



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, Cliff	Interlake	ND
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	ND
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	PC
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	ND
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	LIB
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	PC
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
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	PC
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
NEUFELD, Harold, Hon.	Rossmere	PC
ORCHARD, Donald, Hon.	Pembina	PC
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	PC
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

Tuesday, May 14, 1991

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Simone Chartier, Arcelle Gratton, Florence Chartier and others requesting the government of Manitoba to consider reinstating the indexing of the 55-Plus program.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Chairman of Committees): The Committee of Supply has adopted a certain resolution, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Supplementary Information for the Department of Northern Affairs.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Health Care System - National Government Position

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Before the Premier (Mr. Filmon) left for the Western Premiers' Conference this past week, he said in the House and to all Manitobans that medicare is a unifying force and must be preserved at all cost.

Furthermore, on December 5, when I asked the Premier specifically if this government is seriously looking at the option of further transfer of tax points, the Premier answered, and I quote: No, Mr. Speaker.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), this government, has just put his name to a document

which overwhelmingly comes down on the side of the transfer of tax points in lieu of transfer payments, an action which ends the basis of the Canada Health Act.

I would like to ask the Deputy Premier: What is the position of this government? Is it a renegotiated transfer payment system which would preserve national health care standards, or is it death to medicare through transfer tax points?

* (1335)

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, the member is absolutely correct. The Premier (Mr. Filmon) made comments which are still true for this province in our position. The first choice of the province is to maintain the system which we currently have, which has been and I am sure will continue to be a unifying force, and programs which are essential for the maintenance of this country.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Mr. Speaker, given the divergence of views on that side of the House and in the government of Manitoba reflected in this paper—and I will be happy to table copies of the 1991 report of the Western Finance Ministers' meeting—will the Deputy Premier get a message through to the Premier in Nipawin, Saskatchewan, to remind him of his commitment to this House and to Manitobans and tell him that Manitobans want him to reject the proposal of the Finance ministers of western Canada, a proposal which will kill medicare?

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, I have every confidence that the Premier of this province is as committed to the maintenance of the health care system as anyone else in this country. I do not believe that I have to contact the Premier.

I believe that he is fully aware of the feelings of the majority of the people of Manitoba in the maintenance of the essential programs that do in fact protect the health care of this province, unlike the members of the New Democratic Party who, through their careless spending practices, put on the backs of the people of this province some \$550 million of an annual interest bill that threatens a lot more of the programs that people have been accustomed to in this province.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Mr. Speaker, medicare is our most valued service. It is important in terms of this country as a nation. The words of this deputy minister, in contradiction with the actions of this government, are cold comfort for Manitobans who care about medicare.

I want to ask the Deputy Premier. Since the principles enunciated in this document for national programs are in sharp contrast to the principles of the Canada Health Care Act. They do not mention the principles of universality, portability, accessibility, comprehensiveness and public administration. Rather, they present a set of reworked market-driven principles which also fly in the face of national health care standards. Will the Deputy Premier give unequivocal support to the principles of the Canada Health Care Act and absolute rejection to these new criteria being presented by the western Finance ministers?

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, we currently have a system in this country which this government supports, which is our first choice. It is supported by this government, the current system of which we want to continue to show to the people of this country that it is in fact a unifying force, that it is an essential service to the people of this country.

Our position has not changed, and I want the member to know that and understand that.

Child and Family Services Centralization

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, once again, the children of Manitoba are at risk from the backward-looking, narrow-minded musings of the Minister of Family Services yesterday when he stated that he was seriously considering amalgamation and recentralization of the Child and Family Services agencies of Winnipeg.

Why is the Minister of Family Services considering this action when the current agencies, even though they are severely underfunded by his government, are providing appropriate community-based care to the most vulnerable members of our society, the most vulnerable children and families in our society?

* (1340)

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I am sure my honourable friend would like to follow the advice I gave the other day, not to accept rumours that she hears. I would

say to you, it is a conclusion that was drawn by a member of the media after we talked about the need for a system for automation to track records of children who come into care in Family Services and the fact that this particular individual was asking why some agencies balance their budgets while others have large deficits, so that conclusion was drawn by someone else and not a statement of mine.

Ms. Barrett: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table for the House a transcript of the interview between the Minister of Family Services and the member of the media that clearly reflects the question I earlier asked.

This minister, also in this interview, assumes different priorities that different agencies have are inherently bad when in fact they have been developed in direct response to each community's needs. How can a recentralized agency, based on the Children's Aid Society model which has been discredited for the last 10 years, guarantee that the needs of these families and children will continue to be met in an appropriate manner for each community?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Mr. Speaker, the second question, of course, reflects the fact that the member believes that the conclusion that was reached was the correct one. I indicated in that interview that my concern was with service and service to children and to families.

From time to time, many ideas and suggestions come before the department from board members who are on Child and Family Services agencies, from service providers, from some of the treatment centres. I am prepared to listen to any suggestions that are going to provide for better service for children and families in Manitoba.

Again I would indicate, it is no surprise to anyone in this House that there certainly are issues within Family Services that are in the media from time to time. I can say the department is working very hard with the agencies, with service providers and with all of the players in the game to provide the best possible system of care for children and families in Manitoba.

Just this morning, I met with an official from one of the school divisions who indicated some confusion about the manner in which schools should interact with one, two or three agencies, with the Child Development centre, and others, and felt that some clarification and some work needs to be done

on communication so people who are working with children have an idea where they can access that service.

Ms. Barrett: Mr. Speaker, I think the child care community in this province has seen the results of this government's listening and working with them.

I would like to ask the Minister of Family Services why this government is following the same ideologically driven actions as their federal counterparts in health care, lack of child care plan, cutting back on services to individuals and families by basing their policy decisions on a warped sense of values, which places corporate tax breaks and the financial bottom line always ahead of quality care for children and families in Manitoba?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Mr. Speaker, I know the member was not a part of government or a part of the party she now sits with when child care was vastly underfunded in this province. I think you know that you can look back at the funding record of the last three or four years to see the 60 percent increase in funding to the child care system. I can tell you, too, that we are prepared to maintain the standards that exist in child care.

I cannot help but note that one of your colleagues indicated in the press yesterday that the solution for day care in rural Manitoba was to do away with those standards. I can tell you that we are here to protect those standards for day care, for child care centres and for family day care. If the NDP wants to do away with those standards, we simply are not going to do that—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

* (1345)

Point of Order

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Family Services just indicated an untrue fact, that I was quoted in the newspaper, and I would ask him to withdraw—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member does not have a point of order. This is a dispute over the facts.

Child and Family Services Centralization

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, it is evident that the Tory agenda is very much alive and well in this nation. On the one hand we have a Premier in

Saskatchewan waxing along with his fellow Premiers about potential disintegration of a national medicare program, and at the same time we have the Minister of Family Services telling us that he is considering as an option the centralization of the Child and Family Services agencies.

Can the minister today give us one example, just one, of how he believes the recentralization of Child and Family Services will provide better services to children in the province of Manitoba?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): The Leader of the third party obviously did not listen to the answer I gave to the critic for the NDP. That was a conclusion that was drawn by a member of the media after we discussed the issue of automation and the need for automation in the system here in Manitoba.

I can tell you that the critic for Family Services of the Liberal Party and I, while we do not agree on much, agree on that issue, that there is a crying need for an automated system to be able to track and provide information for agencies as they take children into care, to find out what social workers have been involved with those children in the past, what agencies have been involved.

I have read a number of reports, internal reviews, some of them referred to this department by the courts, where certain clients who have been taken into care perhaps have not received the care that they should, and mistakes were made in the handling of those cases. One of the things those reports indicate is the need for automation and a system whereby one agency could communicate with another agency to track these children and these families as they go from one area of the province to another.

My comments yesterday dealt with the need for this automated system, and I—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, an automated system of children and families getting care in the province of Manitoba has little or nothing to do with centralizing the agencies.

Will the minister now go on the record today, very clearly, and say that he and his government are opposed to the centralization of Child and Family Services in the province of Manitoba?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Mr. Speaker, I would like to go on record as saying, as I said yesterday in that

interview, we are interested in providing the best possible service for children and families in this province. Over the past seven or eight months, I have made a point of meeting with many of the people who were involved with the agencies and with the treatment centres that interact with this department.

I am prepared to listen to suggestions and recommendations that come forward from these agencies and from the people who are involved in the system. By the same token, we have been in discussion with a number of people who have been involved with some of the internal reviews, the Reid inquiry and others, and if we can make this system better, if we can provide a better service for children and families, we are prepared to listen to all people who have something to say on that issue.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, if this minister was really interested in providing, quote: the best possible service to children in this province—he would not have given them a zero percent increase in their budget when they have 20 percent increases in child abuse.

Can the minister tell us what suggestions he has been given that would recommend the centralized model of delivery of child care services in this province is preferable to the one that we have now, which is working to the benefit of our children?

* (1350)

Mr. Gilleshammer: Mr. Speaker, I have indicated again that the member is accepting a conclusion that was drawn by a member of the media, that that was a firm decision. I would indicate again that we are prepared to listen to all groups and people coming forward with ideas on how we can improve the system.

The Leader of the Liberal Party makes much of the dollars and cents that go into the care of children in this province, and I think, if she would look at it in some depth, she would understand that the budget for Child and Family Services agencies has in fact doubled in the last five years. Rather than simply look at dollars and cents, we would like to look at the program that is being offered, the services that are delivered, and we are prepared to listen to all of the players in the game to make this a better system.

Income Tax Regional Collection System

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): I have a question for the acting or Deputy Premier, Mr. Speaker.

We now have the 1991 report of the western Finance Ministers. Along with the other western provinces, Manitoba is considering taking control of the income tax collection system from the federal government. Such a move could eliminate the regional office of Revenue Canada operating in Winnipeg with 2,500 full-time and casual jobs and probably a payroll of between \$35 million and \$40 million. This is not to speak of 400 other jobs being jeopardized in the district office. We have already had experience with Mr. Getty's brand of western co-operation with the removal of Western Canada Lottery jobs to his constituency of Stettler, Alberta.

Can the Deputy Premier tell us whether the government of Manitoba has any study, any overall economic impact study or employment impact study of establishing a regional tax collection structure in Manitoba in place of the federal system as we now know it?

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Without prolonging the answer, I believe that it is a concept that has been proposed at this particular meeting that the minister refers to, and its particular details. I will take the rest of the question as notice for the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness).

Mr. Leonard Evans: Has the government any estimate, any idea of the direct cost involved in establishing a new tax collection system as outlined in the report, which has been prepared over the last year and endorsed and signed by the Minister of Finance?

Has this government any idea of the additional direct costs involved in establishing a new independent tax collection system in Manitoba?

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, unlike the previous administration, I can assure him that the Minister of Finance, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and all our colleagues the members of the government are most interested in strengthening the position of this province and strengthening employment opportunities, strengthening programs for the people of this province, unlike the mismanagement of this province carried out by the New Democratic Party in their term of office.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Mr. Speaker, they are playing with dynamite with this report. You are playing with fire, and the minister does not realize it.

Has the government any idea of the extent to which federal transfer payments would be lost to Manitoba through this new system? In other words, how much of the \$1.7 billion, which is nearly 35 percent of our total revenue of federal transfers for 1991-92, would be lost to Manitoba with the new independent income tax administration?

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, not accepting any of the preamble or the accusations of the member for Brandon East, I will take that question as notice for the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness).

Free Trade Agreement Import Licence - Oats

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Throughout the free trade discussions, Mr. Speaker, the government supported their counterparts in Ottawa, saying the agreement would not have any impact on the Canadian Wheat Board. Immediately following the election, we saw the two-price wheat system dismantled, and shortly after, oats was removed from the Wheat Board against the advice of farmers and the Canadian Wheat Board Advisory Committee.

I want to ask the Deputy Premier what guarantees he has that the import licence for oats will not be removed just as the licence for wheat was removed recently?

* (1355)

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, I should remind the member that the decisions that were made were made by the federal government, and it was my understanding, following information that was received from farm organizations like the United Grain Growers and the wheat growers of western Canada, so these decisions are not made just by politicians. They are made by a consultative process.

I would also suggest to the member that she should pay attention to some of the developments that have taken place, particularly at Portage la Prairie where we see a brand new oat processing company with some 50 or so, I believe, jobs—and I stand to be corrected on the number of jobs—a whole new industry for the province of Manitoba, so all cannot be wrong with what is happening in the

marketing of oats and the production of oats in this country.

Impact Canadian Wheat Board

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, there were also many people who were opposed to the agreement that this minister has not recognized.

How can this minister continue to defend the Free Trade Agreement when we see the Wheat Board, which has served the farmers very well, being stripped of its powers?

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, again, I cannot understand the reasoning behind the member for Swan River's questioning in trying to fearmonger with the farm community of this country. That is not a responsible position for any member of the Legislature to take. To my knowledge, there is not any stripping of Canadian Wheat Board powers, and in fact, I compliment the Wheat Board, under very difficult conditions, for, I believe, marketing some of the greater volumes of grain that this country will have seen marketed this current year.

Ms. Wowchuk: Yes, well, the Wheat Board did lose its powers when oats was taken away from it.

Port of Churchill Grain Shipment - Iraq

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): My final supplementary question is to the Minister of Transportation.

The Canadian Wheat Board announced a wheat sale to Iraq. Has the minister written to his federal counterparts, and has he requested that this sale be shipped through the port of Churchill?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, together with my colleagues the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Downey) and the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay), we met with the Wheat Board. We have constant contact with them and encourage them to make use of the port of Churchill as much as possible in any of their sales, not just the ones with Iraq. In fact, we had a good discussion with them, and I repeat again, as I have done many times in this House, that the responsibility of the Wheat Board is to get the best price for the product for the producer, and that is the premise that they work on.

If they can, they encourage shipping to the port of Churchill, and we support that as much as we can.

HydroBond Advertising Conawapa Dam Promotion

Mr. James Carr (Crescentwood): I have a question for the minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro (Mr. Neufeld).

When the new issue of HydroBonds was announced, Manitoba Hydro officials indicated that the money raised was not earmarked for any special projects, and about at the same time, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) stood in his place and said the government had absolutely no intention of borrowing any money for Conawapa this year. Now we find that HydroBonds are being advertised as an opportunity for Manitobans to invest in Conawapa.

Can the minister explain why the government is sending out conflicting messages to the people of Manitoba?

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, I think the member owes it to the House to put fact on the record. I would like him to have put his facts together before he came into the Legislature. I can assure him that any advertising that I am aware of refers to Conawapa but does not say specifically that money would be forwarded to Conawapa.

Mr. Carr: I can table the transcripts from the ad itself. It says that Manitoba Hydro construction projects like Conawapa generate thousands of jobs, and it goes on from there. The media is getting a rough ride in Question Period today.

Conawapa Dam Project Justification

Mr. James Carr (Crescentwood): With a supplementary question, this time again to the minister responsible for Hydro.

Since the new advertisement talks about projects like Conawapa providing the engine of economic growth for Manitoba, one wonders why originally the government talked about Conawapa because of the need of Manitobans for power?

Can the minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro tell us whether it is now government policy to use hydro development as simply a job creation strategy while borrowing \$6 billion to supply power to the people of Ontario?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for The Manitoba Hydro Act): In the first instance, we are discussing the issuing of Manitoba HydroBonds. That is one issue. The issue of building Conawapa is quite another one. Every year Manitoba Hydro borrows substantial amounts of money for numerous capital projects, and this year, part of those projects will be financed out of the sale of Manitoba HydroBonds.

HydroBond Advertising Conawapa Dam Promotion

Mr. James Carr (Crescentwood): Would the minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro instruct the people who are responsible for putting this commercial on the air to pull it immediately because of the conflicting messages it sends to the people?
* (1400)

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for The Manitoba Hydro Act): Mr. Speaker, I believe that the purchasing of Manitoba HydroBonds is a matter of people investing in Manitoba. As I indicated earlier, there are numerous capital projects each and every year for which Manitoba Hydro must raise money. This is just one way in which Manitoba Hydro raises those monies. I believe that the ability to invest in Manitoba is something that all Manitobans should have, and indeed it is a good thing for us.

Fishing Industry Quota Reductions

Mr. Cliff Evans (Interlake): Mr. Speaker, this government's budget decisions have placed Manitoba's fishermen in difficult economic situations. Now we learn that the Department of Natural Resources will be cutting fishermen's catch quotas on Cedar Lake in northern Manitoba. For the Easterville fishermen, this means a decrease in the amount of money available from MACC. It also means that most fishermen will not have enough weeks to qualify for unemployment insurance benefits.

My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. Commercial fishing is the economic lifeblood of the Easterville community. How can this minister justify the quota reductions on such short notice and without consultation?

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, I have no difficulty in

justifying that. I have to rely on the professional competence of some of the fish biologists who are concerned about maintaining a sustainable yield of fish stocks within those lakes. From time to time, just as I have to restrict other harvest opportunities for other game in the province, that is done on the basis of the best advice that professional staff provides to the ministry.

Mr. Cliff Evans: Mr. Speaker, I ask this minister: Will he reinstate the full quotas and then sit down and discuss in good faith with the Cedar Lake fishermen the future closing of the lake and reinstate the full quotas now?

Mr. Enns: No, Mr. Speaker, my staff is constantly in negotiations and discussions with various different primary producer groups. It would be wrong for me to suggest that we can work out questions with respect to acceptable harvest yields and quotas at meetings of that kind. We will go out and discuss with them the need to implement certain actions from time to time, but that can only be the extent of these kind of discussions.

Freight Assistance Program

Mr. Cliff Evans (Interlake): Mr. Speaker, a further hardship on northern fishermen is the cut to the Northern Freight Assistance Program by almost half.

I ask the minister why this program was cut when his own report, *The Status of Issues Affecting the Manitoba Commercial Fishery* recommends that the program be increased? Why did he decrease the assistance?

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to advise the honourable member and the commercial fishermen of Manitoba that it is my intention to shortly visit with the newly appointed Minister of Fisheries in Ottawa, Mr. Crosbie. It is my belief that the primary producer, the fishermen in this instance, has a call for some assistance out of that \$500-million assistance fund that was announced for some time, principally for the coastal fisheries, but our fisheries are having some serious difficulties.

If I can convince the federal minister to share with me this assistance program, much in the same way that the federal government is sharing the costs associated with the GRIP program, for instance, as far as cereal grain producers, then it is my hope that

perhaps we can enhance the program that the honourable member is referring to.

Travel Industry Default Protection

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

Last year saw a record number of bankruptcies in the travel business in this country. It is clear that consumers must be protected when companies go under. On March 15 of this year, the minister sent a letter to Grant Nordman, the former president of the travel agents association, encouraging them to offer default protection insurance to travelers.

Now, as this requires the travelers to pay for the protection themselves in case the supplier goes bankrupt, I wonder if the minister would meet with her provincial counterparts to establish a national insolvency fund similar to the one that the life insurers and general insurers have in Canada so that the suppliers and not the consumers are paying for potential bankruptcies?

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for that question.

I have been in communication with the travel agencies. We have had in-depth discussions about this topic, which was an initiative of mine relayed to them out of my own concern for various industries in Manitoba. They have been good enough to take that suggestion under advisement, are working on seeing if there is anything they feel that they should be doing.

In the meantime, there is at least one company that does provide that kind of protection, which I would encourage members of the industry and consumers to take out when they are traveling.

As for participating in the ministers' conference, which is coming up on June 5, I have a number of items I am placing on the agenda for that meeting. I will certainly take his advice under consideration, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Speaker, the minister is still indicating that she wants a consumer-pay approach to this problem. In the meantime, will the minister meet with the insurers who provide the default protection? She had indicated that one company provides it. In fact, most do, but she should meet with the insurers and insist that they include

coverage if consumers book with U.S. carriers and consolidators, because I think she will find that both of those are not covered under the current programs.

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Speaker, as a matter of course, most travelers traveling internationally do take out some sort of travel insurance for health or other things they might encounter in their travels.

I have discussed the matter raised by the member with members of the travel industry. We are continuing our dialogue on that topic. In the meantime, those taking out travel insurance are encouraged to look for those who carry that kind of default insurance when they are purchasing their tickets.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Speaker, the minister missed the point. I mean the fact the coverage is just not provided when you book with a U.S. carrier or a consolidator.

Stimulation

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): I will ask the minister a more general question.

The air travel has still not bounced back in Manitoba, because we have had a drop of some 17 percent in the number of tickets sold from March of 1990. What is the minister doing to encourage the travel industry in this province?

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I think that is a question that is more properly addressed to my colleague the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson), who is away from the Chamber at this moment, but I will take that—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mrs. McIntosh: Sorry, Mr. Speaker. I will be pleased to take that question under consideration to discuss with the Minister of Tourism at our mutual convenience.

Conawapa Dam Project Environmental Assessments

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings).

This minister has in the past, as have all parties in this House, criticized those governments in Canada, like those in Saskatchewan and Quebec, who have only talked about environmental

assessments. What we have learned in the last few years in this nation on the environmental front is that governments that first make political commitments to projects will then set out to undercut the environmental process in order to get their way, whatever the environmental costs.

Will this minister today commit to ensuring that there is no political pressure brought to bear on Manitobans to accept the Conawapa project prior to the completion of the full environmental assessment review?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Absolutely, Mr. Speaker.

HydroBond Advertising Conawapa Dam Promotion

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Given this commitment from the minister—and I am pleased that the minister has at least been consistent; he did say that before—how can this minister make that commitment and at the same time support the HydroBond advertisements in that they specifically promote the Conawapa project, totally undercutting this government's credibility on their promised impartial, unbiased environmental review, which has not even started yet?

* (1410)

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): The Conawapa project has always been indicated that it will undergo the fullest environmental assessment. We even spent some considerable amount of time debating in this House, clearly and up front, on what type of process we were going to embark on, a joint environmental process that envisages the federal government coming in to take its responsibility as well. Nothing changes from that direction, and that is the route upon which we will stay.

Conawapa Dam Project Environmental Assessments

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, the advertisement, which my colleague tabled, reads: an engine that keeps the Manitoba economy growing. Manitoba Hydro construction projects like Conawapa generate thousands of jobs in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, why is this Minister of Environment supporting this government's agenda of building momentum for Conawapa so environmental considerations can be ignored as they were in

Saskatchewan, as they were by Ottawa, as they were in Alberta and as they were in Quebec?

Hon. Glen Cummlings (Minister of Environment): Well, unlike the Leader of the third party (Mrs. Carstairs), I suppose this member does not refer to Limestone as Lemonstone, and I suppose he believes that those jobs were not real jobs. The fact is, nothing in the HydroBond issue or nothing in the agreement that has been made regarding the sale to Ontario precludes environmental assessment and mitigation and controls to protect the environment in all ways possible.

Plines Project Incorporation

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): On Friday, May 3, I asked the Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs when Rotary Pines was incorporated. The minister replied that she would check with her department and report back to me at the next Question Period, which was a week ago yesterday.

Does the minister now have the information, which is important information since applicants to Seniors RentalStart must be incorporated?

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I do have the answer, and am quite willing to provide it. It was my understanding from the member that he already had the answer and no longer required it to be brought to the House. However, since I assume that what the member is looking for is this answer to be on the record, since I believe that he may already have the information, for the record, the answer to that question is April 25, 1991.

Mr. Martindale: I thank the member for her answer.

Plines Project Incorporation

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): My supplementary is to the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ernst).

Will the Minister of Housing tell the House why conditional funding approval was given to Rotary Pines before they were incorporated when the Seniors RentalStart application form says the projects must be incorporated?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, no funds were advanced or would have been advanced to any project until such time as they have met the criteria, which is the incorporation. I am advised by the Rotary Club that the Rotary Club's name itself was undergoing a change nationally, and that held up the process of them making application through their particular local Rotary Club here for a nonprofit housing project.

Regardless, the fact of the matter is, no funds will be advanced until such time as appropriate systems are in place.

Workforce 2000 Justification

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Education.

One of the difficulties with this government's privatization plan is that they are privatizing the public education in this province. How does this minister spend millions of dollars on Workforce 2000 to, quote: teach basic skills including reading and writing?

He is going to spend millions of dollars on core skill training, and at the same time, he is cutting half of the ESL program at Red River Community College and leaving 200 people on the waiting list.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): It is unfortunate that, after being in this House for the length of time he has been here and after informing him about the concept of Workforce 2000, the member still has difficulty understanding what the objectives of Workforce 2000 are. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, the Skills Training Advisory Committee recommended that government enter into partnerships whereby industry can invest money into training employees who are within that industry and also employees who are coming into the industry for the first time.

This is what Workforce 2000 is all about, to encourage industry and business people across this province to invest in training and retraining individuals who work within their businesses so that they can become skilled to do the jobs adequately and for long-term employment.

Mr. Speaker: The time for Oral Questions has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Darren Praznik (Deputy Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I would first of all like to ask if you could canvass the House to see if there would be leave to waive private members' hour?

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to waive private members' hour. No? Leave is denied.

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, I would move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

***Motion 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 the Department of Education and Training.

*(1430)

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY—CULTURE, HERITAGE AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Deputy Chairman (Marcel Laurendeau): Order, please. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This afternoon, this section of the Committee of Supply, meeting in Room 255, will resume consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship.

***(When the committee last sat, it had been considering item 4. Citizenship (d) Multicultural Secretariat: (1) Salaries, \$231,000 on page 34 of the Estimates book and on pages 66 and 67 of the supplementary Estimates information book. Shall the item pass?)**

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Deputy Chairman, I believe last night when I had left, we were discussing what the multicultural office actually does during the day. Can the minister—we have four staff people there, two policy analysts, the director and a receptionist. Is that correct?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, that is correct.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, can the minister inform us in terms of what it is that the policy

analysis job is in particular, what does—you have two of them. What is one responsible for, and the other one is responsible for what?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, one is responsible for policy development within government, intergovernmentally, and the other one is responsible for dealing with community organizations and bringing forward the issues that might require policy development by government.

Mr. Lamoureux: The director is responsible for doing what?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Chairing the interdepartmental committee on multicultural affairs, secretary to the cabinet committee on multiculturalism and overall co-ordination of multicultural priorities within government.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, this would be the line that I could ask the minister, who back in May of last year had talked about a cabinet committee made up of, I believe, is it 10 ministers? I would ask the minister how often they have met since that announcement.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, there were considerable meetings before, of course, the policy announcement to formalize the policy. Since that time, I guess if you want me to go back to the election in September—is that a fair time to go back to?

Mr. Lamoureux: Since its announcement.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Since the announcement, since the election, I think, it would be fair to say there have been two meetings of the Multicultural Affairs Committee of Cabinet, and prior to that after the policy announcement last year there were about two meetings before the summer.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, what is the purpose, the objective of this cabinet committee?

Mrs. Mitchelson: It is to look at the recommendations that have come forward from the interdepartmental committee that has been established and is chaired by the director of the secretariat. It is to look at overall government initiatives regarding multiculturalism. Obviously, the purpose prior to the policy announcement was to ensure that there was government co-ordination on the policy announcement, and from time to time whenever the major initiatives are throughout

government, in fact they will be discussed at that cabinet committee.

Mr. Lamoureux: I know when we were in the Immigration and Settlement line, I had asked the minister regarding some of the things that this cabinet committee should have been looking at. She said that, because the staffperson was not at the table at the time, she would not be able to answer that. One of the concerns that I had was getting, in short, what I believe is a fairer share of Manitoba's immigration quota, if you will. I am wondering if she could tell me what type of input, or if at all that has been discussed at that particular committee.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I have been responsible for the Citizenship portion, Immigration and Settlement, and ESL programming since I was sworn in as minister, and have had the budget responsibility since the beginning of this fiscal year. To date, at our cabinet committee that has not been discussed. I am just in the process of being briefed by staff in Immigration and Settlement, and providing some direction to them on the types of things we would like to see in an agreement. Until we get to a point where I have something to report to the committee, that will not be discussed.

Mr. Lamoureux: Part of the purpose of the committee was to take a co-ordinated approach at multiculturalism in the province. I can understand what the minister is saying when she says, I just received this particular portfolio, but I would have assumed, I would have thought that would have been a safe assumption, that this would have been debated in cabinet, whether or not she had the responsibility at the time, because the purpose of the cabinet committee was to talk about things from all of the different departments, whether it is affirmative action, one would have thought, immigration quotas, whatever it might have been. Am I wrong in that assumption?

* (1440)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, any minister who has the lead responsibility for any initiative within their department and the program funding for those initiatives develops those and makes those announcements. If, in fact, it is an initiative that has been ongoing, and there is a decision to be made on a new program that has been developed, obviously yes, that is a decision that cabinet approves.

But in the ongoing, everyday working, the secretariat is an ex officio member of many of the multicultural committees throughout government. There is the multicultural health committee, there is the committee on credentials that has been set up and the secretariat is ex officio member of all of the committees throughout government that deal with specific multicultural issues. So in that way there is that co-ordination and we know what government departments are doing, and if, in fact, there is a concern by the secretariat, that would be brought to my attention and discussion would be undertaken with that minister and myself.

Mr. Lamoureux: Does the minister have a list of all the committees that the secretariat would be an ex officio member of?

Mrs. Mitchelson: We can pull that together. The committees that are actively working throughout government are the Working Group on Immigrant Credentials and the multicultural health advisory committee to the minister. Those are the two active working groups that the Multicultural Secretariat is an ex officio member of.

Mr. Lamoureux: The cabinet meetings, are those in the evenings? The cabinet has met four times. Are these evening three-hour meetings?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, some have been evening meetings. Some have been day meetings. As you must be aware, ministers are very busy and whenever, you know, a meeting can be called that is convenient for most members to be able to attend, that is when the meetings are called and held.

Mr. Lamoureux: I guess, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, my concern is that we have a cabinet committee responsible for multiculturalism in the province. To some degree there appears to be not as much co-ordination between the departments on different issues. It has met twice since the election. Yes, we have been busy preparing for budgets and so forth. I do not know how many hours have been put into this. My concern is that it is a popular thing to do, to set up a cabinet committee. In fact it was not established as a promotion to the multicultural community, rather it was established with the intent on ensuring that there is a co-ordinated approach.

I did want to follow up on the interdepartmental committee, and if the minister could tell me a bit about that particular committee—how often it gets

together. Is it civil servants that make up that committee?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it is civil servants from all government departments. In fact, it meets on a monthly basis to discuss what is happening within different departments.

Mr. Lamoureux: I am trying to get a better understanding in terms of what level. Is this the deputy ministers of the 10 departments that are meeting? Is it the executive assistants of the 10 departments?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I will provide the list of the positions that are composed—what every department has been asked is to appoint one person that does deal with the multicultural area within their department: the co-ordinator of Languages-Multiculturalism-ESL from the Department of Education and Training. From the Women's Directorate, it is a policy analyst. It is the assistant deputy minister of the Civil Service Commission; the director of Cultural and Heritage Initiatives from Industry, Trade and Tourism; the director of Human Resource Services from the Department of Justice; the director of Program Development, Day Care, Youth and Employment Support Division from Family Services; projects officer from Manitoba Labour; the mental health supervisor from Manitoba Health—it does not give the title of the person from the Native Affairs branch in Northern Affairs—and the ADM for the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship. So it is people who have been appointed or selected from all of those departments, based on their understanding and their working knowledge on a regular basis of multicultural initiatives that are ongoing within those departments.

Mr. Lamoureux: The minister had named three things, three items that the Multicultural Secretariat is responsible for, and the last one was the overall co-ordination which is kind of a catch-all, if you will, phrase. I am wondering what the government feels the secretariat is obliged to do as a civil servant in terms of attending functions.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, as I indicated last evening, I think that any civil servant has a responsibility to represent a government or a government department at any function or any activity. From time to time, someone from the secretariat may accompany me, just as from time to time, my deputy minister does accompany me to

events and activities throughout the community. They are like any civil servant, and I indicated that has not changed.

The policy has not changed in our administration from any previous administration. In fact, civil servants do attend functions. Sometimes it is a specific invitation. Sometimes my deputy and I will both receive an invitation to a function. At other times, I may receive an invitation and I am unable to attend for some reason, so he will attend on behalf of the department and the minister.

It is the same thing at the secretariat. If, in fact, I am unable to attend an event because I have something else scheduled, I may ask someone from the secretariat to go. What they are there to do is, at times, represent. If, in fact, I have been asked to speak at a function or an event and I am unable to attend; it might be another MLA that attends, it might be someone from the secretariat, it might be someone from the department.

As I indicated last evening, those decisions are made on an individual basis.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, then going on to the other two positions, you have one policy analyst who is responsible for community organizations. What is it that particular individual does?

Mrs. Mitchelson: As we indicated, from time to time there are calls from the community requesting information from government, requesting meetings to find out what is going on within government. That person would meet with community organizations, listen to the issues and concerns that they raise and, in fact, ensure that, through the executive director of the secretariat, the concerns are brought forward through the secretariat to the government department which might be involved or responsible for a program or for an initiative, possibly, that the community might bring forward as a need or a desire for them to see government do.

It is something that they might want government to be doing, so the person would meet with the organization through the secretariat. The information would come to me, and the appropriate department would be informed that there is a concern or an issue. In fact, we can get information back to the community through that process.

* (1450)

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I guess I am trying to differentiate between this particular

individual or policy analyst and the secretariat. I was under the impression—you just finished telling me—was a role or a function of the secretariat's office for the secretariat, that that is the individual who goes out and meets with the different organizations, consults, finds out what the concerns are and so forth. We have two individuals who are doing that?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I indicated that the role of the executive director of the secretariat was a co-ordinating role. It is a management position. In fact, there are two policy analysts who work underneath the executive director.

One of them deals with community organizations that call in that want information on government programming and how to access government for many different initiatives, or they might want to sit down and discuss issues that are of concern. In fact, the other policy analyst deals intergovernmentally. The information is brought to the secretariat so that the secretariat is aware of all of the concerns that are out there in the community that have come to government. If, in fact, there is one department that people are asking for information, that need answers from, the secretariat will co-ordinate ensuring that the information gets to the proper person in that department.

If there is some analysis that has to be done interdepartmentally on initiatives, the policy analyst who works and liaises with government departments does that side of the work. There is the community input that comes as a result of the community calling the secretariat for information on what government is doing or how they can access, and there is the analyst who works interdepartmentally and liaises with the staff in the departments.

Mr. Lamoureux: Going then on to the other policy analysts, is it fair to say that this particular individual will be the one who will be looking at things such as your white papers, potential legislation, the MIC report on combatting racism, and that type of thing?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Those are some of the things we would be assisting with, the white paper development, co-ordinating the responses that come from the departments on initiatives that are ongoing. There are requests from time to time for what is happening within government departments. We might ask all departments to submit to the

secretariat initiatives that are ongoing and evaluations of those initiatives. That is the kind of thing that would be compiled by the policy analyst who deals with government departments.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, with the two policy analysts then, we have one who does a lot of the internal work, communicating, very similar to most policy analysts, if you will; the other one does more of an external communicating role. We had what I would classify as two political appointments to this particular directorate. The one who does the community organization, was that one of the political appointments?—or what I say is a political appointment, not necessarily, the minister.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I think I indicated clearly last year that we had a person who was there on a term position. It still is a term position. That position will be bulletined and there will be an open competition and a successful candidate chosen. In fact, that is the person who is the community policy analyst, yes.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, because we adjourned at twelve o'clock last night I did have an opportunity, with some help from a research department too—I will not take all of the credit—to go over some of the Estimates of last year. I would like to read, if the minister will be patient with me, an answer that she had given me when I had asked her a question regarding the policy analyst.

An Honourable Member: How many hours did you spend last night?

Mr. Lamoureux: To the minister, plenty of hours.

I will read, and it is a quote: Madam Chairperson, a term position is until December 28, but that term position will more than likely be extended. It can be extended a three-month period at a time, and the reason being we want to advertise and get the Outreach Office filled. Then we will advertise the position for policy analyst because we believe that the policy analyst and the staff that are in place in the secretariat will help to establish the Outreach Office and get it up and running. So the two positions for the Outreach Office will be advertised in the very near future, I would say within the next couple of weeks. We are prepared with the bulletins to go out, but it will take some time, as I had indicated.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the minister at the time had admitted to, or at least given myself the impression, that what we would be doing, or what

the government's intentions were, were to allow the appointed position or the term position to expire at the end of December. Because the minister was concerned that there was not enough time to get out to advertise for that position, in all likelihood she would have to renew that term position. She had given me the impression—and I do not think I was wrong with the impression that she had given me—that, in fact, she might have to renew if for one more term.

If you read the Hansard that I just finished quoting, she makes reference to the Outreach Office positions being advertised in the upcoming two weeks, two to three weeks—I do not want to be too stringent, I would have given her three weeks—I guess really what I am trying to get at is that the Outreach Office was something that the minister is possibly having some second thoughts on bringing to a realization. I think that she has intentionally put off establishing the Outreach Office. I would ask her specifically, why did she not advertise when she had said herself in Estimates, that within the next couple of weeks we are anticipating advertising for the two positions for the Outreach Office?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, there is a procedure that has to be followed, and the Civil Service Commission has to approve all bulletins that are sent out for government jobs and, in fact, the Civil Service Commission did not get to us the approved bulletins until February.

When we talk about my commitments in Estimates—it was mid-November—in fact, I thought that the Civil Service Commission would have bulletins ready to be advertised. In fact, they never got the bulletins approved and through the system until February, and that is when we received the final bulletins and approval from the Civil Service Commission to go ahead and advertise.

I indicated clearly, and I think members opposite agreed, that we should advertise extensively within the ethnic media as well as the mainstream media for these positions. I said last night that process does take a little bit longer, because there are some ethnic papers that are only published, printed and distributed once a month. So it takes a longer period of time, and we have to allow for a longer application process before the deadline closes.

I indicated clearly if—the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) read into my comments an interpretation that he preferred to interpret. I think I

was very clear and indicated that, in fact, we would bulletin and fill the Outreach Office positions. Then we would bulletin the secretariat position. It is very clear. It is there in black and white in Hansard. He may feel that he was led to believe something differently, but I indicated clearly that the term position was extended for three months at a time, as every term position throughout government is. That is the process that we are following.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I guess we have found someone to blame, in this instance, the Civil Service, for taking so long to bulletin it. When did the minister actually submit the bulletin to the Civil Service then?

* (1500)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I do not have the exact date. We could attempt to find that out. -(interjection)- Around the end of November, yes.

Mr. Lamoureux: It was around the end of November when they did it. February, they received it. When did they actually start advertising?

Mrs. Mitchelson: It was circulated to the ethnic media mid-February and to the mainstream media, I guess, around March, giving all the ethnic media the opportunity to have the bulletin out at the same time as the mainstream media.

Mr. Lamoureux: So the minister is giving us the impression now that she was just following procedure. It had nothing to do with stalling to open up the office. Let us, for the sake of argument, assume that she is being very sincere and there is no reason why for me to question that she is not, I guess.

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

So it should be safe, then, to assume that following the procedure, as she is doing, closure came at April 10, a few months, that we should see the office in October—no, it should not be any later than October.

I would then ask the minister, given the process that is involved in getting a position filled, why did the minister not advertise along with the outreach positions for the policy analyst?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I think I indicated clearly, in black and white, last year in the Estimates that in fact once the Outreach Office was up and running that we would bulletin the secretariat

position. I made that commitment last year, and I will fulfill that commitment. The question may be asked. My decision was made, and it was put forward in the Estimates process last year. It was the process that we had determined that we would follow. I indicated that clearly, and we are continuing along that path.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Acting Chairperson, then I would ask the minister: What purpose does it serve not to advertise it? What is it that she hopes to gain by having the Outreach Office established before hiring someone permanently for the secretariat's office?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Well, Mr. Acting Chairperson, we have someone who is familiar with the community and the community organizations, has established a rapport, and until we have got people permanently into the Outreach Office, the decision has been made that we will continue with that person in the secretariat and extend that term position.

That is a decision that we have made. I believe it is the right decision for the community, and we may agree to disagree on that issue. In fact, government from time to time does make decisions and publicly announces those decisions. You know, the opposition may not agree with the path that we are following, but it is a decision that has been made and that is how we are going to follow through.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Acting Chairperson, can the minister clarify for me what the government's position is on those who have been laid off? Was there any thought given to any of these three positions on looking over those who have been laid off and hiring one of these individuals?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, as I indicated, there were several applications from the community but I think we will have to follow procedures that are in place. If, in fact, there are people who are on the redeployment list who might be able to fill that position and have the best qualifications, we are going to have to take into consideration the redeployment list along with the applications that have come for the position.

Mr. Lamoureux: Is the minister aware, or the department aware, of anyone from the redeployment people, people who have been laid off, if they have made application?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I do not have any information right now. I do not know if the question—for clarification, is the question, did

anyone who had been laid off apply for the position? That I cannot answer right at this moment. I guess the finalized redeployment list is not in place because there are still people who are making decisions on early retirement and those kinds of things. So I am not aware, at this point anyway, whether there was anyone who might have applied off the redeployment list.

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): One of the things I am interested in exploring more, and I asked questions on this last time in Estimates, was the relationship between MIC and the secretariat. There is a lot of concern that the function that MIC provides with the contact with the grassroots, with the communities, is not available to the secretariat. So I would wonder if the minister could describe, with the assistance from the staff, the relationship with MIC and the secretariat, how the relationship is being developed, what kind of avenues there are for communication.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, staff in the secretariat have met and conversed with staff at the Manitoba Intercultural Council on a regular basis. There has been much communication, in fact it is staff to staff, that is the relationship the Manitoba Intercultural Council has with the Multicultural Secretariat.

The relationship of the elected representatives is a relationship that—and they communicate directly with the minister, not through the secretariat. In fact the Manitoba Intercultural Council provides for us recommendations or requests things, they communicate directly to the minister and the information then would go to the secretariat.

The Manitoba Intercultural Council and the secretariat have two completely different functions. The role of the Manitoba Intercultural Council is to advise government on—they have an advocacy role and an advisory role to government whereby they bring forward to government issues of concern that they hear in their communities as the elected representatives and as the body that represents the communities.

The role of the secretariat is in fact an intergovernmental role where they assist in policy analyzing, co-ordinating and bringing forward through a central organization to the minister responsible for multiculturalism, issues interdepartmentally. So they have a governmental role.

* (1510)

The Manitoba Intercultural Council has an advisory role to government to bring forward issues that the community shares with them as their elected representatives.

Ms. CerlIII: Is the minister saying that the secretariat does not have a role with respect to the community, Mr. Acting Chairperson?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Absolutely they have a role with the community, because the community calls the secretariat, which is the co-ordinating body for multicultural initiatives throughout government, to ask questions on what government is doing, how they can access programs, what departments they go to and if in fact they believe that government should be addressing some issues. So in fact community organizations and communities and individuals contact the secretariat on a regular basis.

Ms. CerlIII: As I understand it, the role of the secretariat in terms of community is, it is an access point for government, for people who might not know the system well, who might have difficulty knowing which department to go to, that it is supposed to be an access point. Is that correct?

Mrs. Mitchelson: It certainly can be. Not everyone—I suppose those who have difficulty determining what department to go to, yes, would contact the secretariat and that would be one of their roles, to ensure that communities that want to bring an issue forward to government or have a question to ask of government would call the secretariat in many instances to try to access that kind of information.

Ms. CerlIII: Yes, that is what it says in the Estimates book, providing practical assistance to groups and individuals in their efforts to access government departments. Does the minister have some information to add to that?

Mrs. Mitchelson: No, that is in fact a part of the work that they do. Yes, there is that practical role, but another function of the secretariat is to work co-operatively with government departments that are providing multicultural initiatives, to be aware of the programming that is ongoing and to ensure that the Minister responsible for Multiculturalism is informed and up to date on what is happening within departments.

Ms. CerlIII: I guess the question would be, does the secretariat have contact with the community groups

to know which departments there are particular problems with accessing or with understanding or dealing with? Is that something that has come up?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes, from time to time communities do indicate to the secretariat that they have had difficulties accessing certain government departments.

Ms. CerlIII: So there is then at one point a two-way communication that needs to happen, not only with information coming to the secretariat from the communities, but also from the secretariat back to the communities?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes.

Ms. CerlIII: Can the minister tell us what kinds of concerns have been brought with respect to accessing government departments?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, there are a variety of issues that the community comes forward with. They come forward with their concerns about ESL funding, about credentials and being recognized here in the country for professions or education that they have achieved in their own country and the inability to be able to work at the same profession here in Manitoba. The levels of immigration and a desire to see more immigrants come to the province of Manitoba, these are all issues that have been brought forward through the secretariat.

(Mr. Deputy Chairman in the Chair)

Ms. CerlIII: What are people being told then with respect to ESL? Can you be more specific, I guess? What is the specific issue, and how is that being dealt with?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I think the issue has been dealt with by indicating to them that we have in fact, as a province, increased our funding to ESL programming. -(interjection)- Well, the member from the opposition might want us to say that we have decreased funding, but we have not. So she can laugh, and she can consider it a joke, but in fact they want accurate information.

If, in fact, we are providing \$1.174 million to Winnipeg School Division No. 1 for ESL programming, then that is the kind of information that they need to be told. They need to be told that they can access ESL programming and training by applying to Winnipeg School Division No. 1. So that might be information that is provided for them, information on the number of immigrants.

Yes, in fact, there is a desire by government to get our fair share of immigrants to the province of Manitoba. If they come forward and indicate that is a desire or a wish, we can indicate that we are working on it by trying to negotiate an agreement with the federal government.

If there are specific issues, if there is a difficulty in— one of the other issues that they call the secretariat about is spousal abuse within their communities and, in fact, we channel them in the proper direction so they can get counselling and service.

Ms. CerlIII: With respect to ESL, it seems that—

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Order, please. I would like to remind the members we are dealing with (d) Multicultural Secretariat, unless somebody has moved that we deviate from that line.

Ms. CerlIII: I think you will realize that my point will be in order. I am trying to picture the scene when an individual comes to the secretariat with a question about accessing an English as a Second Language program, and they are told that the provincial government has increased funding.

To me, that is not going to help the individual who is trying to sign up for a language class. I am trying to get a sense of how the secretariat is working with the other departments and how individuals coming to the secretariat for information are being dealt with, particularly in the area of ESL where we know that there has been a cutback in classes, where we know that people are concerned. We know that there is some confusion.

* (1520)

Mrs. Mitchelson: If I can clarify—if, in fact, a community organization calls the secretariat and wants to meet with them to see what services government is providing, or what services can be provided to a community, say it be the Vietnamese community, they would come forward and one of the issues that they would raise would be ESL programming and, in fact, we give them the facts on ESL programming. If they need information on how to access the system, that information is provided.

So if they want facts on what government is doing, we tell them what government is doing. If they indicate that ESL is a major issue within their community, if they have had difficulty accessing; we ensure they know where to go to access the service. That would be the same for any issue that a

community brings forward as a major issue within their organization, within their community.

Ms. CerlIII: So there have been calls about ESL, and that is how they have been handled. I am not clear, where are people being directed if they come with concerns about ESL?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, there might be individual calls that come forward from a community member wanting to know whether there is a facility within their area that provides ESL programming, and that kind of information would be given out if we knew what their address was. We could indicate that there was a school or institution somewhere that might deliver that programming. Those are the individual, case-by-case requests.

As far as community organizations and community leaders, they do come in and meet with the secretariat and provide information on what the major issues within their communities are. They vary from community to community.

There are some communities that have a high incidence of spousal abuse that they seem to have a concern about, and they might be wanting to hold a workshop or a seminar to deal with that issue within their community. Advice might be given on how to go about doing that.

There are other communities that come in with different issues of priority. On an individual basis people would come in with a concern or an inquiry as to how they might be accredited for training that they have had in their home country, and then they would be referred to the working group on immigrant credentials to provide that committee with some information on what their profession, what their background might be and the issues that are preventing them from being able to practise here in Canada or in Manitoba. That would be one referral process.

Otherwise, communities do come in and indicate that within the community the main priority for that community might be ESL programming. There are a lot of new Canadians in that community that do not speak English, so we would provide information. In many instances, the leaders in the communities do know what is available, but they just might want to ensure that government knows that within their community ESL is a high priority.

That is information that is provided to the secretariat by the community, so we as government can be better informed as to the issues that are out

there and those issues that might need some policy direction.

Ms. CerlIII: A couple of points before I move on. The minister has raised a couple of things, and I am curious to find out the number of calls related to ESL that have been received by the secretariat in the last while, if there has been an increase in the number of calls.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I would probably venture to guess that my office has received more calls than the secretariat on ESL programming. As a matter of fact, we all know that there were 1,000 people out at a rally at Tec-Voc High School that I think we were all at, as a matter of fact, that had students and teachers who were concerned about future funding as a result of an announcement by Winnipeg School Division No. 1 to lay off some 60 teachers and cut the program at the end of June. So, in fact, we all know that there were thousands of people who are receiving ESL programming who had a concern about future funding.

I think, at this point in time, we have been able to make it clear that we as a government support ESL training, that our money is in and that we are all going to work together, teachers, students and hopefully the opposition, too, when it comes to ensuring that we speak loudly and clearly to the federal government to put their money in where the programs are needed. They certainly are needed here in Manitoba.

So we have made our commitment, and I would say that probably through my office we have received more calls. I certainly have been aware and involved in the process whereby the community has spoken clearly on support for ESL, and we have responded with our financial commitment.

Ms. CerlIII: I am going to move on to the next area. The issue of spousal violence was raised. I am wondering if the secretariat functions in a way to not only help the community in question—well, clarify this for me—if the secretariat would help bring together the community leaders who want some type of service in this area as well as staff from Family Services or another community-based agency.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the concern has been raised to the secretariat by a couple of community leaders that in fact they have a concern within their communities. They have

been referred, in some instances, to Dorothy Pedlar, who is doing the review on family violence. In fact, the secretariat is now working on helping those communities try to plan something.

There has been nothing planned at this point, but we are working in consultation with them. They have expressed a desire and a need to have some sort of a workshop or a conference on spousal abuse.

Ms. CerlIII: So co-ordinating that kind of a conference is something that the secretariat is working with the communities on?

Mrs. Mitchelson: The secretariat would not in fact co-ordinate the conference, but they would assist the communities in working towards finding a facilitator or whoever, giving them some ideas or some names of facilitators who might provide that kind of assistance.

Ms. CerlIII: I think that the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) might have raised this, but I just wanted to clarify. Do the policy analysts who are with the secretariat work with the policy analysts who are working at MIC?

Mrs. Mitchelson: No. They consult with the policy analyst at the Manitoba Intercultural Council by telephone on issues.

* (1530)

Ms. CerlIII: What is the difference in the kind of work that the policy analysts in these two areas are doing?

Mrs. Mitchelson: In what two areas?

Ms. CerlIII: We have policy analysts at the secretariat as well as at MIC. I am wondering—

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I guess that question—I know what the roles of the policy analysts within the government are, but the Manitoba Intercultural Council is an arm's length organization from government elected by the community. They hire their policy analyst, and I would imagine that the policy analyst over there would do research on papers that the Manitoba Intercultural Council might develop to present to government.

I am not responsible for setting the job description for the policy analyst at the Manitoba Intercultural Council. It would be the council itself that would determine what the role and the responsibility of their policy analyst would be, and it would be community-related, I would presume.

Ms. CerlIII: I find this disconcerting. The minister is the minister for both MIC and the secretariat as the minister for Multiculturalism. I find it odd that she is not aware of the function of the staff at MIC. I can appreciate that they are not sitting at the table right now, and we are going to get to the page in the Estimates on MIC in a minute; but I am trying to determine the difference, or the sameness, or the relationship between the work being done at MIC and the secretariat. They both have policy analyst functions. Can you clarify for me?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the Multicultural Secretariat is a branch of government. They are government employees. The Manitoba Intercultural Council hires its employees, its policy analysts and its support staff at the present time to perform functions that from time to time the Manitoba Intercultural Council believes are of importance to the community that they serve.

They are not hired by government, and we do not give the policy analyst at the Manitoba Intercultural Council work to do. We do not dictate to the Manitoba Intercultural Council what each and every one of their staff members is going to do for the community. They, in fact, determine what they are going to do, what kinds of papers they are going to prepare, what kinds of presentations they are going to make to government and, in fact, they will direct their policy analyst in whatever direction they deem appropriate so that they can do the work of the council.

That is completely their responsibility. I do not tell the policy analyst at the Manitoba Intercultural Council what to do. The direction comes from the elected members of the executive of the Manitoba Intercultural Council. They give the direction to their staff, and their staff performs those duties.

Ms. CerlIII: I am not advocating that the minister be telling the MIC staff what to do. I am saying that I would think that she should know what they are doing. I would think that even the staff with the secretariat should know what they are doing. Perhaps the minister would like to consult with her staff, so she can inform us, so we can see if there is a relationship to see how these two bodies are dealing with the variety of needs that are out there.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I think from time to time the members of the opposition have been in contact with the Manitoba Intercultural Council, and I would believe that they would be asking those questions

of the Manitoba Intercultural Council to inform themselves on what that community organization is doing. If there is a paper, I am sure that the policy analyst from the Manitoba Intercultural Council was involved in compiling the research information when the Manitoba Intercultural Council presented to the government of Manitoba recommendations for combatting racism.

I mean, just by looking at the kinds of papers that the Manitoba Intercultural Council presents, I am sure the opposition can gain their own insight into what the policy analyst over there does. I might question the opposition and ask them whether they feel the policy analyst position at the Manitoba Intercultural Council is a useful position. I am sure they have just as good an understanding and have met with the Manitoba Intercultural Council as parties, as members of the official opposition from time to time.

I would think it would be incumbent upon the critics to inform themselves basically what the community organization that is elected by the community is doing for the community.

Ms. CerlIII: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we are in Estimates for a reason. The reason is to ask the minister for information about her—

Mrs. Mitchelson: Or staff within my department and . . . departmental responsibility.

Ms. CerlIII: Is the minister saying that she does not have responsibility for MIC?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I am not responsible for assigning tasks to the staff at the Manitoba Intercultural Council, and my God, it seems to me that the NDP critic has been around the Legislature long enough to attempt to understand the process. Time and time and time again through these Estimates she has asked the same question four different times in four different ways, and I will repeat the answer, and I will continue to repeat that the Manitoba Intercultural Council determines what their policy analyst will do.

If, in fact, the NDP critic would like to take the time to sit down with the Manitoba Intercultural Council and ask them what their policy analyst does, they will be able to give her that information. But I do not hold the Manitoba Intercultural Council accountable for every minute that their policy analyst spends. I do not ask them to give me an accounting on a weekly or monthly basis of what their policy analyst does.

In fact, they assign tasks to that policy analyst, and that policy analyst performs the tasks that are assigned to them by the Manitoba Intercultural Council, not by the Minister responsible for Multiculturalism.

I assign tasks to the Multicultural Secretariat through the executive director, and in fact he assigns to his staff the work that needs to be done, but I do not assign jobs and tasks to the policy analyst at the secretariat.

I would hope that over the next short period of time, and I know it has only been, what, since September that the NDP critic has been elected? but I do know that the Liberal critic has a better understanding of government workings, and over a period of time I am sure that the NDP critic will develop that understanding also.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Order, please. I would like to remind the honourable members that we are dealing with (d) Multicultural Secretariat, and I will ask that you leave all questions on the Manitoba Intercultural Council till item (e).

Ms. Cerilli: The question I was asking, as I said to the minister, did not have to do with her authority over MIC, but had to do with the relationship between MIC and the secretariat. I was wanting to get some information from the objectives or an Estimates book from a number of years back so I could do a comparison between the role of MIC prior to the establishment of the secretariat, and the role of MIC now.

If we look at the Estimates page for MIC now, we can see that it is very short and the Multicultural Secretariat page is full. I would think that there are some functions of the secretariat that previously were performed by MIC.

Given what the minister has said about not being responsible or aware or having MIC report to her on a regular basis, and being hesitant to tell us what it is that the policy analysts there are doing, I would just like to say I think the MIC is providing staff support to a community organization which has a—I am not even sure of the number of people on MIC right now, but there are hundreds of community organizations. I know they require staff. That, though, was not the intent of my question. My questioning was just to try and get something on the record about the relationship between MIC and the secretariat.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, there is a working relationship. As I said, the Manitoba Intercultural Council is an elected community organization that advocates on behalf of the community and advises governments, sometimes provides advice without us asking, and at other times, we ask for advice from the Manitoba Intercultural Council. In fact, that information is presented to us, and we respond to the Manitoba Intercultural Council with a—and they provided advice and they give recommendations. It is up to government to determine whether, in fact, we are going to accept those recommendations and act on them, or whether we are going to say at this point in time we are not going to follow through with those recommendations. That is the same as any advisory body to government. They can provide us with advice, but we do determine ultimately as government whether we accept that advice and act on that advice that is given to us.

I have indicated that the secretariat is an intergovernmental secretariat which co-ordinates and works with government departments on multicultural initiatives throughout government. They do liaise with the community when the community comes forward and wants to know what is happening within government, but the Manitoba Intercultural Council is the advisory body that is elected by the community to advocate and to advise government.

* (1540)

The reason the secretariat was set up in the first place was as a result—I will go back again to the task force that was set up by the New Democratic government at a cost of \$100,000 to the taxpayers of Manitoba, which they set up for political reasons because they wanted to question what the Manitoba Intercultural Council was doing, and they asked questions specifically on the funding role of the Manitoba Intercultural Council. In fact, if the NDP government of the day had been satisfied that the system was working well, I am sure they would not have used \$100,000 of taxpayers' money to do a review of the Manitoba Intercultural Council, and that is exactly what it was.

Nonetheless, that review and that task force were followed through with under a new government and a new administration. There were several recommendations that came forward from that New Democratic task force report that was presented to our government, and the report recommended that

a multicultural co-ordinator, which was part of the old system, was not enough, that there was not enough emphasis within government on co-ordinating multicultural activities, and that we should set up a directorate or a secretariat.

That was one of the recommendations that came forward from the New Democratic task force report. I know the member for Radisson was not a part of that government and that administration or did not sit around the cabinet table at the time that the New Democrats decided to implement this task force, but, in fact, it was done by that government and the recommendations came forward. We did accept that recommendation, and when I met with the Manitoba Intercultural Council to discuss the issue of staffing in government for multiculturalism, there were members of the Manitoba Intercultural Council who, in fact, indicated to me that a multicultural co-ordinator was not enough, that government was not placing enough priority or emphasis on multiculturalism issues and that, in fact, government within needed more staff to deal with the issues.

So the Manitoba Intercultural Council, in a meeting in my office, indicated that very same thing. The secretariat was set up as a result of that, and we now have, rather than one multicultural co-ordinator, a secretariat with three staff people and a support staff so that we can deal more effectively with issues that affect the community.

That is the reason it is there. They are two distinct roles, and I believe that the two can complement each other. If we have co-ordination within government and we have the community advisory body working very closely together with the intergovernmental committee that is dealing with initiatives and issues, in fact, we are going to have a system that works better. It requires a partnership by community, by government. Through the secretariat and through the Manitoba Intercultural Council, we can hear the community side of things. We can hear what government is doing, and we can best co-ordinate all of the activities that will deal in a very positive way with the community. There is a role for both to play.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I have a few questions to continue on this line.

The minister—and I was listening very closely as to what she was saying in terms of the role MIC plays for advising the government and the policy analysts

that she has created, the two positions that she has created within the department.

According to the act—and I will read the act, it is only one paragraph. It says: The council shall make recommendations and provide information and advice to the government of Manitoba through the minister on all ethnocultural matters in the province, including education, human rights, immigrant settlement, media and communications and culture, heritage and may undertake such other ethnocultural activities as the council deems advisable.

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

I would ask the minister what she has asked—or have any departments that she is aware of asked MIC, with the exception of Combatting Racism, the first-class report that they submitted, what they have done or what they have been asked?

Mrs. Mltchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I guess the last one we had asked the Manitoba Intercultural Council for advice on was the planned parenthood issue that we discussed. We discussed that around the table when we met as a cabinet committee with the Manitoba Intercultural Council just a couple of weeks ago, and that issue was raised.

We did ask for their advice on whether they felt it was a program that was worthwhile funding. They indicated they did not have specific information at this point, and I would imagine that probably they are attempting to analyze whether it is a community priority.

They at our last meeting, too, did indicate they would be willing to work with us in trying to prioritize. They indicated that they knew times were tough, financially, that there was not a lot of money to go around, and if they could work with government in any way to determine what the priorities in the communities were, what the priorities for funding would be, and if there should be reallocation of funding to the multicultural community, they were prepared to work with us on that. I indicated we would be pursuing that with them. That is one area.

From time to time there have been requests. I guess the racism initiative was a major request. We also did ask for advice from the Manitoba Intercultural Council on the development of our multiculturalism policy. We sat down with the chair of the Manitoba Intercultural Council, went over the draft policy before it was formulated, asked for advice on whether we were heading in the right

direction. So there has been, from time to time, advice being sought from the Manitoba Intercultural Council.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer): Is there leave to have a five minute recess?

An Honourable Member: I think we better.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer): Five-minute recess.

* * *

The committee took recess at 3:48 p.m.

After Recess

The committee resumed at 3:55 p.m.

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

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I wanted to get a couple of things clarified before we leave this line. One of the things is if—and I am trying to get a better understanding of the process. The minister has MIC, on one hand, that is supposed to advise the government. It is supposed to give referrals, such as Planned Parenthood. Then on the other hand, you have the secretariat's office where you have two policy analysts.

Let us take the example of the Planned Parenthood. Does the minister say to MIC, here is an issue, deal with it, then say to her staff at the secretariat's office, here is the same issue, deal with it, then wait for the recommendations that come in from both? Then, if that is the case, what weight does she give the two or does she assign it out to MIC? MIC then in return submits it to the secretariat's office where it is reviewed and then submitted to the minister. What is the process for information of that nature?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the process is unchanged since the inception of the Manitoba Intercultural Council whereby, from time to time, they make a decision that they want to advise government on some issue that they have heard within the community.

They pull together information, maybe through their policy analyst. I do not know who they use, what staff they use or if, in fact, it is from the members who are elected within the community who have heard an issue within their respective communities and have brought it to the board of the Manitoba Intercultural Council.

The council, in its wisdom, deems it is an issue they want to advise government on that has been of concern. In fact, they will bring that forward to government by way of a letter or by way of a meeting with the minister. They may make recommendations to government, and we will choose to accept those recommendations or not accept them.

From time to time, government asks the Manitoba Intercultural Council to go into their communities and see whether they are on a specific issue, like the combatting racism issue. We ask them for recommendations from their communities on how government might combat racism. So they compiled that, did an awful lot of work on it, as a matter of fact, and compiled information that they presented to government at our request.

So there are two different ways that the Manitoba Intercultural Council can advise us as government, request of the government or, in fact, from issues they have heard in the community that they want to bring forward to government. So that is their role. They can determine what they want to do in those respects. If we ask them for advice, they provide us with that advice, but it does not necessarily have to be as a result of us asking them. If they know there is an issue out there in the community that they want to bring forward to government as an issue, they will bring that forward. So they can act in both different ways.

Mr. Lamoureux: So for the Planned Parenthood issue, did the minister also then instruct her staff to look at the issue along with MIC?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the Department of Health, that is responsible for the programming, will make the ultimate decision on whether or not the funding for Planned Parenthood will go ahead. The secretariat is aware of the issue, and I have not asked the secretariat for a recommendation as such. They will be working along in co-operation with the Department of Health to determine what staff are involved in Planned Parenthood or dealing with the issue, dealing with the community on Planned Parenthood. Ultimately it will be the staff within the Department of Health who makes that decision.

The secretariat will be informed of that decision so that we in fact, as a secretariat, know what the decision within the Department of Health will be.

* (1600)

So we do not ask the secretariat, *per se*, for advice on how a government department should handle an issue. We in fact work along with that department, provide any assistance or information on what the community may have said.

If in fact the Manitoba Intercultural Council comes forward with a recommendation that indicates that it is a very valuable program for the community, that, through the secretariat, will be passed on to the Department of Health and they will have to deal with it accordingly.

Mr. Lamoureux: So MIC whether it is a request of their own initiative does not go through MIC, they go straight, direct to the minister in different forms, letter, report, whatever it might be.

What projects does the minister have? In particular, I am looking at the multicultural Act. Has she asked MIC to do anything about the multicultural act?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, we will be developing the white paper within government, and the Manitoba Intercultural Council I am sure will provide us with some feedback. What we want to do is receive, from all different communities, input into the act.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the minister herself has said that the primary role of MIC is to advise the government on multicultural policy. We are at a period of time in which multiculturalism is changing structurally in the province of Manitoba through her department. I am wondering if it might be advisable for the minister to ask MIC to look into the changes—

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Relmer): If I could just remind the honourable members that we are dealing with the Multicultural Secretariat, and the Manitoba Intercultural Council is the next item.

Is there a willingness to pass the Multicultural Secretariat?

Mr. Lamoureux: No, I will bring the relationship in for you. Has the minister given any thought to having MIC look at what is going on? If you look at, for example, the Multicultural Secretariat's office, first the creation of it, the manner in which the positions were filled, the Outreach Office. These are issues that I would imagine that this advisory body—which is their primary role or function that they have. I am wondering if we are not using MIC effectively by not asking them to do some type of an analysis in terms of what is going on.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, government ultimately has to make decisions, and government has to be held accountable for the decisions which they make. I have indicated already that we do ask from time to time advice from the Manitoba Intercultural Council. They do present to us advice based on what their community is telling them, and they present to government recommendations. That is the role of an advisory body.

All of the recommendations that come from every advisory council are not necessarily acted upon. It is government's prerogative to choose the recommendations and indicate what recommendations will be acted upon. We have to make that decision as a government that was elected to govern. Of course, it is the role of the opposition to be critical if they do not believe we have done things in the proper manner, but ultimately government has to make those decisions and live with those decisions and, you know, live or die by the decisions that they have made as a government.

No, it would not be the role of the Manitoba Intercultural Council to tell government how to go about setting up an intergovernmental branch. That has to ultimately be a government decision. We have made those decisions, and we will live by those decisions. The community ultimately will determine whether or not they believe we have done the right things. They will show by the way they vote in the next election whether in fact they feel we as a government have done the right things, but ultimately, we are responsible for the decisions that we make.

Ms. Cerilli: I have one more question regarding the secretariat, another issue I just remembered about. Has the secretariat had any involvement with MMDI?

Mrs. Mitchelson: They have not met with the secretariat.

Ms. Cerilli: Are any staff from the secretariat involved with decisions or the process that MMDI is going through in developing its report on The Forks?

Mrs. Mitchelson: No.

Ms. Cerilli: Okay.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Relmer): Item 4.(d) Multicultural Secretariat: (1) Salaries, \$231,000—pass; 4.(d)(2) Other Expenditures, \$73,800—pass.

Item 4.(e) Manitoba Intercultural Council, \$220,700.

Ms. CerlIII: Do we have to wait for staff for this section? Since I raised the issue of MMDI, maybe I will start there and to have an explanation of what the Manitoba Intercultural Council's involvement has been with MMDI. I understand that they are one of the groups that has been involved.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am having great difficulty again with the line of questioning. The Manitoba Intercultural Council receives its funding and they act independently as a community organization to provide advice to government. In fact the opposition wants to know what the Manitoba Intercultural Council's involvement is with any organization, they will have to ask the Manitoba Intercultural Council. The Manitoba Intercultural Council staff or the elected representatives are not a part of the Estimates process because, in fact, all they do is receive their grant from the department and they manage their own affairs. So if it is questions on the Manitoba Intercultural Council and what they are doing, I know that they would be more than willing to sit down with members of the opposition and tell them what their involvement has been.

Ms. CerlIII: It looks like we will be able to save ourselves a lot of time here. It seems like the minister already has not had information that we have asked for regarding MIC, and another issue has come up where it seems like she does not have information. Maybe the minister can clarify for us what she is prepared to answer questions about with regard to the Manitoba Intercultural Council.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, if there is a specific request by the opposition on what the activities of the Manitoba Intercultural Council are, I will undertake in writing to ask the Manitoba Intercultural Council what they have been doing with MMDI, and if they provide me with that information, I will provide it for the opposition.

Ms. CerlIII: I am going to move to another issue, given the time. There was an article in the Free Press back in January which stated that MIC was funded at \$150,000 less than what they requested and required. Can the minister explain the reason for that funding decision to MIC?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, every organization comes to government with a proposed budget. Government has to look at the resources

that it has available and allocate those resources so that, in fact, we attempt to serve the majority of the community. Every request to government for funding does not receive funding.

* (1610)

In fact, because of the funding role to the communities being removed from the Manitoba Intercultural Council, they no longer had to perform that responsibility, so there was not money available or required to perform that function. In fact, we had to take a look at the overall picture. We know that Manitoba Intercultural Council had a surplus of funds there, and we wanted them to utilize their surplus rather than holding a surplus, so those decisions all had to be factored in. All organizations come to government with requests and not always do they receive the amount of funding that they do request.

Ms. CerlIII: Can the minister tell the committee how many staff, or what have been the staff changes in MIC since this government took power?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I am told that there has been a reduction of one and a half staff years at the Manitoba Intercultural Council over the last three years? Two years? Two years.

Ms. CerlIII: Am I to understand the minister correctly if she is saying that it was that one and a half staff years that had the responsibility for co-ordinating the funding component that MIC used to have?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, it was the community resources person who had the major responsibility for dealing with the communities regarding funding, and one of them was a half time, I suppose, administrative staff, that dealt with funding to the community.

Ms. CerlIII: So the staff that had been let go had what function with MIC?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, both were related to the granting function. One was a community resources officer that dealt with the communities to develop their grant and the other one was half-time administrative staff. The community resources officer left the Manitoba Intercultural Council to go to another job elsewhere, and that position was not filled. The other position was made half time instead of full time.

Ms. CerlIII: The position—I raised this issue earlier when we were having the debate on funding through

MGAC—that the co-ordination function that was provided by that staffperson at MIC with respect to the allocation of funds is no longer available anywhere in the province, and that MGAC does not have the ability to do that kind of community development work that goes in conjunction with the allocation of grants. I guess I just want the minister to realize that now has been eliminated from services to the community groups, and I am glad that she has put that on the record.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Just a minute, Mr. Acting Chairperson. I still believe that we are serving a function to the multicultural community with the allocation of grants to those communities.

If there is a community that wants some help, I am sure that if they went to the Manitoba Intercultural Council, they would direct them over to the Multicultural Grants Advisory Council. I know that if they come to the Multicultural Secretariat and ask how they can access funding, they can refer them to the Multicultural Grants Council. So there is a role, and I would presume that the Manitoba Intercultural Council would still give advice to their community members as would the members of the secretariat. So there still are resources available. It seems to me that there still are as many grant applications coming in for consideration, and the community is well aware of the process.

Ms. CerlIII: Another issue that has come up with MIC lately was their decision with their funding cutback to give up their honoraria. The members of MIC were willing to put that money towards staff. I am wondering if the minister can tell us what was her position with respect to that option that they were proposing?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I met with the Manitoba Intercultural Council personally and sat down and had a talk with them. I indicated that we were in tough financial times, that there was not a lot of money to go around, that we could not guarantee them an increase in funding when I gave them last year's commitment of funding. I know they asked for more than what they received, but we gave them the resources that we had available and asked them to use part of their surpluses to manage through.

We do know that the Manitoba Intercultural Council has a lease for the next year. I believe it is up in 1992. They probably have more expensive space than they would like to have or that they really

need to perform the services that they provide to government, but they are in a lease that they cannot get out of and that will be over in 1992. There are a couple of years that are going to be more difficult years because of their overhead costs, and we are aware of that. They know that we are aware of that, and that is one of the things that is always discussed.

In fact, they will have a surplus to get them through these years, and I indicated to them clearly—sat down with the executive of the Manitoba Intercultural Council and indicated that these were difficult times and that, in fact, we could not guarantee increases in funding. We could not even guarantee stability of funding at this point in time, but they still have money to operate, to function and to provide a service to the community and to government.

Ms. CerlIII: Without belabouring points that were raised in the debate over MGAC funding, I will just make the point that the minister has seen fit to hire a number of well-paid staff at the secretariat while MIC continues to have to suffer staff losses. I would think that they provide, as she has said, a different function, and I was wondering if the minister would make a commitment that, when the lease is up for the MIC space, the role for MIC will not be up. If she will make a commitment that, if her government is still in power at that time, MIC would have the funding to move and to relocate.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the Manitoba Intercultural Council does negotiate their own lease and find their own space. In fact, we have met many times with the Manitoba Intercultural Council, and I have indicated that we want to work in partnership with them. That commitment remains. They have a role to play in advice to government, and that role will continue.

Ms. CerlIII: One other issue I would like to raise under this area was raised earlier, and that is the issue of the minister consulting MIC with regard to the funding cut to Planned Parenthood for the Immigrant Health Program. I was wondering if she could clarify whom she consulted with at MIC, and how that consultation was made.

* (1620)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, it was brought up to the Manitoba Intercultural Council at our cabinet committee meeting with the MIC. We met just a couple of weeks ago, when the issue was

a new issue, with the Manitoba Intercultural Council, and we asked the council at that point in time for their advice on whether they felt that the Planned Parenthood program was a good program for the community. There were all of the executive of MIC who were present at the meeting. There was staff from the Manitoba Intercultural Council, and there were members of the government at that meeting.

Ms. Cerilli: What was the date of that meeting?

Mrs. Mitchelson: It was April 25 of this year.

Ms. Cerilli: Thank you very much.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer): Item 4.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Acting Chairperson, this is an issue in which we adamantly disagree with the minister. If there was a line that I would like to add an addition of funds to, this would in fact be the line, but knowing the Acting Chairperson it would probably be ruled out of order. So I will not move a motion of that nature, even though I am sure I could give a convincing argument so that I would probably get a majority of her colleagues, or maybe one or two, that is all that would be necessary in order to change a few things towards the positive.

I did want to pick up, however, on some of the questions that were being asked by my NDP colleague. October '92 is, from what I understand, the date when the lease is going to be coming up where MIC is located currently. When MIC had entered into the agreement, from what I understand, they were distributing the Lotteries funds. Is that not the case?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes, I believe so.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Acting Chairperson, when MIC went into the negotiating for a lease, they were banking on being able to continue distributing the Lotteries funds, and the Lotteries funds provided them the income in order to pay for that lease. Yet, when the government decided to go ahead and take the funds away, MIC took a substantial drop in revenue.

My question to the minister is, how can she justify not picking up, if not part of the cost, all of the cost of the leasing agreement between MIC and their landlord when it is their government that has put them in the situation that they are now in where they do not need all of the space that they have acquired. In fact, had they not had the granting capabilities or had they known that they were not going to have the granting capabilities, I would imagine that they

would never have entered into an agreement of this nature.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, you can realize and recognize that we are in a bit of a real estate slump and property that could be leased now could be leased at a much better rate than what happened some four years ago when they entered into this lease.

Yes, in fact the role has changed somewhat and they do not have the resources and they do not require as much staff because they do not have the granting authority at this point in time, but they also do have a surplus, which in fact they can use to get them through this period of time, and we have indicated to them to use their surplus, and when October of 1992 comes and they can negotiate a better lease, we will have to deal with their budget request at that time.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I will deal with the reserve fund in a few minutes. What I want to deal with is how the government can allow an agency to negotiate an agreement, in this particular case a leasing agreement for premises, and then withdraw funds when they were anticipating the funds, and not expect to compensate MIC at all.

Mrs. Mitchelson: They did not ask for government's approval to enter into a lease. That is not a requirement. It was something that they did on their own, and so it was neither approved or not approved by government, it was something that they did.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Acting Chairperson, they did it on their own because they assumed that would continue with the granting function. They had no reason to believe—I do not recall a campaign promise or a commitment to MIC prior to them entering into the agreement that, if there was a Conservative government, they would be losing their funding capabilities. So, as a direct result of the government taking away that responsibility, they have had a drop in their revenue. The government itself says that it is the responsibility of different organizations to do some long-term budgeting, and I believe that is what MIC was doing, some long-term budgeting.

(Mr. Deputy Chairman in the Chair)

They were able to build up a reserve, and my hat is off to them for being able to accomplish that. We should not be penalizing them for doing that, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, but in fact, that is what this

government is choosing to do. The question very direct is, they negotiated the deal when they had the Lotteries revenue coming in. It was negotiated in good faith. The government changed the policy and took away that revenue from MIC. Now MIC has to continue with the lease that they had entered into. I would suggest to you that the government has a role to play with trying to negotiate, renegotiate either with the landlord or to compensate MIC for that lost revenue.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I think I have to correct some inaccuracies or some misconceptions, misperceptions—whatever the word is—by the opposition. In fact, the retained earnings or the surplus that the Manitoba Intercultural Council has is a result of Lotteries revenues that they were given to distribute to the communities. In fact, they were not distributed to the communities, so they had that reserve. Those reserves were lottery reserves.

Now, when we transferred the funding over to MGAC, we could have taken those lottery reserves that were part of—whether it was interest on Lotteries dollars that were given to the Manitoba Intercultural Council because they did not distribute it to the communities or whatever it was, it was lottery monies. That money in the reserve could have been taken from MIC and given to MGAC, but we chose to leave that money in retained earnings with the Manitoba Intercultural Council for them to use.

When we go back to long-range planning for the Manitoba Intercultural Council, I think we have to go back to the special audit also that was done of the Manitoba Intercultural Council. It did indicate that there was excessive spending, and there were instances where members of the Manitoba Intercultural Council had gone out and had dinner meetings in very expensive restaurants in the city of Winnipeg. The auditor did comment on the excessive spending and the lack of financial controls at the Manitoba Intercultural Council, so in fact there was some indication that they should tighten up their accountability and their financial administration.

We did leave the reserves with them. Those reserves are to be used over the next couple of years to help them through with their rent and with the activities that they have to perform.

Mr. Lamoureux: MIC, in using the reserves, have been increasing grants, in terms of real dollar grants,

over the past number of years to a point in which they had \$1.296 million. That is in part because they had the reserves in place.

I would ask the minister, what is the reserve right now with MIC?

* (1630)

Mrs. Mitchelson: \$78,500 at the beginning of this fiscal year.

Mr. Lamoureux: What was it last year?

Mrs. Mitchelson: \$146.1 thousand.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, there is reason to be concerned here. They are depleting their reserves awfully fast, and this year the government has seen fit to cut funding to MIC, more than what they did last year. So their reserves are going to be gone before you know it. What are the government's intentions when it comes to funding for MIC?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we have indicated that they can expend their reserves, and we will have to take a look at next year's budget in the budget process and determine the level of funding.

Mr. Lamoureux: What assurances can the minister give to us today that MIC will be able to cover its bills in the future?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I have every confidence in the ability of the Manitoba Intercultural Council to manage their funds over the next year. When I met with them, I indicated that we were in difficult financial times and that we could not guarantee an increase or a commitment. Certainly they would have liked to have seen that happen, and we would love to be able to give every dollar to every organization that comes forward to government and asks for that.

The reality is in these economic times that the reduction to the Manitoba Intercultural Council—and if you will look at the reduction to the secretariat and to the Manitoba Intercultural Council, they were the same. I think it was about a 3.5 percent reduction in their funding.

When you look at what has happened throughout government, I have indicated time and time again that we as a government determined that our priorities were going to be health care, family services and education, and those were departments that received increased amounts of money. We have asked all of those others that are

funded by government throughout all different departments to share in the responsibility of these difficult economic times, when we have no increase in revenue.

Revenues are flat in the province. To be able to maintain or reduce a very small amount to many organizations, those kinds of things had to be looked at if we wanted to make increases to health care, to family services, to education and keep the deficit at a manageable level.

Those decisions were made. I have indicated that none of them were easy decisions to make but, in fact, they were decisions we have made. We have every confidence that there will be many organizations that will survive and will survive successfully through these tough times with the shared responsibility. We certainly, within our government department, took a very major reduction in administration, I think a 22 percent reduction in executive administration.

We have not asked any community organization to accept more of a reduction than what we had to accept internally.

Mr. Lamoureux: All of my confidence is with the MIC when it comes to its survival and the individuals who are putting in a tremendous amount of volunteer hours in order to make sure that it is going to be around in the next years.

What I question is the government's commitment to MIC. I do not believe that the government is committed to MIC. I think that is demonstrated in the actions that they take. We have the funding that is taken away from them. We are seeing the government deplete its reserves. We are seeing government take more money away from its budgeted allotment. We are seeing the creation of a directorate, of an Outreach Office without consultation from MIC itself.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, what I would like to know from the minister, because ultimately the government will get what it wants and the reserves will be depleted, will the minister make a commitment today to cover the rent from their landlord, and I believe it is around \$3,000 a month, to ensure that MIC will be around for the next number of years?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I cannot and I will not, and you would not find any member of government making a commitment today for next year's budget. That process just does not

happen. I would encourage the members opposite to speedily approve the Estimates and the budget for this year so that in fact we can get on with developing our plans for next year, but there will not be any government member who will make a commitment.

I will agree again to disagree with the member for Inkster when he says that government does not have a commitment to the Manitoba Intercultural Council. I think that might be in the minds of the opposition, but in fact we have, through our co-operative working relationship over the last period of time, developed a good working relationship with the Manitoba Intercultural Council.

Mr. Lamoureux: I am not asking the minister to reveal what her intentions are for the next budget. What I am asking for her is to seek some type of assurance to MIC that the government is committed to ensuring that MIC is going to be around for the next number of years.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I have indicated our commitment to an ongoing working relationship with the Manitoba Intercultural Council. The question can be asked in four or five or six different ways and my answer will remain the same, that we are committed to a working relationship and to a partnership with the Manitoba Intercultural Council for the delivery of service to the community that we all have a major interest in preserving. I have said that, and I will repeat that. The question may be asked five more times in five different ways, but my answer will be the same.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, in terms of the reports that have been filed with the minister from MIC, and I believe there is one report, Combatting Racism, what action to date has the minister taken?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, as I have said, through the Multicultural Secretariat, we have compiled initiatives that are ongoing within government. I reiterated on April 25, when we met with the executive of the Manitoba Intercultural Council, and they agreed, by the way, at that meeting with government that in fact there was an initiative that was ongoing with the Department of Labour and the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship whereby we had seconded a person from government to work with the Manitoba Federation of Labour on initiatives that might be

used throughout the work force and throughout the Manitoba community to combat racism.

In fact, I went into great detail the other evening on those modules that have been developed. It just proves another partnership where labour can work with government and accomplish something positive. I indicated to the Manitoba Intercultural Council, and they agreed in fact that we should not be duplicating something that has already been done. In fact, there has been a lot of time and effort and dollars expended in developing these modules in co-operation with government. We are all looking forward in anticipation to the pilot projects that will be conducted throughout the province and for the modules being finalized so that we can use them within government, and they can be used throughout the community.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I want to bring up one recommendation that I have brought up on numerous occasions, and that is the cross-cultural educational forum, if you will, for elected politicians. Why is it that the minister has not acted on that particular item as a sign of good faith showing that we are committed to combatting racism? Well, let us start with the politicians. I do not think it takes that much time to organize a conference. If she concurs with me, I am wondering if she can give me some kind of an indication of when we can expect the date.

Mrs. Mitchelson: That will be looked at in the overall context of the modules that have been developed, that will be used intergovernmentally. When I say intergovernmentally, I am not just talking about the bureaucrats, I am talking about elected representatives and civil servants. We have an audit report that indicates there might be some problems within the bureaucracy, and I think we all share the concern that we all have to work together, so it will be in co-operation with the bureaucracy and the elected officials.

* (1640)

Mr. Lamoureux: Has the minister received the '89-90 annual report from MIC? Have they prepared it?

Mrs. Mitchelson: No, it has not been received as yet.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I know I do not want to stay too much longer on this line, so I will save my closing remarks on MIC for the ministerial salary, but suffice to say that we

do—when I say we, the Liberal Party—does object in the manner in which the government has chosen to treat what we perceive as a valuable asset, a valuable nonpolitical asset. I know maybe at times the minister might believe that we are trying to make a political issue out of it. I can assure her that I would not want to jeopardize MIC by trying to say that it is strictly politics, but there are some issues that we believe the minister has been somewhat negligent on. I will leave my closing remarks on the issue until the ministerial salary.

Ms. Cerilli: With respect to MIC, I guess the issue for me is the principles around which MIC was established and what they represent. I am not going to belabour this any more than we have either, but I would like to ask the minister if she values the idea of having an arm's-length community-elected body to advise government that represents ethnocultural communities in Manitoba?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we have that within the Manitoba Intercultural Council, and as I have indicated, we have developed an ongoing good working relationship with that community body that does give advice to government. I have no problem with that concept.

Ms. Cerilli: Since the minister seems to value that which MIC offers, I hope that, come next year, when the budget process could be as equally difficult as this budget process was, would the minister commit or would she go to bat for funding for a body that embodies those principles that she says she supports?

Mrs. Mitchelson: We will look at the proposed budget that comes forward from the Manitoba Intercultural Council. I have indicated that we as a government support the work that the Manitoba Intercultural Council is doing, but I cannot make a commitment today for dollar figures for next year's budget.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Item 4.(e) Manitoba Intercultural Council, \$220,700—pass.

Resolution 24: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$3,324,800 for Culture, Heritage and Citizenship for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1992—pass.

The last item to be considered for the Estimates of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship is item 1.(a) Minister's Salary, \$20,600. At this point we request that the minister's staff leave

the table for the consideration of this item. Shall the item pass?

Ms. CerIII: There are two issues that I would like to deal with here. We only have 15 minutes before private members' hour.

The first issue has to do with, as we have heard over and over again—is one of the most immediate and important issues related to multiculturalism and that is English as a Second Language. I understand that this Thursday evening, there is a forum which is being organized. It involves students from English as a Second Language and all the programs that we have talked about, the Winnipeg School Division, Red River. It will probably also involve teachers from those programs.

The idea of the forum is to get together all of the players, if you would, the members from the federal government; both members from the provincial government, the Minister for Education, as well as this minister; as well as members of the Winnipeg School Division and other, I think, representatives from teachers from the different programs.

I was sorry to hear, when I was invited to represent our party, that the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship would not be there. I would like for her to explain what it is that is going to be keeping her from that meeting.

Mr. Lamoureux: I will represent you, Bonnie.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the member for Inkster says he will represent me, and I certainly would hope when he is speaking that he would indicate that we as a provincial government have made a commitment.

I guess the reason was quite clear in the letter that I sent back to the MGEA—who is organizing the rally and who did invite me to attend—that, in fact, I as a minister have met with the students that I am responsible for in ESL programming at Winnipeg School Division No. 1 at Tec-Voc, back in early April I guess it was, and indicated at that point in time our clear support as a government for ESL programming. I subsequently was able to negotiate and obtain \$1.174 million for ESL programming at Winnipeg School Division No. 1 for which I am responsible.

I have been in communication with teachers at Winnipeg School Division No. 1. I have been over to Gordon Bell High School to visit the evening ESL classes. I have been to Point Douglas School to visit with those who are taking ESL programming

and have reiterated our government's commitment. I believe that over the next period of time, I know for a fact that I will be meeting with teachers from Winnipeg School Division No. 1. I will be meeting with many more students who are receiving that programming and listening to the community, and so our commitment is strong and our commitment is there.

I do not believe that, at this point in time, there is any doubt in anyone's mind, there is any doubt in the minds of the teachers at Winnipeg School Division No. 1, that our money is there, it is on the table. I believe the students who are receiving ESL programming at Winnipeg School Division No. 1 are happy with our government's commitment.

So we have said everything that we have to say, and we have put our money on the table. I do not know why the Manitoba Government Employees' Association seems to feel that we have not made a commitment, because we have made a commitment. It is there and so there is really no purpose.

I have communicated with the students and indicated our support is there. The government has made a major and a significant financial commitment—the Manitoba government. I know that we are still continuing to lobby. I would hope that all students receiving programming, that all members of the opposition, would join in our lobbying with the federal government for increased funding, but our provincial commitment is there.

Ms. CerIII: Well, part of the issue is the shell game, the confusion, that is going on with the issue of English as a Second Language. This forum is an attempt to clarify, for the people involved, the maze of where the money is flowing and not flowing and coming from and not coming from. We know that there have been cuts from Red River. We know that the waiting lists are longer. We know that after this year there is going to be 160 fewer available spaces for ESL.

* (1650)

I would think that the minister's refusal to answer questions regarding federal funding to clarify information from the Department of Education is not helping matters, that if there was really a desire to show that there was a commitment, then those kinds of questions would be addressed directly in this Estimates process.

Fortunately, there is also the Estimates process going on for Education at this time, and my colleague will be asking the minister their questions regarding ESL. Hopefully, we will be able to put together some answers for people. I am expecting that there will be a large crowd once again at the rally or the forum on Thursday, and there will be some empty chairs there from this government. There will be empty chair as well from the federal government. I understand that they have also refused to stand in front of people and be accountable for funding decisions that they have made.

To go on to another area though, another program that has suffered funding cuts has been the Manitoba Multicultural Resource Centre. I would like to ask the minister—this is another multicultural organization in the community that represents a broad cross-section of multicultural groups similar to MIC, but yet it is funded as if it were a single ethnic organization—has the minister given any consideration to changing the way that MMRC is funded, so that they can have the kind of funding they need to service the broad community of Manitoba and the broad multicultural groups that they do represent?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, without accepting any of the information that the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) has put on the table, it would have been very beneficial for me to know. Maybe she could clarify by telling me how much funding MMRC has received from what source in government, and what has been reduced, so that she can provide that information for me. She has facts on that, maybe that could be provided to me.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Deputy Chairman, the issue is that they have a deficit. They are being funded as an individual ethnocultural group would be funded, and they are requesting that they be seen as a broad multicultural group, not as a single community group.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I guess the question I need to ask for clarification is, what funding has been cut to MMRC that the member is bringing forward, because I am not aware of any funding cuts from my department to MMRC?

Ms. Cerilli: One reduction is from the Multicultural Grants Advisory Council. There is over a \$3,000 difference in the amount of money that they got in '90 and that they are going to get in '91.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I guess that just proves my point that members of the opposition are putting information that is not accurate because my department has not cut funding. As a matter of fact, my department has not funded MMRC in the past.

What she is indicating is that MMRC has received funding from the Multicultural Grants Advisory Council, which makes independent decisions on funding, and I am not a part of the decision-making process. They evaluate all of the applications, and they provide funding based on one-time grants on a year-by-year basis. They are evaluated on a yearly basis, and those decisions are made. If in fact MMRC felt that the grant from the Multicultural Grants Advisory Council was inadequate or unfair, there is an appeal process that is in place. They can appeal to MGAC and have their case reheard.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the minister is missing the point. The point is that this is an organization which is a multicultural broadly scoped organization. I am asking the question, can this government consider that they need to have their funding allocations based on the reality of the kind of organization they are and not be considered by MGAC as a single community group?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, they have to be considered by MGAC based on the type of application that they present to MGAC, but in fact, I guess I might ask back the member from opposition, if she believes and her party believes that MMRC should receive funding from the department and we should allocate dollars, where would she like to see that money taken from so that we can fund MMRC? I have indicated quite clearly that we have X number of dollars to deal with when government has no increases in revenues, and we have made health care, Family Services and Education our priorities. There is no more money to go around at this point. As an opposition member, if she were in government, would she increase the deficit or would she reallocate money from some other multicultural organization to fund MMRC?

Those are sort of the policy directions that members from the opposition have to put on the table, if in fact they would increase the deficit and charge the taxpayers of Manitoba more money, or would they reallocate money from health care maybe to MMRC, or would they reallocate money from the education system, maybe from ESL

programming to MMRC, or where would they take the money from?

It is fine for the opposition to sit, when they do not have any decisions to make, and say give more, spend more, but that money has to come from somewhere. It either comes out of the taxpayers' pockets of the province of Manitoba, or it comes from some other program throughout government.

I guess we have made decisions based on our ability to provide services within the limited resources that we have and the opposition, rather than just being critical, has to come forward with areas where they might cut back in order to fund new organizations.

Ms. Cerilli: I do not want to get into a debate at this point on the minister's new conservative economic views, but I would like to say there are a number of other issues that we have not touched on in this Estimates process, another issue I would like to discuss, and I will say this is the whole issue of the granting to multicultural arts organizations.

I guess, I would like to say that I appreciate the time we have spent here. I understand that this has been a world record or certainly some record of the number of hours we spent. With changes that are being proposed for immigration, with the crisis in English as a Second Language, with the communities' concern about what is happening with the secretariat and with MIC, I feel like we have given this area the attention that it deserves. Thank you very much.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Do I respond, or do you want to make a comment, and then I will respond to both? -(interjection)-

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I know that my patience seems to be wearing a little thin this afternoon, and I tend to sometimes deviate from my normally very pleasant self and get a little frustrated at times. I do know that I have attempted to answer the questions and sometimes the same questions have been asked over and over again in different ways.

I do have to indicate that it has been a process whereby the opposition has had the opportunity to ask questions and receive answers. Sometimes answers that they do not agree with or, philosophically, we may be taking a direction as a government that they might not agree with, and that is their role as opposition to be critical. It is our role as government to defend and to implement programs that we believe are going to best serve the

communities that we represent as government and as ministers responsible.

I do want to indicate that hopefully by next year, there will be a little better understanding of the process and what responsibilities a minister has and what areas he or she can be questioned on.

I do want to thank the critic for the New Democratic Party for the input. As we review Hansard and look at the many hours that we have put in to discussing the issues and very worthwhile issues, I am sure that next year through the process—can we have leave for two minutes for me to just—

Mr. Deputy Chairman: We cannot get leave.

Mrs. Mitchelson: We cannot sit, that is it. I just want to thank the critic from the New Democratic Party for her input into the process.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: The time is now 5 p.m. and time for private members' hour. Committee rise.

* (1420)

SUPPLY—EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Madam Chairman (Louise Dacquay): Order, please. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply is dealing with the Estimates of the Department of Education and Training. We are on page 41, item 5. Post-Secondary, Adult and Continuing Education and Training. Would the minister's staff please enter the Chamber.

Item 5. Post-Secondary, Adult and Continuing Education and Training (a) Executive Administration: (1) Salaries, \$184,900.

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Chairperson, just by way of clarification with respect to the college governance issue, would it be under the 5.(a) or 5.(b) appropriation?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Madam Chairperson, we can either deal with it under 5.(a) or 5.(b)—flexible that way. If the member would like to go into that area now, we could deal with it at this time.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, I am prepared to pass 5.(a) then, move into 5.(b) and deal with it.

Madam Chairman: Item 5.(a) Executive Administration: (1) Salaries \$184,900—pass; 5.(a)(2) Other Expenditures \$165,600—pass; 5.(b) Program Analysis, Co-ordination and Support.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, I am wondering if the minister will give me a status report on the college governance issue specifically indicating when legislation will be tabled, the status of the committees and the composition of the committees? I will get to other questions shortly.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, with regard to the colleges act, the act is now ready to be proceeded with in terms of the draft form. We will be tabling it during this session. I am hoping to table it very shortly, as a matter of fact. There are still a few details that need to be cleared up, but once that is done, we will be in a position to table it for first reading.

Madam Chairperson, the intention is that we would proceed with the colleges act this session and then would work towards the implementation of college governance over the next two years. The transition committee that is in place at the present time is made up of employee representatives, people from within the department, and we also have three outside individuals who are on the transition committee, who are giving advice, of course, to government in terms of how we can best address the transition from the government to a board-governed community college system.

Mr. Chomlak: I wonder if the minister is prepared to table the report of the advisory committee that was presented to the minister and has not yet been made public with respect to college governance.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, this same question, I think, was asked during the last Estimates process. I regret to say that this was not a report that was meant to be tabled publicly. It was a report for the department, for the minister, and it was of an internal nature. It is not meant to be tabled either in the House or for public use.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, I guess the problem I have with that response is that there are several major outstanding issues of a human relations nature that are outstanding with respect to many of the employees of the institution, and most notably is the question of their pensions and what will happen to their pensions. We discussed this question last session and now we are here six months later and still people's lives are on hold and in chaos, because there is concern with respect to what will happen to their pension plan.

That is my concern, at least that encapsulates part of my concern with respect to the report. I am

wondering if we could—on the specific issue of pensions, is the minister prepared to make a statement definitively outlining for the employees what will happen to their superannuation?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, it is for that reason that we have a transition or conversion team set up, or committee, which has representation from the employees on it, from the MGEA. The purpose of that committee is to make sure that all of those concerns are dealt with in an appropriate manner. There is no intent of government to try in some way shirk employees of their rights and their benefits as under the Civil Service Commission.

I can assure the member that the committee is working satisfactorily. Yes, the pension benefits is a concern, but we are working through the conversion team to ensure that those items are addressed in a very appropriate manner. The member says that there are still many outstanding issues. I am certainly free to answer any questions I can on any of those issues that he may wish to bring forward at this time.

* (1430)

Mr. Chomlak: Can the minister outline what options are available with respect to the employees vis-a-vis their pension plans?

Mr. Derkach: The employees' greatest concern is to ensure that there is some superannuation plan in place for them once the conversion takes place. We have assured the employees that such a plan will exist.

The employees, I think, have stated quite clearly that they would like to have the existing plan in place and those discussions are ongoing at this time. As I indicated very clearly, there is no intention on the government's part to try and diminish in any way the benefits that employees would have once they have become employees of the board of governors.

As I indicated, the discussions are underway at the present time, and we will ensure that employees have equal benefits regardless of whether they are under the present plan or whatever they choose, and it is decided that there should be an equal and alternative plan. My understanding at this point in time is that employees would like to stay under the current plan.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, then the solution seems rather simplistic to me. Perhaps the minister can enlighten me as to why it may not be simplistic because, if the employees wish to remain

in the present plan, can the minister not make an arrangement? I am not certain that The Civil Service Act would require an amendment, but it seems to me that it can be done to satisfy that particular need of the employees. Therefore, one major problem is solved, a major concern has been addressed and no further discussions are required.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, I think that is probably the goal of all of us, including the employees. Indeed, if it were a simple matter as that, we would probably have this matter resolved some time ago.

As the member knows, there is the whole question of the unfunded portion of the pension plan which has to be dealt with so that, if in fact the employees should choose to move into a different plan, then there has to be some reassurance made that the unfunded portion of the pension plan is going to be accounted for in a reasonable manner.

Let me indicate that there is, as I said, no intention on our part as government to try to in some way upset the balance or try to diminish the benefits that are due to employees now and when they transfer over under our college governance system.

Mr. Chomlak: I am not suggesting any intention otherwise on the part of the government. It just seems to me that, if the concern is the unfunded liability of the present plan, then it strikes me as specious because the government is providing a block grant to the colleges, presumably under the college governance scheme, and that would entail any kind of liability that would be incurred in a new plan.

The argument is academic insofar as the minister has already indicated that employees would prefer to stay in the government's plan, so the fact remains, if the government is going to be funding on a block basis the various colleges, the government will be funding some portion of liability on a superannuation plan regardless. Staying in the government Civil Service plan would strike me as the simplest solution.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, as I indicated, those discussions are underway at the present time. I am not involved personally in the discussions. We have a conversion team that is responsible for those discussions, and as I indicated, this aspect and others are under discussion at this time.

We talked about the unfunded portion, Madam Chairperson. I must indicate that, if we were to try

to move that kind of money into the system, that amounts to something between \$35 million and \$50 million, so it is a sizable amount of money that one has to consider. Although it might seem quite simple on the surface, it becomes more complex as one starts to delve into it and discuss it.

Nevertheless, discussions are underway. I am confident that this whole matter will be resolved to the satisfaction not only of the government but indeed to the employees as well.

Mr. Chomlak: It does get complicated if the employees are forced to adopt a new plan and, therefore, that unfunded portion has to be dealt with, but if the employees remain in the Civil Service plan, then the unfunded portion remains in the same state that it has always remained in terms of the government sector. What is the position of the government with respect to the employees as members of the Manitoba Government Employees' Association?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, that is precisely what is under discussion at this point in time. As I indicated, there is a transition committee, or conversion team, that has been put together to look at all of those matters. I am not going to give my personal opinion or try to put that on the record right now since the matter is in discussion. I think we should leave it at that until such time that those discussions and those negotiations, if you like, pardon me, have been fully completed.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, I just have a couple more questions in this area. The minister last year provided us with a listing of the private vocational schools in Manitoba. I am wondering if he could provide us with an update of that particular listing?

Mr. Derkach: I have one copy of the list, Madam Chairperson, that I would be happy to table. We will make copies for you.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, I am wondering if the minister could outline for me what role he sees the department and his staff adopting in this area vis-a-vis the relationship between students at private vocational schools and private vocational schools themselves. If the minister wants specifics, what is the government's role with respect to students and the private vocational schools in the instance where a difficulty is encountered between a student and a private

vocational school? What role does he see the department play?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, the relationship between government and private vocational schools is such that the two are separate. The private vocational schools have to adhere to the act, as does any other independent institution; but if there are complaints, we will certainly follow-up the complaints, investigate them. In terms where there cannot be a resolution, there may need to be—where there is provision, I should say, for us to arbitrate the resolution of the problem, but we do not get involved in terms of the operations of private vocational schools provided they operate within the act.

* (1440)

Mr. Chomlak: What kind of assurances do we have that the department is ensuring that these schools operate within the act? Are there regular audits carried out or regular program checks, roving officers, and how many people are involved in that aspect?

Mr. Derkach: The short answer to the question, Madam Chairperson, is yes. We have two people in the department who do the monitoring and the inspecting, if you like, of private vocational schools.

Mr. Chomlak: One of the reasons I ask is that I was contacted by an individual with respect to the operation of a particular private school, who had grave concerns about the course that had been taught. I was surprised to see that the department did play the arbitration role because, when I read the act, I did not necessarily read that into the act when I reviewed the act. The role played by the arbitrator, by the department, was to the extent of in fact providing a release to the student involved in return for a financial settlement from the private vocational school. I am wondering if the minister is familiar with this practice or whether it is very common? I have tried to be as descriptive as possible.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, the private vocational schools, as I indicated, do operate at arm's length from government. We do not interfere in their operations. As I indicated, we do have two individuals in the department who work with private vocational schools and monitor the programs. We have a Curriculum Review Committee that deals with matters regarding curriculum, but when a complaint comes about from—as the member indicated, in this particular instance, what will

happen is staff from our department will try to get some resolution to the problem between the individual and the school, but we do not interfere in terms of trying to be sort of the judge and jury over a situation. We try to be the facilitator of a resolution to a problem.

I might also indicate that staff from the department do inspection or checks or visits to the private vocational schools to ensure that they are complying with the act and that programs are being delivered in an appropriate manner.

Madam Chairman: Item 5.(b) Program Analysis, Co-ordination and Support: (1) Salaries \$809,000—pass; 5.(b)(2) Other Expenditures \$141,200—pass.

Item 5.(c) Red River Community College: (1) Salaries—

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Can the Minister of Education give us a list of the courses which will not be offered in the academic year 1991-92 because of the cut of 87 staff positions?

Mr. Derkach: Yes, Madam Chairperson, I will table the program reductions at all of the community colleges at this time instead of breaking them down into Red River, Assiniboine and so forth, so this sheet will have all the programs that will be reduced at the three community colleges.

Mrs. Carstairs: Can the minister tell us how many fewer students will be educated at our community colleges as a result of these program cuts?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, we had a bit of a misunderstanding here. I was going in the wrong direction.

Madam Chairperson, I would indicate that, in all of the colleges, the estimated enrollment for this particular year will have an increase of something like 398 students.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairman, could the minister tell us how that will translate into full-time versus part-time work? I use as a standard the fact that in Manitoba between 1985-86 and 1989-90 there was an increase of full-time students in the province of Manitoba at our community colleges of 13.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, in all the colleges combined, the full-time enrollment for 1991-92 is estimated to be 12,857. The part-time

enrollment at all three community colleges is estimated to be 29,605.

Mrs. Carstairs: Can the minister clarify that for me again—12,857 are full time—

An Honourable Member: That is correct.

Mrs. Carstairs: —29,605 are part time.

An Honourable Member: Correct.

Mrs. Carstairs: Can the minister tell the House how he can maintain that kind of enrollment with a cut in faculty of some 87 at Red River Community College alone?

* (1450)

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, as I have indicated on several occasions, the community college system in Manitoba has been in need of some reforming, refocusing and reshaping for quite some time.

This year, combined with some of the budget reduction that had to be done, we also have undertaken to refocus our community college system so that they will better reflect today's society needs, industry's needs and can better take advantage of the training opportunities that need to occur at the community college level.

Madam Chairperson, we are putting in an additional 23 new SYs into the community college system—11 at Red River Community College in the introduction of new programs at the college.

Although the reduction has been significant, I am not going to deny that, indeed it has also given us the opportunity to make sure that our community college system is meeting the needs that are out there in society.

Madam Chairperson, I wish that we could have done more in terms of providing new programming. However, it takes time to write and develop new programs. I can assure the member that we are looking forward to the coming years in terms of providing expanded programs in some areas and new programs in others to allow Manitobans better opportunities in accessing our community college programs and gaining the skills that will lead to full-time jobs and permanent jobs in Manitoba.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, is the minister actually saying there were 98 teachers laid off and 11 additional ones hired so that there is a net loss of 87?

Mr. Derkach: Yes, Madam Chairperson. The net reduction in staff years was 86.35.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairman, when the minister gave his criteria for why courses would be closed down, he listed three. He said, first of all, there was low demand; secondly, that there were alternative programs available elsewhere; and thirdly, that there was not a demand in the marketplace.

First of all, can the minister tell the House why nine of the programs that have been cut, according to his figures, at Red River Community College have no private delivery alternative program available in our community?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, it is true that those three areas are important but, in addition, there are other considerations which were taken into account when program decisions were made.

In each community college, managers, presidents and their staff looked at the programs in the college and made decisions based on those three areas that I mentioned. Additionally, the cost, the graduation rate, the labour market demand which was mentioned before, the student demand was an important consideration, the program effectiveness in terms of the industry's perceptions of the program; and also, whether or not there were alternative programs available through the high school, private vocational schools, through the Canadian Jobs Strategy projects or whether there were federal direct purchases available to take training programs of that nature.

In the community college system, it was important to ensure that the quality of remaining programs would be high. Community college presidents have assured me that when they looked at reductions in the programs that they had to make, they paid particular attention to ensure that there was no reduction in terms of the aspects that supported programs that would remain. So the quality of programs which remained at the community college will, indeed, be high and not be diminished by some of the reductions that have been made.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairman, can the minister tell us exactly what is meant by low demand, moderate demand, or high demand? Does moderate demand, for example, represent a course in which there was full enrollment? The one course listed as high enrollment has about twice the

number of applicants to the number of position spots available.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, the demand relates to the marketplace and the labour market demand of these graduates. It is not the demand that is there by students, it is the demand that is there by industry and the labour market.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairman, just how does the college determine that the labour market has a low demand for a particular occupation?

Mr. Derkach: We have a labour market economist who, in consultation with the industry, does some analysis in terms of what the labour market demands are in various fields. It is this way that we are able to ascertain whether the market demand in a particular program is high, is low or, in fact, is moderate.

This is the means by which departments have used the analysis for a number of years in determining what the labour market demand is for various programs.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, but there would, in fact, be little or no labour market demand for ESL classes. Can the minister tell us exactly how many of the students who graduated in welding last year, in the academic year '90-91, did not find a job within three to six months of their graduation from Red River Community College, which is used as a national standard for successful completion and employment of a course?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, in the last survey that was done of the students who graduated, only 44 percent found full-time employment out of that particular program, so let me stress the importance of not only looking at that one factor. Indeed we have to combine—and this is what was done in determining the programs that would have to be curtailed. We had to look at cost, the graduation rate, the postgraduate employment rate, labour market demands, student demand, program effectiveness, alternative availability and federal direct purchases.

All of these factors came into play when one considered whether or not a program should continue or should be cut. Therefore, just taking a look at one narrow aspect of it might not paint the complete picture.

Mrs. Carstairs: Well, it may not paint the full picture, but it is used by the minister as the justification for why courses should be cut. Is the

minister suggesting that all of those that were in the low-medium range had a full 44 percent full-time employment rate? It is my understanding that the graduates of secretary certificate found themselves very gainfully employed in very short measure.

Mr. Derkach: That may be true, Madam Chairperson, but one has to consider the other factors as well. If that type of program is available in other areas, whether it is in our vocational high schools, whether it is in the private vocational school, if there are alternatives available for that programming and if it is deemed that program is not as important as others may be, then all of those factors came into consideration when one was making the decision of whether or not to continue with the program.

Mrs. Carstairs: Can the minister provide us with a comparison between student fees for clerical bookkeeping or secretary certificate at Red River Community College and the equivalent certificate available from Success or from Herzing?

* (1500)

Mr. Derkach: I do not have that information available at this time but, as I indicated before, that is only one of the factors that one considers when looking at programs. Indeed, some of the programs are not only available to the private vocational institutions such as Success, but, indeed, some of those programs are available through the high school vocational adult programs which are offered in the province as well.

One considered many factors and I have read them twice now, so the decision was not based just on one single factor. It was a combination of factors that would come into play when making a decision.

Mrs. Carstairs: Surely the minister has some idea whether it is less expensive for a student to be educated in a community college model or more expensive than it is for that same student to be educated in a private form of education. One would hope in this myriad of factors he considered, one of the factors that he would have considered and so would the college, would have been whether students will, indeed, be able to take advantage financially of alternative programs available in alternative, independent schools.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, I guess the question would have to be asked, who is it more expensive or less expensive for? If you were considering the student only, that is one aspect. If

you talk about the cost to the taxpayer, that is indeed another factor, but I must indicate that those students who attend private vocational schools are also eligible for student assistance. We cannot provide, as a department, programming for each and every skill area that is available in this province. For some areas, we have to allow the private vocational schools to offer the training. In some other areas, it might be the high school vocational programs that would offer the programming. Still in others, we would strike agreements with other provinces to ensure that there is an availability for training in that area.

So there is a combination of factors that are considered, a variety of ways considered in which students can achieve the kind of skill development that is required, but we as a province do not have the capacity to be able to offer each and every type of skill program that is required in this province, or that is wanted by students, for that matter.

Mrs. Carstairs: Well, from that answer I can only assume that the needs of the students were not considered when these cuts were made. Let us move on to the needs of the province as a whole. This province has a very poor track record when it comes to educating students at the community college level. We are 10 out of 10 in terms of the per capita number of students whom we send on to post-secondary education institutions, and nowhere is that more obvious than at our community college level.

How does this minister intend to increase the percentage of the number of students that we send on to post-secondary educations, particularly at the college level, with cuts of the magnitude that have been introduced at the community colleges this year?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, as I indicated in my first response, this is not just a one-year window, if you like. I indicated that the reason that we had made some of the adjustments that were made was to reflect the needs of society today, to be able to reorganize our community college system so that it becomes more adaptive to the needs that are there in society in terms of training, to allow our community colleges to refocus on the skills that are more in demand within our society and to give them an opportunity to reorganize so that we can indeed meet some of the market demands that are out there and provide better opportunities for the students who want to go to our community colleges.

We have for that reason introduced the new programs that are being introduced this year to allow students to enter into programs which will lead them into highly skilled jobs and highly skilled opportunities within the province. One of those areas that I mentioned was the aerospace industry. We have also embarked on some initiatives in other areas, and I would say Workforce 2000 is one example whereby we are encouraging the partners in our society, the business and the industry groups, to become involved in training our people in this province.

By providing the training incentives that we are providing, industry and business can now become involved in investing dollars in retraining the work force that they have at the present time. Also, we are providing some incentive for them to hire first-time employees and train them, and we are doing that by providing some wage incentives so that new people coming into the work force can be trained properly and develop work skills that will lead them to productive and long-term jobs.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, nobody is questioning that it is an intrinsic function of a community college to always reorganize and refocus the course loads which they offer in any given college at any given time. What we are extremely critical of, however, is that you would remove 86.35 teachers and at the same time eliminate, according to the minister's own list, some 17 programs and not replace them in the same academic year with alternative courses of study for the young people who wish to continue on with their education after Grade 12.

That has not been afforded by Red River Community College. If, in fact, you have replaced 98 teachers, according to the minister, with 11 teachers, there is no way that the same number of students and the same number of courses can be given at the college between '91 and '92.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, we are expanding our college programs by 17 expanded and new programs in our college system. Additionally 23-plus staff are going to be hired to accommodate those new programs.

The member made reference to the fact that we are 10 out of 10. I would have to correct her in advising her that the college system in Manitoba is about average in size; we are similar to those institutions of smaller provinces. We have, it is true,

fewer sequential students due to the current admission policies within our community college system and this is something that has to change. Additionally, Madam Chairperson, I would indicate that we are about the middle of the pack when it comes to the number of students entering our college system.

With regard to the last question that was posed by the member, I would have to say that we are moving toward college governance to ensure that our community colleges are given the flexibility that they require to address and to respond to the needs that are out there in society with regard to training. This cannot be done overnight. We needed some time to adjust, to refocus, to reshape. Now we will allow the colleges to have their autonomy, as they do in many other provinces, allow them the flexibility to grow and to address the needs out there in the system and to develop a highly skilled work force for Manitoba.

* (1510)

The initiative in the aerospace industry is a bright spot for us and indeed Red River Community College is already taking some initiatives in that regard, and I think there is much more that can happen in our community college system, just as we did in our universities by moving our first year of university out to the communities with the FYDE system; so, with our community college system, I think a great deal can be done not just within the centres where the community colleges are, but indeed in their neighbouring areas, in the smaller communities surrounding the community colleges where a great deal more training can be done, so that we do have an appropriate training culture in this province.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, would the minister like to tell the House how many students will be trained in his aerospace new technological programs in 1991-92, and will he admit that there will be zero?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, we are estimating that approximately 75 students will be trained in the new aerospace industry in the 1991-92 sessions of the college system.

Mrs. Carstairs: Well, that is interesting because his press release clearly indicated that they would be up and running in '92-93. Can the minister tell us exactly what courses will be offered in '91-92,

where they will be offered, and what the enrollment in those courses will be?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, when we made the announcement we indicated that there would be a considerable investment in a training centre in Portage la Prairie. Perhaps the member is confusing the initiative that was announced for Portage and what is going to happen at the community college level.

At Red River Community College we will be offering a program called the CNC Operator program, which will take 25 students in the fall. In January we are targeting at introducing a program for composite technology and one for avionics technician programming. Those we are targeting for January of 1992.

Mrs. Carstairs: When the minister says he is targeting them for January of 1992, have students presently in Grade 12 been informed that those students will be available in January of 1992?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, all schools were advised of the programs that were going to be eliminated and were also advised of the new programs that were going to be expanded or introduced into the college system.

Mrs. Carstairs: In terms of the English as a Second Language program which was up to this point offered at Red River Community College, I notice that the private delivery or alternative program has listed Winnipeg School Division No. 1.

Winnipeg School Division No. 1 has repeatedly indicated that it cannot take additional students, that it can only deal with the students that it presently has, that any students that are accepted from Red River Community College will be replacement, because they are on a government granting system of students presently being educated by Winnipeg School Division No. 1. So in fact it is not an alternative program, since no additional numbers of students will be taught.

Can the Minister of Education tell the House what he believes these young people are supposed to do if they are bumped by a Red River Community College student at Winnipeg School Division No. 1?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, a decision was made through the budgetary process that the generic ESL training would be done by Winnipeg School Division No. 1. The reason that was done was that the costs of delivering ESL through Winnipeg No. 1 were substantially less than the

costs were through Red River Community College. Additionally, the federal government has decided that they would no longer be forwarding money through the province for ESL, rather they would be dealing directly with Winnipeg School Division No. 1 for the funds that come from the federal government.

With regard to the Red River program, again through the budgetary process it was decided that Red River Community College would only involve itself with specific training, specialized training, training that was geared to the programs that students were enrolled in or the specific workplace and, secondly, the advanced ESL training.

In all of that change that occurred, monies from the federal government were transferred from programs that were delivered at Red River Community College and were transferred over to the ESL program at Winnipeg School Division No. 1, especially for those students who were taking the generic type of ESL training.

I might indicate, also, that as a result of the termination of the CILT agreements, our province lost something like \$1.1 million. If you take a look at a two-year window, two years ago we made up the shortfall as a result of the termination of the CILT agreement. We indicated, at that time, that we would make that up for one year because of the timing of the termination of the CILT agreement. We could not undertake to support the programs which were really the federal government's responsibility, but we would continue our support. So over a two-year period of time, there has been an increase of some \$200,000 in terms of providing ESL training to Manitobans.

As I have indicated before, I would love to have given more money in ESL training, because I think it is productive and I think it does allow those Manitobans who are trying to gain employment but, because of their inability to communicate in the English language, find it difficult. It is a good investment for us.

However, with the resources, limited as they are, that we have at our disposal, we have been forced to make these difficult decisions. We think that we can provide better training in an overall sense because the training is cheaper at Winnipeg No. 1, and we can get more training for the same dollars. At Red River we can specialize the training in terms of the programs and labour market, and also the

advanced training can be done at Red River Community College.

I think that is a more appropriate split. It does not duplicate many of our efforts, and it is a more efficient use of funds, both provincial and federal.

Mrs. Carstairs: Not only does it not duplicate, it eliminates. There will be 200 less people trained as a result of the cutting to ESL at Red River Community College. Winnipeg No. 1 has clearly indicated it cannot pick up 200 new students. In fact, it cannot pick up any new students, so there are 200 fewer people being trained.

The minister says he is going to have the same number of young people in community colleges next year that he has now. Now if he leaves 200 in that program, and he loses 50 or 60 in clerical bookkeeping, and he loses 20 or 30 in secretary certificate, and down through the list of courses; how does he anticipate he is going to have the same number of students at Red River Community College on a full-time basis next year as he has this year?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, that is exactly why I said this is the time for reshaping and refocusing our college system, because many of the programs that are being eliminated are those that were not operating at full capacity. Indeed, we are expanding programs in areas where there will be full capacity uptake, if you like, and that will make up the difference.

* (1520)

In terms of the ESL aspect, Madam Chairperson, I would have to disagree with the member because the reductions at Red River College are simply going to be taken up by Winnipeg No. 1. As a matter of fact, the federal dollars that are going to Winnipeg No. 1 have certainly been increased from what they were last year because of the transfer from Red River. We feel that the net number of students in ESL programming will probably be the same as they were in the last year.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, the minister is wrong. There has not been an agreement entered into between Winnipeg No. 1 and the federal government as far as I am aware at this point.

An Honourable Member: There is what?

Mr. Chomiak: There has not been an agreement entered into, a contract signed between Winnipeg No. 1 and the federal government.

There is not a clear indication of how much money is being offered to Winnipeg School Division No. 1. There is a waiting list at Winnipeg School Division No. 1. They are already filled up. They are cutting half the courses at Red River Community College, and it sticks out like a sore thumb on this sheet that there is a high demand for a program and the minister indicates: No, no students will be affected; there will not be a cut. That is wrong by any stretch of the imagination.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, the member said I am wrong because he has not done his homework. If he did his homework and perhaps investigated the reality of the situation, he would have better facts at his disposal and then would not make such outlandishly incorrect statements.

I would encourage the member to perhaps participate in the Estimates debate of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, because the ESL training for Winnipeg No. 1 is in that department. I do not intend to get into it in these Estimates because it is not under my authority or my responsibility. So he has to address those kinds of comments to the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson) rather than here.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, I can indicate that I have had contact with our member in that particular branch of the Estimates who indicates the minister there is just as evasive, confused and defensive as this minister is with respect to ESL.

I am wondering if the minister can indicate—can the minister table a list of the 17 programs that are expanding or increasing that he made reference to? Can he table a list of those programs, please?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, for the purpose of the record, I would like to read the new programs that are going to be entered into or the programs that are going to be expanded.

At Red River Community College we have Electrical Electronics, Industrial Electronics, Business Accountancy, Business Administration. We have regional centres going to be developed in Steinbach and increased at Portage. We have the new program, which is called the CNC Operator; a new program, the Composite Technology program; Avionics Technician program; Expert Systems and Total Quality Management programs.

At Assiniboine Community College: Business Administration, another regional centre in the

Parkland South area, and Finance and Sales programs.

At Keewatin Community College: Business Administration, Forestry Technician, Pulp and Paper Technician, Hospitality Management, Small Business Development and Management, and Computer Application Analyst.

Might I add, Madam Chairperson, that of the programs at Keewatin Community College, four or five out of the six will be offered at the Thompson campus.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, with respect to the budgetary process as it applied to the community college sector, I am wondering what the process was. Did the minister offer block funding to the community colleges and say to the presidents and the relevant authorities, you will cut so much from your budget and do so accordingly? What was the process by which these reductions were made, in process?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, first of all, each of the community colleges were asked to identify priorities based on the factors that I have mentioned, that is, the cost of programs, graduation rates, post-graduate employment rates, labour market demands, student demands, program effectiveness, federal direct purchases, alternative availability.

After that, community college presidents sat down with their staff complement or managers and went through a process which looked at the types of programs which were offered, which programs were the most essential, which programs perhaps needed to be maintained within the community college system. Then eliminated those that perhaps were undersubscribed or perhaps were of lesser priority, but ensured that programs that were of importance, and those that had a high demand, and those that fit the criteria that I have read out would be supported adequately, so that the students who were taking those programs would not suffer because of lack of supplies or lack of appropriate support for the delivery of those programs.

Mr. Chomlak: Can the minister indicate whether or not there was a global budget or figure attached to each community college that it had to reduce its costs by?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, it would be maybe oversimplistic to just simply say yes or no to that question, but I think that the mandate which was

given to the colleges was to ensure that the community college was operating effectively and efficiently and that there would be no waste in terms of programs which perhaps were not essential within the whole complement of programs which were being delivered at the colleges.

If someone were to say, well, did you give them a budget of X number of dollars and they had to live with that and no more, I would have to say we looked at the overall area of education, we looked at what we could do in terms of meeting the economic realities and decided to look carefully at all programs, not just at the community college level, but throughout the department to ensure that we could become efficient and effective and deliver programs that were important to Manitobans.

Mr. Chomlak: Can the minister indicate if this will be the same process that will be adopted next year with respect to the community colleges?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, it is far too early to tell. We have not yet passed this set of Estimates, and we have not even begun to look at the next year's Estimates process. I have not received any instructions from my colleagues in Treasury Board in terms of what the fiscal situation of this province will be like for the next fiscal year. I think trying to answer that at this point in time would be impossible.

Mr. Chomlak: In fact, it probably indicates the process that was adopted this year. The fact is that poor planning by this ministry in this particular area meant that individuals that were anticipating entering courses or perhaps taking part in courses can no longer do so.

The fact remains that we are supposed to be going towards a kind of training structure that looks at the year 2000 and beyond. We are not doing a very good job of planning ahead. What we have done in ESL is eliminated 200 students from taking ESL when there is a waiting list of 200 students, and next year what will the minister come in here and say? The Treasury Board has given him a mandate to cut more and, consequently, ESL has been cut from Red River, or some other programs have been cut from Red River, because the minister has been given dictates or some kind of mandate from Treasury Board to do so, despite campaign pledges only six months ago that they would fund at the rate of inflation or better post-secondary education.

* (1530)

So I think it would make good sense to give some idea to students and the people of Manitoba what courses will be available next year and where the government will be going in terms of next year. The minister laughs, but the minister probably does not understand the concept of forward planning as it relates to the field of education.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, I only laughed because of the reality of what this province went through for eight years under that member's party's administration. All I have to do is mention one example, and that is the fiasco of Limestone Training where something like \$41 million had been spent and a handful of journeypersons finally completed their Level 4.

Madam Chairperson, this was the program that was going to be the saviour of the northern people of this province to give them opportunities to work at the Limestone project, and I would dare say that none of them ever were able to get to that point where they were able to gain employment on the Limestone project. So when the member talks about the fact that we do not have any planning, all he has to do is take a look in the mirror and take a look at his colleagues that sit around him and the member who sits in front of him who was then minister, and the fiasco that they created in terms of training in this province. They entered into an area where they just threw money at programs and never looked at whether or not there were any positive outcomes in these programs.

I will mention the numbers. There were some 1,700 plus individuals who entered the apprenticeship programs at a cost of \$41 million, and there were 34 journeymen out of that entire process. Can you imagine that kind of waste in this province? Can you imagine that kind of horrendous taxpayer waste that was undertaken by the NDP administration? Madam Chairperson, that is what I was laughing at, that kind of administration, that kind of planning, that kind of approach to training and education in this province.

I have to indicate that we went through a process that was very difficult. Indeed, if we had the \$500 million that we have to spend on the interest cost because of the foolhardiness of the former administration—

An Honourable Member: \$1.8 million.

Mr. Derkach: Yes, \$1.8 million a day. Can you imagine what we could do to the training culture of

this province? Can you imagine the training programs we could have in this province? Can you imagine the ESL programs we could have in this province if the NDP government at that time had not wasted and squandered the money of taxpayers in this province?

Madam Chairperson, I can tell you that the process we went through was difficult. We had to make some very difficult choices, and I am very thankful that the managers we have within our departments were able to set some goals, were able to base their decisions on some very focused logic in terms of what is necessary and what is not necessary in terms of training programs in this province.

I am indeed thankful that we have come up with a program in this province, in terms of training at the community college level, which will lead Manitobans to permanent jobs and lead them to employment in areas where there are demands.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Well, Madam Chairperson, I was not intending to discuss the Limestone Training agreement. I was not terribly front and center in the administration of it, but I had some knowledge of it and I do recall that we were trailblazing at the time.

I do recall committee meetings with a lot of high-priced technical help from various departments, including this department. So if you want to criticize, the minister wants to criticize, part of the criticism would also fall on the shoulders of various technical people and very high-priced civil servants who were involved in setting up the program and in administering it. The government of the day made a decision, that is to help northern people, people living in the north, particularly Native people, have an opportunity to get into the mainstream of work.

Indeed, Madam Chairperson, while I do not have the figures with me, but a lot of the costs I would understand would be involved in simply living costs, not just training costs but other costs associated with that. I do not intend to debate it. I do not have the information with me, but I dare say it was an imaginative program. It was a program that would provide an opportunity for Native people who would not have an opportunity otherwise. As I understand, that opportunity does not exist today, really.

I would like to go on and, you know, I am very amused when the other side, the government side, forever talks about the debt incurred by the previous government and all the interest on this debt. I want to remind the ministers on that side that we have had this government in office for three years. We left you with a \$58 million surplus, and for three years you have been having deficits. Today we have a higher per capita debt than ever before in history.

You cannot have it both ways. You cannot have it where ministers will get up and say, well, we were spending more than you on this, that and the other; and, in the next breath, say, we have all this debt and all this interest to be paid; therefore, we cannot do these things and we have got to cut back now because of these interest payments.

Madam Chairperson, the deficits have occurred since you have been in office, for three years in a row. When we left office, we left you virtually with a surplus position. We have had deficits since then. You have built up the debt. We are paying more interest today because of the deficit you have built up in this period of time. -(interjection)- Well, that is true. The fact is the debt per capita today is higher than it has ever been in the history of Manitoba. It has not gone down. After three years, it is not less; it is up. Take a look at the last budget document.

An Honourable Member: Take a look at the interest costs.

Mr. Leonard Evans: The interest costs have accumulated. They have accumulated under this government. They have increased under this government, but, Madam Chairperson, the fact is—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Chairman: Order, please. I am having difficulty hearing the member's question.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Well, in Estimates, we just do not only ask questions, but we make statements. This is not the Question Period. This is an opportunity for members of the opposition to make critical comments.

I want to get on to the topic of colleges that we are discussing at the present time and particularly discuss Assiniboine Community College where there have been a lot of disaster stories occurring because of decisions made by this government.

I would like to read a letter into the record written to me, dated May 9, from a Mr. Jeffrey Bowerman, who lives in the Brandon area, who is totally

disillusioned with this government and this department, because he was undertaking retraining, having recently been laid off by Burns—I am sorry, having recently been laid off.

Point of Order

Mr. Derkach: A point of order, Madam Chairperson, we are discussing Red River Community College at this time, and I am wondering if—I know that the member has some questions on Assiniboine, and I respect that, but I am wondering if we could finish Red River Community College. Then I will call in the staff for Assiniboine Community College if that is appropriate. If not, we will be bouncing back and forth, and it is very difficult for staff to be coming in and out.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Thank you. I have consulted with our Education critic, and we are prepared to let the Red River line go. ACC is the next line, I understand. So we can get on to that.

* * *

Madam Chairman: Item 5.(c) Red River Community College: (1) Salaries, \$29,107,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures, \$6,801,800—pass; (3) Less Recoverable from Other Appropriations, \$293,000—pass.

Item 5.(d) Assiniboine Community College.

* (1540)

Mr. Leonard Evans: Madam Chairperson—

Madam Chairman: Order, please. Would the honourable member just allow the minister's staff to take the Chamber, please, so they can respond to questions.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Madam Chairperson, I wanted to take this opportunity in discussing ACC to pass on some thoughts that had been expressed in the community. One in particular was by way of a letter written to me from a Mr. Jeffrey Bowerman, dated May 9, and I think I will simply read it so that the minister can understand a problem he has created by the decision to cut back on one particular program. If he likes I can certainly table it if he wishes, but I will simply read it verbatim.

Dear Mr. Evans: This letter concerns the recent cuts the government have made. At Assiniboine Community College the budget for Motor Vehicle Mechanics was taken away as well as many others. I feel that these cuts were totally unfair to the people who have been on the college's waiting list. I

personally have been waiting for the course since July of 1990. The government and the colleges led me to believe that I would finally be able to do something about my future, but I do not blame the colleges.

In September of 1990 I was offered a job in Calgary, Alberta. I turned down this offer for \$8.50 an hour, thinking I will go to college and then get a job in this field.

As for the excuse of not enough demand for the field, just does not apply here. I know of one autobody shop that hires at least one student from the course. So what other excuses are there? The government does not have to worry about money because they get paid whether they do a good job or not.

I do not see why the government cannot cut the budget after next year's course. People have to put their lives on hold waiting for the college. Instead of the government helping out the future of Canada, they are making it harder and harder for us to have a future. As I see it, I have tried to make a future for me and my family, but what has the government done for me? Not much.

As I write this letter, I know there are many people who want to write but do not have the nerve. This letter is for all the people and for myself. Get your acts together or there will be no Canada. Sincerely yours, Jeffrey Bowerman

Here is a letter from a regular student, I presume, in the Motor Vehicle Mechanics area who feels totally frustrated with the decisions it made of this government. The fact is, Madam Chairperson, we are being told time and time again that what Canada needs is a well-trained work force. We give a lot of lip service to this. We give a lot of lip service to the need to create jobs and yet, when it comes down to it, we make decisions such as these that deny opportunities to people.

I would submit, Madam Chairperson, that instead of providing training and retraining so people can obtain useful employment, we are into a situation with these cuts, not only in this department, but generally where we are providing fewer opportunities for the people in Manitoba, whereby we are driving many onto welfare.

Indeed, the welfare budget of this government has been increased to the point that millions of dollars more are being allocated for welfare expenditures in this province. I say, as the Minister of Energy (Mr.

Neufeld) said the other day in the debate I think was on the budget, let us have work not welfare. If you are not prepared to offer training and retraining to Manitobans, then this is what is going to happen. People are not going, or they are going, to leave the province. In fact, this is what they are doing, they are doing both. We have more people going on welfare than we have leaving the province, and particularly in rural Manitoba we have absolute rural depopulation in many parts of this province outside of Winnipeg and perhaps outside of Brandon and one or two other regional centres.

I read that letter and I let this letter speak for itself on behalf of this young gentleman, whoever he is. I do not know the gentleman. I have never run into him before. I have only received this letter from him and I will be replying to it, but I read it because here is a message from a regular student talking and explaining his frustration to this government.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, I would have expected better from a senior member in this House, especially one who was in a government that spent without any conscience in areas where there were no results obtained.

Point of Order

Mr. Chomlak: I believe the minister is imputing motive in the phrasing of his question. I would ask him to withdraw that.

Madam Chairperson: The honourable member does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over facts.

* * *

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, the reality, the truth of the matter is that during the years of the NDP administration we did have such programs as the Limestone Training program. When I entered into the Department of Education and Training that was one program that I looked at very carefully because of the horrendous amount of money that we were spending on the program and the lack of results out of that program.

Madam Chairperson, the facts are there—\$41 million, and the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) says that was a good, innovative program. What does he think this province is? We can afford to spend \$41 million on training where we train 34 people. Can you calculate that out in terms of cost per graduate? Are these people employed?

The member talks about, let us have work. He agrees with the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld), whom I agree with as well. Let us have work and not welfare, but what did that program do for work in this province? We have 34 journeypersons out of a total of 1,700 people who entered the program. That is not in any way an effective use of taxpayer dollars within this province and within this country.

I think he had better rethink his comments when he puts them on the record so that he can retain his credibility in terms of the way he looks at things in this province. There are indeed going to be students who are going to be left without programs when programs are curtailed. We try to make adjustments in ways that will not affect individuals, but there will be individuals affected, whether they are staff or whether they are students.

In most cases we ensure that students can obtain the training in other areas, but when we talk about the Motor Vehicle pre-employment program, the graduation rate of that program was about 50 percent. The employment rate of that program was about 56 percent. That program is still being offered through the Dauphin campus, so access to that program can be obtained through that area. Additionally, the apprenticeship program, which has a much better success rate, is also in place.

So these are not easy decisions, but if you follow the same thinking that the NDP had where they did not really care about the number of graduates or the number of people who were employed after graduation, I guess you would follow the Limestone model, but we cannot afford to do that any longer as a province. We are attempting to do as much as we can with the scarce dollars that we have at our disposal. That is simply the reality, and indeed we will try to accommodate students in the best way we can to ensure that they can complete the programs that they have started.

Mr. Leonard Evans: I do not accept the minister's criticisms about the Limestone Training exercise. I have not got the facts with me and I am not prepared to debate it, but he keeps on referring to expenditures at Limestone Training establishment.

I do not know if the minister has heard of the story of the three envelopes. I am sure he has. The story of the three envelopes is about the new minister wanting to get advice from the old minister. The outgoing minister says to the incoming minister, all

the advice I can give you is in three envelopes, one, two, three, and here are those three envelopes. You must not use these envelopes unless you are in real deep trouble in the House or wherever, with the media. All of the advice that you need to get is in those three envelopes. So there are three envelopes.

* (1550)

So the new minister went on for some time doing pretty well, but finally one day he did get into a lot of difficulty. He did not want to but he said, I just have to get the first piece of advice. So he opened up envelope No. 1, and envelope No. 1 simply said, blame the previous government. We are on envelope No. 1.

He went on for a while and a few weeks later, darn it, he got into trouble again, and he had to use the second envelope. He did not want to, but he did. He opened it up and the advice was, blame the federal government. So this was all right for a while. He went on his merry way for a while, but finally he got into trouble again, and he finally had to use the third envelope. He opened it up and the advice was, start preparing three envelopes.

I think I heard Warner Jorgenson tell that joke originally. So I say the minister is on envelope No. 1.

The concerns in the community, as I said, have been expressed in the Brandon Sun. There have been various stories including one referring to a Mr. Larry Chambers, who I do not believe I know, who believed that education was the key to overcoming his employment problems. Apparently, he was a former Burns Meats employee who lost his job when that plant closed last fall, Madam Chairperson, and he thought the best way to get back into the work force is to get retraining, to get some education. So he signed up for the Recreational Vehicle Technician course at ACC, hoping that he could turn what was a long-time interest into a full-time job.

That faith that he had in the system that we have in Manitoba, the training program we have, was really shattered when the budget came down and it was announced on April 16 that, among other cutbacks in the government system, there would be 20 community college employees dismissed or fired or terminated. The positions would be terminated.

The point is, when people go and instructors go, the programs go with them. So now this Mr. Chambers either has to put his dream of

re-education aside or go into correspondence courses that apparently were recommended by the ACC staff when the notice of the program's termination was given. The person is quoted as saying in the Brandon Sun, and this is Thursday, May 9: When I got my notice, I said to myself, what do I do now? He is a married father of two girls.

He is only one, Madam Chairperson, of close to 200 students who apparently are being denied the opportunity to upgrade themselves as a result of these cuts. This is the estimate that is included in the story. There are likely 200 stories which go with those students, where their ambitions, dreams and even a prospect of a steady pay cheque have been eliminated because of the cutbacks.

I know it is not just Motor Vehicle Body Repair and Recreational Vehicle instruction, but it has also been the program arts, it has been Applied Agriculture, it has been Architectural Drafting and Electrical pre-employment. I think what we are getting is a great deal of cynicism on the part of the students or the would-be students because, on the one hand, they get the rhetoric from politicians, federal and provincial, saying that everyone must be flexible, we have to accept career changes, we have got to accept retraining and, yet, in the next breath we deny people the opportunity to have retraining because of education cutbacks.

We are also being told now from Ottawa by the Minister of Trade that Canada has to be competitive and it is so important that we have well-trained workers who can ensure that Canada remains competitive in the field of international trade. Again one would ask, well, is this really happening with the squeezing that is going on in the education system? It is not only the community colleges, but it is the public school system, Madam Chairperson, and the universities.

Incidentally, this gentlemen, Mr. Chambers, has worked most of his life. He worked for nearly a decade at Burns Meats. He paid his taxes. He believed he had contributed to the greater good of the country. He helped pay for health care. He helped pay for education, other people's pension plans, for roads and sewers and all those other things that one pays for through the tax system. Now that he is unemployed and it is his turn to get retraining, I think he must feel very frustrated that he has been let down by his country, that he has been let down by his province.

At any rate, I just wonder what the government's priorities are. I know one can always say, well, these are the programs that have the lowest level of attendance or they have the lowest level of job opportunity but, at the same time, there are opportunities and there are people who want to take these opportunities.

We have to remember too that there is more unemployment today in Manitoba than we have had for a long time. I think we are up to a level of unemployment now that equals, in fact is as high as we have ever had. The worst we have had was in '82-83 during the last economic recession, and we are right back up there, right back up to I think it is about 53,000 or 54,000 people who are out of work.

So I say, given that fact, the government has its priorities wrong. There should not be cutbacks in training. I am making that as a generalized statement without singling out any one specific program. This is an area we should not be cutting back.

We hear, even again in the federal government's throne speech, how important it is for training and retraining, how important it is to provide job opportunities for Canadians. Yet, we have this going on in front of us, this squeezing, this elimination of worthy programs.

I simply say, Madam Chairperson, that no matter what rationalization we can provide in this Chamber, no matter what rationalization the government or the minister can come up with, there is a great deal of cynicism out there, a great deal of frustration out there, and there certainly is a good share of it in the community of Brandon and the Westman area.

Mr. Derkach: Once again, the member for Brandon East would simply indicate that we continue to throw more money at all kinds of problems, and that is all we have heard from the opposition is more money. Instead of looking at what results we are achieving from the many programs that we have in place, they simply cry for more money.

Just to show you the example that he used with regard to the individual Mr. Chambers who wanted to get into the recreational mechanics program, the community college has not been able to attract enough applicants for that program in the last three years. There has been no program for the last three years simply because we cannot attract enough students for a program at Assiniboine Community College, yet we have to have staff in place to be able

to deliver that program if in fact there were, so for that reason that program was cancelled. Obviously, someone did not counsel this individual very well in terms of what programs or ones that will lead to meaningful jobs in the Brandon area or anywhere in this province.

How can we continue to have a program in place that has not had sufficient numbers of students to warrant a class in the last three years? I ask the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) to stop and consider the fact that this is not just money we can continue to draw out of pockets of taxpayers, that indeed we have to be conscious of what we are doing.

Madam Chairperson, although there were some programs that were eliminated and some that will not be carried on in the future, I have to indicate that there were programs that were expanded at the Brandon campus, one being the Business Administration program and the other being the Finance and Sales program, and indeed we are committed to a regional centre in the Parklands southwest area. We are attempting to address the needs in that area. One of the bright spots in that community college is the effectiveness with which that college has been able to address the agricultural programs for the western side of this province. Another success story, I might say, would be the Bridging for Women program; another one is the nursing program that was delivered through the Killarney area.

* (1600)

There are many good programs that have been delivered by ACC and will continue to be delivered, but we have to monitor. We have to examine on an annual basis the kind of programs that are meeting the needs of society and students and those that are not working. We cannot continue to carry those programs that are not working, that do not have sufficient enrollments, that there is no employment for those graduates. You cannot continue to carry them, or else we are not going to be doing the task that has been assigned to us.

It is a tough year; I am not going to deny that. It is a difficult year in terms of some of the decisions that have to be made. I would have liked to have been able to expand our programming even beyond what it is, but reality dictates that we have to live within our means. We have to do more with less.

That is exactly what we in the Department of Education and Training are trying to do.

We have expanded programming at the community college level. We have just announced the Workforce 2000 initiative, which I think is a positive initiative, both for the city of Winnipeg, for a community like Portage, for many of our smaller businesses throughout rural Manitoba. Indeed, many of our businesses in Brandon will be able to take advantage of those types of programs.

When you look at the introduction of the first year Distance Education university program, that is again another opportunity for Manitobans to take advantage of training within this province. When I look at such programs as the Rural Development Institute in Brandon, which again provides opportunity for small towns, for those towns that the member says are losing their populations. Yes, that is true, but indeed we have to do everything we can to ensure that we can retain as much of that population as we can.

In terms of ACC's future directions, I would have to indicate that they will continue to develop flexible and innovative models or modes of program delivery, including a major emphasis on modularization. The whole concept of Distance Education becomes very important for the future of Assiniboine Community College. Indeed, I think that is also an area where a community college like Assiniboine can shine.

The future directions also include the implementation of a sustainable program for integrated student services and supports with particular emphasis on high-risk learners. It includes: to develop a capacity to respond to labour market adjustment initiatives, including retraining, upgrading, and worker adjustment. It includes: to introduce the necessary organization flexibility to accommodate a more community and workplace-based delivery system and to offer flexible contract training services on a competitive cost-recovery basis through market-driven training.

I think the future for Assiniboine Community College is bright. I think it has been doing a remarkable job in servicing the rural needs of people in Manitoba and will continue to do that. Staff within that college are constantly looking at meeting the needs of people, not only in Brandon, but indeed through rural Manitoba in that region of the province.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Madam Chairperson, I can understand an argument of rationalizing programs saying that one program has exceedingly low demand or no demand, so therefore there is no rationale for carrying it on. Yet another program has a great demand and it should be expanded but, as I understand it, you have reduced the size of Assiniboine Community College.

Now, if I am wrong, please tell me. I understand there is a net loss of 20 positions. If I am wrong, I stand to be corrected. This is what I understand. There is a cut. There is a net reduction in the programs offered by ACC. As I say, if I am wrong, maybe the minister can correct me, but I understand we have a smaller ACC now. We have fewer staff and fewer programs and, possibly, fewer students. We do not know.

Mr. Derkach: The net impact on Assiniboine Community College would be a decrease of 113 students enrolled at the college. Let me indicate that I have said from the beginning of the questioning on this section, that we have attempted to spend some time at refocusing and reshaping the community college system in this province. When we have achieved community college governance, that will allow all of our community colleges—Assiniboine, Red River, and Keewatin—to become more flexible in addressing the needs of their communities and, indeed, the areas that they have jurisdiction over.

I think the future for our community colleges in delivering training programs for the province is bright. We need to go through this process of reforming, refocussing, reshaping, of allowing community colleges to be responsive to the training needs that are out there. By giving them governance, they will be able to respond much more quickly and much more effectively and then will take on the true community college spirit that they were intended to have when they were created.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Madam Chairperson, the minister answered part of my question. He indicated that these cutbacks meant a reduction in the student enrollment of about 113. How many jobs have been cut and what has been the cut in the total budget of the college?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, the reductions at Assiniboine Community College have been 7.28 SYs and in dollar terms, about \$478,000. Once again, may I stress the fact that this is a time when

there have been reductions throughout government. It is a time when we have indicated that we need to refocus some of the efforts of our college system. Indeed, I think that given all those circumstances, this is certainly not a major adjustment at Assiniboine Community College.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Madam Chairperson, the minister made reference to outreach programs and he gave as example, Workforce 2000. I was wondering, specifically for Assiniboine College, what plans, if any, are there for expansion of ACC with regard to distance education? By that I understand activities of ACC outside of the Brandon community.

Mr. Derkach: Currently, Brandon Assiniboine Community College offers the Business Administration program by Distance Education. They have approximately 130 enrolled in the program at the first-year level through Distance Education. Also in this coming year Assiniboine Community College will be initiating a program in agriculture. It is an agricultural program through Distance Education, so we are slowly embarking on delivery of programs via Distance Education.

As I said, that is one area that we know we need to expand but, for this year, we will be just doing the one program. The programs still have to be written and developed for delivery through Distance Education for this whole area of community college programming.

* (1610)

Mr. Leonard Evans: Madam Chairperson, for clarification, what specifically does the minister mean by Distance Education? I think he said agricultural program. Is he talking now about a program delivered through television, satellites, or is he talking about a program whereby staff actually go to a community and they rent space for a classroom and so on? I know Dauphin is virtually a satellite operation of ACC. Is this what he is talking about now by distance education in agriculture, setting up another satellite-type of program?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, when I talk about Distance Education, I am talking about programs delivered via teleconferencing and satellite network. As I indicated, we are just getting into that area. Assiniboine Community College will be delivering two programs: Business Administration, they will continue with, and also the

introduction of the agricultural program via Distance Ed.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Madam Chairperson, I would like to ask the minister a bit more about governance as it applies to ACC. We have expressed our opposition to this move in the past. I am wondering whether it really is in the best interests of college education in this province. Nevertheless, this minister and this government seem to be determined to go on this course of setting up independent-type community colleges—the whole question of governance.

Can the minister tell me what is the timetable for ACC? By that I mean, what does he expect—I would imagine he has to change the legislation—to do by way of a new board or an independent board or whatever he may call it? When would that board be put in place, and does the legislation have to be changed?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, this is the first mention I have heard that the New Democrats are against the establishment of the community college governance system. Up until this point in time my understanding was that the New Democratic Party supported the community college governance system, which would give local control to the community colleges.

I am surprised at the member for Brandon East, because if he speaks to many of the business people and many of the people from the university community and the college community in Brandon, they have been a driving force in ensuring that we move to community college governance. So he catches me by surprise, Madam Chairperson. Nevertheless, I guess I was not campaigning with the member for Brandon East in the last election, and I was not quite aware of his personal policy with regard to giving Brandon Assiniboine Community College some local control over its affairs.

Madam Chairperson, I would have to indicate that a community college governance will be in effect by 1993 and the permanent boards will be in effect about six months prior to the devolvement of authority to the boards of governors.

I would say that the act that we spoke about earlier today I have indicated we intend to table in this session of the Legislature.

Mr. Leonard Evans: I just want to go on record, Madam Chairperson, to say that there are many ways that you can get the input from a local

community, whether it be in Brandon, Dauphin, Winnipeg or anywhere, through various advisory committees which I believe have been established in the past. You can have various kinds of advisory committees, but when you get into the matter of setting up boards, as I understand it you are moving in a step towards making the colleges independent, you are making them, if not totally private, moving towards quasi privatization, as has occurred in Saskatchewan.

Well, if I am wrong, that is fine; I hope I am wrong. My understanding is that this is a move towards privatization. There has been concern expressed by certain staff, I do not mean necessarily at ACC, but in the community college system generally, about this. The point is, Madam Chairperson, we want to ensure a good, strong, publicly funded community college system in the province of Manitoba. Unfortunately, my recollection is that we have not had the support that we should be getting from the federal government.

Some time back the Honourable Flora MacDonald at a federal-provincial meeting of ministers involved with training happened to take the position where there was to be a 39 percent cutback over a period of three years. I do not know how that has been carried out, but there would be a 39 percent cutback in training monies provided to the Province of Manitoba involving, as I recall at that time, some negative impacts on the community college system.

I just want to mention one other thing, too. The minister talks about the establishment of the Rural Development Institute. That was a commitment made by a former NDP Minister of Agriculture, the honourable Leonard Harapiak at the time.

An Honourable Member: What did he do about it?

Mr. Leonard Evans: Well, we made the commitment.

An Honourable Member: Zilch.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Well, Madam Chairperson, we just made the announcement a matter of months before and there was to be money provided in the next budget, just as we amply funded the program for psychiatric, for the Bachelor of Nurses program, very amply funded under the previous government; very much so. -(interjection)-

Madam Chairperson, methinks the minister protests too much. On this matter, we are prepared to let the matter go because I understand from our

critic we have dealt with various subjects under community colleges for some time now for various topics. I have expressed some of the concerns that I have had. I have some additional ones, but at this point I think we will let it pass.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, how could I ever allow the critic or the member for Brandon East to make those comments and not rebut them?

Madam Chairperson, to begin with, I can indicate that we are not privatizing the community college system. That is the furthest thing from our mind. All we are doing, and I will explain this so that the member can clearly understand what is going on with our community colleges. If you take a look at the models of community college governance right through Canada, you will find that Manitoba is probably the only province, or maybe one of two, that has not moved in the direction of community college governance.

The setting up of advisory boards may be a good thing in terms of smaller communities that have regional centres, but those boards do not have any specific powers that they can invoke in terms of the direction of the community college. All we are doing is giving more control over the community colleges to the local areas, so that community colleges can become "community" colleges as such, rather than colleges that have their mandate from the provincial government and have all their administration directed through that area.

There is no intent to privatize the colleges in any way, shape, or form. We have made a special effort to ensure that Assiniboine Community College has a specific mandate, and I think they are developing that very nicely in terms of such programs as Business Administration as well as agricultural programs which are very prominent in that area. Additionally, I might say that their hospitality program is one of the finest that I have attended, because I have had the opportunity to partake of some of the benefits of that program.

Let me say that I think that community college governance is the way to go to ensure that our community colleges can be more responsive much more quickly. As the member knows, presently if a community college wants to offer a program, they have to go through the elaborate process of sending the requests in through the chain and up to the minister. If they have community college governance, they can do that based on the

president, who is the manager of the community college, and the board of governors who are there. So there is no privatization concept here whatsoever.

* (1620)

Let me say that with regard to the overall intent of training in this province, it is not our intention to diminish the amount of training and diminish the type of skilled work force that we have. Indeed, we are trying to refocus our efforts into areas where individuals can become skilled, in areas where they can gain long-term employment, stable employment, permanent employment for a long time. This is the thrust of all of our programming, be it at the community college level or in some of the training that we are trying to encourage through partnerships with the private sector. With that, Madam Chairperson, I will conclude my remarks on that section.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, will the minister tell us what new programs will be available at Assiniboine Community College for the 1991-92 academic year?

Mr. Derkach: There will be one new program at Assiniboine Community College in finance and sales, and there will be an expansion of the Business Administration program at Assiniboine College.

Mrs. Carstairs: We have cut 10 programs and we have added two for a net loss to the community of some eight programs. Can the minister tell me why they cut the broadcasting program? The reason I ask is that in information that was sent to the minister and copied to me, it would appear that they had more than 100 applicants willing to enter the course. They have a 90 percent employment rate following completion of the course. These are young people who have no alternative training program within the college communities because it is the only college community that offers the program. There is grave concern as to the quality of education provided to the second year of this program in that the first year is going to be cut.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, first of all, the Broadcast Arts program was also considered under the same criteria that all other programs were. It was found that in terms of capitalized costs and cost of program, the program was extremely expensive for a small community college like Assiniboine Community College.

In other words, the numbers of students who were taking the largest budget were those in the Broadcast Arts and, indeed, it was taking away from many of the other programs that the college could be delivering. So for that reason it was determined that the program would be curtailed, but that type of programming is being offered through Red River Community College. It is not the identical program, but a similar program to that is being delivered through Red River Community College. It is the Creative Communications program where students can enroll or gain training in that field.

In terms of the capital costs or the capital budget, Madam Chairperson, about 20 percent of the capital budget was going into that program, which had about 5 percent of the total students at the college. So I guess the major factor in the consideration was the cost factor in this particular program.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, the minister knows the Creative Communications course at Red River Community College is distinctly different from the broadcast course offered at ACC, so different in fact that when they list private delivery and alternative programs, they do not list the Red River Community College program as an alternative program for Assiniboine Community College.

With respect to the capital costs of this program, is it not true that most of the capital cost, in fact, had been achieved in terms of offering this program and that the capital budget for this particular program had decreased dramatically in the last year now that the expensive equipment had been purchased and was there. What is to happen to all of this expensive equipment now that they are no longer going to offer this program at this community college or any other community college?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, the annual average capital costs have been about \$100,000 for the last five years in that program, and we will still require those same capital costs for the next year so that students can complete the second year. Following that, the facility will be turned over probably to a Distance Education-type delivery mechanism for Assiniboine Community College.

Mrs. Carstairs: One presumes that if it can be turned over to Distance Education at Assiniboine Community College, there is no reason why it still could not be used by the broadcast program. The reality is that this is a program not available elsewhere which has been training graduates to

primarily work in the rural communications media. There has not been a lack of demand for students. If one took the attitude that one was going to drop expensive programs, one would obviously suggest we should stop training doctors, because they are the most expensive professionals that we train anywhere in the nation.

Can the minister, therefore, indicate that there was a drop in the number of youngsters interested in taking the program, a drop in the number of employment opportunities available for these young people? There has to be some justification for removing what was, in fact, a high-tech program from the Assiniboine Community College, one of the few high-tech programs, quite frankly, that they had.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, I will take the member's suggestion about stopping to train doctors under advisement and share her suggestion with the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard).

I might indicate that not only were the capital costs very high in this program, but the fact was that salaries for graduates of the program were very low, in the range of something like \$900 on a monthly basis. So, Madam Chairperson, once again we are trying to make sure that we train individuals in areas where there are not only demands, but also where jobs can be permanent and of a respectable level of income. Also, we have to keep in mind the costs of delivering the program in relation to other programs that we have need to deliver.

We have chosen to refocus our attention into areas where we can train students for jobs that pay better, where we can train students in areas where there are also high demands. One is not saying that there is not any demand for students out of this program, because the television stations, the radio stations and some of the other smaller stations are only too happy to hire these students. Once again, the salaries of these graduates are extremely low.

Mrs. Carstairs: Surely that is the decision that should be made by students, not the decision that should be made unilaterally by the Department of Education. If students are willing to go into an occupation, training program, that they know is low in salary—and it is not the only one. Most people choosing to go into child care these days know their salaries are going to be very low because, unfortunately, we have not come to evaluate child care deliverers appropriately in our society. The

minister has yet to give a satisfactory reason for why this program has been cut.

Can the minister tell me how the so-called decentralization initiative of this government and the cut to community colleges, particularly like Assiniboine and Keewatin, meld? In almost every single one of these courses that he has cut, he has recommended that the students come to Winnipeg.

If they want to take Architectural Drafting, come to Red River Community College. If you want to do motor vehicle, come to Red River Community College. If you want to do Electrical, come to Red River Community College. If you want to do Autobody Repair, come to Red River Community College, and so forth. Even the odd times when he does not recommend a community college, he recommends, of course, that they look at something like the National Institute of Broadcasting which also happens to be located in Winnipeg.

How does this government justify an initiative on the one hand called decentralization, at the same time slashing programs available in community colleges located outside of the city of Winnipeg when the only referral for those students is to a Winnipeg program?

* (1630)

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, taking a program at an institution outside of Brandon is not extremely different from finding a permanent job. Decentralization does not mean decentralization from Winnipeg to Brandon. It means decentralization to many parts of this province. Decentralization also means that we deliver as many programs as possible in some of our rural and remote areas, such as the FYDE program, such as establishing regional centres in rural areas throughout Manitoba. We have done that quite successfully. Decentralization will mean permanent jobs in smaller communities outside of the city.

I understand the Liberals have been opposed to decentralization right from Day One, so every opportunity they get they will jump on decentralization, because most of them do not understand the needs of rural Manitoba. Perhaps if they would spend a little time in rural Manitoba they would then become appreciative of some of the needs of some of these rural communities that are losing their populations because of the fact that

there has been no thrust in decentralization for many, many years.

(Mr. Bob Rose, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

Mr. Acting Chair, I have indicated quite clearly why this program was eliminated. The average capital costs on an annual basis took up 20 percent of the budget for five percent of the students. Secondly, in relation to other programs that are needed at Assiniboine Community College, this was not one that was seen as a priority by the college given the needs for other programs. Coupled with the cost of the program, it was deemed more important to invest the college's money in other programs. When you look at the average wages that students earn, graduates earn once they have completed the program, there are other programs where graduates would receive higher wages when they graduate from them. All of these areas were taken into consideration by the president and the staff of Assiniboine Community College and the decisions were based on those factors.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Rose): Order, please. Item 5.(d) Assiniboine Community College: 5.(d)(1) Salaries, \$7,907,900—pass; 5.(d)(2) Other Expenditures, \$2,239,000—pass; 5.(d)(3) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations, \$20,000—pass.

Mrs. Carstairs: What was the line item that you called for?

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Rose): Item 5.(d)(3) Recoverable from Other Appropriations.

Mrs. Carstairs: All right, thank you.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Rose): That item is passed.

Item 5.(e) Keewatin Community College: (1) Salaries, \$7,389,700.

Mr. Chomlak: It is unfortunate, as we have seen in Native programs, and as we have seen in aboriginal Native programs, and as we have seen in rural programs, and as we have seen in ESL, we see, despite claims to the contrary, despite claims that education is a priority and indeed northern Manitoba is a priority, that there have been major ramifications and effects in northern Manitoba as a result of this minister and this government's insensitivity to the needs of northern Manitoba and Manitobans in general.

My initial question to the minister is, we have seen the elimination of seven programs and I note that

the Supplementary Estimates note indicates that six new programs are delivered, is that the sum total of the new programs that are being delivered now by Keewatin Community College, the six that are listed on page 92 of the Supplementary Estimates?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairperson, there are actually seven programs delivered which will be new and expanded programs delivered through Keewatin Community College. I have read the list before, but I will do it again. There is Business Administration, Forestry Technician, Pulp and Paper Technician, Hospitality Management, Small Business Development and Management, Computer Applications Analyst.

Mr. Chomlak: The minister read them rather quickly. I am looking on page 92, the Supplementary Estimates, there are six programs listed. Which program is not listed that the minister has gone through. I tried to keep track as he read through it, but I could not.

Mr. Derkach: There are two sections of the Business Administration Program, Mr. Acting Chairman.

Mr. Chomlak: I guess one of the difficulties I have with the cutbacks is, when you look at the alternatives that are available, most of them were available in the city of Winnipeg in respect of Red River Community College, the Civil Technology course, the small motors course, the carpentry course, the plumbing course, special programs. I guess this kind of flies in the face of what the minister has stated with respect to what the minister is trying to do in terms of rural and northern Manitoba. Perhaps he is just isolating it to rural Manitoba and forgetting about northern Manitoba.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, we are not abandoning rural and northern Manitoba like the NDP did; indeed, we are going to make sure that northerners and Native people in this province are going to be able to avail themselves of job opportunities in the North that will, first of all, be permanent and which they will be skilled for.

Mr. Acting Chairman, unlike the NDP who chose to spend \$41 million and graduate 34 students, we will ensure that the students that we graduate will have meaningful employment and we will not spend \$41 million on graduating 34 students. That is the kind of record that they have that they can be proud of. That is the kind of legacy we have left to this

province and a debt of some \$500,000 in interest costs on an annual basis.

Mr. Acting Chair, I have indicated very clearly that we had to refocus some our attention in terms of the programming through our college system. We have instituted seven expanded and new programs in northern Manitoba, six of which will be in the Thompson area. This is not a cutback. This is an increase in the opportunities that are going to be available to northern Manitobans.

Let us go beyond that, and let us take a look at the record of the NDP as compared to the record of this administration in terms of the people who are employed and the Native people who have been employed at the community college. I hope the member asks me that question because he stands up and he makes grandiose statements about this government abandoning the Native people of this province. Well, the Native people in this province have never been served as well as they have been under this administration—much, much better than they were under that administration. All they did was pay lip service to the fact that they were catering to the needs of Native people in this province but never did a thing.

Mr. Acting Chair, the Bachelor of Nursing Program at Keewatin Community College, which was negotiated for five years under the former administration—they could never come to grips with and never resolve—so it was left and it took us a year to sort out the mess. Indeed, we did finally sort it out and we were able to arrive at an agreement, for today we have a Bachelor of Nursing Program at Keewatin Community College, one that they could not achieve, one they did not have the ability to achieve.

I can also indicate the waste that went on in northern Manitoba. I took a trip through northern Manitoba—(interjection)—We even have music along with this. I took a tour through northern Manitoba to view first hand what we really had up there. Mr. Acting Chair, I was surprised at the waste that had been left by the former administration. Actually what we should have done was we should have taken the media up there to take a look at the waste that was there.

* (1640)

We gathered up the equipment that was used in the construction training program and we brought it to Keewatin Community College, and we finally

auctioned it off. This equipment, worth, I suppose, millions of dollars at one point, was just left lying around in various locations and no one really took any initiative to do something about it. They simply left it lie in the woods and lie in the bushes. They had washed their hands of it and hopefully somebody would pick it up. That is the kind of management we had under the former administration. That is the kind of commitment they had to the northern people of this province.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Oh, that is garbage, absolute garbage.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chair, the member for Brandon East says this is garbage. Well, it sure was garbage in the way that they had approached the training for northern people in this province.

Mr. Acting Chair, we have made a commitment to ensure that programs at Keewatin Community College are going to be effective. I can tell you that when we came into government, Keewatin Community College was on its last legs. As a matter of fact, they were trying to wind down Keewatin Community College and move their attention to Thompson. I can tell you that we have taken a completely different approach. The programs that we are offering in northern Manitoba are going to be programs that are going to lead to meaningful jobs for Northerners and for our Native people in this province.

Mr. Chomlak: Mr. Acting Chairperson, maybe I will photocopy the minister's remarks, and I will give a copy to the 832 less students at that institution this year as compared to last year. I need not say any more, particularly when one considers the credibility that we have heard today, when we have heard programs have been cut. First, they were cut because of low demand and alternative programs available and no demand in the marketplace, now it is because the wages are not high enough or because they cost too much.

Let us face it, the credibility of this minister with respect to these cuts is waning somewhat in this particular debate, so perhaps we could spare each other the rhetoric going back and forth. I will photocopy those comments of the minister and I will send them to the 832 less students attending that institution this year as an example of commitment of this government.

Mrs. Carstairs: Can the minister tell the House what is the pupil-teacher ratio going to be at

Keewatin Community College as a result of 12 professional teachers removed from the teaching capacity of Keewatin Community College?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chair, we do not maintain pupil-teacher ratios as we do in a public school system, for community colleges. The average class size at Keewatin Community College runs around 15 students per class.

Mrs. Carstairs: That is an interesting statistic when you realize you have 142 teachers and you say that you have 3,360 students because, if one does the simple calculation, that comes out to a pupil-teacher ratio of 23.6. The minister perhaps can explain how he manages to maintain that ratio of 15 students per teacher, and how that has changed over the years in that there seems to be a considerable reduction in the number of students who will now get programming at KCC.

Mr. Derkach: The member should understand that the programs that are offered at Keewatin Community College are not all full-time programs and many are part-time programs and many programs vary in terms of length of program as well. For that reason, I said it is impossible for us to have a clear understanding of a pupil-teacher ratio as such. That is why I indicated that the class size is approximately 15 students per class. When she looks at the pure numbers and divides it by the number of staff there, that is overly simplistic in terms of trying to determine the overall view of what the situation is. So for that reason I think it is somewhat misleading to try and give an accurate number of a pupil-teacher ratio where you have these kinds of mixes of programs and full- and part-time students.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Acting Chairperson, it is oversimplistic to do it in the public school system as well, and we do it on a fairly regular basis since a great number of people never darken the doors of a classroom that are counted into the pupil-teacher ratio.

Can the minister tell the House what is meant by the statement of an offset by increases for the northern nursing program delivered by the University of Manitoba and why it is being delivered by the University of Manitoba as opposed to KCC?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chair, the Bachelor of Nursing Program at the Keewatin Community College is a degree program. Keewatin Community College does not have the authority to confer

degrees, and for that reason it is being delivered through Keewatin Community College by the University of Manitoba.

Mrs. Carstairs: Then I can assume that the instructors are paid through the University of Manitoba and not through Keewatin Community College.

Mr. Derkach: That is right.

Mrs. Carstairs: All right.

Can the minister tell the House why it was decided to eliminate the Civil Technology program, which seemed to have a great number of students, particularly when it appears unreasonable that they would be directed only to a Winnipeg-based program?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chair, the original intent of the Civil Technology program, again under the former administration, was a one-time entry program. It was basically done for the Limestone project. It was done with federal-provincial dollars. The federal-provincial agreement ends in 1992 for the Limestone project and, at that point in time, there will be no federal dollars coming into the program.

For that reason, the province itself cannot afford to carry out that type of a program, especially when one looks at it. The member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) stood up in his place and said, well, we have heard all kinds of reasons. I listed eight categories, and I have stuck to those eight categories.

In terms of the cost of this program, we found that the cost was \$150,000 per graduate. For that reason, among others, such as the fact that the Limestone Training agreement ends in 1992, there will be no intakes into the program this September.

Mrs. Carstairs: Is it any cheaper to educate those students at Red River Community College than it was at Keewatin Community College?

Mr. Derkach: I think two things, Mr. Acting Chairman. First of all, we have committed ourselves to ensuring that students who are currently enrolled in the program will have the opportunity to graduate. Secondly, we will save approximately a quarter of a million dollars by allowing those students to complete their programming at Red River Community College.

* (1650)

Mrs. Carstairs: One can assume from that, the province is going to save a quarter of a million

dollars. The cost to the students might be half a million dollars minimum in that one can assume that their average living expenses in the city of Winnipeg would be at least \$5,000 during an academic year.

On that basis, one wonders why the program is no longer going to be offered in the North, particularly in light of Hydro advertisements being conducted by this government which would indicate that they are full steam ahead on Conawapa, whether it passes an environmental impact assessment or whether it does not. What is the long term training strategy of this government with respect to Conawapa in that construction of that project should begin, according to the Minister of Energy (Mr. Neufeld), by 1993, and there will be no longer any training program in the North for civil technologists?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairperson, first of all, the living allowances for students will take care of the living costs for them when they are attending the Red River Community College program, so there will not be an increased cost to the student who is attending the program. The moving costs will also be looked after for the students who will be attending Red River Community College.

Yes, it is somewhat of a disruption to the students at the Thompson campus, but these are some of the difficult decisions that have to be made. The Limestone Training agreement does end in 1992, and federal dollars are winding down for that program. As I indicated, at a cost of \$150,000 per graduate, we were not able to continue with that program.

Indeed, when we take a look at the number of graduates who have been employed by Hydro, very few of the Civil Technology graduates were employed by Hydro. So, therefore, one has to develop training programs that are going to be meaningful for those who are graduating from them.

In terms of our long-term strategy, I could point to the Strategic Plan where we enunciate quite specifically that the northern education strategy will be as follows: In consultation with northern communities, industry and aboriginal people, a northern education strategy will be developed to identify and respond to the education and training needs of people living in northern Manitoba; provide education and training programs in northern areas through Distance Education technologies and networks of regional centres; enhance education

and training program accessibility and co-ordinate training activities in relation to the Conawapa hydro-electric project.

Once we have received some indication as to the kinds of skills that are required for the Conawapa project, when it does receive its approval, then we will be able to embark on training programs specific to that project.

Mrs. Carstairs: One of the tragedies of the Limestone Training initiative was that, had the program for the construction of Limestone taken place when it was supposed to, instead of two years earlier for political motivation, you would have had the ability to train people for two years and to have them reach a considerably higher skill level than they were able to acquire during the Limestone initiative. The further tragedy is that this government does not seem to be doing any better. It seems to be cutting back on programs which would presently train people living in the North, who could then work on a project.

If the minister of Hydro is correct and they are going to begin construction of this project in '93-94, and we are already into the budget year for '91-92, when does the minister anticipate that they will begin training programs so that we again will not be saying to our aboriginal community, well, we can train you as cooks and cleaners because we can do that in 20 weeks but if you are looking for journeyman certificates, it is too bad because that will take you two, three, four years and by that time the project will be completed?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chair, I guess I could report that the skills training inventory is just being completed in order for us to ascertain what kinds of skill levels we have with regard to northern Manitobans. I would say that perhaps when that skills inventory is complete, we may in fact decide to have those people who are at the Level 1 or 2 of the apprenticeship program complete their journeyman certificate so that they could become productive members within northern Manitoba.

I have to agree with the Leader of the third party that, yes, there was a complete foul up in terms of the way that the training for Limestone was undertaken and the development of the Limestone project. We are very cognizant of the fact that if we enter into training programs, we have to do so in advance, so that those people who are in the

programs can then gain some meaningful employment in the project.

I am hopeful that with the member's question she is now clearly indicating her support for the Conawapa project and so therefore we are looking forward to the support of the Liberals, so that we can embark on training programs for the project as soon as we have the signal to do so from those who are doing the reviews and those who are establishing a time frame for the need of skilled workers on the project.

Mrs. Carstairs: As a teacher I never put words in my students' mouth, and I would appreciate if the minister did not do the same thing to me that I would never have done to my own students. Unfortunately, of course, the minister does not respect statements that have been made by others in the past and that is a tragedy.

The final question that I would like to ask in this area is, can the minister confirm that there will in fact be 800-plus fewer students trained at Keewatin Community College this year than last, and that there will be fewer students in addition trained in 1991 and '92?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the numbers may be somewhat misleading because when the Limestone Training people were folded into the Keewatin Community College itself, there was somewhat of an overestimation in the numbers of students at the college by something like 500, so therefore that is why there is the perceived signal that there will be 800-and-some students less trained at Keewatin Community College. I would say that is somewhat misleading and that is the result of an overprojection in 1990-91.

Mr. Chomlak: I do not see how it could be perceived as misleading when last year we passed the Estimates book, on page 88 of that book, and the number was 4,192 students and this year it is 3,360 students. Is the minister saying there may be less this year in fact? Is the minister saying we cannot trust this 3,360 figure on this book today, because the implication of what the minister says is that we cannot?

Mr. Derkach: Again, the member is not listening, because I indicated that as a result of the folding in of the Limestone people with Keewatin Community College, there was a miscalculation and an overestimation of the numbers of students. We do not do that on an annual basis. The Estimates were

approved, that is true, but as I have indicated very clearly, there was an overestimation made in 1990-91, and that is why the figures appear to be somewhat higher than they realistically are.

Mr. Chomlak: My questions are not that lengthy in this area, and I think we can probably complete within minutes so that we could perhaps relieve—can the minister give any indication of the programs that are eliminated, specifically the Civil Technology, Small Motors, Carpentry and all of the programs being eliminated, what the student count was for each individual program last year, and how many are anticipated to be transferred down to Red River Community College and accordingly what the cost of living for those students to be transferred down to Winnipeg to attend the courses will be?

I am asking a very general question in case the minister might want to deliver the response next session.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Rose): Order, please, The hour being 5 p.m. and time for private members' hour, committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

* (1700)

IN SESSION

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Speaker: The hour being 5 p.m., time for private members' hour.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS—PRIVATE BILLS

Bill 32—The Mount Carmel Clinic Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), Bill 32, The Mount Carmel Clinic Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Mount Carmel Clinic, standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand. Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave? Agreed.

**DEBATE ON SECOND
READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS**

**Bill 22—The Manitoba Energy Authority
Repeal Act**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr), Bill 22, The Manitoba Energy Authority Repeal Act; Loi abrogeant la Loi sur la Régie de l'énergie du Manitoba, standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

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

**Bill 23—The Manitoba Intercultural
Council Amendment Act**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), Bill 23, The Manitoba Intercultural Council Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le Conseil interculturel du Manitoba, standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand. Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave? Agreed.

**Bill 24—The Business Practices
Amendment Act**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry), Bill 24, The Business Practices Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les pratiques commerciales, standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand. Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave? Agreed.

**Bill 25—The Environment Amendment
Act (2)**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), Bill 25, The Environment Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur l'environnement, standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand. Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave? Agreed.

**Bill 26—The Environment Amendment
Act (3)**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), Bill 26, The Environment Amendment Act (3); Loi no 3 modifiant la Loi sur l'environnement, standing in the name of the honourable member for St. James.

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand. Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave? Agreed.

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Mr. Speaker: Are we proceeding with Bill 16? No. Okay. Are we proceeding with Bill 17? No. Okay. Are we proceeding with Bill 27? No.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Res. 14—Threats to Medicare

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): I move, seconded by the member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes):

WHEREAS declining federal funds for health care threaten the future of medicare; and

WHEREAS federal defence spending and high interest policies have had a crippling effect on Canada's economy generally and on federal expenditure capability in particular; and

WHEREAS a freeze on federal transfer payments and the imposition of formula reductions will mean the end of federal cash payments for health care around the turn of the century; and

WHEREAS national standards for health care will not be enforceable without federal funding; and

WHEREAS the Manitoba government has participated in discussions on provincial takeover of health care funding which will lead to regional disparities, user fees, extra billing and the end of the medicare system.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba recommend that it:

1. Reaffirm its commitment to preserving medicare and the principles in the Canada Health Act of universality, portability, accessibility, comprehensiveness and public administration;

2. Oppose any moves to support the provincial takeover of health care funding, to privatize any health services, or to introduce any form of user fees;

3. Call on the Manitoba government to develop a concerted strategy co-ordinated with the broader community to oppose federal withdrawal from health care funding and the erosion of medicare.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly recommend that efficiencies and savings in the health care system be achieved through health care reform based on community-based, preventative and wellness models.

Motion presented.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I am very pleased, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the New Democratic Party caucus, to introduce this resolution on the threats to medicare and on the need to preserve our national health care system.

It is of incredible coincidence and significance that this resolution comes on our agenda today at the very time when another serious blow has been dealt to medicare and our national health care system.

This resolution was drafted and submitted to this House several months ago at a time when the threats to medicare then caused us, on this side of the House, to call for collective action and co-operative responses to a very serious and growing problem. The resolution was drafted as a result of a series of events that posed real dangers to medicare. Not knowing that the sequence of events would continue, that more blows would be dealt to medicare, that further discussions would take place that would actually jeopardize and put in real danger the future of our medicare system as we know it today.

* (1710)

Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that anyone in this House disagrees with the statement that the threats to medicare are real. I do not believe—and this is based on some of the statements of the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and other members in the Conservative caucus—that there is any disagreement with the reality of the situation today as a result of federal cutbacks, reductions in transfer payments, putting us on a course in a direction that will lead to the end of federal budgetary involvement in health care and, of course, post-secondary education.

So, Mr. Speaker, there seems to be some appreciation for the difficult situation we are now faced with. There seems to be, at least on the basis of rhetoric and words in this House and outside the House, a general and common understanding of the severe impact that federal cutbacks have had on our health care system.

Our worry, Mr. Speaker, emerges out of the fact that the words and rhetoric and promises of this government here in Manitoba and of Conservative governments right across this country do not mesh with their action, or I should put it, the absence of action. We began raising this issue some nine to 10 months ago when reports started emerging out of Ottawa and elsewhere about federal abdication of responsibility in health care.

Mr. Speaker, you will recall that we have brought questions to this House. We have initiated an emergency debate. We have persisted in every way we can to preserve medicare and national health care standards. Our concern, first of all the tabling of statistics by the federal Minister of Finance confirming something we had heard and something that was rumoured, but putting in clear and certain terms that the federal government was withdrawing from health care.

Mr. Speaker, our concerns grew as we heard about reports of discussions taking place at federal-provincial meetings and particularly among western Premiers and Finance ministers. We were all shocked on this side of the House to receive information about the disentanglement proposal, otherwise known as the disembowelment of medicare.

If that concern was not enough and if that threat was not clear enough, the Ministers of Finance have taken it a step further. Today, we have received a copy of the western Finance ministers' report not disassociating themselves from their previous plans and discussions around disentanglement, but further entrenching themselves in a position of disentanglement and disembowelment of medicare.

That report, Mr. Speaker, came, I must say, as a shock. We had expected that the notion of disentanglement had been dealt with. In fact, after that infamous Finance ministers' meeting and report back in September of 1990, the Premiers of western Canada indicated that they would have nothing to do with disentanglement. The Premier of Manitoba (Mr. Filmon) gave us his assurances that he would

fight to the nth degree to preserve medicare and national standards.

Instead of seeing the end of that notion and a strong concerted effort on the part of this government and all western Premiers to preserve medicare, we have been faced with a new development, a further development of the originally intended position of the western Finance ministers. Mr. Speaker, this report, on numerous pages, talks about an option to federal offloading and federal cutbacks in terms of the transfer of tax points in lieu of cash transfer payments.

Mr. Speaker, there is a wealth of information and documentation to indicate that a change of that kind, of that magnitude, can only lead to the end of medicare and national health care standards. Report after report after report have said that any attempt to replace federal transfer payments with tax points is the basis for the end of the Canada Health Act as we know it today. Not only has that idea been further developed by the western Finance ministers, including our own Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) who signed this document, who put this blessing of the Conservative government here in Manitoba onto this document and this idea; as well, this report clearly enunciates a new set of criteria and principles to guide national programs in this country. We are dealing with a reworked set of principles that diverge dramatically and drastically from the principles enunciated in the Canada Health Act.

Instead of talking about the principles of portability, universality, comprehensiveness, accessibility and public administration, we are faced with a set of market-driven principles—a set of principles that really are a code for privatization, individualization and total provincial control which can only lead to a patchwork response to health care, to a system that is not portable, that does not offer the same health care service to every Canadian in this country regardless of where he or she may live or what life circumstances they may face.

We are now faced with a set of principles that talk about equitable and responsible partnership, adequacy, efficiency, stability, simplicity, Mr. Speaker, all principles that have to do with addressing health care in terms of accounting principles, in terms of the bottom line, in terms of affordability, not in terms of the principles that have been with us since the time of medicare, nothing to

do with the original intentions of the founder of medicare in this country today.

It is important at this time, Mr. Speaker, to go back to the roots of medicare and to face up to and listen to the words of the founder of medicare, Tommy Douglas, who fought so long and hard for a national medicare system. Just to put that in perspective, let me just quote from Tommy Douglas, who made a statement during the 1960 Saskatchewan election campaign where the issue of medicare was the major issue. He stated: Had I been a rich man's son, the services of the finest surgeons would have been available. As an iron molder's boy, I almost had my leg amputated before chance intervened and a specialist cured me without thought of a fee. All my adult life I have dreamed of the day when an experience like mine would be impossible, and we would have in Canada a program of complete medical care without a price tag. That is what we aim to achieve in Saskatchewan by 1961, the finest health service available to everyone in the province regardless of ability to pay. This is our goal of a compulsory prepaid medical care insurance.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, and all members of this House know, Tommy Douglas took that fight from the province of Saskatchewan to Ottawa, to the House of Commons, and worked to ensure that a national health care scheme was introduced in Canada.

We must not forget the reasons for medicare. We must not forget the struggle of those who came before us. The best way we can show our gratitude to those individuals who fought so long and hard is today, at this time of crisis, at this time of threat to our medicare system, stand with one voice and defend the finest health care system anywhere in the world.

* (1720)

Mr. Speaker, this issue about the threat to medicare is not simply a question of quality health care. It is also a question of national unity. Our medicare system is a matter of national identity. It is a question of national pride. It is something that has held this country together and made us different from the Americans to the south of us.

There is another reason for fighting so hard today for medicare. At the very time that Conservative governments in Canada are looking and planning to dismantle medicare, Americans, people in the United States, are now very seriously exploring the

possibilities of introducing a national health care system in the United States.

They are doing it for a number of reasons. They are doing it because it is more cost-effective. Study after study after study has shown that Canada has the most cost-effective health care system anywhere. Study after study after study has shown that the highest quality of health care is afforded through a system like medicare. On top of all of that, Canadians value our national health care system, the Canada Health Act and medicare because of the service it provides to all citizens regardless of geography or economic position. That has been backed up time and time again by study after study, indicating that, and I quote from a study entitled *Datawatch* in a survey of 10 nations, in terms of their health care system: Americans express the greatest degree of dissatisfaction with their health system and Canadians, the least.

Mr. Speaker, for Canadians medicare and our national health care system is our most valued national program and service. We owe it to Canadians to defend this system, to defend medicare and to ensure that this great unifying factor that so many have spoken out, including the Premier (Mr. Filmon) as recently as May 10, is pursued and developed. I would hope, given the statements made by the Premier, specifically on May 10 but on previous occasions, by some of the comments made by the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), by the comments today from the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey), that no member in this House will have any problem supporting a resolution which calls for defending a program that has held us in good stead for many, many years and offers the finest health care system anywhere in the world. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, there are only a couple of things I am going to take objection to with my honourable friend and her statement, and that is rare. I do not want to get into all the corrections I would like to make.

My honourable friend as a New Democrat is making a statement which I believe is incorrect, in that she indicates that Conservative governments across Canada are trying to dismantle medicare. Mr. Speaker, that is the kind of rhetorical argument without foundation that I would expect coming from my honourable friend the New Democrat. It is not an accurate statement of the agenda of this Conservative government, and I would appreciate

that my honourable friend would stop putting that false information out as a matter of her fact, because it is not correct. It is wrong.

If there is anything that has been an issue with this government in just over three years of attempting to protect program, it is to try to understand the health care system, to understand what drives its costs, which many experts my honourable friend, from time to time, the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) will quote, indicating wasteful and inappropriate expenditures in the health care system, trying to understand where those are, how we can develop appropriate policies to address the issues of funding a health care system which protects and enhances the health status of Manitobans.

For her to stand up on behalf of the NDP and say Conservative governments, and rolling this Conservative government into that blanket statement, is wrong, false and she ought not to do it. Okay?

Now, Mr. Speaker, having corrected that, I know my honourable friend will agree to support a resolution designed to protect the medicare system in Canada by initiatives of this province. I know she will do that because that is what she said she will do. I intend to put her to the test and her party to the test at the close of my remarks.

In dealing with the issue—and this is a very, very large public issue—and in taking approximately 15 minutes to try to come around the issues, one can only touch certain themes and certain agendas. You cannot deal with this complex an issue of our health care system and medicare, the way we fund it and how it ought to move and change as we approach the year 2000, in 15 short minutes.

I want to deal with some issues raised in a document called "The Future of Canada's Health Care System," subtitle: "The End of Federal Funding?". This is a report from the Canadian Health Coalition in October of 1990. There are four questions which this report posed and came to grips with. I want to read these four questions to my honourable friends, because dealing with these questions, as this report did, will lead one to some of the potential solutions.

The questions are: No. 1, are Canada's health expenditures out of line with those of comparable jurisdictions? Number 2, are expenditures growing at a rate which appears unsustainable, even if they

are not out of line with others? Number 3, is the current pattern of expenditure efficient and effective in producing high health status in the population? Number 4, are the current funding arrangements for funding this system likely to lead to its future healthy development?

Those are four very fundamental questions, and I want to deal with the first question, namely, are Canada's expenditures out of line with comparable jurisdictions? The conclusion by the authors of this report is fairly clearly, no. They make the analogy that we spend significantly less per capita than the United States.

Mr. Speaker, what I want to point out to my honourable friend—and I know that she has a copy of my presentation that I have made in terms of health care and the fiscal challenge to the Province of Manitoba. I will give her this copy when I conclude my remarks.

The per capita health expenditures of eight industrialized nations—the United States leads, Canada is second; but many nations, Sweden, France, West Germany, Netherlands, Japan, the United Kingdom all spend less per capita than we do and some of them considerably less, namely, Japan. Their one indicator of Japanese health status is embodied in this last graph, where it talks about the life expectancy of those eight nations.

The United States, spending the most per capita, has the shortest life expectancy of those eight industrialized nations. Japan, spending less than half the U.S. spends, has the highest health or life expectancy as one indicator of health status.

Mr. Speaker, that was not always the case, because 40 years ago, post-World War II, the average life expectancy in Japan was some 50 years. Today it has grown to 78.9, the highest of eight industrialized nations, not because, one would conclude, they have spent massive amounts of money on their health care system; but rather their economic growth has been shared by all Japanese. So the wealth of the Japanese economy has provided stable jobs, disposable income for Japanese to make the choices of better housing, better nutrition, better recreation, better education, which leads to greater health status.

The conclusion I draw—and this is not a conclusion drawn by the report I am quoting from—but my conclusion of that is that one of the best health status improvement policies any

government can get into is a growing economy providing meaningful and real jobs, a strong private sector, as in Japan.

The second question posed by the report is: Are expenditures growing at a rate which appears unsustainable, even if they are not out of line with others? Do you know what the report *The Future of Canada's Health Care System* by the Canadian Health Coalition answers? They say this may be a qualified yes. In other words, our expenditures may well be unsustainable even though they are not greater per capita than the United States.

*(1730)

Here is the reason why, and I want my honourable friends in the opposition the New Democrats to ponder this. The reason is not inherently the health expenditures themselves but, rather, the policy of governments to incur deficits and amass debt, weakening the overall fiscal capacity of government and driving out the capacity to use the available and necessary resources on health care.

Now is that not accurate, and who in Manitoba's recent history did exactly that and caused interest payments on an annualized basis to increase in 10 short years from less than \$80 million per year to in excess of \$550 million in the year? I pose that question. I will answer it myself: the New Democrats, who say, we want to protect the health care system, when their deficit policies are the very factor which will contribute the quickest to its demise in this nation.

It is not I who is saying that, Mr. Speaker. It is the Canadian Health Coalition, and one of the co-authors, as I understand it, of this report is Mr. Tim Sale, hardly a neo-conservative thinker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the third question posed by this group is the pattern of expenditures, efficient and effective in producing high health status in the population, and do you know what the answer is? It must be answered, probably not. In other words, despite our massive expenditures per capita, the second highest in the world, their conclusion is that we are not achieving increased health status from those expenditures.

Well, I asked, I posed the simple question: What ought to be the goal of medicare? It ought to be to raise the health status of individual Manitobans and, Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you, that is exactly where all of our policies are guiding us, so that we do things that improve the health status of individual

Manitobans, and we have a range of initiatives which we have undertaken over the last three years and will continue to undertake.

Here is the fourth question, and this is the important question that I want all my honourable friends from the New Democratic Party to ponder. The fourth question is: Are there things that might be done of sufficient magnitude to make an impact on the overall health budget, because is that not really what we are discussing in Canada today? They pose an equally important second question attached to that last one. Are these things, i.e., these things that might be done of sufficient magnitude to make an impact on the overall health budget, politically and technically feasible?

Therein, Mr. Speaker, lies the difficulty. Is there the political will to come to grips with some of the identified problems in the health care system? I suggest we have the political will on this side of the House, and I would suggest that in ordinary circumstances even my honourable friends in the New Democratic Party might say that they agree, that it ought to be done, that this procedure or that process ought to be done, but I want to guarantee you, the moment this government would move to take their advice they would slip around on the other side of the issue and criticize us for doing it, because they have a narrowed political agenda of trying to achieve government so they can drive this province further into debt and thereby eliminate all services that Manitobans value, not just the few that they have already destroyed through the Pawley deficit legacy.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what are some of those things which might be done? I believe I have about four minutes left or so. Three minutes. Oh, well, I must move right along.

Page 5 of this coalition report talks about studies on volume where doctors are now because of their numbers and because of fee schedules not increasing their income through the individual procedure, but by rather seeing more patients. They are increasing their service volume. We recognize that.

One of the parameters of our last agreement we signed with the MMA was a study on volume to address that issue identified in this report. They say that by far the costliest and most rapidly rising segment of care in the system is the teaching hospitals. Again, we have a task force reporting to

us as to what is driving those costs in Manitoba, addressing that issue. We are talking about usage of hospitals and the variation between rural and urban.

Again, we are trying to come to grips with that not through narrowed neo-conservative decision making, as my NDP friends would accuse us of, but of an apolitical study on the issue to provide guidance to the government of Manitoba to make sound policy decisions. Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend the member for St. Johns, the official opposition Health critic, said that she wanted a resolution that would protect medicare.

I am going to give her exactly that opportunity by moving, seconded by my colleague the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik), that the resolution be amended by removing all the words after the first WHEREAS, and replacing them with the following:

THAT federal EPF funds were \$477,323,000 in 1985-86, and were \$588,027,000 in 1990-91, while provincial health expenditures rose from \$1,136,432,200 in 1985-86 to \$1,671,488,300 in 1990-91; and

WHEREAS Canada has the second highest per capita spending on health of any industrialized nation, and the highest per capita spending of any industrialized nation with a publicly funded health care system; and

WHEREAS the policy of governments to incur deficits and amass debt, weakening the overall fiscal capacity of government and driving out the capacity to use the available and necessary resources on health care; and

WHEREAS in the Province of Manitoba interest costs have risen from under \$79 million in 1980-81 to over \$550 million in 1991-92, diverting these tax dollars to foreign investors and away from health care services; and

WHEREAS it is desirable to maintain national standards for health care with funding contribution from the federal government; and

WHEREAS the Manitoba government has participated in discussions on the continued federal funding commitment to ensure the continuation of medicare in Canada,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba recommend that it:

1. Reaffirm its commitment to preserving medicare and the principles in the Canada Health Act of universality, portability, accessibility, comprehensiveness, and public administration;

2. Promote initiatives and policies to "spend smarter";

3. Urge the government of Manitoba to continue the fight against efforts by federal governments of all political parties to curtail funding for health care to the provinces; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly do urge the government of Manitoba to continue to support community-based, reform-minded, wellness-promoting, education and prevention initiatives such as the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation, the St. Boniface General Hospital Free Standing Out-Patient Feasibility Study, the Mental Health Employment Service Demonstration Project, the Self Help Action Mental Health Project, the Back Injury Prevention Program in Manitoba Health Care Facilities, the Diabetes Awareness Prevention Program, the Cardiovascular Education Program, the Manitoba Heart Health Project, the Street Link Project, the Smoke Free Grad 2000 Initiative and the Women's Health Directorate, to name only a few.

That, Mr. Speaker, makes this a resolution truly supportable by all members of the House.

Motion presented.

* (1740)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable minister's time has expired.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I am somewhat encouraged to a certain extent from the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) in taking the time to go over the member for St. Johns' (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) resolution. Obviously, he must have given it a great deal of thought. The simple reason is that he has brought forward an amendment that has changed the original resolution.

It is unfortunate, you know I listened to the BE IT RESOLVEDs and it is very hard to say anything at all negative about the BE IT RESOLVEDs. In terms of some of the WHEREASes, there is reason to be somewhat concerned. If the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) was really trying to pass this amendment, if he would have sought my advice I would have suggested that he maybe not be quite as political as

he was in the resolution. I think maybe then it might have been found upon a bit better from the opposition, at the very least the New Democratic Party.

We talk about universal health care, and I do not think there are very many Canadians who oppose the concept of having universal health care. I think we really learn to appreciate it when you have a family member—or I know even with myself a bit earlier this year I was admitted into one of our hospitals. You really begin to appreciate the fact that we do not have to pay in order to get our health care services, unlike other countries where there is a two-tier system. We only need to look south of us, where we see that if you have the financial resources and capabilities you are able to get first-class health care delivery, you are able to ensure that the attention you need can be received. The same thing cannot be said of those who are less fortunate down in the U.S.

Many of us have heard stories from people who have been injured or comments in regard to what has happened to individuals upon entering into a hospital, even public versus a private hospital, and the horror stories that come out of that. If we look at that and we look at universal health care and we talk to people who have experienced both, and I believe the public at large, from both nations, you will find that universal health care is by far the preferred way to go.

I and the Liberal Party have concern regarding the federal party's commitment to universal health care. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the three major political parties want to provide universal health care to Canadians, but I also believe that the three political parties do have a different priority in terms of delivering those universal accessible health care services. Unfortunately, the priority that this federal government has given universal health care is not what any of us would like to see in this Chamber.

That causes great concern to most Canadians, Mr. Speaker, because if the federal government in its wisdom decides to withdraw funding, ultimately in Canada we will see those funds evaporate into virtually nothing by the turn of the century. What will ultimately end up happening is for those provinces that have the Treasury Board, those provinces that have the resources, the provinces that are better off than other provinces will be able to provide that much more for the citizens who live in those provinces.

So, Mr. Speaker, we are going to have within Canada different levels of health care services. That is something we believe would be a move in the wrong direction, that we should be building a stronger nation and there are certain things that hold Canada together. Health care is one of those issues that does that.

I would like to think if I lived in the province of Newfoundland, Manitoba, Alberta or British Columbia that if something were to happen to me that I would not have to be concerned about having to pay money for this or pay money for that because one province charges for this, another province does not charge for that same item. Whether it is transportation to a facility, whether it is a certain type of an operation, whatever it might be, that is where, as I say, my concern really is. If we come to agree that we want to have universal health care, then we have to, I believe, come to an agreement that there should be one body, that being the federal government, that should take the responsibility at ensuring that there is universal health care across Canada.

* (1750)

This government, the national government, now has decided to advocate its responsibilities over the past number of years by the reducing of our health care contributions. We have to ask what the governments, the different governments, are doing about that issue. We have had ministerial meetings, First Ministers' meetings without the Prime Minister present. We have had western Canada Premiers getting together, and it is not very comforting what we are hearing from those meetings. We are not hearing the provinces coming in with a united voice saying to Ottawa that the priority that they have on universal health care is in fact all wrong.

Mr. Speaker, that commitment from the Premiers has been lacking. Different provincial governments have placed different priorities on health care. We have the Province of Manitoba in which the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) says that it is their first priority. Yet, time after time, Mr. Speaker, we see underspending in the health care. So we have to question if, in fact, it is their first priority. What reinforces the suspicion that we in opposition have are the comments or the commitments that the Premier (Mr. Filmon), in particular, and this government takes when it has its ministerial meetings abroad. This is where they should be

putting forward Manitoba's argument for a strong national program.

As I say, the provinces differ. Many of the provinces, because of the pressure that is being put on from Ottawa, are starting to change and going in separate directions. We are seeing that already. We have seen a report that was brought forward in Quebec where they are looking at user fees for certain procedures. We look at Ontario, even under an NDP administration, where they are also looking at user fees. We can look at other provinces. There is Alberta, where they are also looking at user fees. So it crosses all political party lines, at the provincial level anyway.

We are being forced to look at these issues in a much more serious fashion than we were before, because the federal government is putting more and more of an onus on the provinces to maintain universality of health care. Hopefully, we will see a change in attitude from the federal government so we do not see the individual provinces moving in different directions.

The Health Act, which was put in place by a Liberal administration, was put in place to ensure that all Canadians, no matter what province you lived in—Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) on numerous occasions has asked for positive suggestions from the opposition parties. I have sat in the Health Estimates for a number of hours for the last few years in which my colleague, the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema), has made many different suggestions in terms of what the government could be doing and, in fact, should be doing in order to, if I can use the phrase, spend smarter.

That is the type of thing that we need to look at doing. I would encourage the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) to acknowledge a few of these recommendations which have been put forward from my colleague the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema). If he is serious in his request for these recommendations or positive alternatives, the least the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) can do is to act on some of those recommendations.

Mr. Speaker, you cannot ask for the opposition party to come up with ideas and fail to act on those ideas. I can understand and appreciate the fact that not all of the ideas would be accepted, but there are some of the ideas, and if you look at the government overall, there has been some acceptance of good

Liberal ideas that have been put forward from these benches.

There have been a number of good recommendations that have been put forward from the member for Maples (Mr. Cheema), so I would encourage the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), because in his remarks he attempted, I believe, to a certain degree demonstrate that it is an issue that should not be played solely for the purposes of politics in trying to win in the next provincial election or, in fact, federal election.

This is an issue that deserves to be treated very seriously. There will be issues that we will disagree with when it comes to the health care services and delivery and directions that the government is taking us in health care, but there will also be those recommendations that are acceptable and encourage the Minister of Health to acknowledge the acceptability of those recommendations put forward from our party.

On that note, I would hope in the future if ministers have amendments, such as this, that they bring them forward prior to the resolution coming or being introduced so all parties can be able to comment and possibly vote on the resolution so that we can have time to discuss and possibly even amend it to make it that much better of a resolution. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to have the opportunity to speak to the amendments to this bill because I have to say that I agree in part to what the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) has just mentioned. One important aspect of the whole health program is exactly what the Minister of Health said. He said it is preventative measures that deal with jobs, training, education and poverty.

That is correct, because if you go into Point Douglas, the constituency that I represent, and also into northern Manitoba you will see exactly where the job opportunities, the training programs are leading into poverty which will escalate the cost of our health care system. Because as the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) indicated, if you are employed and you have a good job, you have resources

coming in, then you will have the opportunity of maintaining a balanced diet. If you do not have adequate employment and if you do not have the social programs to fill that vacuum that is created, then your health, your body and the functions of your body will deteriorate, you will get sick and you will spend much more time in hospitals. He is right when he says that we have to concentrate on jobs training and poverty. That is what we on this side of the House have been saying. We do not cut back and lay off people. We encourage, and try and stimulate the economy for more jobs because that way when people are employed they have much more spending power, more opportunities.

Also, when you look at the priorities in cuts in the recent budget, one small measure that we hear about is the deindexing of the 55-Plus. Mr. Speaker, that ties directly to our medicare system and the universal health care program that we have right today.

I have read in the newspapers, I have heard on TV and I have heard people say, it is only \$1.70 a month. Well, that \$1.70 a month will buy you at least a couple of litres of milk. You know when you are getting on in age and your bones are not as strong as they used to be, you need milk to try and keep the growth and to preserve your bones, because you need the calcium in the milk. That is a known health fact. So it is not only \$1.70 that seniors were cut back, it is the two quarts of milk and it is also a cutback to their health. That is the whole irony of it.

Also, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about social programs, when you do not have the programs in place for the children and the families, the support systems, and you turn to abusive measures, then you are cutting back the opportunity and increasing health risk.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes) will have 11 minutes remaining.

The hour being 6 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Wednesday).

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Tuesday, May 14, 1991

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS			
Presenting Petitions		HydroBond Advertising Carr; Neufeld	2059
55-Plus Program Indexing Gaudry	2054	Fishing Industry C. Evans; Enns	2059
Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees		Travel Industry Maloway; McIntosh	2060
Committee of Supply Dacquay	2054	Conawapa Dam Project Edwards; Cummings	2061
Tabling of Reports		HydroBond Advertising Edwards; Cummings	2061
Departmental Estimates Northern Affairs Downey	2054	Conawapa Dam Project Edwards; Cummings	2061
Oral Questions		Pines Project Martindale; McIntosh; Ernst	2062
Health Care System - National Wasylycia-Leis; Downey	2054	Workforce 2000 Chomiak; Derkach	2062
Child and Family Services Barrett; Gilleshammer; Carstairs	2055		
Income Tax L. Evans; Downey	2057		
Free Trade Agreement Wowchuk; Downey	2058		
Port of Churchill Wowchuk; Driedger	2058		
HydroBond Advertising Carr; Downey	2059		
Conawapa Dam Project Carr; Neufeld	2059		
		ORDERS OF THE DAY	
		Concurrent Committees of Supply	
		Culture, Heritage and Citizenship	2063
		Education and Training	2085
		Private Members' Business	
		Proposed Resolutions	
		Res. 14, Threats to Medicare	
		Wasylycia-Leis	2111
		Orchard	2114
		Lamoureux	2117
		Hickes	2119