide a full explanation by way of memo to you on all of the circumstances surrounding this, given that it happened under the former administration. There were negotiations that took place to grant her the educational leave and I am not aware of what the policy was under the former administration for this type of agreement.

Mrs. Charles: I appreciate that from the Minister. One further question on the same subject: was any part of the educational leave paid for by the Government, that is, the education section of that itself?

The Minister in her first address spoke of the GST and earlier on in this House I had asked for a list of the arts groups and cultural groups that would be impacted by the GST. Is that available as yet?

Mrs. Mitchelson: That is very difficult for all of that detailed information to be gathered, but each and every group we have met with that has done any work or any research on how they have been impacted, we have asked them to share that kind of information. We have some preliminary working papers that have been prepared by the department, or province. I have to say I have to commend my staff because they were the department that took the lead across Canada and did some research that we did share with our counterparts across the country at the Ministers' meeting.

Indicate specifics—we do not have the hard cold facts. What happened at the Ministers' meeting was we asked Marcel Masse, the federal Minister, to provide us as provinces with all of the detail and the impacts, the research that the federal Government had done on the goods and services tax and how it was going to impact the provinces and different cultural organizations. That was a verbal request. He indicated he would share that. Since then we have something in writing to the federal Minister asking him to live up to that commitment and provide that information.

* (1600)

It is not easy just to compile and try to do the research and the background on each and every arts organization and what the impact is going to be. We know there are going to be negative effects in many areas. There are some winners, more losers I am sure than winners in the whole scenario. I think that a compiled list with factual information is not available and I do not think you would find that anywhere, but what we are doing is trying to share research that has been done. We are asking all those organizations that have done research on their own, the impact that it is going to have, to provide us with that information so we have the facts and the ammunition to fight against the GST.

Mrs. Charles: From the information gathered already, or gathered in other parts of the country, can you indicate what areas of the sector will have the greatest impact from the GST and what, if any, plans are in place to counter the effects of GST on those particularly sensitive areas?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I do know that Government grants and donations will be impacted, receipts of grants will not be able to input tax credit for any input attributable to receiving the grant. Self-employed artists including those in institutional settings will be seen as performing a service and therefore liable to charge the GST. Admissions to performances, unless charitable, will be taxable. Performance space rental and maintenance may be taxable. Administrative costs for organizations with earnings of greater than \$30,000 in some commercial purposes will escalate. Complimentary tickets will be treated as promotional gifts. The GST will apply on royalties. Virtually all publishers will be taxed on all sales unless engaged in exempt activities. Visual art galleries may not be exempt. That is the information I have.

Mrs. Charles: I am trying to determine at what level this information is available, and I appreciate it is a most complicated series of information to get. Has your department dealt with what in essence would be a worst-case scenario, in lieu of the fact the GST does seem as if it is going to go ahead within one short year, and the impact it will have on Manitoba as the arts and cultural aspect of Manitoba, being a major industry in many parts of our province, certainly in the tourist business as well. Have you planned for the worst-case scenario? What is it and what would those plans be?

Mrs. Mitchelson: The deputies, as a result of our provincial territorial meeting of Ministers, are going to

be meeting over the next three to four months to determine what the impact is going to have, so we do not have those details at this moment, but we are working on them. Each province and territory across the country has exactly the same concerns, so there will be sharing of information and we have committed to working together to try to get all that information.

Mrs. Charles: I noted in your press release that you were urging the federal Minister in your opposition to GST. I do hope that your department and other departments have taken on a little bit stronger wording than "urging" him to oppose the GST. I would appreciate if you could comment on what actions you have taken with your federal counterpart as to the pressure you have put on him, understanding the impact the GST as it is proposed will have on Manitoba and on the arts and cultural community in Manitoba.

Mrs. Mitchelson: At the Ministers' Conference I took the lead in my opening statement with condemning the goods and services tax and the impact that it was going to have on culture. All of the Ministers from across the country were there, or their representatives from their provinces were at the meeting, and it became a general concern throughout the day—that was the first day without the federal Minister there. On the second day when the federal Minister was there we led off again with our concerns.

It was very strong urging on part of all provinces and I think as we went around the table there was not a province that did not have something to say to the federal Minister. Our message came across loudly and clearly. I think as an after-result in the news conference after the conference, of course Marcel Masse could not or would not take a stand opposite to a Canadian Government decision that had been made to implement this goods and services tax, but he did commit to us to go back to his Cabinet colleagues and the Minister of Finance and indicate the strong concerns that we as provinces and territories had regarding what the GST would do. I suppose we cannot do much more than ask him for documentation on what impact their working papers show the GST is going to have on cultural organizations and institutions. If he can provide us with that information, I am sure that we will be able to get a better sense of exactly what the impacts are going to be.

Mrs. Charles: Has the Minister, through her department, informed the groups, organizations and individuals involved in the arts and cultural industry in the province of possible impacts GST will have in their community in order that they may have that information, especially the smaller groups and individuals who may not be privy to the many reports that we have coming across our desks? Is that information being made available to them in order that they could put forward their objections if they so wish to the appropriate people?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, we are in the process of doing that on an ongoing basis. The Arts Policy Review, too, with its travels throughout the province and public hearings is certainly asking those

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questions of delegations. We want to be as well informed. We cannot as Government do all the leg work, but if organizations do know what specific impacts it is going to have, we are asking them to share that information. I believe most of them are quite aware that there are going to be negative impacts. To what degree, I am sure a lot of them are not sure at this point.

* (1610)

Ms. Maureen Hemphill (Logan): Mr. Acting Chairperson, I would like to go back a bit. Since the question of multiculturalism was raised, we might as well deal with some of those issues. I understand the Minister and her Government are in the process of developing a policy and when the policy is completed we will be able to see it and be able to react to it.

I am wondering, since we are in Estimates now, if the the Minister can give us some idea of what her Government's philosophy is, what their principles are, and the policy direction that they are moving in?

I know they are going to consult. I know that MIC is being very helpful to them and that they will be talking to other groups and organizations, but they are also the Government. They have indicated in the throne speech and in the Minister's opening statement that multiculturalism is an important priority. I think it would be interesting to know what the Minister sees as the importance of multiculturalism, the philosophy of it and how they intend to move towards achieving the goals that the Government is setting itself, apart from the input of the public.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am pleased to answer that question. I believe it does not matter what political Party you are affiliated with or associated with. We all believe that there should be equal access and opportunity to all Government programming and to the Manitoba lifestyle that some of us who were born and raised here have become accustomed to.

Just on the side, I guess I have been out knocking on a fair number of doors over the last little while with the civic election, and did note too that sometimes we like to almost isolate multiculturalism or those of a visible nature and treat them in some sort of different way. As I was knocking on doors in the constituency and meeting people, those with different ethnic backgrounds and those of the visible minority community, you soon begin to recognize and realize, especially at the civic level, and I am sure it would be at the municipal level throughout the province, that their concerns are the same concerns as your concerns or my concerns. They want good quality schools for their children to go to, they want to be able to access the recreation programs with the local community rink or the recreation programming in the same manner that we are able to, they want a street light at the corner of a certain intersection so that they can get to work more easily. There is no difference. We are all Manitobans and we all do want those basic services. I believe they are provided basically.

It seems that when you get into higher levels of Government, we tend to isolate the multicultural

community to some degree, and I do not think there is any difference. I think that what we have to do is work towards better understanding of each other and each other's heritages and backgrounds recognize that there are differences from those of us who were born and raised and grew up in this country, to those who immigrated several years ago, to those who have just come to our country and to our province recently.

There are barriers that present themselves, one of the first being language barrier in many instances, barriers to job opportunities because credentials may not be recognized in this country or in this province as they were recognized from the country they came from. There are many areas that we have to look at to ensure that Manitobans, whether they were born and raised here or are Manitobans who are new to this province, have equal access and equal opportunity. I think the concerns are universal.

I attended, on Friday evening I guess, the opening of the Intergenerational Multicultural Conference and found that the concerns are universal and throughout all different backgrounds. They, as well as we, want to see recognition of our seniors and respectful treatment of the seniors in every community. There is the same peer pressure between our youth no matter which ethnic background you come from. I think that we are working towards a policy that will provide, through Government services, opportunities of equal access to programming throughout Government, equal access to opportunities and equal participation by all departments of Government in multiculturalism.

Ms. Hemphill: I agree with much of what the Minister said, as they want their children to receive a decent education, they want to have an opportunity to have a job. Their desires and their wishes are not very different than ours, but their ability to carry them out are very different, and of course that is what I think the multiculturalism policy and programs are about. It will be very nice when we do not have to have them anymore, when the discrimination and the barriers are gone, but that is not the case right now, and since it is not the case, we do have to have special programs, special access. It is almost like in some cases some people might think it is a reverse discrimination because you have to give such an importance and an emphasis and a priority to groups that have not been receiving their fair share.

So dealing with the Minister's questions, I wonder, since she believes they need to have access to all Government programming for instance, what steps the Government is taking. I believe that this Minister should be the one who is taking the lead, either taking the lead in these areas or being very heavily involved with other departments that have a program that touches on promotion of multiculturalism. What steps is her Government taking to begin to get information out to the various ethnocultural communities about programs that the Government is offering, since we are very aware that they do not receive it in the traditional ways? Are they taking any extraordinary steps in this area?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I think the first step towards getting information out to the

multicultural community is one that we have taken, and that is setting up an interdepartmental committee so that each department knows—so the left hand knows what the right hand is doing, so to speak—and each department knows what programs are available throughout Government to compile that kind of information.

We have taken steps to try to get into place a community profile, so we have good lists of names and addresses of members of different organizations and communities. We have, over the last little while I guess, with the announcement of the Multicultural Grants Advisory Council, sent out many letters to the multicultural community making them aware of that type of program.

We are attempting to set up a—and this has been very difficult. I know the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) asked last year in Estimates about the ethnic media and what steps we were taking to work more closely with the ethnic media. I will say that we worked a very long, slow process over the last year since the last set of Estimates, but we are attempting and trying to determine specifically who the ethnic media are and trying to get a meeting together with them.

It has been a difficult task, not something that has happened easily and we have called, as the department and from my office, to certain members of the ethnic media to ask them if they might bring together a group of ethnic media to meet with us. Thus far, we have not had positive results or responses back from those members in the community. We are having to devise other ways and means of trying to do that. We will persevere through that. We have had two attempts now at trying to set those meetings up and they have not materialized into anything. I do know that MIC held a conference with the ethnic media just a couple of weeks ago. We did not at that point in time want to do anything that conflicted with what MIC was doing. As a follow-up to that, I think they have some recommendations and we are going to be pursuing those.

Ms. Hemphill: Mr. Acting Chairman, I appreciate the Minister mentioning one of the tools that is at her disposal and that is the ethnic media. I will touch on another one first, and that is the organizations themselves. I think the question of an interdepartmental committee meeting so that they know what is going on is great, but you have to get beyond that so that what you know what is going on is going out into the community. The question is how is that going to happen?

I think the use not only of the ethnic media but the many organizations, who do a tremendous job of getting information out to their own people, is one of the other tools that the Minister should be looking at. The difficulty is not getting information out about your multicultural grants that you just commented on where you had sent information to all the groups and organizations. It is all the other programs that are not in the arena of multicultural programs. That is the difficulty because the department is set up so that it communicates with your groups about the programs that you are putting in place and about the grants and your criteria and things. It is access to all of the other things that I think is the big deficiency.

* (1620)

Does the Minister—are they moving at all in the direction of looking at working through not only the ethnic media but perhaps other organizations to get information out? Is there any thought of translating some of the most basic and important information about programs that they would want to access into other languages? Well, we will start with that.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, there are many organizations out there that do liaise with the multicultural community on an ongoing basis. I think that we can depend on MIC now that its role has been that of advising and advocacy, or has become that to try to get that information out. I know they have taken a step in the right direction by publishing a newsletter and distributing that throughout the Province of Manitoba to all of the organizations that belong to MIC. It was a very productive positive newsletter, something that I think they have had in the works for many years but maybe has not been sort of high on their priority list until this last little while. So they have done that and they have done an excellent job of that.

We are building a data base right now as a result of hiring a multicultural co-ordinator that will have for us a list of all the different multicultural organizations that do provide a service and that would be a way of disseminating some of our information. We have committed to a consultation process after this Session is over and before the next Session begins. Once we have our multicultural policy out to the community, we are going to be holding consultation in preparation for legislation to be brought in next Session. So there will be an opportunity for us to be out and speaking to the multicultural community in all parts of the province. It is a concern that we have that we do get the information out, and we are working towards a better delivery system for that information.

Ms. Hemphill: Mr. Acting Chairman, I was having a little trouble before but a lot more trouble now understanding why the department is having some much trouble setting up a meeting with the ethnic media. I know that there is a list that the Minister has in her department that lists all the ethnic media and recognizing that somebody may drop off, or somebody else may be added, there is an existing list of all of the ethnic media.

I do not know why the Minister is turning it over to somebody else to decide to call it because I do not think they have the list. I do not think there is anybody out there that I know, in the ethnic media, that has the list that the Minister has that says who all of the ethnic media are. I am wondering, especially in light of the fact that it has not worked and she has had trouble and they have not been able to pull it together, why she is not taking this back herself because I think they would just as soon receive an invitation from you as from a member of their own group calling the meeting, and get this meeting under way.

I called a meeting to meet with the ethnic press that was arranged in 10 days, and I am not suggesting that everybody was there representing every community

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because you never do get them all at every meeting, but there was a good cross section that gave us a really good feeling and a lot of good feedback and some good recommendations on what their problems were. I just do not see why it is taking so long, if this is important to the Government, to get that show on the road and to have the meeting take place. I am sure that the Minister will find that she will even though she thinks she understands the situation. I thought I did, too. I learned a lot from that meeting and I am sure the department could.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, we have been in power for 17 or 18 months now, but I know that there was no strategy in place for the last six and a half years before we took over Government to use the ethnic media to communicate with the multicultural community in any different way than what has been happening over the last 18 months. So I think the Member would recognize that there has been a problem throughout different administrations in getting the message out to the multicultural community, and we are working to try to resolve that problem.

I do know I have talked individually with members of the ethnic media, but I have not had a group together. There is a bit of a dilemma. I think there is a list. Who do you call ethnic media? We have a list, but do you get down to the groups or organizations that do a bulletin in their church that are called ethnic media? There is a very wide range from those that communicate on a regular basis with their communities and those that just communicate. The list includes church organizations that put a bulletin out on a weekly basis. So we are having to determine what ethnic media really means, and we are trying to get a handle on that and a list of that before we can really assess and meet with, and try to develop something so that we can communicate in a better way.

Ms. Hemphill: Not to beat this to death, but there was a list previously that did not include churches and organizations like that, that included the ethnic organizations that were communicating through either a magazine or a newspaper, albeit not always on the same level. It did not have anything to do with churches and the broadening that the Minister is saying, but my question still remains. I have been trying to say to her, the policy was in place for communicating with the ethnic media, and it did not work as well as we wanted it to, even though we had communicated it. I think that all departments do not understand it, they are not used to doing it, and it requires a lot of leadership from this Minister and other Ministers in other departments.

So when I ask you what is happening, it is not because I want to keep hearing the answer, we are doing what you did. We had some problems with what we did, it was not working as well as we wanted and we were trying to improve it. I expect that the Minister is trying to improve the implementation of the policy that we had said, and what I am asking her is, is it working any better, or is this a priority for them? So I would ask her to answer that and ask her, again, the question of why this meeting is not taking place and will she perhaps consider not just leaving it with whoever she

gave it to, but taking it back to herself and saying, you have not been able to manage it, for whatever reasons, it does not really matter why, we will call the meeting. You decide on the group. The point is that you cannot keep going for a year saying, well, we cannot deal with this group because we do not know who they are. You decide who they are and you make the list, and then you call it and start dealing with them.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairman, I guess maybe I have been somewhat misleading in my answers, but I know we are determined to get a meeting. That list of ethnic media that does receive advertising from Government, there is that list, yes. I guess we are just going to have to take the bull by the horns and get on with this, double our efforts to make it happen.

I do want to tell you some of the positive things in the list of ethnic media that we advertise in. We have in our department just recently done a fair amount of advertising to let them know what is happening. I do recognize and realize that this has to be Government-wide, but what we have done is advertise the arts policy in the ethnic media. We advertised about Manitoba Intercultural Council and the Grants Advisory Council in the ethnic media. When our new ADM was hired we advertised that in the ethnic media, so we have made a concrete effort to utilize the ethnic media in our advertising so we know what is happening in the department. I recognize and realize that it is an overall Government initiative that has to be taken.

Mrs. Charles: One further question I have. There was notification sent up through an Order-in-Council that Judith Perry and Muriel Adams were to share the position of executive assistant. Could the Minister indicate what the sharing means? Is this a work-sharing position?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I am pleased to answer that question because as a woman and as a politician, a working woman, I really believe that whenever the opportunity arises we can employ two people, people who may have other home commitments and might want to get back into the work force, we should make every effort to provide job sharing opportunities so that they can work and contribute to Manitoba society in a working way.

I have two very competent executive assistants and I must say how pleased I am to have two people working in that one position. I think that I am probably getting more than my fair share of work out of them because they are so committed and dedicated. I think if you added up the number of hours that they put in, quite honestly they are probably both working close to full time.

Mrs. Charles: I want to congratulate you on doing that. I think it is a wonderful way of having the best of both worlds for mothers or people with educational needs and so forth. I congratulate you on that, and I am sure you are quite right, you are getting more than you bought.

* (1630)

Could the Minister indicate if this is unique for the Government and will there be a special report perhaps given on it and how it works to encourage other departments and other areas within Government and offshoots of Government to go forward? It could be a good case study and I hope we advertise it well.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, I cannot give you any figures or any detail on how much job sharing is going on throughout Government or what is happening in our department even, but I can try to gather some of that information. I think it is an excellent way and an opportunity for all of us to encourage and get women back into the work force that maybe have been out for a while and are not quite ready to take that major step or cannot make that major commitment at this point in time.

I think it is probably fair to say that it is unique for political staff, fairly unique, and it is certainly something that I would commend and recommend to anyone who might ask. I think a future direction for encouraging women to get into the workplace, this would be one way of making that happen.

Mr. Richard Kozak (Transcona): I note that the Minister has held down costs in all areas of administration and finance in her department. As my Party's Treasury Board Critic, I have to view that very positively. I wonder if this has been a conscious strategy on the part of the Minister?

An Honourable Member: Oh, without a doubt.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, our Government committed during the election campaign and since we took office to manage the affairs of the taxpayers of Manitoba well, and I believe that we have attempted in all areas to do that. I am glad to see you asking that kind of question and I would like to see some accolades from the Opposition when we do something right.

Mr. Kozak: This Minister's success in this area is a shining example to all of her colleagues who would do well to consistently follow her example in this regard.

I note that salaries and other expenditures in all administration and finance categories of this department do show significant year-over-year cost savings in the current fiscal year vis-a-vis the previous fiscal year.

I would in a friendly non-partisan spirit like to commend the Minister on the cost savings which I do not feel were realized at the expense of the smooth operation of the department, and I reiterate that I feel this Minister's caucus colleagues could perhaps benefit from reference to the example that we see before us today.

I do have one question for the Minister on the item before us at present, Other Expenditures under Executive Support. I note that unlike savings realized in other portions of these Estimates, we see there is in fact a significant increase in expenditures under Transportation, a significant increase in expenditures

under Communication, and a significant increase in expenditures, in fact approximately a 50 percent increase in expenditures under Supplies and Services. I wonder if the Minister and her staff might perhaps like to account for those increases, as they are so much at variance with the type of performance that we see elsewhere in these Estimates.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I am glad to be able to answer that question. With the hiring of a multicultural co-ordinator that is staffed out of my office, we have made provision for printing of the multicultural policies, so that would look after supply and services as printing. The printing portion of the multicultural policy will come out of this budget line. The other operating would be for the community consultation for The Multicultural Act which we anticipate will take place in this fiscal year, and for the purchase of a computer for the multicultural co-ordinator to do a comprehensive community profile of the multicultural community.

Mr. Kozak: I would like to say that over the last year and a half many Honourable Members in all three Parties in this Chamber have used the word "streamlining" and have commented on the desirability of improving the efficiency of delivery of Government services. I would like to put on the record, Mr. Acting Chairman, that it is rather a pleasure this afternoon to be questioning a Minister who seems to have brought some meaning to the concept of streamlining in terms of the expenditures of her department in the administration and finance categories.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Roch): Shall the item pass? Item 1.(b)(1)—pass; item 1.(b)(2)—pass.

Item 1.(c)(1)—the Honourable Member for Selkirk.

Mrs. Charles: In the Activity Identification it mentions the departmental goals. Could the Minister outline what these goals are, or table the goals that are being worked towards?

Mrs. Mitchelson: The thrust of the Communications Branch of my department is to work towards public information on the arts policy, the multicultural policy, the recreation policy, which are three policies that we have under way right at this time. The Communication Branch in my department runs a program and that is a recognition of volunteers throughout the community. It is the pre-Manitoba awards for multiculturalism, for heritage and for recreation that we are going to pursue for the first time this fiscal year.

* (1640)

Mrs. Charles: The Minister speaks of policies that are yet to be developed and yet you are working towards them already. It seems kind of strange. How can you not have the policies in place and yet be working towards them already? I do not understand. It says you are working to achieve both short-term and long-term departmental goals, and the last question when I asked you that, you are speaking of these policies in multiculturalism and recreation that have yet to be developed.

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There seems to me to be a dichotomy of terms there, one you are working towards and one you have not developed. I just wonder what this department is actually doing when you do not have the policies in place.

Mrs. Mitchelson: As I have indicated, this department is a very busy department. Probably the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation is one of the very busiest throughout Government as far as the social activities, speaking engagements, speaking events.

There are not many Ministers who have as many invitations that come across their desk and I think that you as critic, recognize and realize the number of invitations that you receive on a daily basis to attend different functions throughout cultural, multicultural, heritage and recreation communities. We are busy and there is a lot of time commitment in this department to preparation of background material for speaking engagements.

As I have said, we have multicultural pre-Manitoba awards for multiculturalism that are presented every other year. There is a fair amount of time that goes into the preparation and the application process, and that is all done through the Communication Branch.

There are the heritage awards that are presented on a yearly basis, so there is the preparation and the administration of that. For the first time this year we are going to be presenting volunteer awards in the recreation community. We have yet to develop the specific program for recognition in the arts community, so there are ongoing programs that need to be developed and ongoing programs that need input every year.

Our Communication Branch also is the backup for Government protocol so, for instance, when we are planning for Manitoba Day celebrations our Communications Branch is very actively involved in communicating throughout the province what Manitoba Day means and trying to develop a public awareness around Manitoba Day and the heritage that we should be very proud of. Any special events that happen throughout the province, because we are the backup for Government protocol, this branch tends to be very actively involved in those preparations.

Mrs. Charles: They all seem to be definitive programs. Could you tell me what your short-term goal is in Culture, Heritage and Recreation and what is your long-term goal as under this activity identification that is what you are working towards?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I suppose the short-term goals, Mr. Acting Chairperson, are those goals to get into place, and those we are actively working on are the policy statements. Those would be short term. Once we have a policy statement, then of course there is the implementation of those policies and the long-range planning for implementation.

We have an arts policy review. The short-term goal I suppose is to hold the consultative meetings throughout the province to see and get input from the

arts community to accept the recommendations of the arts policy and then to implement them over a longer-term period of time. There are some recommendations that can be implemented fairly quickly. There are others that may take a long period of time. Some of those that take a long period of time are the ones that would have major financial implications and we would have to look at long-range planning and long-range funding for those programs.

We do want to stimulate the development and appreciation of our unique heritage, of our cultural and artistic resources in the Province of Manitoba. We want to encourage community initiatives which ensure access to all Manitobans—creation, production, exhibition or publication of works representing Manitoba and Canadian or international culture.

Some other activities are, my department does assist initiatives which provide Manitobans with the opportunity to become involved in cultural activities at the community, regional, and provincial levels. We actively encourage initiatives enabling ethnocultural, Francophone and indigenous populations to preserve their language and their heritage. These are ongoing activities.

We also, through our department, manage our province's participation in the ERDA, the communications agreement, our portion of that provincial-federal cost-shared agreement.

Mrs. Charles: If you have a program to promote understanding of multicultural groups, would that be done under the Communications Branch, as through publications, to be made aware of traditions, cultural and backgrounding of new groups to Canada, perhaps through their religious beliefs or tradition or cultural beliefs, is that being done, and if it is not, would it be done under this program?

Mrs. Mitchelson: It is a combination. We have Cultural Resources which is responsible or has the staff in place to provide multicultural programming, and the Communications Branch would follow through with initiatives for public awareness of those activities.

Ms. Hemphill: Mr. Acting Chairman, I am wondering if the Minister can tell us what their objectives are in the department for affirmative action.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Might I ask whether you want to do it at this point or would it more appropriately be done under Personnel?

Ms. Hemphill: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the Minister will find that I do not spend a lot of time on line by line, so since it is not a long Estimates process and you basically have the staff, if I can just cover my territory if it is not necessarily on the line or otherwise, I will never get a turn if I am waiting for the line.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, it may just take a minute to get that information pulled together, and wherever possible we will try to accommodate unless it is something specific.

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Mrs. Hemphill: A question along this line is, what role is the Minister taking, apart from the leadership that she is going to tell me about, in her own department about affirmative action. What are their objectives and what have they managed to achieve?

What role is she taking in the Government's overall affirmative action program and what improvements does she believe they have made overall in terms of meeting goals if they have been set, or improving affirmative action hiring, and specifically approving the information out into the ethnic community about what jobs even are available?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I guess the first step to co-ordination throughout Government is, as I have said, the Inter-Governmental Committee that will be meeting on a regular basis and sharing information. I am sure that will be a topic of discussion throughout departments on what each and every department is doing in the area of affirmative action.

I believe that the co-ordination and obviously a committee that is addressing multicultural issues throughout Government would certainly be looking at affirmative action throughout the departments and bringing forward an assessment of what is happening where, and if in fact one department can share with another ways and means of improving the hiring process and making sure that affirmative action is followed in each department. I am sure that information will be forthcoming, as a result of this committee.

* (1650)

As far as our department, the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation, goes we are over target for women in management, according to the Civil Service Commission. I think that is commendable.

We will look at our long-term targets, and maybe I will give you that information and the information on where we are at, for our long-term targets are, as of around the year 2000. I will give you where we should be and I will tell you where we are at right now, how is that?

In visible minority, our long-term target is 20 and we are at 19 right now.

The physically disabled, we are at 13 right now and our target is 24.

In our Native target group, our long-term target is 34 and we are at four, so that is an area where we are considerably behind.

I do want to indicate that the initiative that was just announced by the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) and myself, to hire eight recreation directors for the North, which will be part of my departmental component, is going to look at the hiring of northern and Native individuals wherever possible. We are going to make a concerted effort to hire them at this point in time or to ensure that there is some type of a program in place that we are having competent and qualified Natives or Northerners to fill those positions. That should be a positive step in the right direction to look at and to hire Northerners and Natives and bring our component up a bit in that area.

Ms. Hemphill: It is a little bit hard to tell from the numbers, sometimes you could be over your goal by hiring one woman, depends on how many you have and what the numbers are.

Can the Minister give us some idea of what the percentage is, in your overall department? What is it you are looking at for women, Native, disabled, and visible minorities? Is there a percentage of your total staff complement?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Our targets are proportional to what the population is. Our long-term target for Natives is 10 percent, we are at 1.29 percent; our long-term target for the physically disabled is 7 percent, and we are at 4.18 percent; our long-term target for visible minorities is 6 percent, and we are at 6.11 percent. According to the Civil Service Commission, we are at 56 percent women in our department. That is where we are at, yes.

Ms. Hemphill: I am just wondering where you got the percentages, like how do we end up with 6 percent visible minorities and 10 percent Native? Is it based on their prorated basis of population?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Roch): Item 1.(c)(1) Communication Services: Salaries—pass; 1.(c)(2) Other Expenditures—pass.

Item 1.(d) Finance and Management Services: (1) Salaries—the Honourable Member for Transcona.

Mr. Kozak: I might ask the Minister for clarification at this point. It is clear that this particular function, within her department, is a crucial function staffed by people of outstanding expertise, as their salaries so indicate. Does this function, within her department, make recommendations to the Minister or to other bodies or agencies regarding the disbursement of Government funds?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, if I understand the question correctly, you are asking whether the actual staff within administration and finance make recommendations on who we grant money to? It would be the program side of the department that assesses any application that would come in for funding. They assess that, make a recommendation to the Minister, the Minister either accepts that or rejects that for whatever reason, and it is the financial people that look at the accountability of the department, administer the grant cheques and follow up in that respect. It is the programming side of the department, in the branch of cultural resources, that looks after that.

Mr. Kozak: Then do I understand correctly from the Minister that this particular function of her department has no responsibility for developing the criteria, according to which funds are allocated by her department?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, they help to judge fiscal responsibility, and there are certain

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programs which are generic formula based grant programs that are handled through grants administration in this branch.

Mr. Kozak: Once again, the Estimates for this section of the department suggests that Finance and Management Services process 1,500 grant requests received under 11 departmental programs. The Minister confirms that certain formula grants involve a greater level of participation by this section of her department.

I wonder if it would be possible, given the fact that periodically we hear accusations, well founded or not, of patronage in the distribution of Government funds. I wonder if it would be possible for the Minister to provide this committee with some indication as to what criteria are used in the granting functions of her department. Indeed, if she feels it might be useful to us as legislators, if copies of all grant requests received by the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation were made available to Members of the Legislature.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am not sure of the intent of that question. Was the Member asking for me to table in the Legislature every grant application? Are you looking for the different criteria for the different programs? There are several different grant programs in my department and there are different criteria and different guidelines for all of those programs.

Mr. Kozak: My prime concern, and indeed the piece of information that would be most helpful to myself and to my colleagues would be the criteria employed by Government, employed by this Minister's department, for the allocation of grants of all categories.

Would it be possible for the Minister to table all of the criteria employed within her department? Does she feel it would be useful, as my Party feels, for Members of the Legislature to have access to those criteria, to put it all up front on the table, or does she feel that this might pose certain administrative difficulties or confidentiality difficulties?

* (1700)

Mrs. Mitchelson: I believe that, if I am understanding again, the question that is asked is that you want to know whether Government would provide, for Members of the Opposition Parties, in this instance you are talking about my department now, the lists of all of the different grant programs that are available, the criteria and the guidelines that are used to determine whether somebody gets a grant or they do not get a grant. All right, I got it. - (interjection) - Well, it is easier than tabling your telephone calls.

There is a grants catalogue that is public information, and I will try to pull together—if everything that you have asked for is in this grants catalogue, I will provide that to you, and if there is anything more that we can provide in the way of criteria or—okay?

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Roch): The hour is now 5 p.m., I am interrupting the proceedings for Private Members' Hour. The committee will return at 8 p.m. this evening.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

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

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

RES. NO. 17—THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NORTHERN UNIVERSITY

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed resolution of the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), Resolution No. 17, The Establishment of a Northern University.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I move, seconded by the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak), that

WHEREAS all residents of Manitoba should have equitable access to educational opportunities regardless of their geographic location; and

WHEREAS there are many successful examples of higher education programs being delivered in the North; and

WHEREAS many of these existing programs have shared objectives, but are not co-ordinated in and connected under one umbrella; and

WHEREAS there are many new innovative ways of delivering educational programs to the North which require a development, demonstration and evaluation; and

WHEREAS northern residents have consistently expressed a desire to exercise more control over programs delivered in northern Manitoba; and

WHEREAS the previous NDP administration had committed itself to the establishment of a northern university or northern polytechnic institute; and

WHEREAS the Northern Development Agreement human resource component, along with the Limestone Training Employment Agency, already commits more than \$15 million to post-secondary and adult education;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE Legislative Assembly of Manitoba call upon the present Government to immediately initiate discussions with northern residents and organizations with a view towards establishing a northern university, which would provide higher education opportunities to northern residents under control of a democratically structured governing body, the majority of which would be northern residents.

MOTION presented.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this resolution today. We actually had anticipated there might be agreement to rearrange the order of this particular resolution as has been requested

by the Opposition House Leader (Mr. Alcock), but since that was not forthcoming, I am pleased nonetheless to be introducing this today.

I would like to indicate initially, Mr. Speaker, that there is a strong desire in northern Manitoba to have greatly increased educational opportunities. I want to go back in history a bit to see where we have come, and we have come a substantial distance to this point in time.

I actually have a claim to fame, Mr. Speaker, as probably the first individual to receive his or her university degree in Thompson, Manitoba. I received my degree, my B.A., in 1977 in Thompson at a ceremony. I think it is indicative of how far we have come in the sense that at that time I received my degree there, after having taken none of the course work, although I am from Thompson, been there since I was a kid, graduated from the local high school, it was only because there was the centenary of the university that there was a ceremony in Thompson to grant degrees.

It is interesting when I look back on it, because in 1977 it required the centenary of the university for people such as myself to receive a degree in Thompson. In the last number of years, literally dozens of Northerners have received university degrees in northern Manitoba, and they have received it after having taken the entire course work in our area. That is very significant, Mr. Speaker.

* (1710)

In less than 15 years, we have gone from the situation where there was virtually no opportunity to get a post-secondary education in northern Manitoba, to the point where people are receiving university degrees, and of course graduating from community college, on a regular basis.

I take some pride in having been part of the New Democratic Party Government that made a number of these initiatives a reality, and I would point to the record, Mr. Acting Chairman. For the education of the Minister of Education, who seems to have a rather difficult time on this particular issue, he should perhaps look back on the sorry record of the Lyon Conservative Government. In 1987 and 1988, one of the things that the Government did at that time was cut IUN entirely, he cut Inter-Universities North, at that time the only opportunity available for people to take university courses, not a full program, but university courses. It was only through a substantial lobbying effort that anything was salvaged in terms of the Inter-Universities North program. It was only through strong community effort that that took place.

I was on the University of Manitoba board at the time, and I remember there was a lot of pressure from the university community to maintain that program. I think that is important for the record, for the Minister of Education. Perhaps he was not aware of what had happened. Perhaps he is not fully aware of the skepticism and cynicism that does greet the Conservative Party when it comes to education in northern Manitoba. I would suggest that a lot of it comes from that action in 1977, 1978, when they tried to cut virtually the only program that we had in place.

I do want to point to the fact that under the New Democratic Party there were substantial improvements, not only in terms of Inter-Universities North, where the number of course offerings increased substantially, but also in a number of other key areas. We have seen a number of programs under the Northern Development Agreement that have been put in place, in terms of the social work, the northern nursing program, for example. We have seen the civil technology program put in place in northern Manitoba, a new program, a new initiative. We also saw, and I am quite proud of this, too, and I am very disturbed at the direction the Minister has taken in this regard, the establishment of the Limestone Training and Employment Agency, later the Northern Training Authority, which I think was a major development in terms of the offering of education. It had one of the best graduation rates of any programs in northern Manitoba. It provided training that had not been available ever since many of the cutbacks of the Lyon Conservative Government, when training was cut by that previous Government in northern Manitoba.

I am very proud of those developments, Mr. Acting Chairman. I want to indicate that one of the things I was most pleased at was the fact that the previous Government had gone so far as to commit itself to the establishment of a northern polytechnic, northern university, if you like. I prefer to use the term polytechnic, because a polytechnic involves both university and community college courses. That was exactly what we had indicated was going to be brought in. In fact, I would point to the resolution which points out that a significant amount of money has already been spent in northern Manitoba in training and education programs.

Now, what we are dealing with is the fact that by joining those programs and by enhancing those programs, we can offer substantial improvements in terms of education in northern Manitoba. I, for example, feel that one of the most important aspects of northern polytechnic has to be in terms of first and second year university programs. That would give a tremendous boost to a lot of people in communities, such as my own community and surrounding communities, who currently have to travel to Winnipeg or to Brandon to take a first or second year university program.

For those of you who are aware of the system that exists in other provinces and other jurisdictions in other countries, the junior college concept, I think, has a lot of possibilities. That is one of the basic features of a junior college concept, in that it allows people to remain in their own community.

I think that if one looks at the statistics, it is clear that northern Manitobans, in fact, rural and northern Manitobans together are at a distinct disadvantage when it comes to educational opportunities. They are at a distinct disadvantage because they have to leave their communities in order to continue their education and that was evident, for example, when we discussed the situation in terms of the supply of doctors, just the other day in the Department of Health Estimates. The number of students who are in the medical program, who will become doctors, is disproportionately weighted toward the City of Winnipeg. In fact, 80 percent of the

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people in the program are from the City of Winnipeg, only 20 percent are from rural and northern communities, and that is in a situation where in fact 40 percent of the students should be, if population is any guide in that program, from rural and northern communities, but only 20 percent are.

I can indicate from my own experience, having had to leave to go to university, actually at the age of 16. I went to the University of Manitoba. I remember the situation that faced many of my classmates, and they went through a very difficult situation, 450 miles away from home, the homesickness led many people to quit. The financial pressures led other people to quit, and just the straight adjustment, the culture shock, if you like, of going from a community such as Thompson to Winnipeg was a major development. I know that is not unique, that has been the situation in rural communities, it has been the situation in other northern communities. In fact the adjustment is far more difficult when one comes from a small outlying community in northern Manitoba.

That is one of the reasons we need a northern polytechnic based right in northern Manitoba to provide an adjustment mechanism in terms of that, and I would like to see the first and second year university option available to rural and northern communities, and I think that is very important to stress. As I said, there have been a number of significant educational developments, but we have not gone far enough yet.

I believe that the long-term goal should be for northern and rural young people, and mature students as well, because many of the participants in the current programs, whether it be IUN or the educational programs, are mature students actually, many women in particular in those programs. I hope the time will come when the opportunity will be there to take all but the most specialized training right in rural and northern communities. That should not be all that difficult because new technologies are available in terms of teleconferencing and computer assisted education.

We have educational resources available in each and every community. I have personal experience with that. I have taught for Inter-Universities North both in Thompson and in Cross Lake. My wife is currently teaching a course for Inter-Universities North in northern Manitoba, and there are many other people in our northern communities who do have the qualifications to teach at both the university and community college level. So the situation is there, Mr. Speaker, where we do have resources available in those communities.

I want to indicate as well the resources are there in terms of classroom facilities, and there is community support for northern education, for rural education. In fact, they have strong community support. I would point in fact to the background behind the Northern Polytechnic. We were able to establish at a public meeting a number of years ago, a committee that represented a cross section of the community and that worked strongly for the establishment of the northern polytechnic. In fact one of the members of that committee was recently elected to the city council in Thompson and she has indicated I know that she is going to continue the fight for that northern polytechnic.

So there is a strong community support for expanded education.

I want to stress to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) that one of the fundamental things that we need is consultation with Northerners. That was the background with the establishment of the Limestone Training Facility a number of years ago. Extensive hearings were held throughout the North, and that was one of the direct recommendations of people that there should be training available, that it should be available not only in major centres but in the communities themselves, and that was one of the major things that was implemented, Mr. Speaker. That I think is necessary now, and I have expressed in debate in the Legislature my concern about a number of initiatives that the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) has taken, and I want to stress again that those moves that the Minister has taken, I think one of the problems with them has been the lack of consultation with northern communities. By that I mean people in the programs, I mean the students in the programs, and I mean the surrounding communities as well because we all have a vital stake in the future of those programs.

I want to stress once again that what we are talking about when we are talking about a northern polytechnic is expanded educational opportunity, not another institution or not one existing institution taking over responsibilities and providing another layer of administration for the existing programs. We are talking about expanded opportunities, and there are models that are available, as I mentioned before. Junior colleges are a good example of that. There are excellent models available in terms of programs that would integrate both community college and university courses, and I would also stress the need to maintain such programs as new careers, Mr. Speaker, which is very important to many northern communities. New careers—by the way—has one of the best graduation rates, the greatest levels of success of any program, in any field in terms of training and education and those programs, they all have a unique focus, a unique identity and many of them are clearly working, and that is why I am very concerned about the moves that have been taken by the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach).

In fact I would suggest to the Minister that what would satisfy many Northerners is a commitment by the Minister to the maintenance of the existing programs and also not vague talk about further programs, but a specific commitment, a specific commitment to the northern polytechnic concept, and I think that is vital. I know some of the existing institutions have been talking about that. I know KCC in The Pas has a paper that is circulating in terms of a northern college concept. I am quite aware of that, Mr. Speaker. I am aware of some of the recommendations in that particular paper.

I want to stress again that I would hope that we can have an umbrella approach which does maintain the unique focus of many of the existing programs while giving greater access to education and greater room for Northerners in particular to take an education right in their home community. I would like to stress one thing and I have indicated this in the Legislature in the past. I am not just talking about Northerners. As well,

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I think there are many rural communities that in fact have even less educational access than some of the larger northern communities. I know for example, Mr. Speaker, my brother-in-law at one time lived in McCreary, Manitoba, and he indicated at the time that he was interested in moving to Thompson, in fact did move to Thompson for a short period of time, because there is more educational access in Thompson because of the IUN programs, than there is in a community such as McCreary which is, I suppose by some definitions, close to Brandon and Brandon University, but is still too far to commute on a regular basis.

* (1720)

What happens, Mr. Speaker, if anybody is aware of communities such as McCreary and other communities in the Parklands area and other rural communities, people simply do not end up going to those particular programs because they cannot commute and they need those resources right in their communities.

I think we have come to the point where the clear evidence is there that you can receive an education that is equal in quality in your own community to the kind of education you can receive on a major campus, Mr. Speaker, and that is clearly in evidence by the number of graduates in both training programs, community college programs, university programs, that we have seen throughout northern Manitoba.

I think what has been particularly exciting, and I use that word, Mr. Speaker, because that is exactly what it is, it is exciting to see the progress. I have had the opportunity to know people on a personal basis and see them going from a situation of having no opportunities, to being able to prove themselves, to become practising social workers, and practising nurses and practising teachers. I have seen that growth and development and it is something that is quite exciting to watch.

I know the Minister of Northern Affairs had the opportunity to see that progress at the graduation that he attended a number of days after he came into office, and I am sure he learned from that and I hope he will pass it on to the Minister of Education who I think would do well to talk to Northerners, come up to northern Manitoba and consult with us. I would say, if he was to consult adequately with Northerners, would support this resolution. In fact, I look to this resolution as a test on how well he has been in touch with northern Manitobans because, if he has, I am sure he will give it his 100 percent support and we can all support the concept of a northern polytechnic university in this Legislature. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

COMMITTEE CHANGES

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: Enns for Connery; Manness for McCrae; and Praznik for Gilleshammer.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed? (Agreed)

RES. NO. 17—ESTABLISHMENT OF A NORTHERN UNIVERSITY (Cont'd)

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to participate in the debate on the resolution on a northern university. This resolution raises some fairly important questions of policy, and I am glad to be able to express my views on those issues.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, my colleagues in Government and I clearly recognize the vital importance of a post-secondary educational institution in the North. We know that the future of the North, as in the rest of the province, will be critically dependent upon the provision of educational opportunities which will allow individuals in all of Manitoba to indeed improve their state. This is especially important in the North because the average level of education in the North is lower than it is for Manitobans as a whole.

I am also very well aware, Mr. Speaker, of the potential for improved co-operation in the delivery of post-secondary education in northern Manitoba. In fact, I am a little bit surprised that the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), who was a Member of a Government for six years, which could have done a lot but really did very little with regard to a program for northern Manitoba. They did not do it and only after their defeat in the House did they suddenly realize that they had to address the issues of northern Manitoba. In the course of the election campaign and in experiencing a conversion they promised a northern university without, I am sure, a very clear idea or understanding of what was meant by their promise.

They were desperate, Mr. Speaker, and in desperation they knew they had to do something to try and keep that northern vote. Where were they for the six years previous to that? Well, we are not really sure. They certainly did not address the issues of northern Manitoba. The Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) who was supposedly a very important Member of their caucus, I guess did not have very much clout around the table, around the caucus table, because there was nothing happening in northern Manitoba.

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

Well, let us talk about a few of the programs that they were somewhat forced into and I hope the Member for Thompson will stick around to listen to what I have to say. First of all, the Government's approach was one of fragmenting the delivery of education in the North among several departments. They placed considerable responsibility for training in the North in the Department of Energy and Mines for example. They had other programs in the Departments of Employment Services, and Northern Affairs, and also in Education. When we came into office we knew that there was a need for co-ordination because the New Democratic approach was certainly a peculiar one. Since we have come into office we have co-ordinated some of the programs in the North into one department.

Immediately after assuming office, we moved the Northern Training and Employment Agency out of the Department of Energy and Mines and into the

Department of Education where it belongs. We have now transferred authority for those programs to Keewatin Community College in The Pas, putting a northern institution and northern people in charge of programs in the North. We saw under the NDP administration that the Northern Training and Employment Agency was run, not out of northern Manitoba where it should have been run, but it was run out of Winnipeg at the corner of Main Street and Portage in the City of Winnipeg. From here, executives used to commute back and forth between Winnipeg and Thompson, and I think the last year of Government the bill for transportation for administration staff from Winnipeg to Thompson was something like \$170,000.00.

In a province that has scarce resources, this is money that could have been put into programming, and for that reason we said that the offices of the administration of the Northern Training and Employment Agency would not be in Winnipeg, but in fact would be located in northern Manitoba. For that reason, -(interjection)- Yes. For That reason, we decided to move the managers of the Northern Training and Employment Agency out of Winnipeg into northern Manitoba where they belong.

But there are still other steps that need to be taken.-(interjection)- Well, the Member for St. Vital (Mr. Rose) is questioning the figures. I can tell him that those figures are not something that we have taken out of the air. They in fact are there and they exist and certainly during the course of Estimates I will be pleased to discuss those with him.

There were other things that needed to be done. We realized that we needed to consult with Northerners to ensure that the programs that were being delivered in the North were appropriate for northern Manitobans. So we did that.

On several occasions I flew up north, I journeyed up north to talk to people who were delivering programs in the North, to talk to community leaders in the North, to talk to industry people in the North to ensure that the programs that we were going to be delivering were going to be appropriate for northern people. So some changes were made. As an example, in the administration area again, we found that in Thompson there was an office for the Northern Training and Employment Agency and an office for Keewatin Community College. Both were doing administrative work. Both were doing much the same work, duplicating much of the work, and for that reason we decided that the least we could do was to locate the two administration offices in one area.

We also saw there were some problems in terms of space and location. For example, the BUNTEP program did not have a profile of its own. Therefore, in consultation with the people from Keewatin Community College and the people from the Northern Training and Employment Agency, it was decided by them that perhaps we should have an office where BUNTEP would have a focus, where BUNTEP would have a building of administration, for then truly it would be an educational institution that would train teachers from northern Manitoba. For that reason, we changed some things. We changed the Northern Training and Employment Agency office over to the Polaris Buildings,

and the BUNTEP office went over into the Northern Training and Employment Agency office. Since then, we see that there is a positive reaction by people in northern Manitoba. As a matter of fact, I have a letter from the mayor of Thompson who congratulates us on the work that we are doing in northern Manitoba.

* (1730)

Now, contrary to what the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) says, we are finding that northern Manitobans are accepting our move very well, and it is not a move for principally political reasons. It is a move to ensure that programs are being delivered in northern Manitoba for the people who need them. Now, we have got much more to do, a great deal more to do. We have just begun. Just recently, from Keewatin Community College, we have had a paper circulated in northern Manitoba that talks about a northern college, that talks about a northern institution, and it is a discussion paper. It is a discussion paper to let people begin the process of thinking about what it is that they want to see as an institution in northern Manitoba. It has clearly been established that people in northern Manitoba want programs delivered in northern Manitoba, by northern Manitobans, not administered by people from Winnipeg or from elsewhere in the province.

We have the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) talking about a resolution now where he is encouraging Government to establish a northern university. After a year and a half in office this Member for Thompson wants us to have, immediately in place, a northern university.

I ask the question, where was this Member for six years? What did he do for six years? What did he do for northern Manitoba in the six years that his Party was in Government? What did he do? He fragmented, for political purposes, the delivery of training in northern Manitoba. You know where they spent the money, Mr. Acting Speaker? They spent it on administration. They spent it on bungling. They spent it on duplication. They did not spend it on programming where it should have been spent.

When we came into Government we were committed. We were committed to delivering programs for northern people, programs that northern people indeed needed, and for that reason it took them -(interjection)- well let us look at the record.

In 1985 Swampy Cree Tribal Council came forth with a proposal for a Bachelor of Nursing program in northern Manitoba. Now, who was in Government then? What did they do with that proposal? They sat on it year, after year, after year. They sat on it. It took us a year and we had a Bachelor of Nursing program established. We will have students in that program in April, and that program is going to be conducted in The Pas.

Where was his Government on the Bachelor of Nursing program? They simply frustrated the people of northern Manitoba, and now their credibility is gone. He comes up with a resolution that says we should have a northern university, again, a resolution that has

very little thought. He does not know what he is talking about, neither does his Party when they talk about establishing a northern university. If you were to ask him what kind of a concept they have about it, he does not know.

There are several things we have to do in northern Manitoba. The development of education in the North rests on a new set of principles, a set of principles which has to recognize certain things, the first one being a need to involve northern residents and communities for planning and delivering post-secondary education.

Secondly, I think it needs northern post-secondary programs that need to address the real northern needs, not just the needs we think that Northerners should have, the needs that are identified by northern Manitobans. In other words, we do not need to be delivering carpentry programs for women in the North if women in the North do not want carpentry programs, but if they want them they are available. That has to be decided by Northerners not by people sitting in Government in Winnipeg.

There has to be a real need for partnership, Mr. Acting Speaker, among the universities, among the community colleges, among school divisions, and community groups. That is what a partnership means in delivering and establishing the principles of education in the North.

We have to have integrated programs as well, integrated programs that will lead to meaningful jobs in the future. We are committed to this. We are committed to ensuring that northern Manitobans are going to have opportunities that are equal to those opportunities that can be had by Manitobans anywhere else in the province.

Under the former administration that was not possible, because they did not have a vision, it was all a piecemeal approach. We will put a band-aid on a problem and hope it goes away. Well, that did not work. Today we had to change a lot of things, and we are prepared to change them for the betterment of the people of northern Manitoba.

How much time do I have? Two minutes, thank you.

Finally, Mr. Acting Speaker, I think we also have to call on the federal Government as a major partner in any of the northern educational development programs or in a development plan.

The Northern Development Agreement has been an excellent vehicle for the provincial and the federal Governments to jointly work towards delivering important programs. We have to ensure that in the round of negotiations a similar agreement or one that recognizes there is indeed a need for a partnership is established.

Those programs such as BUNTEP, Northern and Social Work, Social Professional Studies Program and the Northern Nursing Program are indeed important programs up north, and they have to be continued and expanded. The Northern Development Agreement expired, and we have had an extension on it, Mr. Acting Speaker, but we will need to do a lot of work with our federal counterparts to ensure that we indeed continue

those meaningful programs that are so important in northern Manitoba.

* (1740)

I do not believe we can move forward on major ventures without the support of the communities of northern Manitoba, without the support of our universities, without the support of the federal Government. However, at the provincial level we will continue to take steps to ensure that we have indeed addressed the needs of northern Manitoba so northern Manitobans will have the opportunities they deserve and they need.

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): I too am pleased to be able to rise in the House and speak on this resolution somewhat concerned about the lack of costing of this particular proposal. When I read through it I was not sure whether the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) was referring to a large building, per se, that said "University of the North" over the doors, just what they had in mind. Nobody can argue that the needs of the Northerners, the needs of the rural people in Manitoba, are probably not being met as well as they could be when it comes to their educational needs particularly their post-secondary educational needs.

In the limited amount of travelling that I have been able to do in the rural and northern areas I certainly have heard from people who have said it is far more difficult for us to send our children into the city, into the city of Brandon wherever they choose to go, to attend universities. The culture shock for a young student of 17 or 18 coming from the North to one of our larger educational facilities in Winnipeg, or in fact in Brandon, is very difficult, and we are not bridging that culture shock, if you will. We are not really addressing the problems of these students trying to come into the city.

I had the good fortune on October 24th, this year, to sit in on a teleconferencing session. I had not had that experience. I have seen inter-hospital videotaped classes, but I had not experienced the concept of distance education or teleconferencing. I found it rather fascinating to sit in a small classroom in Sturgeon Creek High School and hear, over the system, Morden reporting in, Churchill reporting in, Thompson reporting in, Portage la Prairie reporting in and having the students in the classroom, in which I was sitting, being able to ask the professor, who was stationed apparently in a sound-proofed booth out at the University of Manitoba answering the questions that the seven students who were in the room with me asked, and then to hear a question of a student who was up in Churchill, who sounded like she could have been sitting in the next room, ask the professor at the University of Manitoba another question.

So there are great possibilities for educating our young people, and our not so young, who choose to go on to take courses without the tremendous cost of a huge building, per se, without the tremendous cost of having that student fly in to the course and then fly back home again and the large figures that the Minister of Education was using.

There are some problems, one of them being the lack of actual personal contact, if you will, where the professor does not see the students. Although, I understand some of the professors have the pictures of their students under the label of the community that they are taking their course from so the professor can get to know the students. As a matter of fact, the professor answered a couple of the students by name, and I asked the contact person, who was in the room with me, how does that happen? He said, very quickly, the professor gets to know the sound of his students voices, or this particular professor did. So I was impressed, and I think that is a very viable option for presenting courses in the rural area, courses in the North.

The concept of a junior college has merit certainly for students in say first year, or first and second year, there are possibilities and there are dotted throughout the province many, many schools that are almost empty, some of them that are maybe three quarters full and there is another quarter space where this type of thing could be utilized even more and more, but that takes co-ordination and that takes some degree of thought.

The province has certainly needs for northern and Native skilled labour, and I think we must look at our aboriginal people and see what their needs are and try and gear educational programs toward these particular students.

The thought of using Keewatin Community College as a northern broker, if you will, and having the programs fanned out from Keewatin Community College perhaps has merit. Although I am told by people in the communities of the North that The Pas is not the ideal location, that there are other spots up north where you could have a more centralized control. I think we do need pro-active policies to address the long-term needs of the North as my colleague, the Member for Niakwa (Mr. Herold Driedger), said not too long ago.

In September of this year I read an article called, "The Rising Crisis", which was in the Maclean's magazine. In it the author talked about the problems with funding of our universities across Canada, talked about the problems of overcrowding and mentioned one particular university where there were 500 students in a class. I find that incredible.

I have seen, I have witnessed, I have taught in one classroom where there were 155 students, and I found that too large a number. They go on to say that underfunding is the greatest problem, and since 1982 the federal Governments have decreased the amount of federal-provincial funding for universities, and I think that is really tragic. Our young people of today are our future for tomorrow, and I certainly think we have to be encouraging our federal counterparts to increase the level of funding for post-secondary education.

That is not to say that funding should not be directed very, very carefully, because again when I visited The Pas one of the comments that was made to me was there are all kinds of federal programs and job strategies—and yes Canada—and all kinds of federal programs available, so many that the students who are looking at where they will go are sometimes rather

confused by this long list of programs. What they often will do is look down the column too and see which of the programs will give them the best stipend, not which program will meet their particular needs as far as getting educated is concerned, as far as skills training or whatever they are interested in, but which of these programs will give them the best paycheque every two weeks.

I certainly do not agree with that. I think they need to be assisted, but I think there has to be a far greater co-ordination, federally-provincially, when it comes to the programs, when it comes to the costs of the programs, and in fact when it comes to the honorarium, or stipend, or paycheque, or whatever you want to all it that the students receive.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

The other problem, and it was a concern when I read through this particular resolution, is that we are already having difficulty with helping some of our current universities as far as the infrastructure goes. We asked a question not too long ago about the University of Manitoba, and the dismal condition of the steam tunnels out there, and what can we do to address that?

We need more funding, we need more provincial funding as well as more federal funding. There is a chemistry professor at the University of Manitoba who is using 30- and 40-year-old microscopes for his students to use. He claims that he cannot replace these particular microscopes, because they cost somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$1,000 a piece or more, even if he gets a good deal on them, and this is unfortunate because we are not keeping up with today's technology. When these chemistry students go out into the world of work, or when they go on to their Master's programs, or on to their Ph.D. programs, they have to learn how to use newer equipment that some other agencies may actually have.

So I think we have to be careful about encouraging a new building per se. We must be very diligent in encouraging new means of presenting programs and new means of reaching the people who are up in the northern communities who do want to access various programs.

I have a young friend who is nursing up in Churchill who is home right now on a three-week course in operating room skills. She said there were several of her colleagues who would be coming down to take this particular course, and I wondered if there would not be an innovative way of teaching that course to the nurses who are up in the North. If they were to send an individual up there with videotapes and with the equipment to set up. It does not take too much to have a mock sterile tray organized for the nurses to work with and to teach them.

There perhaps are more cost-effective ways of delivering some of these programs, and has the Government really taken a look at this? I am not sure.

The Swampy Cree Nursing Program that the Minister talked about and chastised the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) for having on their plate for so long—I thought it was on the Government's plate for a fairly

hefty length of time as well -(interjection)- well, they have moved very slowly, moved very slowly.

He also referred to the Keewatin Community College newspaper, and I have looked at the Keewatin Community College little news bulletin several times, and I think it looks a little bit to me like political propaganda. There is an awful lot of reference to the Government this, and the Minister that, and I sort of wonder if the Minister is not working side by side with the president of Keewatin Community College to sort of put across his message. Maybe I am right, maybe I am not right.

* (1750)

The article in Maclean's goes on to say that the No. 1 reason for a university is for education. The No. 2 reason is for research. I am not sure whether there are some programs, I would think there are, that could utilize the North very effectively as far as research goes, and I wonder if the Government has taken any consideration, or any look, at that particular thing.

The other comment they made was the aspect of tuition fees and the fact that they were increased very sharply in the late '70s, except for Quebec. The other provinces had increases in their tuition fees, and I think our side of the House would be supportive of some sort of assistance for the northern people because of their particular location and their particular circumstances.

If we do not address the problems of our universities, be they in urban Manitoba or be they up north, I think we are going to find a tremendous deterioration in the educational services provided to our young people. So I would encourage teleconferencing, distance education methods, and as the Minister has said, listening to the community, listening to the people and finding out exactly what their needs are and tailoring the programs to the students of the North. Thank you.

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join this debate on the resolution of the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton). I was interested to hear the comments by the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) who said at the University of Winnipeg only a few months ago that the Liberals did not support a northern university. I thought the position had maybe changed a little bit today. Perhaps the article that the Member for Sturgeon Creek read from the Maclean's magazine has informed her a bit about the need for such an institution in northern Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, it should be clear that we are not talking about a giant university campus necessarily. We are talking about a means of co-ordinating the activities that the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) talked about of various educational institutions in the North.

We were the first to recognize as a Party, as a Government, that the fact that money was being spent by the University of Winnipeg and Brandon, and University of Manitoba, and our community colleges, by the Limestone Training and Employment Agency, by the federal Government, and by individual organizations in northern Manitoba on post-secondary and adult

continuing education endeavours. There was no co-ordination.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that it is an important principle that if the activities of various Government agencies and non-governmental agencies in northern Manitoba with respect to education are going to be effective, they also have to have some input. It is easy for the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) to talk about the difficulties the students in northern Manitoba and adults who want to upgrade have with respect to education, but it is more important for them to a) feel that there is an institution, some form that recognizes their problems and that is specifically mandated to address those problems. It is also important for those same people to know that the affairs of such an institution are going to be administered by Northerners.

We are talking about the sharing of power. Mr. Speaker, I heard the Minister of Education's (Mr. Derkach) diatribe on this proposal and the Minister of Education could not be more wrong. The fact is that the proposal for a northern university or northern polytechnic was supported by the NDP. The 1988 election had it as part of the plank of the New Democratic Party and what we recognized, as this Minister at that time apparently did not, was that the federal Government does have a major role to play. The demographics of northern Manitoba and the demographics of the high school population, the population graduating to or moving towards post-secondary opportunity, is changing dramatically in northern Manitoba.

The fact is that in the very near future, the number of status Indians, the number of Metis students graduating in northern Manitoba, will exceed the number of graduating students from other high school institutions. The federal Government, Mr. Speaker, has a direct responsibility for those students. We have seen the attempts by the federal Government to abandon Native students by changing the E-12 Guidelines which offer post-secondary opportunities to Natives. We have seen them ignore requests by the province in dealing with educational issues that transcend the boundaries of the reserves and the adjoining school divisions and the reserves and the universities.

When I was Minister of Education, Mr. Speaker, I sent a letter to the then Minister of Indian Affairs pointing out 19 different areas where the province was carrying the weight of the federal Government in supporting the post-secondary and secondary educational opportunities of Native students. So we know that the federal Government has to be reminded continually of its responsibilities.

The province has to show some leadership, and that is the point I make to the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) and the Member for Roblin-Russell (Mr. Derkach), the Minister of Education, that the province has to show some initiative. We have to believe that Northerners have a right to access educational opportunities, not necessarily in a grandiose university structure, but they have to have access in their communities. They have to know that whatever initiatives they are undertaking are undertaken with the consent and advice of Northerners.

We need a northern board responsible for the delivery of post-secondary education in northern Manitoba. That is what was proposed and that was what was being asked for. Mr. Speaker, it takes more than the province. The province was contributing immensely to training and professional training opportunities in northern Manitoba. Through access programs, through the Limestone Training and Employment Agency, we were contributing close to \$20 million overall.

Mr. Speaker, you do not have to be reminded that Brandon University in and of itself has a budget of some \$11 million. So the money that is needed to support an institution, to support a governing board from northern Manitoba already exists. Those programs are already being funded in one way or another. What is needed is co-ordination, what is needed is a mandate for Northerners to direct, to manage their own post-secondary adult and continuing education opportunities. That is what is being requested by this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) again talked about the costs. The costs were very carefully calculated, and it was very clear from the beginning that the federal Government was to carry a proportion of the costs, a large proportion, (a) because as I said into the very near future, status Indian students will have the greatest number of graduating students, students who will be designated or directed towards this institution. The federal Government has an ongoing obligation to status Indians to support their post-secondary educational opportunities. So the federal Government has to be part of whatever this institution might be.

Mr. Speaker, the former Government was using the Northern Development Agreement which had a huge human resource program component of the Northern Development Agreement. Almost one-half of the money set aside through the Northern Development Agreement were for human resource development. The Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) knows and perhaps the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) knows that the Northern Development Agreement has an educational component. The Department of Education monitors and provides support for access programs for social work and teachers and nurses, all existing programs going on right now in northern Manitoba, university level programs.

The Northern Development Agreement was viewed by the previous Government as the logical vehicle through which to get federal commitment. What we wanted to do and what we asked for, for a period of almost three years, was a commitment on the part of the federal Government to the human resource component was a commitment on the part of the federal Government to this kind of initiative.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Derkach talked about support. The Government had support of the Native community. The Minister of Education spoke -(interjection)- I am sorry, what did I say? I am sorry, the Minister of Education, I meant the Minister of Education, I said Mr. Derkach. I know they are not the same people. The fact of the matter is that we did have support of Native groups.

MKO, Swampy Creek Tribal Council, its education committee was very supportive of the Government's initiatives in terms of establishing the precedent for federal contributions to a provincial institution. We had the support of communities like Thompson, Flin Flon, The Pas, Lynn Lake and Leaf Rapids, and smaller municipalities and councils as well. There was a united front in terms of the need for this organization or this institution, and there was a united front in terms of the desirability of having Northerners in control of post-secondary adult and continuing education opportunities.

The only group that was not supporting it was the then Conservative Party and the federal Government who for some reason is particularly reluctant to follow-up on its responsibilities particularly for Aboriginal peoples when it comes to post-secondary education. We did have that kind of commitment from the communities and those who had a direct interest in establishing a university in northern Manitoba or an institution in northern Manitoba that would co-ordinate the activities of the provincial Government when it came to opportunities, training and professional educational opportunities in northern Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, it should be pointed out as well that not only was the money already available through a variety of budgets, the Department of Education, Northern Affairs, et cetera, universities, but also the infrastructure was largely in place because the technology, the Distance Education Technology that is being used by the correspondence branch, by the now Distance Education and Technology branch of the Department of Education, by the interuniversities north, was already in place. The infrastructure for classrooms and even residences was already in place in Thompson, Manitoba, and in The Pas.

* (1800)

What we are talking about is not a huge investment in capital, and it would not be taking away from other institutions like Brandon, or the University of Manitoba, or University of Winnipeg, when it came to those capital facilities, or their particular needs because we recognize that those institutions all have their own needs.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hour being 6 p.m., and according to the Rules, I am interrupting the proceedings. When this matter is again before the House, the Honourable Member will have five minutes remaining. I am leaving with the understanding that the House will reconvene at 8 p.m. in Committee of Supply.

The Honourable Member for Flin Flon, with a committee change?

COMMITTEE CHANGE

Mr. Jerrie Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) that the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: Evans for Harper. (Agreed)