



Second Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

40 Elizabeth II

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

LIB - Liberal; ND - New Democrat; PC - Progressive Conservative

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	LIB
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	ND
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	ND
CARR, James	Crescentwood	LIB
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	LIB
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	ND
CHEEMA, Gulzar	The Maples	LIB
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	ND
CONNERY, Edward	Portage la Prairie	PC
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	PC
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	ND
DOER, Gary	Concordia	ND
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
DUCHARME, Gerry, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	LIB
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	ND
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	ND
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	PC
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HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	ND
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	ND
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	LIB
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	ND
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	ND
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	ND
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	PC
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McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
NEUFELD, Harold, Hon.	Rossmere	PC
ORCHARD, Donald, Hon.	Pembina	PC
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PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	ND
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	PC
REID, Daryl	Transcona	ND
REIMER, Jack	Niakwa	PC
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	PC
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	ND
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	ND
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary	Fort Garry	PC
WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy	St. Johns	ND
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	ND

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, April 29, 1991

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery, where we have with us this afternoon 20 visitors from the University of Winnipeg, and they are under the direction of Ms. Roxie Brunen. They are guests of the honourable member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr).

Also this afternoon from the Nordale School, we have fifty Grade 8 students under the direction of Ruth Hargrave. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry).

On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you here this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Pines Project Funding Approval

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, members of the opposition over the years, and as recently as two weeks ago, have been raising the Pines project with this government in terms of its criteria for approval of this project.

We have had a lot of conflicting information from three different ministers of the cabinet. We had the former Minister of Urban Affairs and Housing saying he is taking an evenhanded approach. We have had the Minister of Transportation in 1989 talking about even asking the federal minister to overrule the project and stating that the economic difficulty of this project was to go ahead in terms of what transportation policy for the Province of Manitoba would allow or have the government look at not giving this project any money. Now we have the idea that the government is in fact going forward with this idea.

I would ask the Premier why did he, as head of Treasury Board, approve the public funding for the

Pines project in the city of Winnipeg contrary to the advice he had received?

* (1335)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, it depends on which advice the member is referring to. The reality is that the government of the City of Winnipeg, duly elected and duly authorized and mandated to make decisions with respect to zoning and land use, approved that particular project.

Mr. Speaker, in the past we have steadfastly maintained that the government of the city of Winnipeg ought to make decisions within the five-year program known as Plan Winnipeg and make decisions that are consistent with the planning and zoning requirements of that. The City of Winnipeg made that decision consistent with Plan Winnipeg. We have, therefore, decided that we ought not to interfere with that decision making, because the City of Winnipeg has the authority to make that sort of decision.

With respect to the application for the mortgage funding, the Seniors RentalStart program, we have a program that has certain criteria, a program that I might say was established by the New Democrats in government, criteria that were set by the New Democrats when they were in government. The application by the Rotary Club of west Winnipeg fits those criteria, so that is the reason why the project was approved.

Information Request

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, yes, the City of Winnipeg did approve a number of zoning changes that many citizens and many commerce groups objected to very strongly. The question is not whether the City of Winnipeg had approved a zoning or not, they did that a year and a half ago.

The question is: Why did he as head of Treasury Board, the Premier, approve public funds that could put into jeopardy jobs at the airport, the riverbank policy of the provincial government and other factors that run contrary to the public interest?

I would ask the Premier: Will he table the recommendations from the Department of Housing? Will he table the report from Transport Canada? Will he table the letters from the former federal Minister of Transport, Doug Lewis? Will he tell Manitobans why public funds should go into this project?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, public funds go into projects that qualify for those funds and this project, like many, many others that have been approved for housing in this province for seniors supported. That was the reason, I presume, that the New Democrats evolved and created the Seniors Rental Start program was to be able to stimulate the construction of seniors' housing, affordable seniors' housing in this province.

We, as a government, carried on that program that was put in place by the New Democrats. This particular project qualified for that funding, met the criteria, and therefore it was approved.

Airport Restrictions

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, a Transport Canada study—and I was disappointed the Premier did not agree to table the correspondence and make public the criteria before cabinet that I would suggest is in the public interest—has shown that flight restrictions could result of noise objections from citizens in that area. It could cost possibly 130 jobs at \$38.5 million.

I would ask the Premier why he did not consider those realities, Mr. Speaker? Yes, there have been citizens in that area before, but clearly Transport Canada says further high density development in the same area could result in restrictions on our airport.

I would ask the Premier why he approved this project for seniors housing in that area when all the advice from the Chamber of Commerce, citizens' groups and Transport Canada were giving him contrary advice for the best interest in Manitoba?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the St. James Chamber of Commerce, which is the most involved in this particular area, represents this area, is in favour of the project. There are already 14 apartment blocks directly under the flight path, many of which are closer to the airport than that. There are thousands and thousands of residential dwellings and residences that are already within the flight path, many of which are closer to the airport than that.

All of those matters should be known to the member. Instead, he is attempting to make some political hay out of a project that is supported by the community, by the seniors, by the Rotary Club and by the St. James Chamber of Commerce. One has to wonder where he gets his priorities and what his agenda is.

* (1340)

Tender Process

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Opposition, with a new question.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the Premier well knows that the Transport Canada study says further high density in the area could result in these changes with the airport status, so the Premier did not answer the question again. He will not table the reports.

I have a new question to the Premier. We have had further questions in this House before about the public tendering process. This project again is a project that has not gone through the public tendering process, notwithstanding the fact that public provincial money that he is accountable for is at stake.

I would ask the Premier why he failed to ask as one of the terms of reference that a public tendering process would be utilized for the approval or disapproval of this project?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, all of the subtrades in this project will be tendered publicly—all of it. The member should know; he was in government. Perhaps he has forgotten that when housing developments of this nature are put forward, the proponents, in this case the Rotary Club, have to select some major contractor to be the one who invests in all of the soft costs, getting engineering drawings, getting the land requirements and approvals, going through a zoning process, all of which involve thousands of dollars—tens of thousands, sometimes even hundreds of thousands of dollars—invested in getting the project to an approval process. Then when it is approved, all of the subtrades, which are all of the elements of cost, are then publicly tendered, and it will be done on that bid basis. He should know that because that is standard practice.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, we will talk about standard practice. There are two—

Mr. Filmon: Go ahead.

Mr. Doer: Well, the Premier is heckling from his seat.

There are two public projects now being funded by him—and he and his government—for Seniors RentalStart. One of them is in Niverville, Mr. Speaker, where there have been 10 bids in a tender process. Three of those bids have been asked to come back to come even lower, the three lowest bids I might add, not like the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation, the latest project. The three lowest bids have been asked to come back in a public tender process.

The Premier mentions our government. The Fred Douglas Lodge was an open tender process, the inner city was an open tender process. Why did the Premier not demand an open public tender process in this project?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the member would give me some information. I do not know which project he is referring to. I do not have the information in front of me.

I would be happy to give him a full and complete answer, but as he was told earlier on the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation request for space, all of that was done through a public tender process. When the low tenderers could not comply with the specifications, all the other tenderers were asked to reconfirm their bids, which they did do. It was on the basis of the lowest tender that saved a million dollars for the taxpayer that the award was made, so let him not try and put forward any false implications.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, we have one project that has 10 bids now before the public and another project with no tendering going on with his Minister of Housing (Mr. Ernst).

When the government appointed this minister as the new Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs, we said that this is going back to the old ways, the back-room ways of dealing with government.

Mr. Speaker, why will the Premier not remove this minister who is always dealing in the back rooms, whether it is city boundaries or housing projects or whatever and give us a new way of doing things on open public process rather than the old back-room way that he is—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) simply will not understand that all of the bids for all of the trades in this project will be by open public tender, every single element of it. He ought not to try and put false information on the record; it does not become his integrity. The reality is that all of the trades will be tendered, and that is the way in which those projects are often done.

Plines Project Funding Approval

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the Premier accuses the Leader of the Opposition of making political hay, but it would appear that the only person trying to make political hay is the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst).

When the government deindexed the 55-Plus program, we were told that it was done because the money was required for health care. In light of that, it would appear the only person whose health is improving is one Don McKenzie and Bob Akman. The minister's decision to give the \$4.7 million worth of grants and low-interest loans to his friends is directly counteracted by all of the studies that have been done of this particular project.

Why has this minister decided to go ahead with this project contrary to his Minister of Highway and Transportation's (Mr. Driedger) statement on November 2, 1989, in which he said there would be no government money in this project?

* (1345)

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, I find it reprehensible, quite frankly, that the Leader of the second opposition party would call into question, for instance, the credentials of Mr. Don McKenzie, one of 30 volunteers of the Rotary Club of Assiniboia, volunteering his time to create a seniors' project for this community. Whether I know Mr. McKenzie or whether I do not is immaterial. He is a volunteer; he is there helping the Rotary Club of Assiniboia to develop a seniors' project for that community. I find it reprehensible that the Leader of the second opposition party would call into question his credentials.

Information Request

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, then the minister will have no difficulty putting before this House today

copies of reports and studies which he has, which would counter the objections raised by the federal Department of Transport, local residents, his own advisory committee which recommended legislation to control by the province the development like the Pines.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, if the Leader of the Opposition had read the Winnipeg area airport report, she would know that there is no specific indication of that particular project at all. It deals in generalities.

Mr. Speaker, let us put this in perspective a little bit. This project is four blocks from the flight path, four blocks west of the flight path. Between it and the airport, there are 17 blocks of residential construction—housing, 17 blocks. This is not right adjacent to the airport. This is not right under the flight path. As a matter of fact, it is right at the edge of the noise profile, as stated in the report of the airport agreement study. That study is available. The Leader of the second opposition party knows that, and her critic has provided it for her, so there is no need to table that particular information. That is public knowledge.

Seniors' Programs Government Priorities

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, with a final supplementary to the minister.

How can this government hold its head high and say that it is concerned about seniors when it takes a \$350,000 program to deindex 55-Plus and throws it away, and gives a \$350,000 grant to a building project which is questionable by other levels of government?

* * *

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, the Rotary Pines project has—

An Honourable Member: No answer.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs. Carstairs: Perhaps I can ask another question they are willing to answer. If they are not willing to answer that question, can I have leave to ask another question that they might answer?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable Leader has asked her question and her two

supplementary questions. I have recognized the honourable member for Burrows.

Mr. Martindale: We will give leave to the member from the second opposition party to ask her question.

* * *

Mrs. Carstairs: Can the Premier of this province tell us why he is not prepared to help senior citizens living below the poverty line, but is prepared to put money into a development project which quite frankly has all the earmarks of one more than acceptable to the private sector?

* (1350)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the project that the Leader of the Liberal Party is criticizing is one that has strong approval from the seniors in the St. James-Assiniboia area who have long been calling for seniors' housing in that area so that they could retire, sell their homes in St. James-Assiniboia and move into an apartment building in that area.

It has the approval of the St. James Chamber of Commerce. It has the approval of the City of Winnipeg who went and did zoning changes and variances in order to approve the project, Mr. Speaker. It has very strong public support.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I want to know what the Leader of the Opposition has against providing housing for seniors. Is she wanting to turf them out of housing like she is wanting to turf them out of personal care beds? She said, prior to the last election, she would kick 40 percent of those who are living in personal care homes out on the street because she did not believe that they ought to be in personal care homes. That is the kind of attitude that the Leader of the Liberal Party has to the seniors of this province. I think that is reprehensible.

Pines Project Government Position

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, the Rotary Pines project has been opposed in the past by the provincial Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) and two federal ministers of transport. It is opposed by the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, opposed by the Winnipeg International Airport since Rotary Pines will be built under an airport flight path.

Since Transport Canada studied this airport issue and concluded restricting night flights could cost Winnipeg 130 jobs and \$38.5 million in airport revenue, and this Minister of Highways and Transportation asked the federal minister to overrule the City of Winnipeg, when did this Minister of Highways and Transportation and his government change their policy from being opposed to being in favour of the Rotary Pines project?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, let me first of all indicate to the House here that I am pleased actually with the process as it has evolved itself, because ultimately there would be a project come forward that would have had to be dealt with along these lines. Ultimately, I think, we are all concerned about the potential economic development at the airport.

When this project came forward, I then expressed concerns about the potential for the future. We went together with the Minister of Urban Affairs, myself at that time appointed the Advisory Committee for the Protection of the Winnipeg International Airport, and they worked together. There were people on that committee from the government. There were people from the city, and residents from the area came forward with the recommendation which then was turned over to the Minister of Urban Affairs who went to the city and talked to them about the potential of how to deal with the whole problem.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased with the way it has gone because basically this project triggered this kind of concern that has been expressed. I think through this process and Plan Winnipeg that ultimately we will be able to deal with the planning and the development in the area as it should be taking place.

Mr. Martindale: Will the Minister of Highways and Transportation say why it is this government's policy to now approve the Rotary Pines project when two ministers of Transport in Ottawa were opposed due to the economic consequences and safety concerns?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, I was trying to answer the process that has taken place, and why I raised the concern, and it has been raised and supported by my colleagues in the government of the day in terms of how we went at this thing, having the advisory committee come forward, and Winnipeg right now has to deal with it.

In our discussions with my colleagues, we decided that to go with legislation was not the right way, that we would ask Winnipeg in their planning to take this under consideration and make provisions to control the development, especially in the northern portion of the airport so that we could have ongoing economic development at the airport.

Information Request

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Does the Rotary Pines project conform to the advice that the Minister of Highways and Transportation received in the Winnipeg area airport study from CMHC and the Lewis letter, and will the minister table all of those documents?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, I have no problem tabling the correspondence and the process that has taken place from the time that the Pines project came forward.

As I indicated in my first statement, ultimately some project would have triggered this kind of reaction where we are looking at trying to protect the air quarters around this Winnipeg International Airport. This happens to be the Pines project that triggered the activities that have taken place, and I think because of it, we are going to have a better plan for the Winnipeg International Airport for the future and its economic development.

An Honourable Member: When?

Mr. Driedger: It is in the process right now. Plan Winnipeg is dealing with the issue right now, and we are on top of it together with my colleagues.

* (1355)

Aboriginal Education Federal Planning

Mr. George Hickey (Point Douglas): One of the few positive initiatives to come out of the federal government's announcement last week was the Prime Minister's commitment to increase funding for aboriginal education. The Prime Minister said that no initiative is more important than our program for aboriginal post-secondary education, and he committed an extra \$320 million to these programs.

My question is for the Premier. Can the Premier tell this House if he has contacted the Prime Minister and ensured that Manitoba will be receiving its fair share of this extra money?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, we have indeed been in contact with the federal government. Letters have been drafted. Some have been sent with respect to our concerns to maximize the availability of training funds for our aboriginal people in Manitoba.

Mr. Hickes: My second supplementary question is for the Premier.

Will the Premier assure this House that Manitoba's aboriginal population will benefit from the additional funds by using the money to reverse this government's recent cuts; for example, \$1.4 million from the ACCESS and the BUNTEP programs and from other aboriginal programs?

Mr. Filmon: We have told the members of the opposition many, many times and we will repeat again that we have not cut the money that we are putting into it. Regrettably, the federal government has withdrawn part of its funding, and we have been unable to make up for that because, in addition to that, they have cut back, for instance, on EPF transfer payments some \$35 million of cash transfers to us.

Despite that, we have put more money into education, more money into health, \$90 million more this year, 3.5 percent increase to public school funding, 3.5 percent increase to universities, all of that with getting less in transfer payments from Ottawa.

In addition to that, we could not make up for their withdrawal of funding—

An Honourable Member: Just got another 1.5 percent.

An Honourable Member: Two percent.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Filmon: Take a look at the Estimates. I know you cannot think, but maybe you can read. Okay?

Mr. Speaker, I repeat, we are not able, in addition to getting less funding from Ottawa, to also make up for their withdrawal from a variety of programs. If more money is available, we will certainly look at utilizing it where we believe it will pay dividends; that is, in an investment in the education of our aboriginal people.

Accessibility

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): My last supplementary question is: What commitment will

this government make that aboriginal peoples have access to post-secondary education and training so that they do not continue to face a bleak future of social assistance or low-level jobs?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, as in the past, we will continue to put as much funding as we can make available to it. I repeat for the member though we cannot make up for the withdrawal of federal funding by putting more money in when we are getting less money in transfers from Ottawa.

Conawapa Dam Project Energy Projections

Mr. James Carr (Crescentwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro.

All members of the House were very pleased to learn last week that Manitoba Hydro had joined the Power Smart program of British Columbia, thereby becoming much more aggressive in energy conservation targets for the utility, so much so that it is now debatable whether or not Manitoba will need any of the power at all generated by the Conawapa dam.

My question to the minister is: Can the minister tell us, what are Hydro's current projections, and when will we need the extra power to be generated by Conawapa?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for The Manitoba Hydro Act): The projections that Manitoba Hydro has as of today are that the power will be needed by the year 2000. It is possible that it may not be needed until the year 2000, as has been indicated by Manitoba Hydro president, Bob Brennan. We expect the next projection to come out in about July when a current update will be brought forward to this House.

* (1400)

Justification

Mr. James Carr (Crescentwood): It now seems debatable whether or not Manitoba will need the extra power when the Conawapa generating station is complete, so I would have to ask the minister then, can we justify the \$6 billion expenditure on the basis of the Ontario sale alone if Manitobans do not need the extra power generated?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for The Manitoba Hydro Act): It is still our best

projection, our best advice, that the power from Conawapa will be needed by Manitoba consumers by the year 2001. It is on that basis that we are going forward with the construction of the Conawapa dam.

Mr. Carr: Since the minister cannot give us any assurances that we will need the power, is he satisfied, in his conversation with executives at Manitoba Hydro, that it is an economic model on the basis of the Ontario sale alone? Can he now give assurances to the House?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member's question seeks an opinion and is therefore out of order.

The honourable member for Crescentwood, kindly rephrase your question, please.

Withdrawal Penalties

Mr. James Carr (Crescentwood): With a final supplementary to the minister.

Can the minister tell us what the penalties would be, given the contract with Ontario Hydro, if Manitoba Hydro would withdraw from the contract today?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for The Manitoba Hydro Act): Mr. Speaker, I am certain the member for Crescentwood has read the agreement and the penalty for withdrawal on one basis only, and that is the environmental licence may not be issued. There is a schedule for penalty payments. There is no clause in the agreement which permits Manitoba Hydro to escape from the contract for any other reason than for environmental reasons.

CareerStart Application Deadline

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question of the Minister of Family Services.

Unemployment among Manitoba youth was 17.1 percent in March of this year, significantly higher than the 13.5 percent of last March, and in particular, unemployment among male youth has risen dramatically to 22.7 percent. Today we have thousands of university and college students out of classes looking for work.

Can the minister explain to the House why the CareerStart Program will not begin until May 15 this

year, and not May 1, as has been the case in previous years?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, we are pleased to be going ahead with a CareerStart Program again this year. Because of the budget deliberations, the lateness of the budget and the paperwork that has to be put in place, the deadline for CareerStart applications is May 3, and the jobs that students have applied for and with the participation from the nonprofit, the business and the institutional sector, getting their applications in and matching students up, it will be slightly later.

We are pleased to continue with this partnership approach with the community, and we will be proceeding with that program in the next few weeks.

Mr. Leonard Evans: I am still not sure why the government is half a month late this year compared to other years.

STEP Program Reduction

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, last week I asked the Minister of Family Services for information about the STEP program; that is, the Student Temporary Employment Program in the Civil Service.

Can the minister now tell this House to what extent the STEP program has been cut back this year?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): I indicated to the honourable member last week that we would be continuing with the STEP program. That is still in process. At this point, I do not have final figures for him. As I indicated last week, I will get him some information in the not too distant future.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Well, I thank the minister for that information.

I wonder if he could advise whether we are going to have a cutback in STEP or not. Particularly, I would like to ask the minister, when will the students be able to be hired under the STEP program? Will they have to wait until May 15, along with the CareerStart applicants?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Mr. Speaker, that program is in process now, and I believe that students will be coming on stream prior to that date.

GRIP Program Review

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, farmers continue to have little to look forward to this spring outside of some rain this past weekend. As I said, the rain is all they have to look forward to, certainly not action from this government.

GRIP is still the travesty that it was when it was introduced. It is unfair and inequitable from region to region, from farmer to farmer in this province. Now we see that the government has confirmed what we have said all along, that they intended to make changes to GRIP after the first year that would vastly change the benefits under the program, if indeed there were any under section 37 of the contract, saying that 20 percent less in benefits could indeed take place next year under this program.

I ask the Acting Minister of Agriculture, in view of this change that is going to undoubtedly take place in GRIP, as we have been predicting, will the Acting Minister of Agriculture get together with his colleague, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay), and change the contract term from a minimum of four years to one year so farmers can once again assess the program next year without penalty when the changes are made?

Hon. James Downey (Acting Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I have no difficulty in getting together with the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay), as we have done, to make some changes which have in fact been requested by the farm community. I also want to make it clear, this is the first time that any government has made a commitment to the farm community of the magnitude of some \$43 million in the history of this province.

Deficiency Payment

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, the program is a travesty. It is unfair and inequitable. In addition to that, there is another travesty, the announcement by the federal minister just over a week ago which said that there would be no deficiency payment.

I ask this Acting Minister of Agriculture why he has not made known his opposition to this program that was announced, this nondeficiency payment announcement two weeks ago, which is going to devastate farmers in Manitoba who need money desperately at this time to put the crop in?

Hon. James Downey (Acting Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, again, let us be fair and be honest and open. When you look at the past years' support of the farm community by the federal government, one cannot underestimate the commitment of the federal government to the agriculture community.

I am aware of the fact that currently there have been some concerns about a lack of cash flow in the farm community, but let me assure him that I am sure we were listened to, my colleague, I and the government, when we requested the continuation of an interest-free cash advance program to continue on this year and as well, an adjustment to the GRIP fall premium payment period.

Agriculture Industry Financial Assistance

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, farmers are getting frustrated with this government and the federal government. There is no action.

I ask this minister: Will he now stand up and outline to this Legislature and to the farmers of Manitoba specifically what action he intends to take to bring forward this terrible travesty that is being perpetuated on the farmers of Manitoba who will not have any cash and who will not even see their way through the crop year, never mind getting the crop in unless they have some cash at this time, a cash injection? What action will he take?

Hon. James Downey (Acting Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, there is no question that this government realizes and appreciates the difficulty that the farm communities have been facing. That is why there was a commitment of the magnitude made by this government of some \$43 million in the GRIP program, plus the continuation of the removal of the education taxes off the farm land, something that his government took a long time to see the need for and then did it in a poor and ill-advised manner.

Dept. of Highways and Transportation Ukrainian Language Services

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, all parties, in the last couple of weeks, paid tribute to Ukrainians coming to Canada and recognized this is the centennial year of Ukrainians and what they have contributed.

My question is to the Minister of Highways and Transportation. We have services provided in many languages for immigrants. In fact, driver licences are available in 20 different languages in Manitoba. However, they are not available in the Ukrainian language. Can the minister tell us when this service will be corrected and provided for Ukrainian people as well?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, I will take that under advisement.

* (1410)

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Speaker, because I am of Ukrainian descent, I would appreciate that being looked at very soon.

Aboriginal Language Services

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): However, there is another group of people who do not have services in their language. Can the minister tell us why aboriginal people cannot get driver licence testing in this language and whether he is prepared also to look at that matter?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, I will take that under advisement as well.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Speaker, aboriginal people are being treated very shabbily in driver licence offices, and many are driving without licences because they cannot be tested. How soon can aboriginal people expect to have driver tests available in their language as well as Ukrainian people?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, I take great exception to the comment made by the member that the Native people are treated shabbily. I will tell you something—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, I and my staff take great pride in trying to give a good service to the people of Manitoba wherever we provide a service to them. If the member has any cases to take and substantiate that kind of a statement, I want to know about it. I want to make sure that I have proof when I deal with those issues.

Elder Abuse Legislation

Mr. Nell Gaudry (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, this government has been promising since its first throne speech in 1988 to take action to protect seniors. Three years ago, we had documented evidence of the physical, mental and financial abuse of seniors. Today, we have more documentation and more problems for seniors but still no action. We have seen how this government treats seniors with a Seniors Directorate that is a mere exercise in public relations.

Will the Minister responsible for Seniors please tell this House when we can expect him to table the long-promised legislation for the protection of seniors?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister responsible for Seniors): Mr. Speaker, first of all, the initiative of this particular government in '89 to go with the public hearings to produce and verify about the senior abuse, and the Department of Family Services, in 1990, have provided \$45,000 towards a resource centre and in their budget for '91-92 have provided \$60,000. In addition to that, we also have a campaign where we are going through to establish the financial abuse program with the federal government to the tune of \$100,000.

Plines Project Funding Withdrawal

Mr. Nell Gaudry (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, will the Minister responsible for Seniors speak to the Housing minister today to recall the grant to his Tory developer friends and give it instead to the seniors in need of financial assistance, the ones who will not even be able to buy basic necessities?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, firstly let me say that I reject totally the preamble from the member for St. Boniface.

When people like Steve Patrick, former MLA, Rotarian in Assiniboia, is accused of being a Tory developer's friend, Mr. Speaker, I think the member for St. Boniface ought to think twice. When Neil Mackay, a very prominent Winnipeg Liberal lawyer, Rotarian in Assiniboia, is called into question, when Reg Edwards, a former Deputy Minister of Health in this province, is called into question as some kind of back-room deal, the Liberals are out of line totally in this issue.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

Nonpolitical Statements

Mr. George Hlckes (Point Douglas): May I have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Point Douglas have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? Leave? Agreed.

Mr. Hlckes: Mr. Speaker, we just heard some rhetoric and some speeches, and I would like to commend an aboriginal all-Native hockey school that has been established. We know that the youth from some remote communities in the North—you could take Shamattawa, Tadoule Lake and various remote communities—who come out to play junior hockey—we just had a nonpolitical statement last week of the member for Winkler and there were a couple of aboriginal players on that team. What happens is that we can go right back into history and a lot of the aboriginal people who come out from these remote communities, they come into culture shock.

What happens is a lot of the talent and potential for these youths is denied because there is no regular training or exposure for these aboriginal youths. One example—we could go back to the later years—was a player by the name of Fred Saskamoose whom I had the pleasure of playing against when I was playing for The Pas Huskies. He was a treaty aboriginal who came out and played for the Chicago Blackhawks for a while, but he was in total shock and amazed by the big cities, and obviously he did not last very long.

Now there is a school, an all-aboriginal hockey school that will be operating this summer for the first time ever, and it will be run by Ted Nolan, and it is called Ted Nolan Anishinabe Hockey School. It will bring in our youth from northern Manitoba, from Alberta, from Saskatchewan, from all over Canada. It will work with the families and the young players, and they will learn proper weightlifting techniques, proper diets and family counselling. I think this is a great step for the future of our aboriginal athletes.

I would like to recognize that today. Also, we know in Winnipeg, there is a famous aboriginal hockey player. His name is Jim Neilsen. He played 18 years as a pro hockey player. He played with the New York Rangers and then with the Edmonton Oilers. He accomplished quite a bit for us aboriginal people. Hopefully, that hockey school will expand into

Manitoba, so I would just like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Ted Nolan Anishinabe Hockey School.

* * *

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask for leave to make a nonpolitical statement.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Wellington have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Ms. Barrett: I would like the House to recognize and join with me in congratulating Vic Neufeld who was a Winnipegger who has just won the Canadian Association of Social Workers Distinguished Service Award for Manitoba.

As a social worker myself, I feel very proud that Mr. Neufeld is a member of this profession and that he has served for 16 years with the Child Guidance Clinic of the Winnipeg School Division. I think it says positive things about us as a province and our ability to provide service to our members, our residents. As well, it states positive things about the Child Guidance Clinic, an organization that has done excellent work over the years and is in some danger of not being able to continue to provide the type of service that it has in the past.

So I think it is important, at this point, that we recognize the services of Mr. Neufeld and congratulate him on a personal level for the award and for the positive influence and the positive things that it has to say about Manitoba, the Child Guidance Clinic of Winnipeg. Thank you.

* * *

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): May I have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Selkirk have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed.

Mr. Dewar: Recently, the Red River Wave Juvenile Female Volleyball Club beat Club West two matches to one to capture the provincial title. The Wave, No. 1 ranked juvenile female team in the province, beat the second ranked team, Club West,

in straight sets in the first match held at Mennonite Brethren Bible College.

Dana Iwanoczko was named the tournament's most valuable player as she notched 21 kills and four stuffed blocks. Teammates Tracy Forbes, Randene Prawdzik and Kelly Shields were also named to the all-star team.

The Wave will now represent Manitoba at the national championships during May 10 to May 12 at St. John's, Newfoundland.

I know that this House will join me in congratulating this team and wishing it the best of luck in its future competition. Thank you.

* * *

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): May I have leave, Mr. Speaker, to make a nonpolitical statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Thompson have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, I thank the members of the House for granting leave.

On Friday we paid tribute to the Day of Mourning and today we have the 10th Annual Health and Safety Conference, which is being offered by the Manitoba Federation of Labour, which is in keeping with the intent of, I believe, everyone, whether it be in terms of labour or management, and certainly all members of this House, for working toward improved health and safety in the workplace.

In fact, as I indicated, this is the 10th annual conference, and I do want to note that this conference has been dedicated to a former member of this House that many members will remember well, Jay Cowan. In fact, he has been given this unusual honour, given his role in establishing the first conferences for the Health and Safety Conference with the Manitoba Federation of Labour.

So I would like to, I am sure, pass on the hopes of all members of this House that these types of conferences which bring together many working people, indeed as well many people from business, as well, will continue in the future and that perhaps at some time in the not too distant future we may end up in the situation, Mr. Speaker, where we have

a significant reduction of injuries, illnesses and deaths in the workplace. Thank you.

* (1420)

ORDERS OF THE DAY

House Business

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, before I move the motion to go into Committees of Supply, I would like to indicate that there has been an agreement reached that will not vary the order; it is just that within Culture, Heritage and Citizenship we will deal with Votes 24, 25 and 26 this afternoon, and then revert to Votes 21, 22 and 23 this evening.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the honourable Government House Leader.

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

Motion agreed to, and the House resolved itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) in the Chair for the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship; and the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) in the Chair for Executive Council.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY

SUPPLY—CULTURE, HERITAGE AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Deputy Chairman (Marcel Laurendeau): Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

This afternoon, this section of the Committee of Supply, meeting in Room 255, will be considering the Estimates of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship.

Does the honourable Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship have an opening statement?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): Yes, I do, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, and I have copies for the opposition critics. If I can just indicate that the page is making another copy, if the two of you just want to use that one for the moment, it should be here in just a few seconds.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am pleased to introduce my department's Estimates for the 1991-92 fiscal year and have the opportunity to report to the committee on the substantial progress my department has achieved since I introduced my department's Estimates last year.

On February 5, 1991, Premier Filmon announced the restructuring and renaming of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation to Culture, Heritage and Citizenship. The restructured department creates a new Citizenship Division that will significantly enhance immigration and integration services to new Canadians by enabling easier access to government programs and services.

The new division comprises the Immigration and Settlement Services Branch, which was formerly part of Manitoba Family Services, and the Immigrant and Foreign Credentials Accreditation Review as well as the Adult English as a Second Language Branch, which were transferred from Manitoba Education and Training.

I am pleased to be able to confirm that our government's commitment to adult ESL programming will be enhanced, during this budget year, by an increase of more than 20 percent over 1989-90 funding levels. As well, responsibility has been established for the development of a focus on business immigration with a view to enhancing results in attracting business to locate in Manitoba.

I believe the consolidation of these activities under one minister, along with the Manitoba Intercultural Council and the Multiculturalism Secretariat, will result in improved co-ordination of services to Manitobans. I would like to note that, this year, support is again being provided to the Manitoba Intercultural Council to assist it to host its biennial assembly.

I am also pleased to note my department's commitment to the elimination of racism. As a part of a co-operative project with the Manitoba Federation of Labour, my department seconded a senior analyst to a two-year project to eliminate racism in the workplace. The development of an antiracism training course, which is innovative in its approach, design and delivery, is nearing completion and will be launched as a pilot project in my department.

The Multiculturalism Secretariat has been opened, as a result of the multiculturalism policy, to

ensure co-ordination and co-operation among all departments of government regarding multicultural issues and initiatives, and to foster partnerships with the community to achieve our shared goals. Reflecting our commitment to a multicultural act, we are developing a white paper for distribution to and feedback from Manitobans. This white paper will set out an overall multicultural strategy for Manitoba. We expect to release the white paper this summer.

In the 1989-90 Estimates, the department established funding for the renewal of the province's major cultural facilities, the majority of which are over 20 years old now and, in some cases, are in need of critical repairs.

* (1440)

Funding will continue to be provided in 1991-92 for this purpose, including significant commitments to the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature and the Manitoba Centennial Centre Corporation. Refurbishment is expected to strengthen the ability of both of these facilities to house visiting attractions and thereby enhance their revenue base. In particular, preliminary engineering studies on the concert hall have identified serious problems with the exterior cladding. Initial projections are that the cost of necessary repairs could reach \$5 million. I am pleased to indicate that we are proceeding as quickly as possible on this matter of urgent public concern as well as completing the testing on the museum and planetarium walls to ensure their safety.

Funding will also be continued for another year for the Community Places Program. This program was originally announced as a four-year initiative ending in the 1990-91 fiscal year. Community Places has been an extremely popular program, providing funding to over 1,600 projects initiated by communities and organizations throughout the province during its four-year term. In recognition of the continuing needs of facilities for upgrading in order to increase their operating efficiency and prolong their life spans, support will continue to be available for facility initiatives throughout the province.

In view of the fiscal challenge facing the province at this time, it has not been possible to allocate more funding for the arts this year. However, my department is continuing to address the recommendations contained in the Arts Policy Review, the DeFehr Report. Specifically, we are in

active, ongoing negotiations with the Manitoba Arts Council, with the intention of clarifying our roles and responsibilities. We consider these deliberations with the arts council and other organizations to be the necessary ground work to the subsequent formation of an arts branch and the formulation of an arts act. Our government will continue to support the province's cultural industries as a means to employ Manitobans and portray our accomplishments to others.

Last year, Manitoba's five-year federal-provincial agreement on cultural industries came to an end. The programs initiated under the agreement have been a resounding success, resulting in dramatic growth in the film, publishing and sound recording industries. In aggregate, these industries now provide more than 200 person years of employment annually. To Film Manitoba, there have been a number of success stories, amongst them the films *Bordertown Cafe*, a \$3 million feature currently in production, and *The Last Winter*, which was one of the top English Canadian films in 1990.

In the area of publishing, sales by Manitoba publishing houses now total some \$2 million annually, double four years ago.

In the area of sound recording, Manitoba artists continue to be recognized nationally, with children's performer Bob King and the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra having been nominated for Juno awards this past year.

Upon the expiration of the agreement, the federal government reduced its funding to one-half the former level. I am happy to say that, for 1991-92, the province will continue to maintain its funding at the same level as in previous years. Federal funding will also continue at last year's level. I am hopeful that the federal government will sustain this funding in future years.

As indicated in last year's throne speech, our government is committed to initiatives to improve the literacy of our citizens. In my department, this commitment is evidenced by our strong support for libraries.

In the fall, I indicated that the Public Libraries Advisory Board had just completed its Discussion Paper on Library Development in the province. I subsequently released this report for comment by interested organizations and individuals. The consultation process has now concluded, and I am expecting to receive the board's recommendations

this fall. I am most hopeful that this process will lead to strengthen support for library services.

I am pleased to advise this committee that the department will be able to continue to maintain the existing formula for support to rural libraries for 1991-92. Based on the projected level of funding for libraries by municipalities throughout the province, provincial funding is expected to increase by some \$45,000 over last year.

As well, I am pleased to note that plans to move our provincial Library Services branch to Brandon are on track. This move is scheduled for this fall. Tenders were recently let for a new building to be constructed in Brandon, and the contract will be awarded shortly.

In our province with its sparse population in its more remote regions, the provision of Library Services is particularly difficult. We must search for innovative ways to bring these services to local people, particularly in those areas not served by local governments. To this end, last year my department commenced a two-year pilot project, in co-operation with the Frontier School Division and local organizations, to establish a public library at Norway House. Funding for this project is being continued in 1991-92.

I am also pleased to say that the province has maintained its share of the operating cost of the city's library system at last year's level of 11 percent of budget. Based on figures provided by the city, this will result in a provincial grant of \$1.95 million, an increase of \$115,000 over last year.

As well, the Legislative Library continued to promote the sharing of printed materials with libraries across Manitoba and Canada. This year, the library instituted a broader depository program to provide decentralized access to government publications through a network of city and rural libraries.

It is now five years since The Heritage Resources Act was proclaimed in 1986. With an increase of heritage awareness and community involvement, the Historic Resources branch is now more able to focus its efforts on its core services and responsibilities as outlined in the act.

Last year, a significant concern discussed in the Estimates review was the issue of assistance for building owners, particularly in the Exchange District of the city of Winnipeg. Over the last five

years, my department has provided assistance for the renovation of designated heritage buildings throughout the province. During this period, provincial grants in the amount of \$2.1 million have been provided through this program with over \$1 million being provided to the owners of buildings located in the city of Winnipeg. I am pleased to advise this committee that funding for this program is being continued for 1991-92 at its traditional level of \$400,000 per year.

Manitoba continues to be a leader in the protection of our archival heritage, with one of the most fully developed conservation programs in Canada. This expertise is well recognized, and I am proud to note that governments and organizations have continued to seek the advice of our Archives staff in setting up their own programs. This year, the Provincial Archives will begin a multiyear survey of its holdings to establish conservation priorities.

Our government believes that leisure activities are vital to the physical and mental well-being of all Manitobans. It is committed to promoting increased awareness of the benefits of participating in these activities. Our government recognizes that recreation is an important component of an overall strategy for the renewal of our rural and northern communities. As indicated in the throne speech, our government will introduce a policy on recreation which recognizes partnerships with local government in the provision of recreational opportunities, which enhance healthy lifestyles and strengthen communities.

Working together with the Department of Rural Development, my department has developed a proposal for a new funding model for the recreation district program, which we believe responds to the concerns expressed by municipalities for increased flexibility.

We are now ready to discuss this with the Union of Manitoba Municipalities and the Manitoba Association of Urban Municipalities. Meetings are being arranged to take place in the next few weeks. Nowhere is the value of recreation activities to our citizens better recognized than in northern communities. In April of 1990, our department, in co-operation with the Departments of Northern Affairs and Education, launched a two-year pilot program to train recreation directors for northern communities.

Through this program, 23 northern residents are being trained and employed as recreation directors to serve their own communities. These recreation directors work out of such communities as Cormorant, Moose Lake, Norway House, Camperville, Warbowden, Split Lake band, York Factory band, Oxford House band among others.

* (1450)

During the election campaign and as indicated in the last legislative session, our government promised to assist parents in protecting their children from pornographic and explicitly violent videos through the introduction of a home video classification system. I am pleased to note that this program was introduced in January of 1991. All new videotapes intended for rental or sale to the public are now required to be classified by the film classification board prior to distribution to retailers. As well, retailers are required to sticker age-restricted videos, and it is now illegal to rent these videos to minors. New resources for this program are being provided in this year's budget, however, I anticipate that the program will be self-financing through licence fees charged to the industry.

As a result of our government's renewed commitment to the French Language Services policy, as announced by the Premier (Mr. Filmon) in November of 1989, the response from the public for services in French have resulted in increased demands on translation services. Accordingly, additional resources are being provided for 1991-92 for my department's Translation Services branch to enable it to better assist departments to communicate with their client populations in the language of their choice.

As indicated in the Speech from the Throne and the Budget Address, our government is committed to developing new delivery mechanisms and management approaches for government programs. Communication activities of government departments will be co-ordinated through the establishment of a communications services function in my department. This will maintain service to departments and the public at large while resulting in significant savings.

Undoubtedly, this has been the most difficult budget exercise conducted by my department and by government as a whole in many years. The choices have been difficult but necessary. We have

endeavoured to sustain and, in some cases, increase funding for those areas where we believe maximum impact can be obtained. In particular, we have endeavoured to sustain the cornerstone of community organizations across the province, organizations such as libraries, community arts councils, community museums and recreation districts that are vital to the everyday quality of life in their communities.

As indicated in the throne speech, our government has endeavoured to reduce executive and administrative overhead to the greatest extent possible. As well, a concerted attempt was made to reduce administrative overhead in provincial agencies. In preparing its budget, my department has reduced its budget in executive administration and finance areas by more than 20 percent. Regrettably, it has not been possible to preserve jobs for all of our staff. We are doing everything possible to reassign staff to vacancies where appropriate and to otherwise assist staff to secure other jobs.

Despite the magnitude of these reductions in administrative overhead, regrettably the resources available to the department have been insufficient to allow funding to continue to be provided to all of the community programs and organizations that have been supported in the past. Where reductions or eliminations have been made in grant assistance being provided to community organizations, these organizations were notified immediately upon release of the provincial budget to enable them to begin to adjust to lower levels of funding. Every assistance will be provided to these organizations by our department in adjusting their plans and budgets to reflect decreases in funding.

In closing, I want to express my pride in the management and staff of my department for their dedication and co-operation during this most difficult period. I am most hopeful that the measures that we are taking to preserve the core services of my department will position us well for the future. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: We thank the honourable Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship for those opening comments. As was previously agreed in the House this afternoon, the committee will be considering Resolutions 24, 25 and 26. This evening the committee will be considering Resolutions 21, 22 and 23.

Is there agreement to consider opening statements by the critics for Citizenship this afternoon and for the remainder of the departments this evening? Is that agreed? Agreed.

Does the critic for the opposition party, the honourable member for Radisson, have any opening statement?

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Yes, I do.

I would like to begin by saying how much I have enjoyed being the critic for multiculturalism. It has been difficult, though, in separating out multiculturalism from so many of the other areas that affect the ethnocultural communities. Actually, I am thinking that the way that the department is being reorganized may make that somewhat easier, and I appreciate that you are going to bear with our party and allow us to split it up as we have in the past.

One of the things that I have benefitted from is the opportunity to learn more about a number of the cultures that are a part of Manitoba. I would like to make a few comments about how important I think it is for Manitoba that these cultures, different cultures, have support and opportunity to be continued. I think that it is not only nice that we have all these cultures and we have events like Folklorama, but I am beginning to think that it is essential for the survival of our society, and I would like to talk a little bit about that.

It has been also interesting for me to be the Environment critic at the same time as being the multicultural critic because putting the two together has really helped me develop my perception of the problems that are facing our planet. One of the things that has been so exciting and provides me with a lot of hope is learning more about the cultures that are part of Manitoba that have a different value system. I am starting to think that multiculturalism is about having those different value systems and ways of perceiving the world become part of the mainstream culture here in Manitoba and, as I said, I think that is essential for us to move away from the individualistic, competitive, hierarchical, dominant orientation that we have in our society and try and incorporate some of the more co-operative, collaborative values that come from some of the other cultures from different parts of the world.

On top of that, I am starting to really appreciate, then, that multiculturalism is not just having a variety of people here in Canada, but it seems to have two different parts in my mind. We are wanting to

preserve the different cultures of people who are living here now, and we are also wanting to make sure that these people have access and become part of all the institutions that make up our society. I am starting to get a real picture of how those things are important to work together. I would like to talk a little bit about that.

We have, in the first session, heard a lot of comments about how we cannot afford funding multicultural organizations and ethnocultural groups. In times like we are suffering now with the recession and the tactics being taken of government cutbacks, it becomes very easy, I think, for people to think that this is an area that can go.

While we certainly have to prioritize health and education above cultural organizations, and I think that will be to the detriment of a lot of the communities that are already marginalized, one of the things that I am beginning to believe very strongly is that a lot of the ethnocultural organizations which we are funding are essential if we are going to address the other problems in multiculturalism like the problems with accreditation in the language barriers, ghettoization in the workplace, because the ethnocultural groups are what are going to allow us to make contact with those communities and for us, for government and the various community organizations, to begin to work out ways where we can have that kind of a partnership. To me, that is one of the challenges of multiculturalism and what we are trying to do with your new area of citizenship.

* (1500)

So I guess one of the points, just to reiterate, is how important it is then to have well-organized, well-developed ethnocultural organizations and to start to see that there is a difference in needs among these communities, a difference in need between communities that are very new to Manitoba like some of the southeast Asian communities, Laos, Vietnam and some of the communities that are more established in Manitoba, the Italian community, the Ukrainian community, and to realize that we are going to have to apply that principle of meeting needs based on needs in the communities and that everyone is not going to have the same kinds of services, I think, if we are going to really address the problems that are out there.

I was going to talk a little bit about some of the issues that I am becoming more familiar with, things

like the ghettoization of particularly immigrant women in certain job sectors. I think that when we centralize the services for ethnocultural communities and immigrants, that we have to realize though that the problems are not centralized and they are pervasive throughout our society and throughout the province.

Hopefully, it will happen that staff in the Secretariat and in all the other parts of the branch, will be working with other government departments, as you have said, and with other institutions in the communities, so that we really can start dealing with some of these problems. The fact that there still are, in this day and age, newcomers who are being exploited and are working in the garment industry and as domestic workers, and they have poor wages and no benefits and intimidation is used so that they are not able to organize or better their situation on the job. They are controlled in ways that would be surprising to a lot of people who do not have to work in those conditions and think that Canada has moved away from that.

I would just like to also talk a little bit about the essential programs that there is some confusion about right now in the community. The changes that are happening with the restructuring of the department and cutbacks have caused a lot of confusion around the English as a Second Language programming, and I am hoping that through the next while we will be able to clarify some of that, how money has been transferred.

Obviously with Premier Filmon's statements earlier on that we want to have more immigration into Manitoba, this is not a time to be cutting back on English as a Second Language programming. I hope that you are sincere, I mean the government is sincere, when they are saying that they are going to be looking at legal action to address the decrease in transfer payments from the federal government.

There are other cuts that are not under either the secretariat or under MIC but I am thinking are more important that are going to affect a lot of these communities are the Planned Parenthood program and those kinds of programs.

Maybe I will just leave it there and pass it on to my colleague from the Liberal Party. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: We thank the honourable member for Radisson for those comments.

Does the critic for the second opposition party, the honourable member for Inkster, have any opening comments?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Yes, I do.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I wanted to start off as I start off on many occasions when I talk about multiculturalism and I talk about it in the context of Canada. I have always argued in the past that Canada's history is based on our aboriginals being our first, the first settlers of what we know as Canada, which were followed by the French and the English. Canada has been built up by immigrants, different waves of immigrants to what we have today in terms of mosaic, a multicultural society.

I firmly believe that Canada's future will be one of multiculturalism, that we do have something to offer people from all over the world, something uniquely Canadian. That is the difference that really sets Canada and the United States apart, is the way we feel that Canada can accommodate all cultures and heritages. In fact, that is what makes up our own culture and heritage, unlike the United States.

I was at the Guyanese function over the weekend over at the Portuguese centre and one of the questions that was asked was, what does someone from Guyana look like? Mr. Deputy Chairperson, at that point the master of ceremonies then had members from the Guyanese community in their past. We had the aboriginal, there were the Dutch, blacks from Africa, East Indian, British and Portuguese. Once you had all these people standing up on the stage, they said that is what your Guyanese people look like.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, you could do the same thing here in Canada. You can put all different nationalities—and that is what really being Canadian is all about. I think we have to learn and appreciate that.

I did want to talk a bit about in terms of some of the remarks that the minister has put on in her opening remarks. Before I do that, I did want to make it very clear that we in the Liberal Party feel that the government is moving in the wrong direction when it comes to multiculturalism, that there have been some actions—and we have discussed this and debated this in the past and every so often it is important to reinforce the differences between our parties on this so very important issue.

We feel that the government is doing a disservice to the multicultural community by the way it is treating and handling the Manitoba Intercultural Council by the stripping of its powers in terms of the funding authority, by not—at least in regulation or I guess it would need an amendment in the MIC Act to give them more autonomy, in the very least, of appointing their chairperson and their executive director. So there are things in that area that we feel that the minister should be moving towards.

In that respect, the Multicultural Directorate—the concept is a good one. We believe that it has been somewhat tarnished in the manner in which it has been formed, and I plan to go into that in much more detail when we in fact have the staff present here to answer some of the comments regarding it.

Immigrant credentials, the minister has made mention. I am somewhat pleased with the approach that the government is taking towards recognizing the credentials that many immigrants bring to our land. It is a waste of talent if we do not recognize what these people can do. All of us benefit if we can somehow ensure that we have our immigrants doing what they are best able to do, and whatever we can do to further that cause, we should be moving towards. I do see that the government is moving in the right direction, generally speaking, in that area.

I was disappointed with the adult ESL, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. We had the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Derkach) who was quoted from the Free Press as saying that we have had an increase in the past couple of years in ESL, through the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson), of \$200,000, while at the same time, he says that the ESL program at Red River College has been completely cut of \$270,000. That is a net loss of \$70,000.

I am hoping, through the Estimates process, that the minister will be able to clarify that and give us some assurances that in fact students—and the bottom-line is that student enrollment, the number of people who would have access to these valuable programs, if in fact it will go down as a direct result of the missing \$70,000 and the lack of support from the federal government, because I know when I meet with many different organizations their primary concern is English as a Second Language.

It is very hard to compete equally if you cannot speak the language, and when we look at again multiculturalism, we are not just talking about song

and dance, we are talking about social integration, economically, politically, socially and so forth. Without English, we are not allowing them to integrate.

So I would have preferred to have seen a stronger commitment and I will wait for the minister to try and alleviate some of the concerns that we do have in regard to ESL.

In terms of the business immigration, there are many business opportunities here in Manitoba. I think it is a positive in the sense that we are opening up our borders to more immigrants who will bring business to Manitoba. I think it is equally important that we fight for the compassionate reasons as to why we should have more immigrants here in Manitoba.

I do not believe a month goes by where I do not hear from a constituent of mine who wants mom or dad or a sister or a brother to come and join them here in Canada, and we have to keep that in mind and not let the economic dollar be our only priority when looking at immigrants, that we should be considering all immigrants.

* (1510)

The minister has talked about a Multicultural Act, I believe, last year at this time—I should say not last year, at the last Estimates. I expressed our concerns in that the Multicultural Act is something that we would support wholeheartedly. We would have liked to see the government move faster on it. They made a commitment, last May I believe it was, in the throne speech. One would have anticipated something, and I can understand that it takes time, but in all fairness, the minister has had a full year now to deal with it.

I have to assume that there were some discussions prior to it entering into the throne speech of May last year. So it is a bit disappointing in the sense that we are not seeing anything more concrete. I know she did say that we are expecting the white paper during the summer and, all things going well, I would imagine that will likely be out by no later than mid-August. Let us hope anyway; then she has seven months to really get the act in shape.

I trust, Mr. Deputy Chairman, that if that is in fact what the government's agenda is, not to go ahead with the Multicultural Act in this session, that it will be a much higher priority for the government for the up and coming session. I would also suggest that I

would be most interested in assisting in any manner in which I can to ensure that the act is a first-class piece of legislation. I know we do have what I like to think of as a, not completely apolitical, but we do have a committee that does look after cultural and heritage things. If I can be of some service, I would be more than happy to offer that.

The minister talked about the elimination of racism. Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the Manitoba Intercultural Council just last year had brought forward a well-detailed document in terms of combatting racism in Manitoba. There are some things in there that the minister, I believe, could have acted on in a much quicker fashion. It is not like we are saying, here is the report, act now; we want this report implemented in the next six months. There are things, positive things, that the minister could have done that would be a positive gesture. I look at 1.(b) which is on page 35 of the report where it is suggesting that the government of Manitoba provide a one-day cultural sensitization workshop to all members of the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba, school trustees and city councillors.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I would suggest that we should be looking at that particular resolution and reflecting on it. That is a resolution that would not take very much to act upon, yet I believe it would send a very strong message to the community at large. Hopefully sometime during the next recess, and I would not even object even during session, that we do see that one-day cross-cultural conference of sorts for, at the very least, MLAs. They do not have quite as much control over the school trustees and city councillors. I do not know what their time agenda or their agenda is like, but all the same it could be offered to them, but at the very least make the offer to the MLAs. I think it would go a long way in terms of a positive suggestion.

On that note, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I think it is best that I leave it at that. I will reserve some further remarks on the Culture and Heritage aspect later this evening.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: We thank the honourable member for those opening remarks. Under Manitoba practice, debate of the Minister's Salary is traditionally the last item considered for the Estimates of a department. Accordingly, we shall defer consideration of this item and now proceed with the consideration of the next line. We will actually move down and start with line 4. Citizenship

(a) Immigration and Settlement Services: (1) Salaries \$681,100.

At this time, we invite the minister's staff to join us at the table, and we ask that the minister introduce the staff members present. The honourable minister will introduce her staff now?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes. My Deputy Minister Tom Carson; Kerry O'Shaughnessy from Finance and Administration; Martin Itzkow from Immigration and Settlement; D'Arcey Phillips from ESL Programming; Jerry Kuye from Immigrant Credentials; and David Langtry from the Multiculturalism Secretariat.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Okay. We will now deal with (a) Immigration and Settlement Services: (1) Salaries \$681,100—shall this item pass?

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am wondering if the minister would be able to explain to the committee under this line, with the announcement from the federal government, that over the next number of years we are hoping to see an increase in immigration numbers.

Maybe I should start off by asking what percentage of the increase has she had any negotiations with her federal counterpart in terms of Manitoba's share of the quota that is going to be increasing to what I believe is 250,000?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Indications are from the federal government that, yes, there will be about 250,000 new immigrants. We are expecting, in conversation with the federal government, that we will receive about 3 percent of those new immigrants—around 6,000.

Mr. Lamoureux: Does the minister have any percentage in terms of last year, or what percentage overall we received of immigrants to Canada?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Last year we received 3.1 percent.

Mr. Lamoureux: Does the minister, in terms of the percentages—I have to apologize I have not worked out the percentages myself. The percentage overall as comparison to Manitoba's population in comparison to the rest of Canada, what percentage are we at right now?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I am not sure if I understand the question, but if in fact you want to know what percentage of the population of Canada Manitoba represents, it is about 4 percent. As of now, we are

only getting 3 percent of the total number of immigrants. I might just add to that, I do not feel that is good enough.

I guess it is important that we, as a government, initiate as quickly as possible. I guess that is one of the responsibilities that I will have with Citizenship being part of my responsibility now and with the restructuring of a Citizenship division. We will be actively pursuing an immigration agreement with the federal government.

Of course, those issues and concerns will be one of our first and foremost concerns, and one of the areas that we will want to negotiate very strongly with the federal government to ensure that we get our percentage that we believe we should be getting. If we are 4 percent of the population, we should be getting 4 percent of the new immigrants to Manitoba.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, at one time Manitoba used to be in and around 6 percent of the population of Canada. If we look at terms of future growth potential without immigration to this province, Manitoba will continue to decrease in the overall population in comparison to the rest of Canada. I do not know what discussions she has had lately with the minister but to settle for 3.1 percent last year, when we do make up 4 percent, it is only a matter of time, especially if you take into account the number of people that are leaving the province, that Manitoba population-wise will become more and more insignificant in comparison to the rest of Canada, which will make our arguments that much harder to make in future years.

I am interested in knowing the percentages in the past number of years. Is this something that is more recent than late? Have we ever received our, what I would classify, fair share of immigrants to Manitoba?

* (1520)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Okay, if I can just indicate by a couple of charts that I have here and maybe you might want to seek further clarification, but Manitoba's percentage of Canada's population has decreased over a number of years too. We were, back in 1980, at about 4.3 percent of Canada's population—Manitoba. We are now about 4.1 percent in 1990. So over a 10-year period, the total numbers of people in Manitoba as a percentage of Canada's population has decreased.

In 1980, I guess, the percentage of immigration to Manitoba was about 5.5 percent, decreased in '81 to about 4.3 percent. There have been ups and downs, but I would say the actual decrease in the numbers of immigrants started in 1987. Since 1987 we have been receiving just over 3 percent of the total number of immigrants here in the province of Manitoba. There might have been a follow-up comment or a question that you have?

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I would appreciate if I could get a copy of those two charts. It would be most beneficial.

We mentioned that this year it is 3.1 percent. Is it 6,000?

Mrs. Mitchelson: 6,626.

Mr. Lamoureux: That is out of the 251 or is that—

Mrs. Mitchelson: That is out of the projected 250,000 new immigrants. Pardon me, if I could just clarify it—220,000.

Mr. Lamoureux: Given the increase, that is, in all likelihood—now I could be a bit out here—of in and around 50 percent, 60 percent from one year to the other, because the immigration—what did we receive last year in terms of real numbers?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I think I just made a mistake on the record. In fact, out of 220,000 immigrants who came to Canada in 1990, we received 6,626. In 1991, the expectation is that there will be 250,000 new immigrants to Canada, and out of that number, we are anticipating—of course, we will not have the final figures until the end of the year—we will get 6,842.

Mr. Lamoureux: There is an increase in the number of immigrants Manitoba will be receiving over the next couple of years while, at the same time, we have not seen the increase in government spending in order to facilitate that number. I am wondering if the minister can tell me how she would justify keeping things such as the ACCESS and so forth programs somewhat stagnant while, at the same time, we are receiving more immigrants?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I might tend to disagree somewhat with: programs remaining stagnant. As a matter of fact, the Nssp program, which was the Newcomer Services Support Program which was started, I guess, in 1986, under our administration in 1989-90 was increased from \$25,000 to \$50,000. The maximum dollars allowed per project under that increase went from \$5,000 to \$7,500, so in fact we

have doubled support to the Newcomer Services Support Program under our administration.

You will have to excuse me for the slowness, but in fact these are new programs that I have just inherited at the beginning of this fiscal year, so it may take me a little while to get the information that I need. The Newcomer Services Support Program provides grants to a maximum of \$7,500 per project, and that goes to nonprofit organizations concerned with immigration settlement issues. As I indicated, in 1991, 10 projects were funded for a total of \$50,000, and that was an increase in the program of 50 percent.

If I can indicate what this program does, it has three components. There are settlement materials provided through this program; there are community development projects. Those are applied for by the nonprofit community ethnocultural organizations; educational symposiums might be one example. Also, the third component of that program is settlement and adaptation research. One example of that might be, the Canadian Mental Health Association has applied and received project funding to review mental health programming for new immigrants, and that is something that is brand new. They have applied, and they have received funding.

Through the nonprofit organizations out there applying for grants for newcomer support services, there has been, over the last couple of years, enhancement.

There are other programs that are provided through immigration and settlement, and I do not know whether the member would like me to go through all of these programs.

* (1530)

Mr. Lamoureux: If the minister does have them right at hand, just the name of the program and the percentage of increase would be appreciated, percentage and the dollar value.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Now, this is not a grant program, but we have Immigrant Access Services which provides cultural and linguistic interpretation services to bridge the needs of immigrants to the services that they require. This is a service that provides consultation to service providers to enhance their cultural awareness of the services needed by newcomers to adapt to Canadian society. In 1991, the caseload statistics were that

800 people, or clients, were served through this program in languages such as Spanish, Polish, Vietnamese, Punjabi, Tagalog, Hindi, Persian, Khmer, Pushtu, Eritrean, Thai, Afrikaans, Urdu, Portuguese, Chinese and Laotian. The areas of the province that are served outside the city of Winnipeg are Winkler, Morden, Gretna and The Pas, and I guess the major areas of service are finance, immigration, family, education, language, training, housing, mental health, legal, youth, health and employment.

The Immigrant Access Services has not increased in its total amount of operating, but it is not a grant program. It is providing services. As I said, 800 clients were served. No one else in Canada provides this kind of service, so it is innovative and new, and it is something that a lot of provinces feel that we are further advanced than what they are as a result of this program. This is Access Services through the department, and I have indicated that there is not a grant dollar allocated to this.

We have also the Program Recognition which is a wage subsidy program which provides assistance to private sector businesses to employ immigrants with foreign professional or technical credentials, and also through this, financial resources are available as well to assist in the reimbursement of courses, materials and exams needed to receive accreditation. This program provides information and consultation to newcomers regarding other available employment readiness and training programs, and this program has been doubled since 1989-90.

This program was first introduced in 1985. Let me go back and indicate that. There is a lot of counselling that is done, but there is now direct service to 30 to 35 new Canadians that come, and this is a program that is an excellent model. It is working very well, and those that do, after—let me say that about 2,000 to 3,000 clients receive counselling services, and out of those who are counselled—pardon me, let me go back a little bit.

It was started in 1985, and we are into our seventh cycle of this program. Over the period of 1985 to now, between 2,000 and 3,000 clients have been provided with counselling and referral services, and out of those who met the program's eligibility criteria, 143 clients have been placed in jobs related to their former profession or trade in their own country. It has

been a very successful program, and many of those who are placed tend to be able to maintain their jobs in those areas where they were accredited and have received subsidy for work experience here through this program, through the Program Recognition.

We have increased the numbers. From 1985 to 1989 there were approximately 15 people who were placed in the work force. We have increased those numbers to 30 to 35 per year now.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: I would like to remind the honourable members that we are dealing with Citizenship, line (a)(1) Salaries of the department which is \$681,100. Grants and other expenditures and other things will be dealt with further down, so if we could relate line to line—

Ms. CerlIII: I thought we were going to be dealing with the Multiculturalism Secretariat, so I am—

Mr. Deputy Chairman: We will eventually.

Ms. CerlIII: Yes, I know that now. I just wanted to clarify, under Program Recognition, does that program both provide an incentive to a business to hire a newcomer as well as help them go through the process of having their training and education recognized?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, yes, there is a one-year subsidy to the employer to hire someone in the profession who is related to the work that they did in the country that they came from. In fact, along with that subsidy is an educational component that is worked out with the employer and with the employees, so that while they are working through that year, while they are being subsidized and while the company is being subsidized, that person is being equipped to either go on to work in another job in that profession that they had in the country where they came from or to continue on with that employer.

Ms. CerlIII: That answers half the question.

The other part of the question was, we know that one of the problems that newcomers have is of winding through the maze of organizations, professional organizations and regulations that deal with their accreditation or of having their training transferred, their certification transferred. Is that part of what this counselling does, and is there—

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes, it is.

Ms. CerlIII: The other part of my question would be: Is there an outreach component to that program, or how are they working with the communities?

* (1540)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the co-ordinator of the program works with the Core Area Initiative, Red River Community College, Immigrant Women's Employment Counselling Service, so there is the outreach in the fact that the co-ordinator from the program does work with all of these organizations to attempt to find employment.

Ms. CerlIII: To attempt to find the citizens who need the employment, so it is still up to the community-based organizations to identify the individuals in the community who—I am trying to address the question of outreach. One of the problems that we have is of newcomers accessing the office.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Over the years, Immigration and Settlement Services have been broadly publicized to all of the ethnocultural organizations, and all of the ethnocultural organizations out there know what programs are provided by the department, so there is that networking, there is that outreach. The ethnocultural organizations that are responsible for newcomers from their communities that are part of that ethnocultural organization do know where to come to access this service.

Ms. CerlIII: So a newcomer, it is required or it is wise for them or it is necessary that they be part of their ethnocultural community and be receiving their newsletters or be going to the meetings, so that they are going to—what I am trying to say is, the responsibility for the outreach is with the ethnocultural organizations.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, all of the federal agencies, all of the settlement houses, everyone knows that we have a department of Immigration and Settlement within the provincial government. As people arrive in Manitoba, that kind of information is provided to new immigrants so that they know how and where to go to access the service.

Ms. CerlIII: I want to go back to earlier discussion of immigration levels and to clarify if the 6,842 immigrants that we are going to expect in '91 for Manitoba—does that include refugees?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes.

Ms. CerlIII: I am understanding that our total number of refugees is likely to decline from 1,000 to—what I am aware of is between 600 and 800. Is that correct?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the feds have indicated to us that the number of refugee immigrants coming to Manitoba will decrease.

Ms. CerlIII: Can you clarify both the percentage and the total number of that decrease, and how that is going to affect the amount of money that we are going to receive?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I indicated a minute ago that the refugee numbers to Manitoba would decrease, and apparently they are going to decrease right across the country.

Ms. CerlIII: Is the minister aware if that is a fact?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Indications are that the number of government-sponsored refugees will decrease from 1,000 to 600. That is a 40 percent decrease, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, and the adjustment assistance for those government-sponsored refugees will decrease from \$6.4 million to \$4.2 million.

Ms. CerlIII: Can you repeat those figures again?

Mrs. Mitchelson: From 1,000 down to 600 in the numbers; in dollars, \$6.4 million down to \$4.2 million.

Ms. CerlIII: Is this change in the total number of the refugees to Canada part of the federal government's policy, and is that supported by this government?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Okay. My understanding is that it is not a policy. This is based on the number of immigrants that they believe they can process through the system and bring to Canada over the next year. My understanding is there is some backlog in processing of applications to receive refugees this year.

That is a federal government responsibility. We have absolutely no say in how many refugees the federal government can bring in. They will bring in as many as they can accommodate and as many as they can process. I am told that it could change from one month to the next, or within two months there could be new numbers.

Ms. CerlIII: The Premier (Mr. Filmon) has said that he would like to change the way Manitoba deals with its immigration and attract different categories of immigrants. I am wondering if the minister supports this change, if you are going to—having less

immigrants here, or if you are wanting or—sorry, refugees.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, when the Premier talked about changes, he was talking, first of all, about negotiating with Canada our own Immigration Agreement for the province of Manitoba. Within that agreement, we would like to see Manitoba receive numbers of immigrants proportional to the population of Canada that we have, and right now we are not receiving our fair share of immigration.

We would also like to be able to negotiate with the federal government an agreement whereby, on the business side of things, we would like to be able to match those immigrants in instances where they are coming specifically for that reason. We would like to match them with the job skills that we have a shortage of trained people, from a country that may have a certain amount of expertise in those areas.

If we could match people so that in fact if we did not have anyone here that could do the job, and we could bring people from another country that could fill in where there is a shortage in job skills here in Manitoba, we would like to see that happen, but that does not mean to say we are not going to accept those that are coming for family reunification or for other reasons.

* (1550)

Ms. CerIII: I guess I am addressing the issue of having people come here for humanitarian reasons, and I know our party is concerned about that. If we see there has been a decline, and that means we are going to be receiving less money, that means that services will be eliminated, it is going to be difficult perhaps for us to reinstate the services, so that we can again get up to the levels of accepting refugees we want in the country and in the province.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I think that we have to have a good balance of immigrants coming to Canada for all different reasons. There is certainly no question in my mind that for humanitarian reasons we will still see immigration. One of the programs that I could talk about within the department is a very unique program that we have here in Manitoba, which is called the SPAR program. It enables the provincial and federal governments and private sponsors to provide services and assistance within three categories to refugees, and those are those who, for some reason, are medically inadmissible to Canada—if

they are unaccompanied minors or if they are women who are at risk in their own countries, single moms maybe with families that are at risk. We have a special program here in Manitoba.

I can attempt to explain the program. The staff of Immigration and Settlement Services play a lead role in acting as a broker to admit these special-needs refugees, with External Affairs. They work with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. They work with Employment and Immigration Canada. They work with private sponsors. They work with social service agencies and relevant provincial departments such as Family Services, Health, Education and Training.

As I have said, we have this special relationship whereby we, as a province, have this program. The federal government pays the transportation costs once the province has agreed to admit these refugees, so it has to be agreed to by the province. These are people who are admitted to our province for humanitarian reasons. They receive one year's financial support through the Adjustment Assistance Program, and then the province assumes other settlement costs associated with helping these people to successfully settle and integrate into Manitoba society.

I guess one of the real success stories of this program was the settling of 10 Polish deaf mutes here in Manitoba. Because we had such a successful settlement of these people here, Canada has removed deafness as a medical condition for inadmissibility under the Immigration Act, so it has been a very positive program. I think that we are certainly doing our share as Manitobans, through this program, to ensure that those who are somewhat disadvantaged and for humanitarian reasons—would not normally be able to immigrate to Canada—are able to come.

Ms. CerIII: Wonderful. How much money does that program receive?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, there is half a staff allocated to that program, and it is a co-ordination program. What I have indicated is that the federal government pays transportation costs and the province assumes other settlement costs associated with helping these people to settle into Manitoba, so they would receive money through other programs such as language training settlement, vocational rehab, etcetera.

Ms. CerIII: This is a program that is how old?

Mrs. Mitchelson: It has been around since 1981.

Ms. Cerilli: How many people has it serviced this last year?

Mrs. Mitchelson: In 1990-91, 24 people were admitted through the program.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Item 4.(a)(1) Salaries.

Ms. Cerilli: I wanted to stay with immigration levels a bit longer and to get a clarification of the breakdown for the different categories of immigrants who come to Manitoba and the numbers, maybe for last year as well as this year.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I can give you the figures for 1990 and the projected for 1991. Family class in 1990, 2,190, and for '91 the projected is 2,488; refugee designated, 1990, 2,340, and projected for '91 is 1,446; and independents, 2,096 for 1990, and for 1991, 2,908 projected.

Ms. Cerilli: Those are the only three categories?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes.

Ms. Cerilli: Where would increase in the business program be, that would be under independent class?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Item 4.(a)(1) Salaries.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I wanted to get back in terms of the support that the government has been giving to the immigrants who come to Manitoba. The point that I was attempting at getting across is that it is very competitive across Canada, as most all provinces try to provide services that will be able to retain the immigrants they do acquire, and Manitoba being included. We have in the last couple of years, and the next couple of years, an increase in the number of immigrants who are coming to Canada. I think that should be reflected in the programs in that even though the minister has noted a couple of programs and spoke very highly with them, I concur with her to some part.

I am familiar with the recognition program in which we have 35 to 40, but I am also familiar with the fact that there is quite a long waiting list in order to get in there; in fact, I believe it opens in March and within a few days all of the positions are virtually filled. I am wondering if the minister can comment on that particular aspect.

What I am trying to say, in terms of the other immigrant programs, is that it is very competitive. If

Manitoba wants to retain the immigrants that we are receiving, we have to offer the services that are necessary in order for them to integrate into our Manitoba society. We can look at examples of nursing, engineering, accounting, where people—and this is where the whole question of credentials comes in—who come to Manitoba are unable to get the job that they are looking for and go elsewhere, not only in Canada but will also go to the United States, because at least there they are in fact being recognized. There are other programs that other provinces have to offer.

So I think we have to keep on top of immigration in the province of Manitoba, and we have to take the initiative and come forward with new, bold programs that will ensure that the immigrants we are receiving, that we are better equipped and better able to keep them in the province of Manitoba.

* (1600)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we certainly in Manitoba do value those new immigrants that we receive to our province. In fact we are one of the provinces, and very uniquely positioned, in that we have several programs that serve new immigrants. B.C. has absolutely no provincial program to service immigration, new immigrants to their province. Alberta has no direct service. They fund settlement agencies, and that is the only funding they provide. Saskatchewan has no programs, so in fact I think we are leading specifically in the West for programs that do serve those new immigrants that come to our province.

As I have indicated, some of them are very unique programs that are not funded anywhere else in Canada. We are ahead in some areas, and we do provide more service than many provinces do, so I think we are fairly well positioned. I would hope when we attempt to negotiate an agreement with the federal government, because we are providing some services that they do recognize as important services, that might give us a bit of an upper hand in being able to get an agreement negotiated with the federal government.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, does the minister want to respond to the one particular program where we have the 35—is it 35?—who are accepted every year, in terms of what type of numbers actually apply for that program?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, there are approximately 80 people per year on the waiting list for that program.

As I indicated, we doubled the funding from \$150,000 to \$300,000 for that program, so there has been an increase. There is no increase in the funding this year over last year, but the funding was doubled two years ago for that program.

Mr. Lamoureux: Again, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, what I am trying to say—and the minister rightfully so has pointed out some valid comments regarding Alberta and British Columbia, but they do not encounter the same problems that we have in Manitoba in terms of if you look at the percentages that they are receiving from the overall population in Canada. I know a number of immigrants that are, in fact, moving out to the West Coast. Vancouver is a very attractive place to live for numerous reasons.

What I am attempting at saying is that we need to have programs to be able to offer to immigrants that will give them reason to have hope to remain in Manitoba. Otherwise, we could end up losing them to other provinces.

(Mr. Jack Reimer, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

The budget that we have before us—and she has pointed out a couple of programs that we have seen increase, but in relative terms, in terms of real dollars it is not quite as much as one might believe, especially if you put it in comparison to, let us say if you have the ACCESS where we lose \$70,000 at one point from the Red River College being closed down, to your increase in the Nssp from 25 to 50.

In terms of real dollars to service immigrants who are coming to Manitoba, is there a plus? Are we on the plus side? As immigrant quotas increase in Canada overall, we should be considering looking at this particular department and how we can best facilitate Manitoba in terms of receiving more immigrants and retaining more immigrants.

I use the example of, one that comes with me on numerous occasions is the nursing program. I realize that is more a question of credentials, but these are the things that we have to look at. At this point, I am ready to pass it along.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Can I just make a comment? Mr. Acting Chairperson, I guess you have made some comments and some very, I suppose, valid observations about the value of new immigrants and the support for them.

I guess this is a year where we would have loved to have done a lot more in a lot of areas. I know in the citizenship area, there were no reductions. There may not have been increases in all instances, but there were not reductions, and I think that bodes well for programs.

You know, the only areas that got major increases were Health, Family Services and Education. A lot of the other departments, at this point in time, and services—you know, if we were able to maintain the status quo when we had a zero percent increase in revenues in the province, I think, it indicates a commitment by government, but I think a greater indication of commitment is just to look at what has happened with the restructuring of the department.

Now, within the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, we have Immigration and Settlement; we have ESL programming for Winnipeg School Division No. 1; we have a bit of money to take a look at business immigration and how we can attract more business to Manitoba; we have immigrant credentials now in the department; we have MIC responsible to the same minister and the Multiculturalism Secretariat.

I believe that is an indication that we as a government and I as minister, over a period of the next year, are going to have to try to pull together the services that are provided to new immigrants in the province of Manitoba, see if we cannot develop a way whereby we can get an agreement with the federal government, look at the services that have been provided in different departments of the government, amalgamate that into some order, I suppose, so that in fact we can assess what the needs are of the community and try to work toward a better provision of services to new immigrants.

I think it is a step in the right direction. I look forward to having all of these services amalgamated within our department, so that in fact we can move ahead with addressing some of the real issues and the real concerns that are there with integration, settlement and job access within our Manitoba community.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer): Item 4.(a)(1) Salaries, \$681,100—pass; 4.(a)(2) Other Expenditures, \$111,400—shall the item pass?

Ms. Cerilli: I guess I am trying to still get a handle on the variety of services that are provided, that have been transferred into this section, and I have some questions related to the Immigrant Access

centre. I would just like to clarify the services that are being provided currently through the Immigrant Access centre and to clarify if now, I am assuming, that organization will come under this branch as well.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes. Immigrant Access Service does fall under my department now. It was established in 1985, within the Immigration and Settlement Services branch, to bridge the barriers that new immigrants encounter in accessing various health, employment, social, education, language, financial and legal services.

It provides information, needs assessment, resource identification and referral to clients in their own language. The service provides five Access workers who represent various language groups including Vietnamese, Chinese, Laotian, Spanish, Polish and Punjabi. The Immigrant Access Service works with services to help them become more informed and sensitive to immigrant needs and cross-cultural service issues.

* (1610)

Ms. CerlIII: Can you clarify which communities have representation and an Access worker?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Vietnamese, Chinese, Laotian, Spanish, Polish and Punjabi.

Ms. CerlIII: Will you repeat those, please?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Vietnamese, Chinese, Laotian, Spanish, Polish and Punjabi.

Ms. CerlIII: When were these communities identified, and how was that done?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, when the program was put together, these communities were identified as the communities requiring the largest amount of service.

Ms. CerlIII: So the same communities have had a worker throughout the duration of the program?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes.

Ms. CerlIII: Has there been any research to see if there are other communities that require service, or how are the other ethnic communities serviced?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Okay. It is my understanding that there is a pool of trained workers from other communities, through community organizations, who are called in on a volunteer basis to assist with other communities that need help.

Ms. CerlIII: Are these workers responsible only to the community that they represent, or are they supposed to work throughout all the communities?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Absolutely not. They are cross-cultural, and not one worker works specifically with one community, but they work with all communities.

Ms. CerlIII: Do you have any reports that document that that is what is happening, that in fact there is a cross-cultural aspect to the centre and that a variety of communities are being serviced?

(Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Deputy Chairman, in the Chair)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, six years ago, when these people were hired, they were part of the Refugee Community Training Program under the Core Area Initiative, which was a cross-cultural training program, and people were hired from this program.

Ms. CerlIII: My question was, has there been any documentation or is there a report? I am certain that the organization has to submit annual reports and report on the number of communities that are receiving services.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I am under the understanding that there is a perception out there within some of the communities that in fact there might be only certain communities that are served through the Immigrant Access Service. There has been an internal review conducted just in 1991 to assess the operations and the service model. That review has yet—given that I have just accepted or received responsibility for this area, I have not been presented with that internal review. I will be meeting with staff and be briefed on that in very short order, probably once the Estimates are through, and then we will be dealing with that.

I guess that is all I can say at this moment that there has been an internal review, and there is a perception out there in the community that there are some communities that are being served over and above others. I think that kind of information, I will have to sit down and be briefed by staff within the department and determine where we move from here.

Ms. CerlIII: Seeing as how the staff are with us, I wonder if we could have an explanation of some of the recommendations that were in the review—or if there are the staff here.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairman, yes, there is one staff member here, but I guess I would like to see the review myself. I have not personally seen it. I would like to see it, review the recommendations, and act on those recommendations accordingly. Anything that is done or anything that is changed will obviously be public information. It was an internal review and it is a working review for the department with the minister.

Ms. CerlIII: Can we have some general comments of what the review found?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I believe as the minister responsible, I am to answer questions in the Estimates process; normally staff do not answer questions, it is the minister. In fact, if I have not seen that review, it is very difficult for me to try to explain to you what might have been in that review and what recommendations were made, and as a further step how I am going to act on them. Quite frankly, as I said, this is a new responsibility for me. I have not had Immigration and Settlement in my department or under my responsibility before.

I will take quite seriously reviewing all of the activities that have been going on in all of the areas that I will now receive responsibility for. We will be co-ordinating a division of Citizenship within my department to deal with all citizenship issues. In fact, we will be reviewing all aspects of everything that I will have responsibility for.

Ms. CerlIII: As a point of clarification, in Estimates in the last session, particularly in the Department of Environment, it was common that staff would answer questions.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I guess I can take a break. Never, never in the past has staff answered any questions in the Estimates process. I would seek the advice of some of those that have been in the Legislature a little bit longer than I have, but whenever I was part of an Estimates process—I know that as critic in opposition we asked questions of the ministers, and the ministers answered the questions.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Just for a point of clarification, to the honourable member, it is done during some committee procedures, but not during Estimates. I believe that is what you are mistaking it for.

Ms. CerlIII: Okay.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Item (2) Other Expenditures, \$111,400—

Ms. CerlIII: Can I request that we take a short break, please.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Move we take a five-minute recess? Agreed? Agreed.

* * *

The committee took recess at 4:19 p.m.

After Recess

The committee resumed at 4:29 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Order, please. The committee is now dealing with item 4.(a)(2) Other Expenditures \$111,400. Shall the item pass?

Ms. CerlIII: I want to pick up where we left off with regard to looking at the development of the program offered by the Immigrant Access centre. I am wondering if there has been research that is going to look at the demographics of the immigrant population coming into Manitoba. Maybe we can start there. Just to clarify, what are the demographics of the population?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the top 10 source countries in 1990 were: the Philippines, No. 1 at 20 percent; Poland, No. 2 at—I will round the numbers off—13 percent; Vietnam, No. 3, 7 percent; Hong Kong, No. 4, 4 percent—Oh, pardon me, it is a little out of order here—China, 5.1 percent; India 4.9 percent; El Salvador 2 percent; Ethiopia 4 percent; USA 2.5 percent; and the United Kingdom 3 percent.

Excuse me, did I miss Hong Kong in there? Did I give you Hong Kong, 4.4 percent?

An Honourable Member: Yes.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Okay.

* (1630)

Ms. CerlIII: I know that those were not in order, but what was the percentage for Vietnam?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Seven.

Ms. CerlIII: For particularly those immigrants that are not speaking English, how are services provided for populations that do not have a worker who speaks their language?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am informed that all of the top 10 source countries and all of the different languages that are spoken by

those countries are covered off with staff in Immigrant Access Service.

Ms. CerIII: Earlier on, when the minister was describing the services in the department, she mentioned that there were 800 clients served under the Immigrant Access Service. Who is providing this service? How many staff are there?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, there are five staff who have—five cross-cultural staff employed in this branch.

Ms. CerIII: Do the five staff cover off all those languages?

Mrs. Mitchelson: There are the five staff who deliver the actual service. The support service worker within Immigrant Access is Philippine-speaking, and all of the other languages are covered off by staff.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Item 4.(a)(2) Other Expenditures—

Ms. CerIII: I am just trying to get a better understanding of how this service is operating and what kind of organizations the workers are liaising with, what kind of services are the newcomers requiring. I understand that then the community workers, there are five staff, and they are providing interpretation and translation services for clients.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, if I can just indicate, the languages that are served are Spanish, Polish, Vietnamese, Punjabi, Tagalog, Hindi, Persian, Khmer, Pushtu, Eritrean, Thai, Afrikaans, Urdu, Portuguese, Chinese and Laotian, so obviously there are some workers who do speak more than one language.

Ms. CerIII: What kind of structure is in place, or how do these workers interact with these various communities?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the Immigrant Access Service does not do consulting work. What they do is intake clients, assess what their needs are and refer them to agencies within the community that may serve their needs. Examples of that are Child and Family Services agencies, the cross-cultural mental health specialist, community Mental Health Services, doctors, nurses, psychiatrists, social workers, with Winnipeg's hospitals and city and provincial social allowance counsellors.

Ms. CerIII: So the idea is that the Immigrant Access Service is a bridge. I can imagine that there are a variety of problems in trying to provide that kind of a link. Language is a barrier, and there are probably a number of other barriers. What is Immigrant Access Service doing, or what is being done to develop that kind of service, the bridging service?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I believe that people come or hear about or are sent to Immigrant Access Service because they have a specific problem whether it be a family problem, whether it be a mental health problem, whether it be another type of health problem, whether it be a problem accessing social services. Obviously, those languages that I indicated to you that were spoken by the workers or the staff in Immigrant Access, they will be able to assess the needs of that person and refer them. So it is a referral service. It does not actually do consultation, and it refers them to external agencies that will help or attempt to solve the problem.

Ms. CerIII: I understand that was the idea of the Immigrant Access Service to have a central place where people could go, so that they could have access to a support who would help them with insurance or health care or child and family. Unfortunately, as I understand it, what happens is that people do not come, that we need to have more outreach because when people, particularly what I am aware of, is elderly immigrants who are very much marginalized who are in need of, you mentioned health services, they are not going to go downtown and go to the Immigrant Access centre. They need to have some method of being identified. So I am wondering what is being done to address that problem.

* (1640)

The reality of the situation is we are getting somewhere because we have established the office. We are developing a service, but in reality, the people who need the service often do not access it on their own. So I am trying to identify what structure or systems are in place so that the people who need the services actually are getting the service, particularly in some of the communities that you mentioned, El Salvadorian or Laotian community, where people would not—it would be difficult for them to get there without—they might not even know that this is available.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, staff inform me that in fact they have realized that there has been, in some instances, a problem. They have changed their hours so that staff from Immigrant Access are available to make house calls. I am told that every community and community organization does know that there are services available. On Wednesday evenings they are available to make house calls should someone phone and indicate that there is a person within their community that does need that kind of service.

I am also informed that there is a network of other organizations that are also involved, such as Planned Parenthood, Immigrant Women's Association, settlement agencies and all of the health care agencies that do know and do refer people to immigrant access.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Order, please. We will now recess until the vote has been taken in the House. We are all requested to go to the Chamber for a vote. Recess until eight o'clock.

SUPPLY—EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Madam Chairman (Louise Dacquay): Order, please. This section of the Committee of Supply will be dealing with the Estimates of Executive Council. We will begin with a statement from the honourable First Minister.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Chairman, since our department is the first to be considered in Committee of Supply and since I served as Chairman of Treasury Board for the preparations of the Estimates that we are beginning to review, I thought I should repeat, on behalf of my colleagues in cabinet, just how much we appreciated the long hours and careful attention our staff, at all levels, in all departments, devoted to the preparation of these Estimates.

I should pay special tribute to the work of the Treasury Board Secretariat and the committees of deputies who played such a large part in helping the government and the province deal with an extremely difficult fiscal situation. Executive Council Estimates reflect their efforts.

As members will note, the overall appropriation for Executive Council for 1991-92 is down \$225,000, or 6.6 percent, from last year's vote. The largest reduction has occurred in management and administration, where total requirements are down \$179,400, or 7.6 percent. This total is made up of a

reduction of \$46,400 for Salaries and \$133,000 for Other Expenditures.

It is from this section of the department that two positions were eliminated, as was noted in the material that was distributed on the day the budget was introduced. The department's staff-year total is now 46. As a point of comparison, I understand the total, when we assumed office, was 59 for the Department of Executive Council.

The appropriation for the Intergovernmental Relations Secretariat is also down by \$66,900, reflecting the fact that last year's vote included an allowance for the cost Manitoba incurred in hosting both the annual Premiers' Conference and the Western Premiers' Conference last spring and summer. Otherwise, the Estimates remain the same as in 1990-91, with the exception of the vote for the French Language Services Secretariat, which has been increased by \$15,300.

As I believe most members of the committee are aware, the Manitoba government is about to lose the services of Roger Turenne, who has been a special adviser to the Premier on French Language Services for some 10 years. Those of you who know Roger well will know of his dedication to our province and to the advancement, not only of French Language Services in the public sector, but also of the well-being of our Francophone communities throughout Manitoba.

Recently, the Commissioner of Official Languages praised the progress Manitoba has made in extending French Language Services, and much of that praise rightfully belongs to Roger Turenne. Roger has left a lasting contribution to Manitoba and deserves our thanks and commendation. In fact, a reception is being held in Roger's honour this afternoon in the dining room, and I hope that members will have an opportunity to attend and join me in wishing him well.

Roger's successor is Edmond Labossiere who I know is also well known to many members on both sides of the House. My colleagues and I remain strongly committed to the strengthening of French language services, and we believe the appointment of Mr. Labossiere reflects that commitment clearly. He will be responsible for carrying out the implementation plans that Mr. Turenne helped us put in place and will also take the lead in implementing the official languages agreement

which we signed with the Government of Canada last year.

Along with the staffing changes in the French Language Services Secretariat I also want to recognize the invaluable contribution of another member of our staff who will be leaving at the end of this month. Libby White has been the Tour and Itinerary Co-ordinator in the Premier's Office from the beginning of our administration, and she has done a consistently superb job. There are few, if any, more demanding positions in Executive Council. The hours are long, the deadlines are always unreasonable, and the amount of detail can be overwhelming. The fact that Libby will be leaving us with literally hundreds of friends in the Manitoba government and in other governments across the country shows just how well she has done her job.

* (1430)

Earlier I referred to the serious financial pressures facing the government in preparing this year's budget and Estimates. While much of that pressure resulted from increasing debt service charges and from the impact of the national economic recession on our revenues, a significant part of the pressure can also be traced directly to federal transfer payment cuts and offloading. This is not a problem which is unique to Manitoba, of course. Concerns about federal transfers and federal offloading have been a recurring theme in provincial budgets right across the country this year and last, and discussions of this subject have dominated Premiers' meetings for the past year.

Undoubtedly they would have dominated a First Ministers' Conference on the economy last fall as well had such a meeting been held. Regrettably the Prime Minister has refused to call further First Ministers' Conferences on the economy.

In two weeks the western Premiers will be holding our 1991 conference in Nipawin, Saskatchewan, and once again federal-provincial fiscal issues will be front and center on the agenda along with national unity, trade and international competitiveness. Interestingly, I believe the federal government has rescheduled the date of its throne speech to coincide with the first day of the Western Premiers' Conference, May 13. I do not know if this was a coincidence, but whether it was or not I am sure that the other western Premiers and I will be most interested in hearing the federal government's

plans for the upcoming session of Parliament and for improving its relations with the provinces.

Clearly the appointment of the Right Honourable Joe Clark as Minister responsible for Constitutional Affairs and Federal/Provincial Relations was a promising step. There have been reports suggesting that Mr. Clark shares our view that federal transfer payment cuts and offloading are totally inconsistent with the federal commitment to strengthening the ties of unity across the country. If that is so, then perhaps we will start to see a reversal of that trend and a recognition that programs such as equalization, medicare and the Canada Assistance Plan and others are vitally important to sharing the benefits of confederation and to holding Canada together.

I might say here that since last fall I have had two extremely productive meetings with the Premier of Ontario. Besides federal/provincial fiscal issues, Premier Rae and I also discussed a number of bilateral issues of importance to Ontario and Manitoba, specifically the power sale from Manitoba Hydro to Ontario Hydro and the management of the Shoal Lake basin. The Ontario government has reaffirmed its support for the Hydro sale and has also signaled its readiness to consider an innovative, new approach to co-operating with us and with local Native communities in assuring permanent protection for Winnipeg's water supply.

Although the Premier of Ontario will not be at the Western Premiers' Conference, he and our colleagues from other provinces will be present at the 1991 annual Premiers' Conference, which will be held in British Columbia during the last week of August.

I am hopeful that, by that time, most of the constitutional hearing processes across the country will have been completed and that we will be in a better position to identify the common ground in our positions and the areas on which we will have to work hardest to find solutions. There should be little doubt in anyone's mind at this point that we are now into what will probably be the most difficult year or year and a half in federal/provincial relations in any of our memories. Even with enlightened leadership from governments and a strong will to stay united from the people of all provinces and regions in our country, we still face a very formidable task.

That is why the work of the Manitoba Task Force on the Constitution is so important. I understand that

the members of the task force are now holding in-depth discussions on some of the major issues identified during their initial round of hearings. It is essential that the task force move ahead with its work as expeditiously as possible.

While federal/provincial and interprovincial relations will take most of our attention in the coming year, my colleagues and I will also continue to work to strengthen our international relations, particularly with the western United States. Our relations with Governor Sinner and the State of North Dakota remain excellent, of course. The Governor and I had a meeting about two months ago at which we discussed a great many issues of mutual interest.

In the coming months I will be holding initial meetings with the new Governor of Minnesota, Arne Carlson, and with the new Governor of Kansas, Joan Finney. My staff have already had excellent discussions with senior officials in these new administrations with the result that when we do meet, we will not only be reaffirming our existing economic trade and tourism co-operation agreements, but we will also be announcing some additional steps to make them more effective.

In line with the new relationship between the Western Premiers' Conference and the Western Governors' Association, which Governor Sinner and I were able to develop last year when we both chaired our respective organizations, some of the Western Governors' Association members will be taking part in a portion of the Western Premiers' Conference in Nipawin, while the Premiers in turn have been invited to the Western Governors' Association summer meeting in Rapid City, South Dakota, in July.

Interestingly, the western governors have also invited some of the governors of the Mexican border states to attend the Rapid City meeting as well, so we will all have an opportunity to discuss, among other issues, the potential trilateral negotiations now underway on a possible Canada-U.S.-Mexico North American free trade agreement.

Madam Chair, with that overview, I look forward to the comments and questions of the committee on Executive Council Estimates for 1991-92.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Chairperson, just a few brief comments about the Premier's Estimates as preliminary comments.

Our major concern throughout the Premier's Estimates will be the direction that the Province of Manitoba is heading under the stewardship of this Premier and this government. As we have said in the Budget Debate, and we will say it in other discussions that we will have through the Estimates, the government does indeed have choices and it does have options. It is the Premier that ultimately makes those decisions and decides on those options.

Today we heard an option for seniors' housing in a potential flight path versus the decision the government made two or three weeks ago on deindexing 55-Plus—almost the same amount of money, and they chose to make a decision. I am sure that they feel they can justify it to the public; we feel that we can justify our opposition to their spending priorities to the public of Manitoba.

We want to talk about the direction the government is going in terms of its philosophy, a philosophy that says that in order to grow we must cut, a philosophy that says that while there are record numbers of Manitobans unemployed and people are losing their jobs on a daily basis, our budget will not do anything about that, in fact, will put more people out of work, thousands of more people out of work. Those are the choices governments have and ultimately, over time, they are accountable for those decisions.

We disagree with the direction of the government, obviously. We do not believe in putting more people out of work when we have high numbers of people unemployed already. The government is putting \$30 million more into welfare, not in this budget line, but that again is a decision of the overall government. We believe \$20 million to fire people for a \$30 million saving perhaps in the next fiscal year, we do not believe that makes sense, Madam Chairperson, in a recession and a potential depression in our province.

* (1440)

When we meet in the community clubs and the community halls of Manitoba, the coffee shops around the province, whether it is in the North, rural Manitoba or in the city of Winnipeg, people are scared stiff of their jobs and their livelihood. What is going on now, in terms like, we are worried that this province is going down the tubes. Madam Chairperson, that is the language that people are using, not language that we believe is conducive to

confidence and growth and giving opportunities for ourselves and our children in terms of the province of Manitoba.

So we believe the government is headed in the wrong direction in terms of the economy. We believe the bottom line numbers reflect that, because the bottom line numbers in the budget, in terms of the stewardship of the total government, on the revenue side is a mirror of what is happening in our economy and on the spending side it is a mirror of the priorities of government, and that is fair enough.

On the revenue side, Madam Chairperson, we saw a 7 percent increase in personal revenue from personal taxes. We saw a flat growth on the retail sales tax. We saw a 5 percent increase in all the money the federal government gives the province of Manitoba. In that mirror we saw not something that was highlighted in the provincial government's budget, not something you could pick out very quickly, not something that was in all those press releases we had—a 47 percent decline in the revenue portion from the corporate sector which, to us, is a major indicator—I am not talking about the health and post-secondary tax which we have disagreed with the government on before—where our economy is going, because we are not getting growth in private sector investment, and maintaining our public sector spending, we will have decline.

Surely as summer follows spring we will have decline. The question is will our decline be greater than other provinces because there is a national recession or will it be less than other provinces. That will be the test for this government, because they can blame the federal government, they can blame the recession.

I might point out that this government did campaign with the former government. It was side by side and shoulder to shoulder with the—well, one of your members gave me a quizzical look on that statement. I have to remind you that I can remember four or five occasions where the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Prime Minister campaigned together on behalf of the Conservative Party in 1988 for free trade. I suggest to the Premier that it has had a devastating effect on our Canadian economy, and it has had an even more devastating effect on the Manitoba economy.

Madam Chairperson, then we find it as cold comfort after that, that the Premier then bashes the federal government. It is a tried and true strategy of

opposite parties usually. It is usually not the same strategy as the same political party or the same ideology, let alone the same strategy from a government, the campaign from the government that finally was successful, and now a government that most of us blame for the recession as sort of a superficial damage control rather than dealing with the ideology and dealing with the policies that arise from that ideology and dealing with the human devastation that arises from that Conservative ideology in the country.

Madam Chairperson, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) also states the priorities of government. The government has stated that their priorities are health, education and family services. Day in and day out we have seen not opposition politicians or members of different political parties, but parents and children and teachers and other Manitobans commenting about the education direction of this government. I have never seen education policy that has been so acute and protracted and restrained—not the same language, but even more of an acute policy than we saw in the late '70s, where we have the public education system that will lay off eventually 500 teachers.

There are schools being closed right now, Madam Chairperson. People in rural Manitoba have no idea which school will be next, based on the government's policy and the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Derkach) ducking that issue in southwestern Manitoba and people feel will duck that issue by changing the criteria on allowing schools to close, from transferring students to closing schools.

You know, people out there know and the member from that constituency in the Conservative benches knows the public see through the difference of terminology, but they know the similarity of the decision. They know the government is ducking the issue. I am sure your member has told you that in caucus. They know that. They are ducking their responsibility by using technical terms, because technical terms do not keep schools open and keep communities thriving.

Madam Chairperson, we have seen a change in the—and I mentioned the public school system. It is radically changing out there and people are very concerned. I am talking not just "New Democrats," I am talking about the whole community, people who had faith in this government, quite frankly, in the

August 7 to September 11 election period, had a lot of faith and did not see this thing coming at all between the difference between a minority government strategies and policies and the majority.

Last week we saw the triple whammy on universities. Never have we seen a combination of high tuition fees, 20 percent, a deficit being run at our major universities and layoffs and cutbacks taking place in our schools, in our universities. The University of Winnipeg is next, I believe this week, in dealing with those realities of government policy.

We had the second lowest tuition rates in Canada when the government took over, and now I believe we have the highest in western Canada. We are moving every year to a much more difficult problem of access for Manitoba students.

Then, of course, the community colleges again are supposed to be part of the priority of the government, and we see a massive 7.9 percent cutback in community colleges. That is not saving money, Madam Chairperson. That is money that is being moved over from the publicly run community colleges that should change courses.

The Premier (Mr. Filmon) quoted Maureen Hemphill back to me in 1983. I absolutely agree. They should change all the time. Every time the courses are irrelevant, we should upgrade the courses, change the courses, retrain the instructors and bring in new courses—no problem with that. I do not mind turmoil through change, but we really reject a transference of a success ratio of over 90 percent from the public sector in our community colleges over to the private sector in so-called corporate training allowances, which have a dubious, dubious success ratio—\$3.9 million to \$7 million. That is why we are different—nothing wrong with that. That is a democracy.

Family Services, Madam Chairperson, the majority of the money, the priorities of that item are going to welfare increases and the flow through from foster children. We will see some of the other decisions on the communities as we flow through the Department of Family Services.

Madam Chairperson, the other priority, health care, we have heard about a 6 percent increase in health care funding. We found from the government that when the government establishes priorities, we always find underspending in Health. We will have to watch that one as it goes through, because they

are getting 3.2 percent in the health care institutions across the province—3.2 percent. The government says it is going to spend 6 percent more. Health care facilities are getting 2 percent less than inflation; \$19 million is being cut out of the health care budget.

We are going to continue to watch that, because we usually find with the member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard) that it is kind of like, you have to follow the hidden pea, you know, it is always moved around. In fact, if you look at his Estimates, in Administration he changed it all around this year so we would not be able to show that he had raised his administrative cost 19 percent over the last couple of years. We know he is adding in all kinds of functionaries in his department, and we cannot see line to line, because he is too cute for that, too clever to have full disclosure like that. We have to go find it again under the thimbles. It will be a real interesting Estimates process in Health.

The Premier (Mr. Filmon) mentioned the free trade agreement with Mexico and the United States. We have stated our objections to that, and I would put it on the record in the Premier's Estimates. During the election, the Premier said in the all-party leaders debate, Manitoba was opposed to the free trade negotiations with Mexico. After that, when we asked questions in the House last September, we still received answers from the former Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology that Manitoba had a number of concerns about free trade with Mexico. Since then we have asked the Premier, what correspondence has he had with the Prime Minister, what correspondence has this government had with the Conservative government in Ottawa about free trade? We now get the word that they are "monitoring the situation." -(interjection)- We have asked the Premier to table it, and I await that during this Estimates. I am glad we may get a chance to look at that.

Madam Chairman, we believe that this is an agenda not for people, it is an agenda of trade that would get resources from Canada under the Free Trade Agreement that they already have with the United States, and that is there in place, cheaper labour costs, workplace safety and health costs and environmental costs in Mexico and the markets of the United States. That is an absolute dream for the corporations of North America, but we do not believe for the people of our continent. So we will be watching this very carefully.

* (1450)

The Premier mentioned the staffing decisions in his office. We know, of course, that his Estimate numbers are down from last year because, as he explained in last year's Estimates, the government was hosting the Prince's visit, the Premiers' meeting and the Western Premiers' meeting.

Madam Chairperson, I am not going after those items on the Premier's Estimates, but I will say on the Management and Administration in his office, which he directly controls, the Estimates are down, but they are not down to the level of the 5 percent that he is now instituting and implementing in the rest of the public service.

Secondly, when we look through the Premier's Estimates and then look through other departments, we find very interesting changes. We find people being moved over to Treasury Board, for example, who formally worked in the Premier's office and, of course, the Premier chairs Treasury Board and the salaries in that office from '89-90 to '90-91 went up 34.4 percent, \$1.7 million to \$2.335 million.

Madam Chairperson, we see functions that used to exist in the former government now being moved over to different departments. We have the Ottawa embassy of the Premier, because the Premier is responsible for Federal/Provincial Relations. He has now an Ottawa branch and last year's Estimates that cost about \$300,000, and that money has been moved over to a different department. Then we have cabinet offices being moved to different other departments.

So really, when we look at the surface of these Estimates, it looks like a cut but not a cut that is nearly level to the rest of the public service, not certainly up to the community college cuts of 7.9 percent. I am talking about the line under Management and Administration of the Premier's office.

We believe that much of this money is going into different areas but they are really Premier's functions. Let me give you an example. The government now has five communication positions for the cabinet. One of the positions is staffed by a person on maternity leave to, I believe, early July and that is an increase of 25 percent over what the former Premier had, but the Premier will move that over to a different department. It is over to the Rural Development department. So therefore the position is hidden from the public in terms of where it sits in

the Estimates process. So you have a \$60,000 a year salary—

Mr. Filmon: If someone is on maternity leave, that position has to be held open for them. What would you do? Fire them. Come on.

Mr. Doer: I am absolutely agreeing with the Premier that we have in fact gone up to five positions.

Mr. Filmon: Temporarily, while there is somebody on maternity leave.

Mr. Doer: Madam Chairperson, as I said, the Premier keeps denying the obvious. The person that works in Brandon, when the maternity leave is over, is going to still hand out the Premier's press releases, still handle all the Premier's communication, handle all the Premier's public relations, will still phone radio stations, as that person does and complain about the coverage that certain of his ministers are getting, will still damage control all the issues, will still threaten to withhold cabinet ministers from radio shows if that person is not getting the right press.

That person is a communicator and that is exactly my point. You have gone from four communication positions to five communication positions, but the Premier has hidden them in different departments. He has hidden the federal-provincial function, the embassy, in another department in Industry, Trade and Tourism. He has hidden some of his other political staff over in the Treasury Board that has had an increase, that he chairs, of 34 percent in salaries in the government. So he comes in here, offloading all these different positions that report to him off to different satellites, different orbits and different Estimates, but those satellites still orbit around and report to the Premier, and he knows that.

Mr. Filmon: How was I to know—

Mr. Doer: Well, the Premier raises that. I can name—there were four positions under the former Premier and there are now five positions under this Premier. The only difference between this Premier and the former Premier is the former Premier put all four of them up front. This Premier, because he does not—he was critical of the former Premier—has four positions up front and has got one position in another department. -(interjection)- Well, the member for Rural Development knows full well what I am talking about. -(interjection)- Well, if her salary was ahead of the principal secretary now for government, notwithstanding the cheap shots from

a cheap-shot government, then I think you would have some legitimate criticism.

Madam Chairperson, so what we see is the federal-provincial embassy, \$300,000 in another department. The rural development communicator in a different department. Oh, they think it is funny. They hide another position over here. They had another position in Northern Affairs that works for cabinet. Treasury Board goes up 34 percent and the Premier comes in here and says, no problem.

Well, most people in the public service know the kind of offloading that is going on, and most people know the 5 percent reduction that he announced, with glee, in the last budget is not the same 5 percent reduction that is going on in his office. He is moving his own people over and he is not taking any net decline, in fact, in his own office, at the same level he is in the rest of the public service and that is very, very clear.

This Premier is responsible for Federal/Provincial Relations. Now in his Estimates today we have to deal with that issue because if there is ever any Premier that has had a worse performance in terms of bottom-line numbers for federal/provincial relations, I do not know who it is. Even Sterling Lyon did better with Pierre Elliott Trudeau than this First Minister is doing with Brian Mulroney, and Sterling Lyon I know did not campaign with Pierre Elliott Trudeau. I know that. I also know that Howard Pawley did not campaign for Brian Mulroney in '84, but I do know that this Premier (Mr. Filmon) campaigned with Brian Mulroney in 1988, was beside his very side at every public announcement in the province of Manitoba.

In fact, he told us—

Mr. Filmon: That is not true, not true. I was not on one forum or by his side in any meeting during that campaign. Now take it back, or you are not telling the truth.

Mr. Doer: Well, what about the barbecue at the University of Manitoba in the middle of the federal campaign?

Mr. Filmon: I was not there.

Mr. Doer: What about the rally at the Convention Centre?

Mr. Filmon: I left before he got there.

Mr. Doer: Oh, you were there, were you?

Mr. Filmon: Not by . . . take it back.

Mr. Doer: Well, you were at the same rally at the Fort Garry Hotel. I am surprised the Premier is so upset about that, I do not blame him, mind you. But let us look at the claim -(interjection)- I mentioned the Convention Centre, he was there when the Prime Minister was there.

Mr. Filmon: No, you said side by side on many forums.

Mr. Doer: Well you were at the same forum at the Convention Centre—

Mr. Filmon: Not side by side . . . before he got there.

Mr. Doer: Madam Chairperson—

Mr. Filmon: It was not at the Convention Centre, it was at the Holiday Inn Grand Plaza, get it right there, I mean the truth should mean something. It should mean something.

Mr. Doer: Madam Chairperson, the Premier has stated in the 1988 election that he in fact would have to just pick up the phone and the federal government, the federal Conservative government, would come back with Manitoba with not just the same money as the former government negotiated, but with more money than the former government negotiated. Now he probably will try to deny that as well, but that one we have on tape. That one we have on tape from the debate in 1988.

Madam Chairperson, we have seen—well you know, the Premier—now he is going to say he has more than we did from the federal government after bashing them with every Speech from the Throne and every budget and every day during the last provincial election. The bottom line is—let us just take one agreement, the forestry agreement. The forestry agreement was negotiated at the same time in Manitoba and in Newfoundland. Newfoundland got a higher agreement for less years than Manitoba did.

* (1500)

Madam Chairperson, when we go through the old ERDA agreement that this Premier criticized, and when we asked questions in 1988 said he would do better than, this Premier said: I do not need advice from the NDP. We were suggesting he negotiate these agreements before the federal election because he might have a little thing called leverage.

An Honourable Member: They did not negotiate any of them before the election.

Mr. Doer: Well, you look across, Lloydminster had a project announced, the gas line project in British Columbia, Hibernia—(interjection)—No, no, Oslo, not Lloydminster. Get your facts right.

An Honourable Member: Well, you said Lloydminster.

Mr. Doer: Yes, not the Oslo. Many of the projects, St. Lawrence Seaway projects in Quebec and harbour projects in Toronto were all negotiated during that period of time, so we asked the Premier to get involved, get involved in these negotiations. You are responsible for it, you are the chair of this federal-provincial committee, and get these things nailed down. And you said, oh, we will get more money. Well, now you have an agreement, a couple of agreements, left; you have lost all the ACCESS programs in the federal government; you have lost many of the northern economic development agreements; you have less of a tourism agreement than before.

The forestry agreement is less when you factor in inflation, or the same money when you do not factor inflation in terms of the agreement. You do not have a third Core. You say you are going to have public meetings on a Core, but then you do not have them and then you let that thing slip through and you are on the way to letting that go down.

You lose bases, you lose federal jobs, you just last week lost part of the Agriculture Canada jobs in the city of Winnipeg are going to Regina. And what does this Premier do after we get our pockets picked for the last two and a half years and he fails to negotiate any of the agreements? Last week the Premier said, and I quote: We feel really great about the new federal announcements by the federal government. Many of our people are on first name basis with the new cabinet. We think we can deal with the new cabinet.

Now here is Don Mazankowski getting promoted to Finance minister. Under Transport he has taken all our head office jobs almost, to his riding of Vegreville in Edmonton. We have lost bases to Edmonton. We have lost uncounted federal opportunities. In fact, this government has the greatest loss of federal public sector jobs of any other government on a per capita basis in Canada, and he is applauding the federal cabinet.

You know, you wonder why we are getting shafted after every federal-provincial agreement that comes before this government. The Premier (Mr. Filmon)

will now bash the federal government, bash the former government, world-wide recession, a Manitoba recession, does he ever take responsibility? Does he ever add up the numbers to show what an absolute disaster his federal/provincial relations policies are?

He loses a \$260 million ERDA agreement, a five-year agreement, \$60 million a year. He brings it down to \$5 million or \$6 million a year under a southern sewer program, or a southern water project, and he says he is proud of that. Your tourism agreement is \$1 to—it is 10 to 1 ratio from the former government. I mean, when is the Premier going to produce?

Now, the first thing we had when the Premier was dealing with federal/provincial relations, he was going to establish an embassy in Ottawa. So we established an Ottawa embassy at \$300,000 a year—that has not worked. Now, the Premier has established a committee now chaired by a cabinet minister.

Well, the Premier is the head of Federal/Provincial Relations. He is where the buck stops. He is the person responsible for co-ordinating all of the ministries in government to ensure that we have a strategy in place that maximizes our focus in terms of negotiations, decides where we are going to use leverage, where we are going to co-operate, where we are going to use public pressure, how we are going to bring public pressure to bear, and when we are going to say nice things about the federal government because you have to have a strategy, a silk-gloved, iron-fist kind of strategy with the federal government, and the Premier has to be in charge of it.

You cannot just wait till something falls apart and then say, oh, that mean, old federal government. You cannot go to a First Ministers' meeting and applaud them on health and education after they cut \$104 million out of your budget, and say they have done a great job of co-operating and not expect to get another clobbering of hundreds of millions of dollars three months later or two months later.

So the Premier has to have a strategy. He cannot just wing this anymore, because it is costing our economy thousands of jobs. It is costing our economy billions of dollars, and he is responsible. It is tragic because we are losing out on tremendous wealth and opportunities, and we are losing out

greater than any other province, Madam Chairperson.

He wonders why we get worried now with his western Premiers' new reality statement that his Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) was involved with after the Lloydminster meeting of new realities, and he wonders why we asked him to table the position Manitoba will take into the discussions in Nipawin, Saskatchewan, in a couple of weeks. The Premier does say in this House, and we have asked him time and time again, he is in favour of universal health care, he is against user fees, and he is against the disentanglement of medicare. Yet his Minister of Finance muses from day to day about the changes that are necessary in our health care system, and Ministers of Finance have signed a document that talks about the changes that are necessary in our health care system called disentanglement. What it says there is, you can lose EPF and just stick with equalization.

That is why, Madam Chairperson, we are very, very worried about the direction this government is going. Because we are not Alberta; we are not British Columbia; and we are not, in terms of the philosophical position, the same as Quebec. Manitobans are different; and in the public hearing process they said loud and clear, if the government wanted to go off on their own new realities of Lloydminster that is one thing, but in the public hearings of this province the people of this province said, no—no to disentanglement, no to changing our national health care program. Let us strengthen that along with aboriginal constitutional reform. Those are the two priorities that came clearly out of that position.

Madam Chairman, I agree with the Premier that this task force should conclude its work quickly and that we should get on with the Manitoba agenda in Canada. The Manitoba agenda in Canada clearly from the task force hearings we had was aboriginal constitutional reform that most Manitobans, 99 percent of Manitobans, said were long overdue and reinforcing the strong national federal programs that are so essential for keeping us as a country from coast to coast to coast. Those are some of the issues we will be looking at in the Premier's Estimates today.

Thank you, very, very much.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Madam Chairperson, I would like to

begin by agreeing with some of the things that the Premier said in his opening statement, particularly with the appointment of Joe Clark as the new Minister responsible for Federal/Provincial Relations and our Constitution. I think that any of us who participated in Meech Lake realize that Senator Lowell Murray and Norman Spector could not possibly negotiate in good faith with the remaining Premiers and the new Premiers that will gradually come on side as elections have been held.

I must say that I think that there must be a sense of *deja vu* for Mr. Clark who is now being asked to assume responsibility for saving the nation and asked to assume that responsibility by the individual who chose to defeat him at a leadership race. Politics are strange on occasion, but I agree with the Premier that of all the members in the cabinet probably only Joe Clark has the credibility with the Premiers to be able to get them to bargain in good faith with one another. I also think, however, that it will never be very far from the Prime Minister's Office. Certainly that was the case when Jean Charest presented a report which was not unacceptable to many across the country and was quickly stymied.

I remind the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to remember that Norman Spector is now running that office as the principal secretary to the Prime Minister, and so we must indeed remain cautious even though Mr. Clark is in a position where, hopefully, he can achieve some good.

I want to spend the moments today that I have speaking less about the specifics of the budgetary line and more about what I see is the theory of this government. When they are asked difficult questions in the House, the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) and the Premier both have a word which they tend to use. They both come back with "choices." We had to make choices. Well yes, Madam Chairperson, they did need to make choices, but the difficulty that I find in going through the entire budget, and therefore the direct responsibility of the Premier, is why so often did those choices attack vulnerable people?

* (1510)

When we talked earlier today about money being used to go into a seniors' housing project in which there is a large down payment that must be made and a rent of \$750 a month, and this government deindexes senior citizens whose income is less than

\$750 a month, I see no logic. More importantly, I see they have made a choice and the choice that they have made is to attack the vulnerable. When I look at program decisions made at the community colleges, I see again strange program cuts which directly affect the vulnerable, the one-year program which trains community workers for the mentally handicapped so that they can work in day programs and in shelters and indeed in the group home environment. I cannot understand why that program has been cut.

The Premier has been known to stand a couple of times in the House and to say that, well, they want to move the dollars around so they can enhance programming. Yet, in the Supplementary Information for Legislative Review put out by the Department of Education, after each community college there is the note, staff years reduction related to reduction in college programming.

There is no question in their own Estimates book that there has been a reduction in college programming, but what disturbs me is where that reduction has taken place. When that reduction takes place, where there is no alternative program available and where there is an incredibly large need for those people trained to work in our community, I say, why again have the vulnerable in our society been held somehow or other accountable for tough budgetary decisions?

When I look at the tuition fees having risen some 56.8 percent at the University of Manitoba since this government took office, 8 percent their first year, then 10 and 10 and 20, which leads to a cumulative increase of 56.8 percent, then I know that the children, the young people who will be affected are not children who come from the upper-middle class or the upper classes. I know they are not children who have been fortunate enough to be born into families where, because they have been well educated, they may put a high value on education in turn.

The people who will find themselves unable to go to university will be single mothers. They will be aboriginal students. They will be students looking to go back to university when perhaps they have found, because of inadequate qualifications, they cannot get jobs in the work force. Those are the people and those are our vulnerable people. I do not understand how a government can make choices like that.

When I look at the Family Services budget and I talk to the agencies, I am shocked that they seem to have said, we have to make choices, and if there is a vulnerable three-year-old out there, then the vulnerable three-year-old will get treatment, but that means we may have to ignore the 14-year-old in trouble. Well, I do not think either one of them should have to be ignored.

I spent three hours on Friday at Marymount visiting and talking with staff and meeting some of the young girls and, interestingly, some young boys, which surprised me, because I did not realize they had some there for their educational component. These are children in a great deal of need. One of the young girls who was getting a great deal of staff time on Friday had badly slashed herself, every vulnerable part of her body. We cannot ignore that kind of a 14-year-old in serious trouble.

When I look at Planned Parenthood cuts and again our immigrant population which is again among our most vulnerable, we know that they are often denied health care not because the health care system is not there, but because they do not know how to access it. That is what this program helped them to do. It also helped them to avoid unnecessary testing by doctors who were testing because there were not adequate levels of communication between patient and doctor because they did not share the same language base. That is a program that you say, well, if you make a choice, why is that kind of program cut?

ESL at Red River Community College, right now there are 179 students enrolled in that program. Some of those students will indeed be picked up by Winnipeg No. 1 because they are government sponsored, but that will mean that those students presently not government sponsored at Winnipeg No. 1 and not government sponsored at Red River Community College will be dropped to the bottom. They will not acquire that essential skill necessary to make it in our society because they will not be able to speak the language.

Many of them have high levels of skills. I had three in my office the other day, two of whom had university degrees. Our critic for The Maples is a graduate of English as a Second Language. He would not have been able to practise medicine, he would not have been able to pass his exam to practise medicine without English as a Second Language. So we are leaving that kind of talent

tragically go to waste when we make a cut to that kind of a program.

We have cut high school bursaries. Now I do not know whether the Premier is aware of who gets those high school bursaries, but students who apply for high school bursaries are again most frequently single parent moms who have decided they have to upgrade. They are students, some of whom have moved from rural communities where they cannot get the skills they need, so they have moved into Winnipeg. Others are people who have been in the work force who again find themselves so inadequately skilled that they need to upgrade. When you cut the high school bursary for those individuals you are cutting vulnerable Manitobans, and you are saying, we are going to put a limit on your opportunity to succeed. So I question choices.

I would like to also go into another issue which I think touches on the same theme of a lack of humane treatment of vulnerable people. We laid off 958 civil servants. The Premier I know is well aware that is not the final figure. Three hundred and twelve teachers have been laid off by school divisions because of a 2.1 percent grant to public school funding, and that is just the beginning. One hundred and fifty, the University of Manitoba tell us, will be laid off. Many of the cultural communities are looking to laying off staff. Many of those who get grants are looking at laying off staff. What disturbed me the most, and I think it disturbed most Manitobans, was the way in which some of them were laid off.

I know that the Premier went on television and said he did not approve, but I am glad to hear that he did not approve. I do not know how you can be the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) of the province knowing there are going to be that many people laid off and not have asked staff, how is this going to happen; what are the procedures that are going to be used; what kind of treatment is going to be afforded to these people; how can we do this in the most humane way?—because some of them were not treated in very humane ways.

The other theme, of course, that I bring up with some regret is what I see as intimidation. Intimidation of the nurses; the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) apparently unwilling to provide information that he is willing to provide in this House, but not during the bargaining process; the staff at the Selkirk nursing school told, do not talk to anybody about this, do not raise it, do not discuss it; the fact

that there seems to be a disproportionate number of people laid off in the Civil Service who had grievances with the government. Why have they been targeted? Is it because they have spoken out in the past and that speaking out on behalf of your legitimate rights is not acceptable?

The farmers have certainly felt that form of intimidation with respect to GRIP. When I asked the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) if he had spoken to the banks about the loan guarantees being tied to participation in GRIP and their operating loans not being granted if they did not join GRIP, he said, well, the bankers had not raised that with him. I did not expect the bankers to have raised it with him; I expected him to have raised it with the bankers, but there still seems to be that kind of intimidation going on or the sense of intimidation going on.

* (1520)

The Premier (Mr. Filmon) sets the style of the government. That style, which we certainly did not see prior to the election campaign, but which we have seen since, is that those who are able to lobby effectively appear to not be vulnerable to cuts, but those who do not have the ability to speak eloquently on their own behalf seem unfortunately to be subject to that kind of choice, to that kind of intimidation.

The Premier indicates that he has cut his budget and certainly the bottom line reflects that. If there are people who have been put into other departments, that will be nothing new; that certainly happened under previous administrations. So there is nothing new about that. I will accept the Premier's word that he has cut his own department by two staff years and by expenses mostly related to functions that do not have to be performed this year. Then I will ask the questions in the other department about what those individuals do—(interjection)—and I am sure they will be answered as they were answered in Rural Development last year when I asked a number of questions about Ron Arnst, and it became clear exactly what it was he did.

An Honourable Member: Reported to the Premier.

Mr. Filmon: That is nonsense. He is in Brandon and I do not talk to him from one month to the next.

Mrs. Carstairs: What we do have to do, however, is ask the Premier if indeed this style of government is going to continue, and if in these recessionary times, people cannot turn to their government for aid

and support when they are in most need of that aid and support. That is what I found over and over again in the budget of the province and in the style of the Premier.

Mr. Filmon: I do not think I can let the comments of the opposition Leaders go without some brief response. I did not take as long as the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) did, so I will use a little time to respond to some of the outrageous comments that were made in addition to many of the inaccurate ones that I have already corrected from my seat, Madam Chairman.

The Leader of the Opposition has questioned how it is that you can employ a policy that says in order to grow we must cut. What he does not realize is that the growth takes place in different areas from the cuts, unlike his administration. There are basically three classes of people: there are taxpayers, there are tax avoiders and there are tax consumers. In the case of New Democrats, they wanted to cut the taxpayers, and they are very successful in doing that when they are in government. They cut all sorts of taxpayers off the roll by driving businesses out with things like the corporations capital tax and the payroll tax.

What we are doing is attempting to cut the tax consumers, that is, that part of the economy that actually adds to the drain on those people who are already suffering due to the recession, by forcing greater tax burdens on people who cannot afford it. That is a different area, and if we are going to have this economy be lean and also attractive for investment and job creation, we have to ensure that we do not place further burdens by increased taxes.

What we saw in the NDP years was increased taxes, and I found it interesting that he said that never before has there been such a reduction in taxes paid by corporations. I want to just read to him the corporate income tax change between the year 1981-82 and 1982-83. That is the Howard Pawley years. They went from \$115 million to \$54 million, a 53 percent reduction, greater than the reduction that he says is taking place this year. That was Howard Pawley.

What did he do? He did not do what we are trying to do, and that is live within his means. He started bringing in all the short-term make-work jobs, funding the economy with increases in double digit expenditures by the government and transferred it onto the backs of the individuals of Manitoba. So

what was his answer? His answer was the surcharge on personal income taxes and the 2 percent tax on net income, which hit people who were working at incomes less than \$20,000, seniors, people on fixed income. Everybody got damaged by that 2 percent tax on net income, because his response to the reduction in corporate income taxes was not to try and reflect the pain that was out there and keep taxes down, but rather he kept spending like crazy, transferred it all onto the backs of the individual taxpayers.

That is why during that period of time, the Pawley years, personal income tax revenues increased 139 percent, while corporate income tax revenues went up only 49 percent during that period of time. That is the kind of transference that he thinks is fair, put it all on the backs of the individuals of Manitoba. That is his answer, and that is why we had the kind of uncompetitive economy and uncompetitive tax rates, courtesy of the NDP government. That is what they are suggesting that we do again and again and mirror those bad judgments, those bad decisions, and replicate them with huge increases in taxation and deficit debts that we can ensure that we are going to then dampen the recovery after the recession.

We are not going to do that, and I will not accept that kind of solution, because I know that when he talks about people changing their positions, that he did not accept that as sound public policy when he was not a part of the Pawley administration. I read to him last week chapter and verse of his criticisms of the Pawley administration's economic policy when he was not part of them, and now he is suggesting that those were somehow the panacea that we ought to be looking for today. He was right when he criticized them back in the early '80s. He is wrong to ask us to try and reproduce him today.

He says that we ought not to be spending \$20 million in support for adjustment for people who are leaving the public sector as a result of decisions—

An Honourable Member: Leaving the public sector?

Mr. Filmon: Yes, leaving public sector employment in Manitoba as a result of the decisions of this budget. He says we ought not to be spending that \$20 million. I believe we have a responsibility as a compassionate and caring employer to ensure that we make that separation and adjustment as easy as possible in terms of the effects on the individual,

because these are human costs to difficult times. These are very human costs, and I think that we ought to be considerate of it.

We are doing our level best to be considerate, but when he says we are spending 20 million for a 30 million saving, the reality is that we are spending 20 million for a 30 million saving in perpetuity, but those reductions are forever a saving to the taxpayer. It is a one-time cost that I think as a considerate and caring administration we ought to take seriously, and I am disappointed in him that he suggest we ought not to be investing that money in adjustment, in helping to make the transition as easy as possible on those people who, regrettably, are losing their jobs.

* (1530)

I just say to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) that when he suggests that the provincial government has a greater role to play in a school closure, he ought to examine what it is that has been set up there, because the guidelines, the criteria for school closure have been laid down by the previous administration, the NDP.

This administration can only follow those guidelines or change them, and if we change them, then we would have another political battle here, because they would say we are interfering with the autonomy of school boards. The fact is that The Public Schools Act does give autonomy to school boards to make decisions within their jurisdiction. The minute we are asked to intervene is the minute that obviously we have to take over responsibility for public schools, that is, away from the school boards and into direct control right across this province.

I think most people want to have continued local input and local control over school boards. I think the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Derkach) is doing his best to follow not only The Public Schools Act but the guidelines that were laid down by the previous administration, and not interfere.

I cannot make sense of his criticism that our Management and Administration was not reduced in Executive Council to the 5 percent guidelines that were reductions in Management and Administration in other departments. In fact, it is down 7.6 percent. All he has to do is read the figures.

I cannot make sense of his criticism that Treasury Board Secretariat has somehow increased. If he reads the figures, the reduction is \$206,000 on a

\$2.7-million budget, which is about 8 percent. I cannot make sense of his criticism. The figures do not support it, Madam Chairman.

When he talks about the Manitoba office in Ottawa, its primary purpose—he can look at all the press releases, he can look at all of the information that has been put out—is to try and ensure that we are plugged into federal government initiatives as they affect economic opportunities for our province. So whether it is that they are working with western diversification, whether it is that they are working with Ottawa for procurement or business development initiatives, their primary purpose is in that area of economic development. We always said that when we set up the office.

Again I can say to him that the number of times that office is working with my office directly with respect to matters of federal-provincial or constitutional matters is very minimal in comparison to all of the time they spend on procurement, business development and economic initiatives of the federal government that affect jobs and investment in Manitoba. That is why it is funded and set up under Industry, Trade and Tourism. That is what we said when it was announced, and it has carried on its operations that way.

When he tries to make the argument with respect to whether or not there are five positions in communications versus four under Howard Pawley, he misses the point entirely. Since we have taken government, there have been 70 positions total reduced in communications right across all government departments, \$4 million of reduction in expenditures on the whole area of communication. If we are able to replace those 70 and that \$4-million expenditure with one more position in Executive Council, then I say, he is giving us the greatest advertisement for our effectiveness in government that we could ever ask for, if that is what his argument is.

I say that when Mr. Arnst is in Brandon, I do not speak to him once a month. So his argument is totally fallacious. Even if he wants to give us credit and say that we are able to get the work done with 70 fewer people and a \$4-million saving across all government departments by having one more person in Brandon, then I say, he is giving us a great advertisement for our effectiveness in management in this administration.

How he can allege that somehow the way in which my department is being kept down is because other departments have now the people who were and should be working for Executive Council? All those other departments' budgets are down as well. In Rural Development, Native Affairs, you name it, I, T and T, every one of those departments is down. The area that houses the communications people, Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, down substantially in its budget. Where are we hiding them when every department is down?

All he is doing is giving us a vote of confidence, saying that not only have we reduced the staff, the funding and the expenditures in Executive Council, but we are doing it in every other area despite the fact that we have hidden all these bodies that he says are in there. The argument just is illogical, Madam Chairman, just as most of the comments that the member is making.

With respect to the arguments being put forward by the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) and zeroing in on choices that she says affects vulnerable people, and zeroing in particularly on the so-called deindexing of senior citizens, we are talking about a narrow range of people within the 55-Plus program, who as a result of this decision are having a maximum reduction of \$1.80 a month. I really think that ought to be put in perspective, \$1.80 a month in favour of having money, \$90 million going to health care to really support the services that vulnerable Manitobans need. If anything, they need quality health care.

Those are the kinds of priority decisions that yes, we had to take, but surely even the Leader of the Liberal Party would recognize that the \$90 million going into health care is going to a large extent to recognize the needs of vulnerable Manitobans, whether they be seniors, whether they be people with physical or mental handicaps, whether they be people on sole support or social allowances or anything else. The 6.9 percent increase in Family Services budget recognizes the vulnerability of people especially on social allowances in so many other areas.

Our priorities are clear and we put them out to people to say these are the areas, and there are very few of them, who are getting any more money this year. Health care is a big one, Family Services is another, and Education, though it does not meet what we would like to be doing, it is an area in which

we are saying to them that we have to do our best and we have to share. That is the kind of circumstance that we are faced with.

The only people who do not have to make choices in this Legislature are the Liberals and the New Democrats who get up day after day and say: give them more, give them more, give them more, but never have the courage or the honesty to tell people that means increased taxes, to tell those people out there who they want to vote for them that their taxes would have to go up in order to support the demands of the New Democrats and the Liberals. They all went up under the NDP, huge increases in property taxes under the NDP. At the same time as the New Democrats were driving up provincial taxation, they were also driving up property taxes, and that is fact on the record.

With respect to all of these other areas that have been raised, I would say that we can talk about them in philosophical terms. I invite the members opposite, when they get down to an individual program at a community college or to ESL funding and why it has been put forward, that they discuss those with ministers responsible because those kinds of detailed discussions—I know that the Minister responsible for Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson) is in her Estimates right this very moment. If you want to talk about ESL funding and programming, she is available to answer those questions. I think that would be more appropriate than us attempting to go into the detail here.

With respect to layoff procedure—and I just want to make sure that the member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs) knows the facts so that she does not misrepresent them unknowingly—and that is that there were 958 positions eliminated as a result of this Estimates process. Of that number, we believe quite confidently that there will be less than 450 laid off, perhaps somewhere in the range ultimately of 400 depending on those who might take early retirement, those who can be accommodated through a variety of other measures within the budget. So we are not talking 958.

* (1540)

With respect to my attitude toward layoffs, she says, why was I not aware of the procedures to be followed? I want to say that Treasury Board felt so strongly about how the process took place that there were meetings with the Civil Service Commission to

ensure that a process was followed. I walked out of cabinet here after Question Period to spend about three-quarters of an hour with the deputies face to face telling them what I expected of them in terms of how they would handle layoffs. I said, wherever possible, as the senior managers of this government, I would like you to do it face to face, because that is the only way you will have a feeling for what people are going through in this process.

It is the most difficult job that any manager does, but I tell you I do not know of a manager who likes to tell someone they have lost their job. Nobody in the private sector does, despite the kind of shots that the NDP take at the private sector. The only way to do it is the most senior people take the responsibility to do it face to face. It is the managers who made the recommendations; it is the managers who I expect to be able to do it. There were some departments in which that was physically not possible, but where the numbers were low the deputies attempted to be involved in the process or very senior management.

I tell you that a lot of what has been said after we have checked into it has not exactly been honest or fair with respect to the criticism. In one case that was on the front page of a newspaper in which a person protested about the so-called treatment he received, he walked in with his lawyer and intimidated the manager who was doing the process so much so that, the manager then carried through a very restrictive process, because he was under the watchful eye of the individual's lawyer. That definitely predated and influenced how he went about the process because he was concerned that every aspect be done to the tee.

This is the kind of thing that there are two sides to every story. Where possible, the senior managers carried out the process themselves. In all cases, under our direction, it was to be done in as humane, as considerate and as compassionate a way as possible. If some people because of their own approach to the problem did not do it in that way, I have said publicly on television, I am sorry for that. I regret it, because it is not the way we chose. I personally believe that we took every possible avenue to protect against something being done in an inconsiderate or a improper way.

The member for River Heights says, there have been a lot of grievances. Indeed, I am sure that the employees' association has encouraged people to

put in grievances if they think they have a case. We have looked at the situation. Of course, we have the collective agreement, and we have a process for arbitration and for settlement of grievances.

We do not believe that there are very many cases that will be successful, despite the fact that there have been many launched. We will abide by the process. That is what we do as a good employer, and we will abide by the process. We do not believe that the fact that many grievances have been lodged necessarily means that many grievances will be successful. We will abide by the process to the letter.

Finally, the member says that somehow my style has changed because we are in a majority government. Well, I suggest to her, firstly, I do not believe my style has changed, but secondly, I believe that the opposition's style has changed to some degree, particularly the Leader of the Opposition.

Many of the things that he supported in a minority situation, perhaps because, as many believe, he was afraid of an election and the devastation it would accrue on his party, he is now changing his approach to government very dramatically. That is all right. I suppose it is all in the eye of the beholder.

I do know this. Economic circumstances have changed and changed dramatically, even in the midst of our election campaign. I think that Manitoba was staying away from many of the negative aspects of the recession, but as time went on, each passing month, by October there were signs that were coming forward. Of course, as each month passed we became aware of how much it meant in terms of reduced revenue to us.

I do not think our style has changed, but I think the magnitude of the problem that we have to deal with has altered, certainly altered some in the past seven, eight, nine months. As good managers, as people who care about the people who elected us, I think we are taking the action that we believe is necessary in order to preserve a strong future for this province.

Only time will tell whether or not the opposition is right or whether or not we are right, but we believe that we have put in hours and hours and hours trying to ensure that the right decisions have been made. We will be prepared to face the judgment of the public with respect to the actions that we have taken.

Madam Chairman: I would remind members of the committee that debate on the salary for the Premier, item 1.(a), is deferred until all other items in the Estimates of this department are passed.

At this time, we would invite the Premier's staff to take their places in the Chamber. Does the honourable First Minister wish to introduce his staff?

Mr. Filmon: I have my clerk of the Executive Council, Mr. Don Leitch, the principal secretary, Mr. Greg Lyle, the Deputy Minister of Federal-Provincial Relations, Mr. Jim Eldridge—he had been the Finance officer of the Executive Council, and Karen Popp.

Madam Chairman: The item before the committee is 1.(b) Management and Administration: (1) Salaries, \$1,581,500.

Mr. Doer: Madam Chairperson, just a few comments moving into the salary item. The Premier talked about the options he had or did not have in the layoff of public employees in this province, and let me make it perfectly clear that we had called on a hiring freeze of the government. We believe through attrition and redeployment, retraining, if you want to reduce the public service you have choices to do that as opposed to an acute protracted restraint with layoffs, with high costs of the \$20 million to fire people and the tremendous morale problem that creates in your enterprise. So I would say to the Premier that he did have a choice.

The Premier did make a mention of the Treasury Board Secretariat which he chairs. I would point out that the salaries, yes, did go up from '89-90. In fact the salaries in '89-90 were 1.7 million. They went to 2.3, then they went up to 2.7 and then they went down to 2.5. Madam Chairperson, if you look over three years, though, that is an \$800,000 increase from where it was before, and it confirms what we have been saying about the Treasury Board, but that is an item for another line and a different budget process.

* (1550)

You have to look back over these items over two or three years and then you have to follow them into different departments as they sort of trickle around the government service and reverberate into different pockets into administration in government.

I asked the Premier in Question Period a while ago—the Premier now has a 5 percent reduction in the Civil Service according to his press release. The

Civil Service also, according to the superannuation numbers, increased 500 in the last two years since they came into office. Civil Service, the -(interjection)- Well, we will wait and see. The Civil Service superannuation numbers that the government tabled increased 500 in two years, and that is the best indicator of the size of the Civil Service because the Civil Service Superannuation Annual Report only records the number of cheques that are out.

Madam Chairperson, I would ask the Premier (Mr. Filmon), of the 900 or so layoffs, how many positions—there are many positions that are seasonal located in the Department of Highways and the Department of Natural Resources. The Premier has given us an answer of about how many public employees would be laid off in the city of Winnipeg from the 400 or so permanent civil servants. Will the Premier table today how many of those positions in those departments are located outside the city of Winnipeg, and what will be the net decline in the economic performance of the public jobs in areas outside of the city of Winnipeg?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Chairman, these are all matters that ought to be asked directly of ministers and I cautioned earlier about getting into matters about programs at Red River Community College, and ESL, and all of those different things. There are answers for everything.

It just happens that because the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) is sitting with me that he gives me information about Treasury Board which comes under Finance. Firstly, that figure that he gives with respect to Treasury Board, a whole section was moved into there, the ISSB. That was not there under the Pawley administration. It was under another section of the Finance Estimates, under the Controller. It is now under Treasury Board. There are not more people, there are not more expenditures, there are less.

I am telling him that, and there are answers for it. If he will just have the courage to ask them directly of the people who have the information, he cannot get away with putting false information on the record. If that is his game, then we can go on all night and let him put false information and wait for a month to refute it when the appropriate minister does it. But I am telling him it is the wrong way to do anything with respect to these areas.

With respect to the figures that he pulls out of Civil Service superannuation numbers, there is a whole agency been moved in there that was not under the superannuation before and that is not an increase in the number of people working in the Civil Service. -(interjection)- Yes, they are now under the superannuation numbers; they were not there before.

Mr. Doer: You have people coming back from out of province.

Mr. Fillmon: We are talking about the enrollment in the superannuation fund, not the number of employees working for this government. If he wants to get into those numbers again he can do that through the Civil Service Commission Estimates, and he will get the answers from them. I do not have all that information. I do not have 23 departments and all the fine details, but I am satisfied there is an answer for every single thing that he is raising as being a potentially different variant of the facts as he knows them.

We will work with what is in my Estimates and I can tell him chapter and verse that we are spending less in every area of my administration, and that is true virtually across the board in every government department. He can try and do his version of the pea game of putting something under a shell here and taking it from there, but every other department is down as well. So if we are hiding people, how can we be hiding people when my Estimates are down, when virtually all other departmental Estimates other than Health, Education and Family Services are down? Where are we hiding them? I would like to know.

Mr. Doer: I asked the Premier a question. Could he give us a breakdown of the number of employees that have been laid off or positions lost outside of the city of Winnipeg versus inside the city of Winnipeg? He gave us an answer on the permanent Civil Service. He did not give us an answer in the House two weeks ago on the other jobs. Rural Manitoba had a net decline in population under this government, and I would ask the government to give us the basic financial analysis that went on with the decisions they just made two weeks ago?

Mr. Fillmon: That information is all available from the Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission (Mr. Praznik). That is the process, and they have it all centralized in there. It is not centralized in my Estimates, and if you say it is in

Treasury Board, Treasury Board comes under the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). If you want to deal with it, I can tell the member that out of the 400 or so permanent full-time jobs that were reduced, just over 100 of them were from rural Manitoba. The rest were from the city of Winnipeg. That was the number before.

I can also tell him that the numbers of people being decentralized will be up between the Crown corporations and the direct government jobs. By the end of this year, 500 of those jobs will have been decentralized of the original number that was forecast, something in excess of 600. We know that 44 of them were affected by virtue of departmental decisions in the Estimates process, so the total number will not be as high. Still, at the end of this year there will be approximately 500 that will have been decentralized through Crown corps and direct government. There continue to be very concrete, direct measures taken to improve the lot of all of our communities outside the city of Winnipeg and support them in an economic sense.

Mr. Doer: The Premier is the chief executive officer of government, and the chief executive officer of government made a decision to reduce the public service by 900 positions. Many of those positions were in departments that have seasonal employees called Highways and Natural Resources. Many of those positions are, in fact, located outside of the city of Winnipeg. Now I know the permanent Civil Service numbers. He has given us those numbers in the House before; 100 out of the 500 or 450 and 44 of those are decentralized positions. He gave that to us a week ago Friday.

I ask the Premier, of those other seasonal employees how many positions are located outside of the city of Winnipeg, and what is the financial impact on the areas in the province of Manitoba outside of the city of Winnipeg that are reeling from an agricultural crisis which we all acknowledge?

Mr. Fillmon: Firstly, those numbers are in the individual departmental budgets of the Departments of Natural Resources, Highways, Agriculture, every one of those, and they ought to be discussed. He also knows that we have both a collective agreement and a process that is known as "bumping," whereby people of like classification within the department with greater seniority, if the function that was terminated involved somebody with greater seniority and like classification and like

function, that person from an area that has been terminated could, in fact, bump out a person in another section of the department.

* (1600)

So we do not have the final numbers as to where the jobs will come from, where the people will come from. Probably, if you want to get into the fine detail, there will be better estimates, finer detail, available from the ministers. They may know what the first swath did do, but they will not know what the bumping has done because that is a process that takes some time. They can give him better estimates.

I lay open for him because he said we should have had a hiring freeze. Well, in effect that is what we did have. That is why we had 278 vacancies as part of the process and, as I say to him, somewhere in the range of 400 to 450 of permanent full-time positions, so we are left with a number that is something in the range of 200 others that involve the positions that he is talking about that are seasonal and others. Some of it being taken care of by work sharing, where people will be laid off for part of the year, seasonal employment opportunities to minimize the number of positions lost due to these budget cuts. All of that is part of the process, and I invite him really to get through my Estimates in a hurry so that he can get at the other ministers and get into those detailed questions.

Mr. Doer: I was not asking the Premier to give me details based on what may happen later on on grievances, et cetera. The Premier knows that everything is tied to The Civil Service Act, and he knows that merit is the predominant factor in The Civil Service Act, and he also knows, and I know, that it is a very difficult, subjective criteria in the act. It is not like a normal industrial setting, Madam Chairperson, and therefore the chances of proving capriciousness or whimsical firings is very tough.

So I am asking the Premier, I assume that the cabinet did a financial analysis of the positions that would be lost through the government cabinet decisions. They have made four sets of decisions that affect the employment levels in Manitoba: the education decisions; the direct budget decisions, both full-time Civil Service and part-time, seasonal employees; and they have made decisions affecting the nonprofit organizations in government and other agencies that are related to government.

I assume that in the direct public service at least that the government has done a financial analysis of the impact on those decisions on various regions of the province. I would ask the Premier to please give us the—he mentioned they have the information on the first "swath." Can he please tell us how many of these positions that they cut last week are—many of them are maybe vacant, but they may be seasonal jobs that normally come back on May 1, because the Premier well knows that Highways and Natural Resources employ a number of people in the summer, many of whom are farmers, many of whom will use that employment to keep their farm going, because they are in tough times.

I ask the Premier: How many of those positions are outside of the city of Winnipeg, and what is its impact on various regions of the province?

Mr. Filmon: The 278 positions that I referred to as being vacant are full-time, so they are equivalent to the 450 or fewer full-time layoffs that are coming as a result of this budget. So we are not talking about seasonal, and we are not talking about term or anything else in those vacancies. They were full-time. Then we have the other terms that were not renewed, and we have various seasonal positions, and they amount to, if you take 278 and 450, you are looking at 728 out of the 958, so that leaves you 230 jobs approximately that are in the category that he is talking about which are seasonal and regional and term and all of those things.

Some of them will be in the rural and some of them will be in the city, but of the full-time permanent, I have already told him, it is literally three-to-one in favour of the city cuts as opposed to the rural areas. So I do not know what case he is trying to make, but to get more information, he will have to go to the ministers for the further detail on that remaining 230 or so. I have given him the broad, general numbers as we know it.

I just want to make sure that he knows that these were program-driven decisions. We did not go through the public service and say, you are out, you are out, you are out, you are in, you are in, you are in. None of that took place, and there was absolutely no political involvement. Program-driven decisions in which we had to ask ourselves what are the things that we must do, and what are the things that we would like to do but just simply cannot afford any longer, and that is the basis upon which those decisions were made.

Mr. Doer: Madam Chairperson, we have seen before the so-called program-driven decisions in the decentralization process was in fact (a) a fiasco, at minimum; and (b) a process where various political strengths were the determinant of what jobs got moved. I mean, obviously in an area of 7 percent unemployment, they got a number of jobs. Economic modelling was not used to give Swan River, at a 12 percent unemployment rate at that point, quite a few less in the Interlake and northeast Manitoba, obviously, there was no economic modelling.

So the Premier says there was no economic model in place. I am not surprised. My question though is, to the Premier, because we are getting calls from hundreds of people right now—I have not received calls from hundreds of people yet, I do not want to exaggerate—we are getting lots of calls and maybe overall our MLAs outside of the city of Winnipeg considerable calls from people who formerly were called back by the government, who relied on keeping their farm together, et cetera, who are not going to get called back this year in Natural Resources and the Department of Highways.

The Premier knows that if you cut a staff year in Highways—and it is seasonal staff year that could affect three people being hired who have farms because it maybe 14 to 16 weeks—so what we want to know, from the Premier, is how many of these seasonal jobs and jobs period are outside of the city of Winnipeg, so we have some way of debating this issue in an intelligent manner? We do not want to just go on our phone calls, but our phone calls worried us that the agricultural communities that are being hit dramatically by the lack of agricultural support and the prices, et cetera, et cetera, are also going to be given another whammy by this government in terms of its decisions in its budget outside of the city of Winnipeg.

Now Winnipeg already has a 10 percent unemployment rate so it is unconscionable to put more people in the unemployment lines with that kind of unemployment rate. I would ask the Premier, does he have those numbers? How many in the Parkland, how many in the North, how many in Westman, how many in southwest, where are these jobs, who is going to be affected, what does it mean for our economy? I would expect the Premier to have those numbers, and I think it should be made public, given that there has been a 5 percent cut in the public service.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Chairman, I do not have those numbers and those numbers are available through the various ministers and their detailed Estimates. That is what I am telling the member. I find it somewhat ironic that the member is whining about us not providing enough employment in Highways when the major area for cuts, consistently under the NDP, was Highways. The most that was ever spent on construction in any year in Highways was \$88 million and we have, in this particular budget, \$102.5 million on highway construction. Admittedly that is less than it has been the last two years, but we have consistently put significant investment in the infrastructure of our highways unlike the New Democrats. So whatever jobs there are in the Highways Department, there is still more than was generated under the NDP with their miserly budget of \$88 million, which was the most they ever spent.

Mr. Doer: I am surprised the Premier does not differentiate between jobs and maintenance in the Highways and jobs in capital. As the Premier well -(interjection)- Again, the Premier, obviously economic planning is not part of his strong suit. We can see that in the unemployment lines and the bankruptcies and everything else, because if you do not understand the difference between a dollar and capital in terms of job spinoff versus dollars and maintenance, it is too bad. Unfortunately, it is too bad for Manitobans.

An Honourable Member: We are providing for them. You were not. That is the difference.

Mr. Doer: We will talk to the people working in Highways, and we will talk to the municipalities that are getting the offloading of the government, notwithstanding the government said in their budget, oh, we do not like the dishonesty of the federal government for offloading and not consulting us with the health and post-secondary cuts. They do the same thing and more in their own budget.

An Honourable Member: Balderdash.

Mr. Doer: Well, balderdash. Madam Chairperson, the Premier is in charge of Federal/Provincial Relations.

Can the Premier tell us whether he has settled the issue that the Auditor has raised for forest fire compensation in the 1989 forest fires that took place in the province? Can he tell us what the settlement is?

The Auditor chastised the government for failing to have accurately reflected the revenue side when they put money in the budget and did not recover it. Can the Premier tell us what the money we have recovered on that is, please?

Mr. Filmon: Well, we continue to press the federal government to live up to its obligations. As the member knows, if we were to rely on just the established federal-provincial agreements, they would produce something in the range of \$15 million under the existing agreements and the obligations that the federal government has.

* (1610)

We have maintained consistently that the federal government ought to be providing us with greater support for those disastrous forest fires, the largest civil disaster in the history of our province. There have been ongoing discussions and negotiations amongst senior officials and members of our two governments on the matter.

Mr. Doer: Well, with the greatest respect, it sounds like a recorded announcement. We have no settlement. We are into a period two years after the fire, so it brings me to another question.

Why did the Premier agree to cut Fire Tac crews in northern Manitoba, given the devastation that took place in that area of the province?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Chairman, the Minister of Natural Resources from his seat says that is untrue. I have to accept that. Just as most of the allegations that the Leader of the Opposition has put forward, there is another falsehood that he will have to have corrected when he goes to Natural Resources to debate those Estimates.

Mr. Doer: If the Premier would be honest enough with the people of Manitoba and table the list that I have asked about, then we would not have to rely on just advice we are getting from citizens who are saying they are not getting called back as Fire Tac crews. If the Premier would be honest—

Madam Chairman: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Filmon: On a point of order, I have been honest with the Leader of the Opposition in telling him I do not have that information. It is detailed numbers that are in the Estimates of the Minister of Natural Resources. If he had the courage to go to Natural Resources, he would get his ears boxed by the

minister, but he comes here knowing that I do not have that information in my material.

Madam Chairman: Order, please. The honourable First Minister did not have a point of order. It is a dispute over facts.

* * *

Mr. Doer: The Premier is the chief executive officer of this province. He can send me off to this ministry and he can send me off to that ministry, but there are over 200 layoffs in the Department of Natural Resources. Now if you will not tell me where they are, and if you cannot tell me where they are, I suggest to this Premier, he is absolutely and totally incompetent in terms of making the decisions he made in the Province of Manitoba—utterly and totally incompetent. He does not know where he cut, and then he gives me some criticism for asking the questions gently for the last three weeks about where it is.

If he will not tell me, I do not apologize for asking. I want him to know that, very clearly. If he has not done any economic planning of where these cuts are taking place in terms of the province, then this is even more of a disaster than we thought it was before. This government is a total disaster. It is in a state of total chaos.

The bankruptcies are the highest they have ever been, a 58 percent increase. We have thousands of people unemployed. We have all kinds of economic situations. Private sector investment is down lower than it ever has been in the country. We have the lowest decline of manufacturing jobs, and these people play jurisdictional games in this House, Madam Chairperson—jurisdictional. Ask the minister. I asked the chief executive officer. He cannot tell me. He made the decisions. He chairs cabinet. He chairs Treasury Board. He chairs the whole government, and that is why I asked him.

Madam Chairperson, we think there is a double standard going on in this government. He cut the public service 5 percent. He moves all kinds of jobs all over the public service, into this department, into that department and his own functionaries.

Madam Chair, we believe that in this line there should have been also a 5 percent reduction of the salaries in the Premier's Office to be consistent with the other decisions he has made and cannot tell us where they are and other departments.

I move, seconded by the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), that in this section, 1.(b) Management and Administration, that Salaries in the Estimates of the Executive Council be reduced to \$1,546,605, a reduction from the previous year which would be consistent with what he has done in the rest of the government. Thank you.

Mr. Fillmon: Madam Chairperson, we really are seeing the kind of change—the monster that has been created in the Leader of the Opposition now that he has ascended to that responsibility. We are seeing the creation of a desperate individual who now is not only satisfied with the 10-second clip, but now is trying to conjure up for himself a great, great power.

This kind of questioning of all the different departments and detailed Estimates from the Premier's Office has never been done in the history of the Legislature, going into all the details of numbers in other people's departments. -(interjection)-

Let us talk about what this member is suggesting ought to be done in reducing the size of Executive Council. This is what he said when he supported the Executive Council Estimates, for instance, back in 1988. This is the member for Concordia, quote: Generally speaking, in Manitoba the staff of Executive Council, as I can recall it, like many of the other resources in this legislative Chamber are, in relative terms, lean. So we will not be looking at the levels of staffing in terms of this administration at this occasion except to say that in Manitoba we have, in relative terms, lean operations of the Executive Council. I hope that we would look over time at deployment of those resources more so than the actual levels which are below Saskatchewan I believe today—the First Minister can correct me—and have traditionally been below on a per capita basis a number of other Executive Council offices with, quite frankly, increasing demands. That was 1988. We are now down below that level both in numbers and in expenditures.

That is the kind of intellectual dishonesty that the people of Manitoba have to put up with this new Leader of the Opposition, who has now become puffed up with his new-found responsibility and authority, that he can go and take what he said was a lean administration two years ago, which is now leaner, and cut it back arbitrarily with some capricious motion that he has put forward because

he wants to try and create an issue out there in the public. Dishonest, Madam Chairman, dishonest, intellectually dishonest is the kind of approach that he has.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Madam Chairperson—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Chairman: Order, please. The honourable member for Thompson, on a point of order. Would you please state your point of order now?

Mr. Ashton: Madam Chairperson, if I could have some order in the committee. I am just simply waiting for members of the committee to come to order, so I can place my point of order.

My point of order is the fact that it is not in order for the First Minister to refer as he did to dishonesty. That is unparliamentary, and I would ask the First Minister to withdraw that comment. I might point, Madam Chairperson, to page 145 of the 6th Edition of Beauchesne where that is clearly indicated as being unparliamentary. I realize the First Minister is sensitive in terms of cutbacks that are taking place, but he should not place statements like that on the record.

Madam Chairperson, if I might just add to that, I can point specifically, it is page 150, where "intellectual dishonesty" is referred to as expressions that have caused intervention on the part of the Chair, Beauchesne 492, in addition to the citation I referred to earlier.

Madam Chairman: On the honourable member for Thompson's point of order, page 147 in Beauchesne, the word has been determined to be ruled parliamentary; February 1959, additionally the word has been determined to be unparliamentary, page 145; and the reference Rule 492, page 149, is a partial listing of expressions which have caused intervention on the part of the Chair.

* (1620)

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Mr. Fillmon: Further, as I indicated, that section, Management and Administration, is already down 7.6 percent from last year from what was described by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) as a lean administration. I repeat, here he is on December 6, 1988, with respect to these Estimates, quote:

Again I think he is running a lean operation which has been the tradition in Manitoba in the Premier's Office, and I say that with all sincerity (end of quote).

So he is complimenting us on running a lean operation. We have successively reduced that lean operation both in total numbers because, as I said, we are now down to 43 staff in the Executive Council office from 59 under Howard Pawley. He is still now, because he thinks there is some cheap political gain in it, putting forth a motion to reduce that.

The people of Manitoba know him for his honesty or lack of same, and we know what he is all about in this Chamber and what he is trying to do.

This is what he said on November 5, 1990, about Executive Council Estimates, the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), quote:

I would agree that we should encourage departments to underspend their allotment. I have always believed that you could not do both things. You could not encourage departments to underspend and then take away their money as their base for next year (end of quote).

So what is he doing? He is taking away their money as their base for next year, going against exactly what he said November 5, 1990, quote:

As a person who tried to do the same thing in my brief period of time, I actually would encourage departments where they can save not to do the old-fashioned kind of thing. It did not happen a lot in Manitoba, but from time to time departments would be told or directors would be told or bureaucrats particularly would want to protect their sort of base. They would ask people to go out and spend a lot of money to protect it, which did not seem to me to make any sense to the taxpayer if we had a rule in place that said you are not penalized for good management (end of quote).

So here we are, demonstrating good management year after year, getting down the size of our public service in Executive Council, substantial decrease, virtually a 25 percent decrease in our numbers since we took office in Executive Council, substantial decrease in the spending, 7.6 percent in Management and Administration this year, and he is coming forward in a cheap political attempt to try and create a fuss in this Chamber and coming up with this motion.

Well, Madam Chairman, that is what I believe is the true mark of the Leader of the Opposition. We

now know him for what he is. Different from what he was in a minority administration where he had to be honest, where he is now trying to come forward with the kind of thing, the true colours, that we can really expect of him.

Mr. Doer: I would agree that the total public service of Manitoba is a lean operation, and I stand by every word the Premier read back to me. I read them all over the weekend again, including the statements the Premier made when he was Leader of the Opposition years ago. He may find some questions that he just a minute ago stated he never asked in Estimates.

The government cannot even tell us where these layoffs are taking place in the whole public service. When the government was on a middle-of-the-road, moderate approach to the Manitoba economy, we took a middle-of-the-road approach to our criticisms of the government.

The government has moved on to an extreme, Mulroney-type ideology in the provincial public service and, Madam Chairperson, I believe the whole public service's meat is very lean. It is a public service that has traditionally been considered one of the lowest per capita in the country, and Madam Chairperson, the salary line of the Premier has not been reduced the 5 percent that he is reducing the rest of the public service.

The Premier has acknowledged that he increased the number of communicators by putting them over in different departments, by putting positions over in the community of Brandon.

Mr. Filmon: Come on, Gary, do not be dishonest.

Mr. Doer: Well, you know, the Premier mentions honesty, and I think that is a good point. The Premier, in the last election, said the province was strong, and then a week later he told us how weak it is. The Premier, in the last election, told us how he is going to support education, and then he has been devastating it. The Premier told us how strong our economy was, and then he has been proceeding to ruin our economy. The Premier says he has a thorough government. He cannot tell us what he has been cutting and where he has been cutting and what effect it will have.

Madam Chairperson, we are not proposing more than the 5 percent cut that the government announced to the rest of the public service. We are not proposing to cut the public service in his office

by the same level he cut the community colleges. We are not suggesting that we cut the Premier's salary line at the same level as he has cut some of the departments, like Natural Resources. We are not suggesting we cut some of the lines in other areas of government. His government, when in opposition, moved different decisions in budgets. In fact, I had one moved myself in Urban Affairs by the former Urban Affairs critic. I did not think that was a personal issue. I think the Legislature can vote on those issues.

Madam Chairperson, we think it is important that if the Premier is cutting the public service by 5 percent that he practise the same thing in his own office. If the Premier had not been cutting the total public service and had been reducing the size of our spending through attrition and layoffs, we would not be coming forward with motions like this today. Let me make that very clear.

We believe it is important when a government goes from four communicators to five in the Premier's own office, but they hide them over in other departments, that we show that when it comes to dealing with the Premier's own salary line, he is not going to practise the 5 percent cuts that he has practised somewhere else. He is going to practise a different variation.

I am not talking about the whole department of the Premier's office. We will not be moving changes in areas where we know there has already been major decline because of no federal-provincial meetings being hosted in Manitoba this year or other lines but, Madam Chairperson, let me make it perfectly clear to the Premier just so that he is aware, the government has embarked on a cutback of 1,000 jobs mainly at the line level all across Manitoba, and if this government thinks that we will not be moving amendments at various departments of government where we see an inconsistent action of the government from what they are doing in the line public service, they are wrong.

This is not the Estimates process of 1990, where we were taking a moderate approach. This is not the Estimates process of 1989, where we took a moderate approach. This government has chosen to go on an extreme ideological, right-wing position in their budgets and in their decisions in government and, given that they have taken that extremity, Madam Chairperson, we will be responding in kind at the various opportunities we have, and that is part

of a democracy. Now, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) can object and that is fine. I am sure he will try to get the votes for every one of these decisions.

I do not think we should decry, in any personal way, the decisions that oppositions move in Estimates. I did not decry the Premier when he used to make, as Leader of the Opposition, 20 or 30 decreases in minister's salary, down to \$1 or the price of one bushel of wheat or the price of one yard of asphalt. I did not decry the minister, the former critic of Urban Affairs, when he tried to get rid of the Policy Branch that dealt with the City of Winnipeg.

Well, I will not comment about this year's budget. I do not want to put anybody in jeopardy. I did not decry that, it was a democratic decision, it included seniors' transportation, it included handicap transit, it included all those other things that the Tories recommended that we cut when I was a minister. That is a decision that the Premier made in opposition. I assume that those decisions went to him when he was chairing the opposition government, so I do not think he should take these things as personal, Madam Chairperson.

We have a disagreement about where this province is going. He has gone from a moderate, middle-of-the-road approach in government to an extreme ideological, right-wing cut-back approach, and all we are asking him to do in his own salary line is practise the same 5 percent that he has imposed on other—

An Honourable Member: He never imposed that.

* (1630)

Mr. Doer: Well, I have the press releases from the government saying there has been a 5 percent reduction in the public service. All I am asking the Premier to do is use that same standard.

Now, the Premier can vote against it, and that is fine, that is his right. The people will know he is voting against something that he is imposing on other people. Madam Chairperson, we will be moving amendments throughout the budget and Estimates process, and we will be doing so this time around as opposed to the last times, because the Premier is right when he quotes back chapter and verse of previous statements. We are doing it now because the government is not the same government it was in 1990. It is not the same government it was in 1989, and it is not the same

government it was in '88. It is taking this province down the path of disaster economically.

We believe that we have to demonstrate, in any way possible as opposition, in a democratic forum, with democratic votes, our opposition to the direction of government, and we make no apologies for that. That is why we live in a great country, in a great province, because it is a democracy. Votes and amendments to Estimates, which should not be foreign to the Premier—he has made a number of amendments himself, I would imagine, over time. I did not take them personally when they were cutting seniors' transportation. I tried to explain to the opposition what they were doing.

I do not think there has been any amendment that I can recall that was capricious and whimsical as when this Leader of the government was in opposition and he wanted to cut back Handi-Transit. This is not a Handi-Transit cut we are suggesting. This is not as capricious and whimsical as seniors' transportation. This was not as whimsical as some of the programs like Healthy Parent, Healthy Child that originally were being cut back by this government when they were in opposition. This is just a mere 2 percent difference from what the Estimates were from where it was before.

Now, Madam Chairperson, the Premier has mentioned what we stated before. We did not move motions of nonconfidence when the government brought back a modest budget. We voted against two and actually voted for one. I say to the government now, if they were on a modest, middle-of-the-ground approach and dealing with the recession and the economy in a middle-of-the-ground way, we would not be acting the way we are today. We believe what the government is doing is wrong headed, and we believe we have the financial numbers to show that indeed that is correct.

Madam Chairperson, I am not suggesting we cut out the seniors' transportation and the handicap transit, even though the government has cut it back, and I am not suggesting we cut back the services to the most vulnerable. I am just saying that if there is going to be a 5 percent cut, let us have it in the Premier's Salary line like everywhere else and let us vote accordingly. If you do not want to vote for it, fine.

Mrs. Carstairs: I have a number of questions, but we are now into a motion and I cannot vote on the

motion until I have some answers to those questions. For example, in the Estimates of Executive Council, we were given two pieces of paper which said what was the staff as of October 20, 1990. The numbers on that staff list were 42.

Now I have heard two numbers from the Premier (Mr. Filmon) today, and I maybe misheard the first one, but I thought he said 46. He then said, a few moments later, 43. In any case, if it was at 42 in October of 1990, neither would represent a cut of two people. So logic tells me there has not been a cut. There has, in fact, been an increase, or something magical happened between October of 1990 and today which increased and now has bumped the staff of Executive Council.

I think it is appropriate, since members of this Chamber are going to be asked to vote on this motion, that we get the correct figures from the Premier.

Mr. Filmon: I apologize to the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs). My original statement of 46 is the accurate one. That is the approved staff complement that we have, but as we went through this discussion last year and previous years, all of our positions are not filled.

As in the past, we have had reductions in staff complement positions and there are two fewer overall positions than there were last year. We have gone down further from 48 to 46 as part of this budget process. We started off at 59 under the Pawley administration and we are down now to 46, all of which are not filled. I believe we have 43 filled at this point in time. So that is the number.

Having said that, Madam Chairman, I want to just repeat what is the inconsistency and why he is now back-peddling and whining and complaining and comparing to seniors' transit and other things. I am not suggesting even that the Leader of the Opposition's (Mr. Doer) priorities are not right. What I am suggesting to him is that we already have reduced in this set of Estimates, in that line of Management and Administration, 7.6 percent. That is our reduction.

We gave a target to all departments in that Management and Administration line of 5 percent, and we achieved 7.6 percent in our area. We thought that was leadership and good, but I might say that this overall reduction is against the backdrop of what the Leader of the Opposition said was a lean operation. He repeated it time and time

again. He said that we, referring to Executive Council, the staff of the Executive Council—that is what he referred to on December 5, 1988. He said that was a lean operation. That is when it was higher than it is today. -(interjection)- No. Well, he says we have moved them over, but I challenge him.

Every other department is down, the overall area, for instance, of communication has been reduced 70 positions, \$4 million. Every area is down; Treasury Board is down; Rural Development is down; Northern Affairs is down; Finance is down; Industry, Trade and Tourism; Housing; every single one of them. Where are we hiding them? Mine is down. Every one is down.

That is what I consider to be the duplicity. That is what I consider to be the inconsistency in his approach. He was telling us that we were a lean operation when we were way up over where we are today. I want to tell him that in the budget that we defeated in 1988-89 when he was the minister of Treasury bench, in that area of Salaries there were 52 staff years in that defeated budget. Today there are 38, just Management and Administration. Overall it was 59 down to 46, but in that section we went from 52 to 38. We went from salary complement of 1.95 million down to, in this budget, 1.58 million—huge reduction.

Despite the fact that we had GSI increases built into those salaries of 3 percent and 4.5 percent, we are still down from 1.95 to 1.58. This is the area that he referred to as being lean, one of the leanest in the country, and now he is saying capriciously, just for his own political purposes because he has acknowledged that nothing has changed except his view of our government, he is saying that it ought to be reduced.

So I can understand why the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) wants some clarification, and I hope that I have clarified for her that 46 is the global number and they are not all filled.

Madam Chairman: Shall the amendment pass? All those in favour of the amendment, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Chairman: All those opposed to the amendment, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Chairman: In my opinion, the Nays have it.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Yes, Madam Chairperson, I would request a recorded vote, please, of all the members.

Madam Chairman: Order, please. The committee will come to order. The question before the House is the motion by the honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer).

I move that section 1. (b) Management and Administration: (1) Salaries in the Estimates of the Executive Council be reduced to \$1,546,605, a reduction from the previous year.

A COUNTED VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:

Yeas 20, Nays 33.

Madam Chairman: The amendment has been defeated.

* (1710)

The hour being past five, and time for private members' hour, I am interrupting the proceedings of the committee. The committee will reconvene at 8 p.m.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

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

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Res. 6—Clean up of Red River

Mr. Speaker: Resolution 6, Clean up of Red River, standing in the name of the honourable member for Selkirk.

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Interlake (Mr. Cliff Evans),

WHEREAS the Red River downstream from Winnipeg, and Lake Winnipeg itself are being continually polluted by Winnipeg-based effluents; and

WHEREAS the City of Winnipeg is violating The Environment Act by not stopping this pollution; and

WHEREAS the lower Red River is a centre for tourism and recreational and commercial fishing and boating;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge that the Manitoba government consider supporting all measures aimed at cleaning up the Red River including:

1. the examination of alternatives to road salt now used by the City of Winnipeg,
2. the encouragement of industries which reduce, re-use, and recycle their waste products,
3. the encouragement of the Department of Natural Resources to take a more active role in the protection of the river environment.

Motion presented.

Mr. Dewar: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about this important resolution to the citizens of Selkirk and all residents north of Selkirk, those in the Gimli constituency and those who live in the Springfield constituency and those from the Lac du Bonnet constituency as well, of course to anyone who is actually concerned about the cleaning up of the waterways in this province in general.

It also stresses our concerns about the fishing and tourism industry and asks the Department of Natural Resources to take a more active role in the protection of this industry.

This resolution offers tangible suggestions like finding alternatives to road salt and the promotion of environmentally concerned industries.

Of course, I am asking as well for the province to live up to its previous commitments, Mr. Speaker. I believe it was 10 months before last September's election when the Minister of Environment issued an order requiring the City of Winnipeg to change the way it went about discharging sewage into the Red and the Assiniboine Rivers. The city would have to begin disinfecting the sewage discharges from its three treatment plants.

The disinfection program was to be phased in over four or five years, and the city was given until March 1, 1990, to submit its plans, plans that would outline the steps needed to disinfect and treat the sewage in an effort to control sewage dumped into both the Red and the Assiniboine Rivers, but March 1, 1990, came and went and still no plans. These plans have still not been filed with the Environment department a year after the minister's deadline.

In an article in the Selkirk Journal, the Minister of Environment states, quote: We will put the city under

environmental order. We knew in doing so that they would still not be bringing their water qualities up to the Manitoba water quality objectives. The city is effectively on notice that they have to deal with this, but it may be some years before they are able to bring their discharges up to standards. He added that the province would tighten up the order if it felt the city began fudging the time line.

Well, I ask the minister now to tighten up his order, because the city is fudging the time line. It has been well over a year since his deadline for the city to submit its plans. This disinfection program would help reduce the bacterial count in the Red River, which has been estimated at certain times to be 10 times above the provincial surface water quality objectives. A value this high, what it does is put swimmers and water skiers health at risk. There have been about a dozen cases a year of gastrointestinal illness from skiers and swimmers between Winnipeg and Selkirk. If I was in Selkirk right now, I would not be drinking this water. Okay, so I asked the minister today to tighten up this order to the City of Winnipeg and ask them for their plans.

In November 1990, the minister announced Clean Environment Commission hearings would be held to examine the effects of a wide range of discharges into our river system. The hearings were to take place in the fall of last year, but, of course, the hearings were not held. Nothing concrete has come from this minister's announcements, which he made in 1990.

I call upon the minister today to fast track this process and get the Clean Environment Commission hearings proceeding as soon as possible. When I raised this question with the minister on April 12, 1991, will the minister tighten up regulations concerning the City of Winnipeg and its discharge of sewage into the Red and the Assiniboine Rivers—

An Honourable Member: What did he say?

Mr. Dewar: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, the member I think probably knows well that process is well underway today. Well, obviously the process is not underway, and again, we urge the minister to just simply follow things that he is already previously committed to.

Another concern we have in the Selkirk area, of course, is the proposed weir, the dam to be built in the Ste. Agathe area, as part of the Assiniboine River diversion project.

Professor Ken Stewart from the University of Manitoba has stated in his study on this proposed weir that it could have disastrous effects on the Red River channel catfish, walleye and sauger. Stewart, in his study called *The Preliminary Assessment of the Impact of the Dam on the Red River Proposed in the Pembina Triangle Water Supply: Study on Fish Communities in the Red River—Dr. Stewart goes on, I believe there would be significant declines in two of the three most important game fish species in the upper Red River; these are the channel catfish and the sauger. The channel catfish is the object of a world-class trophy fishery in the lower Red and very large catfish are also taken commonly in the upper Red.*

Given the presumed physical effects of the proposed dam, production and survival of young channel catfish would decrease greatly. It seems likely that the overall abundance of the species would decline, and the very large fish, which support the trophy fisheries, might nearly disappear. Dr. Stewart concludes, the Red River is in the area affected by the proposed dam, would suffer a large decrease in desirable species, the sauger, the channel catfish and walleye. The game fish most likely to increase significantly is the less desirable freshwater drum. In addition, there would be a large increase in the black bullhead, brown bullhead and carp, all undesirable coarse fish.

The loss of most of the spawning and nursery habitat in the river as a whole for sauger, walleye and channel catfish would also have a significant negative impact on angling in the lower Red River. It is likely to result in the loss of a trophy fishery for channel catfish, which has high tourism value, as well as providing quality fishing in Manitoba.

* (1720)

Stewart feels that the weir would slow the river and cause the sediment it carries to drop out and settle on the river bottom, eliminating two conditions on which walleye, channel catfish and sauger are dependent, fast-flowing water and a rocky bottom.

Selkirk, of course, has been promoting itself as the catfish capital of Canada. It has been very successful in drawing tourists and fishermen from around the world, particularly from the United States. An elimination of the channel catfish from the Red would destroy this industry, not to mention be ecologically unsound.

Tourism, of course, as I stated, is a vital industry in Selkirk. Any threat to the area of catfish, walleye, sauger, as predicted by Dr. Stewart, must not be ignored. It is disappointing that the province has refused to undertake an independent assessment of the Pembina Valley project on Selkirk and its effects on Selkirk.

The Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) has become an advocate for the Pembina Valley water diversion project. We cannot rely on a minister who refuses to look at the effects of this diversion on the Assiniboine River, on one of our most important natural resources and tourist attractions.

This resolution would call upon the minister to become more active in protecting the fish stocks in the Red River. However, considering the cuts to the Department of Natural Resources in this government's recent budget, one has to question his commitment to the environment and to the wildlife species in this province.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I urge this House to pass this resolution, to call upon the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Cummings) to demand that the city submit its plans for treatment of its sewage that is dumped into the Red, let the minister speed up the process and proceed with the Clean Environment Commission hearings he promised in November 1990, and I call upon the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) and the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Cummings) together to protect the fish stocks that will be threatened by the proposed Pembina Valley water diversion.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, I, with some relish, rise to speak on the resolution produced here by the member for Selkirk. He who now represents an electoral division in this province previously held by the Premier of this province for a number of years who did nothing to improve the quality of the water in this river, who did nothing to change the regulations requiring the City of Winnipeg to change its discharge, who did nothing to improve the catfish fishery in the Red River, and who now has an MLA representing it whose biggest concern is to make sure that somebody downstream does not get to use the water, or if they do, that they do it by standards that he is unwilling to see imposed in his own community.

Mr. Speaker, when I look at the import of this resolution, I have to tell you that it is an important

resolution. There is not anyone in this House who does not recognize the importance of the waterways, particularly the Red and the Assiniboine, and the importance they have all across this province. You know, when we have the members opposite, who have raised so much havoc over the last two or three years about water control structures—nobody has risen in this House to speak about the fact that the Assiniboine River would have been dry the last couple of years if the Shellmouth Dam had not been in place.

The fact is that the management of that reservoir has meant that Selkirk has had better quality water than it might have otherwise had. The fact is that we live in prairies that have just come through some of the driest periods in the history of the western region. We are living in a situation where the management and the careful husbanding of our water resources is increasingly critical to the development of this part of the Prairies. When I look at the member putting forward concerns about what is being released by the city of Winnipeg, I do not think that the City of Winnipeg councillors, or anyone in this room, would suggest that a better job cannot be done.

I think he has been listening, unfortunately, to some of his perhaps less astute political advisors when they talk about the fact that the City of Winnipeg is somehow fudging in a way that will be unproductive in the long term for the improvement of water quality on the Red River.

The fact is that we intend and we will continue with the Clean Environment Commission hearings. Those hearings will be very widespread. We have in fact expanded them, which will be to the benefit of the member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar) and the Selkirk area, to include the greater Winnipeg area, to include some of the other tributaries that flow into the Red and the Assiniboine so that when the discussion about water quality is heard, everybody will be heard about the concerns that they have. It will not simply be a matter of a very narrow Clean Environment Commission examination of the water quality within the boundaries of the city.

The discharges from the City of Winnipeg treatment plants—it is the next level of treatment that is important to the city of Winnipeg. When I talk about the fact that this will need to be phased in, I talk about it in the fiscal sense, not in the sense of in any way backing away from the environmental

requirements that are needed to be met, but the fact that the city needs to phase in these types of capital costs.

The fact is that there is a rapidly changing technology in this area that may allow us to deal with some of the issues in a more environmentally sensitive manner. In fact I have had city councillors who are, I think, of the same persuasion as the member for Selkirk, who have come to me with their environmental concerns talking about, is it really a good idea to have additional chlorination of the city of Winnipeg effluent, because once you chlorinate it you have to dechlorinate it before you can discharge it.

Obviously they are going to have to look at all of the technical possibilities that are available to them in dealing with the requirements of the order to do a third level of treatment in the city of Winnipeg sewage.

The fact is there is another ongoing problem that is going to be extremely expensive for the city to deal with, and that is the issue of the combined sewage. While the member has not been a part of this Chamber for a great deal of time, I am sure that his Leader could probably give him a five minute update on the costs of dealing with the city of Winnipeg combined sewage discharge.

He was unable, during his tenure as Minister of Urban Affairs, to deal with that question adequately. In fact under the leadership of the previous Premier, none of these issues were dealt with by the previous administration, the very man who was living just downstream from the city of Winnipeg, the Premier of this province. What did he devote to it for funds? Not a whole lot.

The fact is, I guess, the member for Dauphin who was the Minister of Transportation, put in that large edifice which is put there in memory to the Howard Pawley administration, north of the town of Selkirk. When the member talks about the catfish attracting the tourists, I can tell you that there is another attraction out there. That is that \$30 million bridge that for a long time went nowhere.

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, when the bridge is so high that you cannot fish off the darn thing either—you can sit in the shade and fish I suppose. It is a great place to take pictures from. You get a close look at the airplanes as they fly under the bridge, but the fact is that this has not been a priority of the previous administration, one that we, I would

suggest, in the last three years have done more than any combination of governments in the previous decade or two decades, as a matter of fact.

When you look at the fact that the City of Winnipeg, when we indicated that they were going to have to do a water quality study on their snow dumps and that within two years they would probably be expected to deal with them, they voluntarily moved forward and stopped the practice of dumping on Winnipeg riverbanks, virtually eliminating that contributing factor to riverbank instability. The fact is that there is more we can do as a jurisdiction, more that can be done anywhere where you have the type of climate that we have that causes us to increase the use of salt on our roads or any other location, whether it is within the city or out across the province. Certainly the minister responsible for transportation has had some considerable involvement with looking at what the alternatives are to the cost of road salt and the impacts of road salt within this province.

* (1730)

You know, it is so unfortunate that he would put it on the record that we are—how does that read? Yes, let us have another look at how that reads. It says, whereas the City of Winnipeg is violating The Environment Act by not stopping this pollution. Well, who declared The Environment Act? Did they declare it? They did not even put it in place. The member for Portage (Mr. Connery) when he was Minister of Environment finally brought environmental regulation into place in this province.

I can forgive the member a little bit of embarrassment if he does not remember that, because he was not part of this august Chamber at that time and the member -(interjection)- probably that could have some impact, I suppose.

I guess there is a little bit of confusion that arises from the way we have had to look at the regulations under The Environment Act. Somebody over there has given him the misleading information that because a development, which is what the city of Winnipeg sewage plants are, when a development is not, having received a new licence under the present Environment Act, does that mean that it is not regulated? It does not mean that. It is regulated under permit every bit as tightly as it is under the Environment Act licence, but The Environment Act licence spells out operating standards within the regulatory confines of today's act, and within that act

we will now have the ability to control the next level of disinfection that is required by the city of Winnipeg in order to deal with their discharges.

An Honourable Member: Did Howard Pawley get you to put this resolution in, Greg?

Mr. Cummings: I would suggest that the previous Premier, the member for Selkirk, may very well blush when he reads that this was brought up in the Legislature that he used to be the Premier of because, the fact is, this is one area where he failed his own constituents. In fact, the previous member for Selkirk that this member replaced, she was just like a pup with a rope. Every time she got a chance, she was up here chawing away at us about dealing with the Red River water quality.

Where was the previous Premier? He did not even bother dealing with it while he was the chief executive officer of this province. So, Mr. Speaker, I think the members opposite should well be embarrassed to be acting as if they are concerned in the face of the activity that has occurred in this Legislature regarding the regulation of the water into the Red and the Assiniboine.

I want to put one other point on the record that the member refers to: future developments upstream on the Red River. One of the very interesting things that has occurred in this province is that all of a sudden because of the drought everybody is interested in what is happening to the water. When the Pembina Valley people have looked with some longing, I would have to admit, at taking some water from the Red River in order to augment the domestic water supplies and agricultural water supplies that are required in their area, all of a sudden we have people such as the member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar) talking about the implications for the fishery, a fishery that a few years ago was not being as well developed as it has been lately, a fishery that is truly one of the great resources that we have in this part of the province for tourism.

I want to assure him that will be one of the first questions that any environmental panel has to deal with, with any kind of structures on the Red River, in terms of the long-term matter of reproduction and spawning and development of that fishery, because it is important to us. I think that when he talks about the waste that goes into the river, he should be also encouraging us to get on with the development of a hazardous waste treatment plant in this province.

He should be standing in his place and saying, what is the matter with you? You have not got the hazardous waste treatment plant sited yet. Why are you going to spend more money on that? I do not hear him asking that. Because the material that goes into the waste stream of this province that should be going into a hazardous waste treatment plant is what will create the toxicity that will have more damage on the catfish in this province than anything that is presently being considered as a development within the act and the city of Winnipeg discharges.

So I think that, unfortunately, he should be taking a rather serious look at the overall picture of how we deal with wastes in this province, and make sure that we do not put ourselves in a position of having the blinders on and only thinking that the professor who talked about the fact that he stood on the bridge at Selkirk and he assumed that all the residents of Winnipeg did certain things, that that is the only way you look at protecting the quality of this great river. Because we know that when the Red River crosses the Manitoba-U.S. border, the water quality starts to deteriorate as it comes into this province. That is one of the reasons that we expanded the Clean Environment Commission mandate so that they can look at the total area in support of this Clean Environment Commission report.

So, therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would move, seconded by the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard),

THAT the resolution be amended by deleting all the words following the first "WHEREAS" and replacing them with the following:

Howard Pawley, MLA Selkirk from 1969 to 1988, did nothing to improve the quality of water in the Red River at Selkirk; and

WHEREAS the Red River downstream from Winnipeg and Lake Winnipeg itself have been subject to pollution for many years; and

WHEREAS the City of Winnipeg is now working with the provincial Department of Environment in order to better treat emissions from its sewage treatment plants; and

WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba recognizes the importance of the lower Red River for tourism, recreation, fishing, agriculture, other commercial activities and as a source of drinking water for some Manitobans; and

WHEREAS much progress has been made over the last two years and much more will be made in the near future to address the problem of pollution;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba continue to support all the measures aimed at cleaning up the Red River including:

1. the examination of alternatives to road salt now used by the City of Winnipeg,

2. the encouragement of industries which reduce, re-use, recycle, and recover their waste products,

3. those taken by the Department of Environment and the Department of Natural Resources as part of their ongoing role in the protection of the river environment.

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), seconded by the honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), and the resolution is amended, and the amendment is in order.

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to stand and speak to the resolution put forward by the MLA for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar), as amended by the Minister of Environment. Yes, I must say that I was not sure when I saw this proposal coming forward from the MLA whether or not this had to do with the North Saskatchewan River through Edmonton or the Red River through Winnipeg, given the member for Selkirk's obvious affinity with the people of Edmonton, looking at the donations which he received for his campaign which all originated in Edmonton.

* (1740)

In any event, Mr. Speaker, I am happy to see that this is indeed about the Red River, a concern to all Manitobans as it should be. Before I go through the actual wording of the resolution, I do want to suggest to the relatively new MLA for Selkirk—and I myself have not been in this auspicious Chamber much longer than he—but I do feel it necessary to point out to him, some of the things he might have considered before coming forward with this resolution, and I do not think he has. I did not see it reflected in his speech. I did not hear apologies prior to coming forward with this resolution.

In view of the record of the administration from the party that he represents in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that an apology should

have been forthcoming prior to bringing forward this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, we know that the former administration came up with the Limestone project, three or four billion dollars, rerouting a major waterway in northern Manitoba, and the former government did not so much as order an environmental impact assessment. Not one day of hearings was held on that major water-diversion project for this province. Indeed, it was kick started for the election by the prior administration with the sole purpose of getting the economy going so that it could look like they were doing something for this province before they went to the polls. In order to do that, for political purposes, Mr. Speaker, they sacrificed the environment of this province.

We saw about a month ago—I raised an issue in which MTS had been found negligent in not complying with environmental orders. For years, eight years, they had outstanding environmental orders in northern Manitoba, and for eight years it was allowed to go unchecked and the work was not done. It was only by the fluke that the same inspector who went back to the same site for a similar spill happened to remember that he had been there eight years before. It was only because of that that he was able to catch the Manitoba Telephone System in not doing their job on the environment. That is the type of environmental administration that was the hallmark of the former administration, what some would call hypocrisy, Mr. Speaker.

We do not have to look any further than just minutes ago in this Chamber to understand the full extent of the hypocrisy of the official opposition on issues in this Chamber, generally. They stood up just minutes ago and voted to cut back the Premier's executive salaries and yet, under the former administration, those salaries were some \$400,000 higher.

Point of Order

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): I think that when we are speaking on resolutions, we should keep our comments to the topic we are speaking on.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the honourable member for Point Douglas, and I would remind the honourable member for St. James to keep his remarks relevant to the amendment before the House at this moment.

* * *

Mr. Edwards: Well, Mr. Speaker, let me just tell you how relevant those comments were. I am talking about the self-righteous approach which is taken in these resolutions, and I am comparing it to the facts. I am comparing it to the history of this party and the party that the member who moves this represents from just short years ago. That is very relevant when one is considering what comes forward. This is the party that stood up just minutes ago and criticized executive salaries under the present Premier which are too high. They are too high, but they were \$400,000 higher, and that is a few years ago, \$400,000 higher under the former Premier.

Mr. Speaker, the former Premier had some 59 people on his executive staff at the Premier level. This Premier has too many, but he has some 15 less. That is the kind of, what some would call, hypocrisy that we have to put up with daily in this Chamber from the official opposition.

Mr. Speaker, let us get to water. Let us talk about water. I have talked about Limestone. Let us talk about Rafferty-Alameda. That was a major water project in the south of this province. I am talking about water. This is about water, the Red River. I am talking about the former administration's approach to environmental concerns with respect to works on waters in this province and specifically, the Souris River.

Mr. Speaker, the member of Parliament for Transcona was very eloquent in his condemnation of his own cohorts in the New Democratic Party on the Rafferty-Alameda issue. He said he was embarrassed by what they did not do, and the way they hopped into bed with the Premier of Saskatchewan, Mr. Devine, for years. Rafferty-Alameda did not just come up since '88. Rafferty-Alameda has been around since 1986. The damage was done in 1986, '87 and '88 when this party, the official opposition, were in the government. -(interjection)-

The member says—what did the member for Selkirk say? Well, the member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar) would have agreed with every word of this. In fact, as I look at it, I do too, Mr. Speaker. The point is when the member for Selkirk, the former member, stood up and would espouse these things, she had some credibility. She was speaking with clean hands, as it were.

Coming forward from this member from Selkirk shows only that the official opposition has no shame. This is the party that was willing to sacrifice the Churchill River in northern Manitoba, that was willing to sacrifice the Souris River in southern Manitoba and that is on a daily basis here asking Manitobans to forget what they were and what they did in the prior administration.

The City of Winnipeg was exempted from The Environment Act at the behest of the former administration. It was the former administration that proclaimed The Environment Act some days before their demise in 1988. It was the former administration that did not include the City of Winnipeg under The Environment Act.

Now you might be forgiven for that because if you included the City of Winnipeg overnight, it would shut down the city. They would have to come up with a billion dollars to change our water and sewer system if they were going to comply with The Environment Act. That would be unreasonable, Mr. Speaker, but you would think that in the last decade they would have taken the time, made the effort to go to the City of Winnipeg and come up with a plan to deal with the pollution which is caused by the joining of the sewer system and the storm system. They did not do a thing.

Mr. Speaker, when the new Environment Act came in and the City of Winnipeg was not included, I am advised on good authority that there was not one issue which they were negotiating at that stage, not one. They were not talking about anything. There are probably a dozen issues on the environmental front that the province should be talking about with the city and trying to come up with a plan to get the job done, not one.

In other words, not only did they exempt the City of Winnipeg from The Environment Act, they were happy to do it. They had no concern about what the City of Winnipeg was doing. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that is indeed the kind of, what some would call, hypocrisy that we have had to become used to in this Chamber.

* (1750)

Now let me indicate again that this resolution says some valuable things and is worthy of support. What shocks me is who it has come from, Mr. Speaker. I do not mind the words, but I do think that before the member for Selkirk had come up with this, he should have prefaced his comments with an apology.

Surely he is not coming to this Chamber with credibility asking us to support this without comment on the former administration's history. I would be remiss in my duties to not only my constituents, but every member of this Chamber, if I did not bring to their attention what I think needs to be said prior to considering this.

Now, with respect to the present minister, he puts forward a resolution. His hands are not clean on this either, Mr. Speaker. The present minister indicates that he is doing everything possible, they are working very hard. Well, the fact is, there has been very little, if any, progress made on cleaning up the Red River. The Red River is an integral part of this province's water system, it is an integral part of not only the city of Selkirk, but the city of Winnipeg, and this again is the government that cut the water management branch of the Department of Natural Resources, cut them when they are proposing diverting almost every major river in southern Manitoba. That is the present government's agenda.

The present government's agenda on Rafferty-Alameda was to continue the same negligence and turn the same blind eye as the former administration did, and it is humorous, if it were not so tragic, to see these two old parties point at each other, point their finger and say: You are neglecting the water in this province, you are neglecting the water in this province. They both are, they both have, and they both should be ashamed. The fact is that this province has yet to see a credible Minister of Environment stand up and protect the water of this province, and this minister is no different.

The Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), Mr. Speaker, cut the water management branch, cut that branch at the same time as they are proposing rerouting rivers in southern Manitoba. They are proposing rerouting the Assiniboine River, and the member for Portage (Mr. Connery) has stood up, I believe with some integrity, and protected the wishes of his constituents as they sought to reroute that river.

This is the same government that has consistently—consistently—refused to live up to their rhetoric on protecting the environment and in particular the water supply in this province, but, Mr. Speaker, I must say, not without hesitation, not because of the words on the page, but because of the party that this resolution has to come from, I do

support this resolution. My friend the former MLA for Selkirk would have wanted me to, and she spoke eloquently about this, but when she spoke she spoke with credibility, because she did not have on her conscience and on her hands the horrendous record of the former administration when it came to water in the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. Doer: We do not need two conservative parties, Paul.

Mr. Edwards: Well, Mr. Speaker, it is too bad that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) arrived late for my comments, because he would have heard about the record of Mr. Pawley when he was in government, on his executive support, \$400,000 more than Mr. Filmon, and they have the gall to stand up three years later and say that it should be reduced more than it is. It is too high, but Mr. Pawley had 59 people on his executive staff—59. I have read the Estimates—59 salary years in 1987 under Mr. Pawley. He had apple polishers coming and going. The fact is, that was no small part of the demise of the former administration, and they have what some would call hypocrisy. They have that in ample supply.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): Mr. Speaker, the honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) stated that the former Liberal member for Selkirk, Gwen Charles, spoke with credibility. Let me quote you what Gwen Charles said: All the environmentalists gone from the Liberal caucus. We have got a House full of people who do not give a damn about the environment. This is printed in the Selkirk Journal, Tuesday, March 19, 1991, page 8.

Mr. Speaker, when a witness talks against one's self-interest, then the witness is obviously telling the truth. This is a former colleague in the Liberal caucus and accepted by his colleague that she spoke with great ability. She must be telling the truth.

An Honourable Member: Okay, now back to the resolution.

Mr. Santos: Now back to the resolution. I agree with the honourable Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) that this is a topic of utmost importance for all Manitobans, but if this is the case -(interjection)- I am talking on the amendment because that is the one that is on the floor now.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Broadway has the floor.

Mr. Santos: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We all have to accept the common fact that the river is a very important part of our environment. We cannot just stand idle and let the river deteriorate because, as far as Mother Earth is concerned, the river is like the arteries of Mother Earth. Every time we pollute the running water in our river, it is like injecting lethal toxic in our own arteries. The acid and the industrial waste that we dump in our river, coming from all the manufacturing plants and industries in the city of Winnipeg, is doing no good to the future of our environment and to the future of our city.

Indeed, it can be considered that the cost of cleaning up the river due to industrial pollution is indeed part of the cost of production, the cost of manufacturing of those industries, and it should be assessed and levied against those industries that help pollute the river. They should absorb the cost and then add it to the cost of production when they charge for the product that they sell, in which case then the taxpayer will not be subsidizing the private manufacturer at the expense of the public interest.

There should be a system in our society where this offloading by the private sector manufacturing industries on the taxpayer for the cleaning up of the pollution, which is part of their manufacturing process, is undertaken by the innocent taxpayers of this province. There should be a system by which all those who dump industrial waste in our rivers should be assessed the proportionate cost of cleaning up the river. That is the only fair system that I know of.

If there is a common facility in the community, if there is a common resource in the community that everybody should have access to, I think it should be the riverbanks. The riverbanks should be accessible to all Winnipeggers if they want to stroll and jog along the riverbanks. It should be accessible to all people. No one should be allowed to fence in any portion of the riverbank for their private purposes because this is part of the common heritage of the community. This is public property and the public has a right to use public property.

Dumping toxic waste is terrible. Let me cite you some statistics that happened. Two years ago there was the Exxon Valdez oil spill, and you know what the effect of that was in the long run? Here it is. More than two years.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Santos: Mr. Speaker, more than two years after the oil spill, it was continuing to harm wildlife. Scientists reported finding 330 feet below the surface, throughout the food chain from fish to seals to bears, according to the report that spill had killed 5,500 sea otters already; 70 percent of the breeding population had been adversely affected and there is complete reproductive failure on the part of this

wildlife. Mr. Speaker, that is how terrible it is to pollute our river.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Broadway (Mr. Santos) will have eight minutes remaining.

The hour being 6 p.m., I am leaving the Chair with the understanding that the House will reconvene at 8 p.m. in Committee of Supply.

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Monday, April 29, 1991

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