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

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

42 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature**

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, May 25, 1993

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): It is my duty to inform the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker and, therefore, in accordance with the statutes, I would ask the Deputy Speaker to take the Chair.

(Mrs. Louise Dacquay, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair)

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Madam Deputy Speaker: I have reviewed the petition (Mr. Santos). It complies with the privileges and the practices of the House (by leave). Is it the will of the House to have the petition read? [agreed]

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS Manitoba has the highest rate of child poverty in the country; and

WHEREAS over 55,000 children depend upon the Children's Dental Program; and

WHEREAS several studies have pointed out the cost savings of preventative and treatment health care programs such as the Children's Dental Program; and

WHEREAS the Children's Dental Program has been in effect for 17 years and has been recognized as extremely cost-effective and critical for many families in isolated communities; and

WHEREAS the provincial government did not consult the users of the program or the providers before announcing plans to eliminate 44 of the 49 dentists, nurses and assistants providing this service; and

WHEREAS preventative health care is an essential component of health care reform.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) consider restoring the Children's Dental

Program to the level it was prior to the 1993-94 budget.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I have reviewed the petition (Mr. Clif Evans). It complies with the rules and practices of the House (by leave). Is it the will of the House to have the petition read? [agreed]

Mr. Clerk: The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS Manitoba has the highest rate of child poverty in the country; and

WHEREAS over 55,000 children depend upon the Children's Dental Program; and

WHEREAS several studies have pointed out the cost savings of preventative and treatment health care programs such as the Children's Dental Program; and

WHEREAS the Children's Dental Program has been in effect for 17 years and has been recognized as extremely cost-effective and critical for many families in isolated communities; and

WHEREAS the provincial government did not consult the users of the program or the providers before announcing plans to eliminate 44 of the 49 dentists, nurses and assistants providing this service; and

WHEREAS preventative health care is an essential component of health care reform.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) consider restoring the Children's Dental Program to the level it was prior to the 1993-94 budget.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 225—The Health Reform Accountability Act

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), that Bill 225, The Health Reform Accountability Act; Loi sur l'obligation redditionnelle en matière de réforme de

la santé, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Deputy Speaker, it is a great pleasure and honour to stand in this House and discuss The Health Reform Accountability Act, something that I am sure all members of this House will join us in the New Democratic Party in supporting. It is something long overdue in this jurisdiction, concerning the so-called health reform of this government.

The bill itself will contain four major components. Firstly, it will require the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) to table quarterly reports in the Legislature that outline the major components of the government's attempt at health care reform and its status, Madam Deputy Speaker. This would include the number of beds closed, alternatives in place, et cetera.

Secondly, Madam Deputy Speaker, within 30 days of proclamation of the bill, the minister would have to hold public meetings to allow for a public input into the health reform process. The first four of these eight meetings would be held in Winnipeg, and four would be scheduled outside of Winnipeg.

Thirdly, once annually, Madam Deputy Speaker, each health care institution would be required to hold public meetings to discuss their reform and the process that is occurring in the public.

Fourthly, the Ombudsman's office or another third party would be given the responsibility to inquire into an act as an advocate and to deal with matters on a third party basis of health care reform when many individuals feel wronged or aggrieved by actions of this government or by the Ministry of Health. They would have a forum and a body to appeal to in respect of this decision.

Those are the major four components of The Health Reform Accountability Act, Madam Deputy Speaker, something I think would be welcomed by all Manitobans as an opportunity to provide both input and a dialogue with respect to health reform. Thank you.

Motion agreed to.

* (1335)

Introduction of Guests

Madam Deputy Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw all honourable members' attention to the public gallery, where we have with

us this afternoon, sixty-five Grade 5 students from Shamrock School. These students are under the direction of Ms. Sheila Wiebe. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer).

Additionally with us this afternoon, we have twenty Grade 5 students from William Whyte School. These students are under the direction of Ms. Rebecca Ehnes. This school is located in the constituency of the member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes).

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

**Provincial Parks
Policing**

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the Premier.

Madam Deputy Speaker, in 1988 a survey of all park users indicated that approximately 8.7 percent of people utilizing the parks felt that rowdiness was a significant problem dealing with our provincial parks.

This weekend, there have been a number of incidents reported publicly and privately to, I am sure, all members of this Legislature, dealing with the provincial parks.

Madam Deputy Speaker, one weekend does not a park policy make, but given the fact that on Friday the minister indicated that they were using, quote, smarter means to control the situation in our provincial parks, can the Premier outline to us the reasons for this major increase in rowdiness in our provincial parks and the strategy to deal with it?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I will take that question as notice on behalf of the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Doer: I am a little disappointed to see that this is such a low priority for the Premier, because it was the Premier as the head of Treasury Board that cut the staffing by 62 positions in the 1991-92 budget.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Filmon: Madam Deputy Speaker, I did not say that it was a low priority with this government. In fact, if the Leader of the Opposition wants that question

answered, he should ask it of the Minister of Natural Resources, not the Premier.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): On the same point of order, our rules are fairly clear that opposition members may ask questions to anyone they may request. It is the government that decides who answers.

If the Premier decides not to answer and to take questions as notice, that is his prerogative, but the bottom line, according to our rules, is that members may ask questions as they see fit and the government may decide.

I would suggest in that regard that perhaps the Minister of Natural Resources may wish to answer the question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The honourable First Minister did not have a point of order. It was a dispute over the facts.

* (1340)

Provincial Parks Staffing

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): My second question is to the head of government across the way, Madam Deputy Speaker, that made the decision when head of Treasury Board to cut staffing in the Department of Natural Resources by some 21 percent, the lowest priority in government, obviously, with the decisions that they made. The second lowest priority was the community colleges in the same year, in terms of government spending.

The minister has now indicated that the lack of staffing may have to be augmented by the utilization of RCMP officers, in terms of provincial parks.

People in Manitoba are very concerned about crime and very concerned about enforcement of crime. How is it cost-effective to have RCM police to make up for the staffing cuts that this Premier made in the provincial parks in the 1991-92 fiscal year?

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Madam Deputy Speaker, with respect to the staffing question that the Leader of the Opposition raises, let me assure the honourable member that the substantial portion of the staffing cuts that he alludes to, which in fact took place, were going back to the practice that had been there previously and worked well for many years, that is, staggered work hours for our Parks employees.

There are no riots, no rowdiness in our parks in the months of November, December, January and February, so that represents the standard. There was no reduction in personnel within our Parks system. In fact, this particular weekend, because of past experience, my department added staff to these locations in all instances. [interjection]

Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, I tend to agree with the honourable Leader of the Opposition that one rowdy weekend should not make policy, but there is a problem, and we have tried different things in the past. We have had kind of a voluntary restriction on the use of alcohol back in the early '80s. It did not work particularly well. It is difficult to enforce.

Certainly what happened this past weekend is of concern to all of us, and senior officials within the Department of Natural Resources are meeting this afternoon to assess the whole situation and to make some further recommendations to me as minister.

Policing

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): In 1988, the last public survey of park users dealing with the, quote, rowdiness problem, had a number of significant perceptions from the people who were surveyed. Twenty percent felt that stricter enforcement was necessary in the provincial parks. Thirty-two percent, the highest number, felt that more patrols were necessary. Madam Deputy Speaker, 5.9 percent felt that a ban on alcohol on some weekends would be desirable and 5.4 percent said a ban on alcohol on all weekends would be desirable, and then there were other recommendations to the government.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the people we have talked to in the Parks feel they are understaffed, and they cannot provide the enforcement levels that are necessary for those provincial parks, contrary to the government's statement today.

I would like to ask the minister: What will the strategy be for dealing with rowdiness in the provincial parks, and will he consider the opinion of the public, the utilizing public of the provincial parks in Manitoba? The beauty of our provincial parks and the quality of our provincial parks surely must go hand in hand with the kind of comfort and safety that most Manitobans would desire for our provincial park system.

* (1345)

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Madam Deputy Speaker, I can only assure the honourable Leader of the Opposition that all issues will be examined. I am told, although somewhere along the line I skipped that generation, that at another time, Clear Lake and the Riding Mountain National Park was a favourite haunt for a generation of youngsters to initiate the rites of spring.

I might say that the federal government's response was to impose a total ban on liquor in the Riding Mountain National Park. I am just suggesting to the honourable Leader of the Opposition that I will entertain all suggestions from staff and from past public surveys as to what we can do.

We do have the opportunity, within the Department of Natural Resources, just as we do when faced with emergency forest fire situations, to move staff around. We have history that indicates particular weekends being the heaviest call on our park and campground facilities. I will ask the department to facilitate to the extent possible the added supervision that obviously we would like to bring to bear on this situation.

Health Care System Reform Rural Manitoba

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): Madam Deputy Speaker, under the minister's direction, hundreds of hospital beds in Winnipeg have been closed. Hundreds of workers have been laid off, and a multimillion dollar consultant has been brought in to try to salvage what is left of the minister's health reform plan.

Now, apparently, the minister has announced that, contrary to what is stated in his plan, health reform in rural Manitoba will now be delayed two years until after the next provincial election.

Can the minister confirm and outline what the plan is for his so-called health reform in rural Manitoba now?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Madam Deputy Speaker, again, with regret, I have to point out a factual inaccuracy in my honourable friend's preamble. My honourable friend indicates that I have said reform of the rural health care system will be delayed 12 to 24 months. That was a report emanating from—we are not exactly sure—western Manitoba, allegedly, by some reporter.

Maybe my honourable friend had something to do with that statement. I do not know.

Madam Deputy Speaker, my honourable friend, as I said, is factually in error and, again, has relied on his most common research vehicle, the rumour mill, to pose questions in this House.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Deputy Speaker, can the minister confirm that his schedule is on schedule with respect to his Health Action Plan? Is he continuing to close the 200 beds in rural Manitoba, as he announced, by '93-94? Will he table an update of that plan, if it is not, in fact, the case?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Deputy Speaker, with as much regret as I can muster, my honourable friend is factually inaccurate again in his preamble. My honourable friend has stated that we were going to close 200 beds in rural Manitoba, according to the Health Action Plan, as tabled May 14, last year. My honourable friend might revisit that section. He will find that is not the intent.

It will be a refocus of the use of up to 200 beds, some of which will be used for repatriation of patients from Winnipeg, where they have received care, to care closer to home, which is a fundamental underpinning principle of reform of the health care system.

We, unlike the NDP, are trying to build services in rural Manitoba. We are trying to build services in northern Manitoba instead of the constant reliance that grew through 14 years of previous administrations' efforts at centralizing health care to the city of Winnipeg.

Psychiatric Bed Closures

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): Madam Deputy Speaker, I am sure patients in lineups will be happy to know they are being repatriated rather than waiting in line.

My final supplementary to the minister is: Will the minister assure this House, since beds at St. Boniface were supposed to be closed last week, psychiatric beds, that no more beds will be closed until the community services are put in place prior to the closing of the beds?

* (1350)

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Madam Deputy Speaker, my honourable friend has finally asked a question without inaccurate preamble.

Let me indicate to my honourable friend that the St. Boniface acute psychiatric beds were retired from service Friday, May 21. Some 24 were retired from service. Here are the community— [Interjection] Madam Deputy Speaker, maybe my honourable friends the New Democrats have all the answers, but I doubt they do.

The community alternatives which have been implemented include the six additional Salvation Army Crisis Stabilization beds which have been in place for the past month. Eleven members of the Mobile Crisis Team have been recruited, trained and began work Monday last. That is now a crisis stabilization team that is now operating longer hours, more days, with more people in service. The new Mobile Crisis phone numbers are in place, and they are 946-9109 and 946-9113. Intensive Case Management group: Members are in place to handle cases resulting from the St. Boniface closures. The Sara Riel Crisis Stabilization Unit: The building has been identified and is now in the process of reserving for in-service. Madam Deputy Speaker, these are community-based services that are in place prior to the closure of those St. Boniface beds.

That is why I say from time to time, my honourable friend gives me an opportunity to put facts on the record, not the rumour-mill rhetoric that my honourable friend always brings to this House, inaccurately, I might add, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Health Care System Reform Public Consultations

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Madam Deputy Speaker, the Winnipeg Sun had an article by James O'Connor in which an individual indicated that her father had died because of cutbacks. It was denied by the hospital. The reply was that lines outside operating rooms have not grown much, the implication clearly there that they have grown some.

Today in my mail I received a letter from another individual—I am prepared to table this letter—in which he asserts that his mother died due to the provincial government's underfunding of our health care system. This is happening more and more frequently, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I think that it is time that the government did what we have been begging them to do since the health reform package was presented.

When will this government finally begin to debate and to discuss in an open and public process, the means by which they are engaging in health care reform?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Madam Deputy Speaker, my honourable friend refers to an article that appeared in the Winnipeg Sun. If I have the same article and the same circumstances in memory, the individual was not on a waiting list for any kind of heart surgery at the St. Boniface General Hospital. That, of course, would have one question as to why the allegations around this event were raised. I have no doubt that there is a great deal of stress within the family in terms of the circumstances of a tragic loss.

Madam Deputy Speaker, even the recently tabled Fraser Institute report said there has been a greater improvement in terms of management and length of the waiting list and access to open-heart surgery and heart surgical procedures in Manitoba than any other province since their previous review some two years ago.

Those are some of the positive results that are happening. Much work has to be done in terms of making our health care system work effectively and appropriately to serve the health care needs of Manitobans.

Madam Deputy Speaker, with regret, I have to reject my honourable friend's use of this particular circumstance to try and in some way illustrate that the process of change is not working, because in this circumstance I do not believe the accusation of fault was an appropriate one.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Deputy Speaker, the minister simply does not get it. The reality is that it does not matter what he is doing, the public does not believe him. They do not believe that the reform process is taking place like he tells them it is taking place. The time has come for him to be much more open with the public so that we do not get letters like the one I just tabled indicating that an individual honestly believes that his mother died because there have been cutbacks. If those cutbacks do not exist, then the minister has a responsibility to explain that.

When is he going to start to explain his own health reform policy?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Deputy Speaker, I explain our health care reform policy in this House almost every Question Period without fail. I explain it at invitations

to speak to varying groups both inside the province of Manitoba and outside the province of Manitoba.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the reason for the confusion is some of the language my honourable friend, from time to time, may use inadvertently. How do you call a 38 percent increase in funding to health care, from \$1.2 billion in 1988 when we came into government defeating a budget—which we subsequently increased the budget of Health—and now it ranges \$1.86 billion, a 38 percent increase, all areas of the ministry increased and increased substantially. How does my honourable friend square that with cutback?

That is the problem that Health ministers across the length and breadth of Canada have today—opposition members and others who persist in using the language of cutbacks, when in fact every single ministry from Newfoundland to British Columbia has probably poured the same 38 percent increase over a five-budget period of time into health care, and are now coming to grips with managing that system better to assure its integrity, to assure its preservation, to assure that it is there to serve the people when they need that health care system.

* (1355)

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Deputy Speaker, the Liberal Party has supported the health reform package since the minister announced it. There is no question about that, but we have asked him to please explain things to the people, and challenging the way we ask our questions is not explaining to the people of this province that their health care system is not in jeopardy, and they believe, rightly or wrongly, that it is.

Will the Minister of Health explain this simple statement by Jack Litvack: "Lines outside operating rooms haven't grown much . . ."

What does he mean by "much"?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Deputy Speaker, I would leave that explanation to the individual who made the statement.

Madam Deputy Speaker, surely my honourable friend must believe that something worked appropriately when the waiting lists and length of time to access service in, for instance, cardiac surgery, has improved over the last three years, not gone down, as my honourable friend would have us believe.

I appreciate the support of the Liberal Party in attempting to support reform of the health care system, because clearly and unequivocally, Ministers of Health, whether they are New Democrats in British Columbia, or Liberals in Newfoundland, or Conservatives in Manitoba, agree that we have to make significant changes or else our system will not survive the 1990s, and all the disastrous predictions that my honourable friends are wont to make from time to time will come true.

It is only with significant change that we can preserve and protect medicare as Canadians want us to do. Now, that means not just me explaining what we are doing, because I do that every opportunity I get. From time to time, it would require the integrity of both opposition parties to explain what they would do, give us the good ideas, but we never hear that.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): On a point of order, Beauchesne, Citation 417, is very clear, Madam Deputy Speaker: "Answers to questions should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and should not provoke debate."

I would suggest to you that the minister has broken all three of those provisions or rules. I would like to ask you to call him to order, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The honourable minister had concluded his remarks.

Aboriginal Justice Inquiry Report Government Action Plan

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): My questions are directed to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon).

Madam Deputy Speaker, when the AJI report was completed almost two years ago, and delivered to this government, Manitobans rightfully had high expectations that the government would live up to their promises of action on the report.

Instead, what we have seen since has been a series of excuses and minor adjustments, mostly adjustments that would have occurred anyway, whether the AJI happened or not. The government, through its ministry, told us one day in this House that it was working on this issue harder than anything else it was working on.

I would like to know, Madam Deputy Speaker, when this Premier and his government will be releasing, finally, the action plan on the AJI, as far as implementation plans go.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Deputy Speaker, that is a question which more properly should be responded to by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), but I can tell the member opposite that a good deal of work and effort has been put into implementing as many of the recommendations of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry as could be done, and many of the initiatives have been undertaken.

Many of the recommendations have been followed. A commitment of over a million dollars has been made for the second year in a row to the implementation phase and work is progressing.

I will take the remainder of that question as notice so that a complete update can be given by the Minister of Justice when he returns to the House.

* (1400)

Aboriginal Policing Services Negotiations

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): Madam Deputy Speaker, this government has shown their support to the AJI all right when they have cut the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs of their funding.

Why has this government not agreed to negotiate with the federal government and the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs to increase on-reserve policing by way of those federal-provincial AMC agreements?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Deputy Speaker, again, we are one of the leading provinces in the nation with respect to aboriginal policing and justice initiatives in a variety of ways.

I will take the remainder of that question as notice again on behalf of the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), so he can give a more full and complete response as to all of the things that are underway with respect to that issue.

Aboriginal Justice Inquiry Report Analysis Tabling Request

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): Madam Deputy Speaker, my final question is again to the First Minister.

Is the Premier and his government finally ready to table in the House the government study and analysis of all of those 306 AJI recommendations, so that Manitobans can see for themselves what it

is that has stopped this government from acting on the report?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Deputy Speaker, this government has been implementing many of the recommendations and many of the initiatives contained within the AJI. This government has committed each of the last two years more than a million dollars toward that implementation phase.

This government has been meeting with people throughout the community and with the aboriginal community. I have participated in some of the meetings, so has the Minister of Native Affairs and Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) in our government, as well as the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), as well as many others of our ministers.

The process is ongoing, and I would just say that this information will be brought back by the Minister of Justice to the satisfaction, I am sure, of the member for The Pas.

Grow Bond Program Status Report

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Madam Deputy Speaker, when it comes to economic initiatives, whether it is the Industrial Opportunities Program or negotiations with groups like Repap or Ontario Hydro, this government has been a disappointing failure, I think, for most Manitobans.

Three years ago, when the government announced the formation of the Grow Bonds concept and approximately a year later, some two years ago, when the government introduced Grow Bonds legislation, we were promised in a glowing press release that the Grow Bonds corporations would be creating hundreds of jobs in Manitoba and that the province was putting aside some \$10 million for the program.

Madam Deputy Speaker, my question to the acting Minister of Rural Development is: Can the minister indicate how many Grow Bonds corporations are currently operating and how much of the \$10 million has currently been assigned as part of the guarantee under that program?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Energy and Mines): Madam Deputy Speaker, I will take that question as notice, unless the member wants to repeat the question for the member.

Mr. Storie: Madam Deputy Speaker, you can imagine my relief at seeing someone who may actually be able to answer a question.

Madam Deputy Speaker, my question to the Minister of Rural Development is: Why, after two years, is the Grow Bonds corporation being roundly criticized and condemned amongst economic development groups across the province? Can he tell this House how much of the \$10 million that was committed as part of the guarantee has been committed under the program and how many Grow Bonds corporations that represents?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): Madam Deputy Speaker, I can indicate to my honourable friend that over the last year we have had a number of initiatives that have been undertaken under the Grow Bonds program. Indeed, we have to date four proposals which have come before us and have been approved for sale of Grow Bonds, and that is over the course of a year.

It is a new program to this province and the four projects I think would—I cannot give the exact number of dollars that would be generated by the projects, but, Madam Deputy Speaker, I know that we have about four different proposals that are being worked on right now that show very good promise.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we have to assure the members of the House that it is communities that come together to form bond corporations and projects come forward from communities, not from government. It is the Grow Bonds corporation staff that are out there working with communities to ensure that projects do come forward. Indeed the money is there. In all four projects we have shown that the investment is ready as long as we have the projects coming forward.

Failure Rate

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Madam Deputy Speaker, back in 1991 the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) was promising us that there would be dozens of projects approved under the Grow Bonds corporation. Two years later, the minister says—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order. Does the honourable member have a question?

Mr. Storie: Madam Deputy Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Rural Development.

Can the minister explain why 50 percent of the projects that have thus far been approved have failed, that projects approved for Selkirk and projects approved for Portage la Prairie have

failed?—50 percent failure rate in a very limited program.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): Madam Deputy Speaker, as a matter of fact, the Grow Bonds proposal that the member refers to is one and the same. He is talking about the Sunnex project, which is not dead for that matter. Indeed the Grow Bonds corporation that was formed in Portage la Prairie for the purpose of supporting the project chose not to go ahead with the project. It was not the project that failed, nor was it our withdrawal of the approval for the project. It was the proposal in Portage and indeed it was the Grow Bonds corporation there that decided not to go ahead with the project.

Review

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Madam Deputy Speaker, given the fiasco that the Sunnex Grow Bond proposal has turned into—and the minister has suggested there may be a review, in fact, of the program and the management of the program—will the minister now agree to have a review of the program and the difficulties the program is having in creating the kinds of economic opportunities that rural Manitobans had hoped for? Will he review this program?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): Madam Deputy Speaker, the Grow Bonds Program itself is one that is working. We want to ensure when we do a review of the proposals that come before us that each and every proposal is going to be one that is going to be viable and is going to have economic benefit for the province.

That is why we have addressed the entire issue of Grow Bonds in a very careful way. The member talks about the Sunnex proposal, and the proposal itself is not one we have rejected. It is one we approved, but it is up to the Grow Bonds corporation within a community to decide whether or not they will go ahead with the proposal.

In the Portage la Prairie case, they have decided not to go ahead with it. That has nothing to do with whether or not we as a province approve or do not approve of that project.

Provincial Parks Polling

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources.

In the minister's own words today, quote: Every year, we have partying, drunks and the odd assault.

On May 7, the minister issued a press release indicating that whether you enjoy camping for a weekend or just a day trip for relaxation, Manitoba has a variety of great parks for you to discover. I encourage everyone to take the time to explore our rich, natural heritage—words which I heartily agree with, actions which bear out a different story.

My question to the minister: If he knew that this type of hooliganism, as he says, occurred in our parks every year, why was he unable to better control the situation which resulted in assaults and sexual assaults around the province, at least 20 beatings putting at least two individuals in hospitals with knife wounds?

Why was this minister not able to better control the situation, and was it as a result of the cutbacks in his own department?

* (1410)

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Madam Deputy Speaker, some 60,000 to 70,000 youngsters enjoyed themselves in our parks and acted responsibly. I regret, as I am sure do many of their fellow campers, that a relatively small number chose to act irresponsibly, but I ask that honourable members appreciate the problem that this poses for the officials, you know, the parks.

In effect, you are putting communities of 40,000 or 50,000 people in one place, and I suspect you get the same averaging out of people who choose to abuse that opportunity.

I want to assure the member for St. James, as I assured the Leader of the official opposition (Mr. Doer), that it is precisely because we have had, regrettably, a history of some difficulty in the past that we in fact beefed up our complement in these locations during this particular weekend.

Liquor Control Act Amendments

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): I hope the minister has filed his registration form to vote, Madam Deputy Speaker. [interjection] It is in the mail. He is calling me the leader already.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the minister talks as if—and I do not mean that he intended any of this—there is a certain amount of acceptable violence in

our parks. He says, you get 40,000 or 50,000 people together, it is going to happen. Well, it should not happen. We know it happens every year.

My question for the minister, Madam Deputy Speaker: Did he meet with his colleague the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) in anticipation of the problems of this weekend, to look at amendments to The Liquor Control Act that could be brought in to control this situation, to better give his officers, his increasingly shrinking number of officers, a better opportunity to stop this type of hooliganism, a lot of which has to do with alcohol abuse?

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Madam Deputy Speaker, to refute the last question first, the number of natural resources officers has increased in the last 18 months. Firstly, a special SWAT team, as I have dubbed it, has been put in to help reduce the illegal poaching, and we are currently in the process of filling an additional five positions of natural resources officers.

Madam Deputy Speaker, there are a number of issues that the Parks Branch will examine. Friday night, as per example, when the occupancy rate of these same facilities was at 80 percent rather than the maximum, we had a relatively quiet night. When we were to full 100 percent occupancy, we had difficulty. Now whether or not that had anything to do with it, we will take a look at it.

As for the initial aside, I have to answer to the honourable member, that I have given my firm and unswerving support to his opponent in the Liberal leadership campaign. I believe that Kevin Lamoureux would make a great leader of the Liberal Party. Once I commit myself, I commit myself, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Provincial Park Lands Act Amendments

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): The honourable minister's change of heart hurts me greatly, Madam Deputy Speaker. It is a big loss.

My final question for the minister: When is this minister going to table the long-awaited new parks act which he has threatened to table since last fall? When is he going to table that legislation? Will that legislation include better controls on this type of hooliganism and put more power and better penalties into the hands of his officers with respect to these problems?

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): The member raises a very important issue. Yes, indeed, it is my hope that I will be able to present for first reading, the new Park Lands Act. I was hoping to do it today, but I may do it tomorrow.

To the specific question, whereas under the present regime, that kind of authority is more by tradition or by ministerial policy, there will be very specific clauses enabling the Parks Branch and the appropriate minister to respond to situations that trouble us all today.

Consumers' Association of Canada Government Funding

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Madam Deputy Speaker, this government listens only to their friends and each week that is becoming more clear to us.

Students on social allowance, daycares, the Manitoba League of the Physically Handicapped, foster families, and aboriginal organizations have all seen their funding eliminated. One lobby group, however, the lobby group supporting this government, the Consumers' Association of Manitoba, on Friday, last Friday, got a grant of over \$35,000.

My question to the Premier is this: Why does this lobby group rate higher than foster families, students, handicapped organizations and aboriginal groups to this Premier?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Deputy Speaker, the Consumers' Association of Canada, Manitoba branch, has long provided a very valuable service by—[interjection] It was supported by the New Democratic administration. They provide a nonpartisan objective analysis of the presentations that are made before the Public Utilities Board by the various utilities; they have worked together with the Manitoba Society of Seniors, with many other public organizations. They supply research, they supply information to make—[interjection]

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Deputy Speaker, the members opposite do not want to hear the answer, so I will sit down.

Arni Thorsteinson Provincial Audit—Terms of Reference

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Madam Deputy Speaker, my supplementary to the same minister,

and perhaps I will now ask him: Will the Premier table today the terms of reference of the request that he is making to the Provincial Auditor, to investigate the delays of this government in seizing the rental payments of the Tory fundraiser?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Madam Deputy Speaker, I sent a letter of request to the Provincial Auditor—I believe it was Friday morning—and giving broad terms of reference to the Provincial Auditor, to look in any matter that she so chooses with respect to this issue.

Mr. Maloway: Madam Deputy Speaker, well, my question was: Would he release the terms of reference? Will he show us a copy of the letter? Since the fundraiser collected over a million dollars in rental payments during this period, will he ask the Auditor to investigate why Arni Thorsteinson was allowed to take the rental payments when he was not making the mortgage payments?

Mr. Manness: Madam Deputy Speaker, I would ask the member to accept my word that I have sent a letter requesting and allowing the Provincial Auditor to look at all elements and aspects.

If the members wish me to table that letter, I will do so tomorrow.

* (1420)

Winkler Area Farms Irrigation

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): One of the concerns with the Assiniboine diversion project, is that the water from the Assiniboine is being diverted to the Winkler area, to allow expanded irrigation, that it will indeed allow expanded irrigation because the potable water will be used for municipal use, which will allow the existing aquifer to be used for depleting the water for irrigation.

My question is for the Minister of Environment. With the new irrigation licence issued for the regional farms in that area, what is the expected increase of the aquifer water for irrigation?

Hon. Glen Cummlings (Minister of Environment): Madam Deputy Speaker, let me first of all address the preamble.

I hope the member is mistaken in her statement that water being proposed to be dealt with in this request can somehow be diverted for irrigation, because the proposal, as I understand it, is for treated water. As a farmer myself, I think that would be a very impractical approach.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The time allocated for Question Period has expired.

Nonpolitical Statement

Madam Deputy Speaker: Does the honourable member for Swan River have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Swan River Youth Justice Committee which on May 18 held a dinner in recognition of 10 years of service to the community. The dinner was to recognize many early board members, four of them who are still in the community, for the work they have done.

I think it is very important that we recognize this committee that goes about the community very quietly doing its work, not looking for any great publicity of what it is doing but doing some very important work. As I said, four of the original members are still in the community. Only one was able to attend that meeting, and that was Staff Sergeant Dominato.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the committee came into existence in February of 1983. They were organized to serve, and by May that same year, they had their first constitution. The committee provides an opportunity for concerned citizens to participate with offenders in the criminal justice system. They are aware of local problems and are aware of local resources to come up with a solution.

Over the years, there have been many young people who have committed some of the less serious offences and have been able to participate in alternate measures. This gives an opportunity to young people to participate, to accept the responsibility of their illegal actions and to make up for their wrongdoing.

One of the functions of the Youth Justice Committee is to mediate between the victims and offenders and assist in making arrangements for offenders to make compensation to victims, either by cash or personal service.

Madam Deputy Speaker, there are many other activities going on in the Swan River community that this committee is working with. That is a students' peer group, which has been very effective in the community. I want to recognize those people who have devoted so unselfishly of their time to help these young people correct their errors, pay their dues and correct their ways in the community.

Madam Deputy Speaker, there are many people in the community who have given of themselves unselfishly. I congratulate them on their work. In the words of one of the members, they said, perhaps through all of this work and the peer groups, we will not need youth justice committees in the future.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Downey), that Madam Deputy 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 Education and Training; and the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) in the Chair for Executive Council.

* (1430)

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Mr. Deputy Chairperson (Marcel Laurendeau): Good afternoon. 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 Education and Training. When the committee last sat it had been considering item 1.(c)(1) on page 34 of the Estimates book.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): I wanted to give notice to the minister that in order that we will not have to perhaps wait once we get to the support for public schools that we will be wanting the breakdown of all of the funding for each of the school divisions, the increase or decrease that was announced by the minister in mid-February and the impact of decisions taken as a result of Bill 16 which of course has not passed the Legislature but which has governed the practice and conduct of the school divisions to a great extent, I believe, this spring in budget decisions.

To the extent that the minister has that information at the time we get to that line in the Estimates, I just

wanted the minister to be aware that we will be wanting that breakdown for each of the school divisions.

The Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) seems to believe that there is a limit to the preamble in the committee and that is a departure from traditional practice and perhaps something that the minister should be aware of before he starts determining when he thinks questions should be asked, because it simply delays matters and slows down the process rather than speeds it up.

I wanted to, just before I get onto another major item, ask the minister whether it is her policy, I guess, since we are dealing with Planning and Policy Development, whether it is her intention to speak to the student rally tomorrow?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I have had some opportunity to discuss the intention of the student rally with the organizers and to talk with them about what they hope to achieve, and they have asked that I will be available to be present and I have told them that I will.

Mr. Plohman: I want to ask the minister a few questions about the issue of Francophone governance. Yes, it is an important matter. The Bill 34 which the minister introduced, I think last Wednesday last week the minister moved second reading and spoke on the bill, and I wanted to ask a few questions about the bill and the policy behind the bill prior to our moving forward in this particular area.

The minister has taken the position with regard to French language governance that she should have a dual system of French language first instruction in the province, and I wonder whether the minister could explain the rationale behind that.

It is an implementation of the Supreme Court decision which is necessary to do as we all understand it, and we understand that there might be significant costs involved.

Unfortunately, when the minister was unable to be present on Friday—and I just mention this for her edification because she was not there to hear the questions—I did ask about the potential transference of grant money from existing school divisions to the Francophone division and school board. I want to explore that a bit with the minister here today. In addition to that, there is the issue of

how the instruction will be offered, and it has cost implications as well.

I wonder if the minister could give us some background on arriving at this aspect of her policy. There are many aspects to this, and it is obviously a very large policy issue, but it does involve some particular policy decisions that the minister would have had to have made.

So I want to ask the minister on that basis why she has proceeded with the proposal that would see duplicate French language instruction in schools insofar as programming is concerned.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order. It will just be one minute, please.

Order, please. I would like to advise the committee that the line of questioning the honourable member is bringing forward does not really fall under line 1.(c)(1) which is Planning and Policy Development. It does fall under legislation which is before the House at this time.

I would ask the honourable member to either rephrase the question, but it will be up to the minister whether she cares to respond to the questions put by the member.

Point of Order

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I fully agree with your comments that this matter is legislation that is before the House.

There is a book of Estimates which you are dealing with, a specific line which does not include what is now being questioned on, and I think your ruling is correct.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: I thank the honourable minister for his comments.

* * *

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I realize that it is up to the minister at any time to determine whether she wants to answer the question or not. That is not a newfound right that the Chairperson has identified here. In all cases, the minister can either decide to answer, to give another answer which quite often happens, to talk about the topic of discussion or perhaps not to answer at all. This happens frequently.

* (1440)

What I am asking about is the policy of the minister with regard to this aspect. We can put the bill aside. I asked the minister her policy and her rationale for her policy.

Obviously, she has had to determine this policy with consultation with her officials in the bureau and also the senior officials in the department and arrive at a position, so we have a question dealing with the minister's policy as it applies to—and perhaps identified in the booklet that was distributed by the minister.

Of course, that is within the purview of this committee, something that should be discussed contrary to what the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) has stated in his remarks. He is obviously not aware of the extent of the issue, Mr. Deputy Chairperson.

Quite aside from the legislation that is before them, we have a book called: Francophone Schools Governance. The minister has put that out to the public. One of the policies that the minister has identified is a provision that would allow for French language first instruction, both within the Francophone division and within existing divisions—in other words, a parallel French language first instruction. I ask the minister if indeed that is her policy and what her rationale is for that parallel policy.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the issue of the creation of the Francophone school division is before the House in legislation. It will be fully discussed and debated as it progresses through second reading and on to committee.

Its background is likely very well known to the member. The issue of Francophone governance and the right of the Francophone minority, in this case, for governance of their own schools flows from a section of the Charter of Rights. In addition, it flows also from a Supreme Court decision. So the right flows, one, from a legislative document, or a document which we refer to as legislators, and then, in addition, it also refers to law within the court, a judgment of the Supreme Court of Canada.

In complying with the Mahé ruling and reflecting upon what has been required in the Charter of Rights, on behalf of Section 23 people, Manitoba has decided on a form to ensure that the Francophone minority, in this case, will have governance over their schools.

The court did not tell Manitoba or any other province who would be covered—because it is a Supreme Court decision and therefore applies across Canada—exactly how this system of Francophone governance was to be implemented. It was up to the provinces to determine the way that they would implement it best for their province and would allow provinces to give consideration to their own regional differences and the regional needs of their particular province. It is with that background consideration that Manitoba developed their system of Francophone governance.

We certainly look to respect the ruling of the Supreme Court of Canada. We also recognize the Section 23 portion of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. As a result of that, Manitoba has arrived at its particular mechanism for Francophone governance, the provision of a Francophone school board.

Further to that, we can discuss during the debate of the legislation, but I believe that provides the background to the member in terms of where the direction to create such a school board flows from.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we do have the unique opportunity to discuss all aspects of policy of this minister at this particular time in her Estimates and happens, coincidentally, to occur just when the bill is before the House.

The two issues and happenings are independent, of course, but happen to be occurring at the same time and provide us with a unique opportunity to discuss aspects of a policy that is reflected in a bill. That policy, of course, had to be developed by the minister, so I think it is quite appropriate to explore that as far as necessary at this particular time.

The minister has given some background on why she has proceeded with legislation. However, in discussions with her policy staff, she has obviously had to make a number of policy decisions. I just want to ask the minister whether she has consulted extensively in arriving at this, at her position, and with whom?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I will remind the member that when the decision of the Mahé case was handed down, Manitoba's response was to set up a committee, the Gallant committee on Francophone governance.

That committee was a representative committee. It did look at the issues, and it did provide government with a great deal of information in terms of

issues to look at in setting up the model of Francophone governance in Manitoba.

Mr. Plozman: Following that committee, has the minister acted on those recommendations, or have there been additional policy areas that have been developed since the Gallant report?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the member, I am sure, has had an opportunity to look at the Gallant report and to also look at the bill and to see a great deal of what was recommended by the Gallant report reflected in the bill.

In addition, we also had another case which was before the Supreme Court of Canada. The decision was handed down in December. We also were able to look at what that decision stated and to then determine how Manitoba would proceed in setting up a system of Francophone governance.

Mr. Plozman: Could the minister provide the committee with the total number of students potentially served by a Francophone school board in Manitoba?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we believe the number will be in the range of 4,000 to 6,000 students.

Mr. Plozman: I thank the minister for that. Is the minister saying then that the 7,101 students identified in the Gallant report is not the figure that is being used?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the figure I gave the member is an estimated figure, and that was what he asked for. In terms of a more detailed figure, we might get to that when we are discussing the bill in more detail, or perhaps when we are at the section of my department which deals more specifically with the education of Francophones and French immersion and other assistance in terms of French language services.

However, we will only know the exact number of students who wish to be educated, whose families wish them to be educated in the Francophone division, when those parents have in fact indicated that they wish to enroll their child or children within the Francophone system. So that number, in terms of its total accuracy, will not be known until the implementation committee has had its opportunity to complete its work.

* (1450)

Mr. Plozman: Is the minister saying that the implementation committee is on schedule at the

present time, and what is the date that she expects that to be in?

Mrs. Vodrey: The implementation committee has had, I believe it is, two meetings to this date. The implementation committee now has to do the work with the communities within Manitoba. They will be setting up the times that they will be able to go into those communities, provide the information that is required, and look at the registration process, because we would like to have, of course, the legislation passed at the end of this session.

With the legislation passed, we will then be able to conduct the elections for the regional committees. Following that, the regional committees will then be able to name their member to the board of trustees. We know that whole system of regional committees and trustees will have a great deal of work to do over the next year, so we certainly look for this to be done within the time frame that has been set out, which will allow us to proceed with those elections within the fall of '93.

Mr. Plozman: So then the minister is expecting the Monnin Committee to report its findings prior to the fall. I notice the minister talks about October 1, '93, as the implementation committee identifies which français programs to be transferred to the Francophone school division. Is there any additional information or preinformation that will be brought forward in report prior to October 1?

Mrs. Vodrey: The implementation committee will be in touch certainly with myself as minister as issues arise, if there are issues. We also expect to receive information from that committee about how the process of registration is proceeding, and so we look for ongoing information from the committee. But the committee does have a large job to do, and we expect that they will be able to proceed with that job as quickly as possible.

Mr. Plozman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, would the minister think that prior to the end of June, she would have a clarification on the number of students initially that would be transferred? Would she have that kind of definitive information, or would that not be till the fall?

Mrs. Vodrey: If the member is looking for the exact number of young people who would be registered in the Francophone division by the end of June of this year, I think it would be very difficult to provide him with that exact number.

We certainly look to have a fairly good estimation, and we hope that by the end of June to have a good idea, but we will have to see how the committee is able to do its work, how quickly the committee is able to do its work.

We have certainly put forward a time frame, and I believe they will be starting with some of the areas which have been identified, and they may be able to very quickly have a sense of the numbers of young people within some school communities who will register fairly quickly.

Then it may be as it moves on to other communities, the numbers may not occur as quickly, though again, we do look—and I have set this timetable forward from the very beginning—for the election of the regional committees and the trustees in the fall of '93.

Mr. Plohman: So the figure of 4,000 to 6,000 is an estimate of what the minister anticipates being registered initially, or is this something over a longer period of time?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, this is an estimated figure. We will have to wait until the committee has done its work and has worked within the community and has provided the information that Manitobans will need to know regarding the operation of the Francophone governance system, the system of representation.

I point to the direct and indirect election that will take place within the Francophone governance system which I know Manitobans will find important, and they will have to make sure that all of that is well understood.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, will the criteria for sufficient numbers be the prevailing one insofar as which communities in the province would be initially included in the Francophone school division, and what would the sufficient numbers be?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the member's question is somewhat difficult to interpret.

What we have said is that there are certain areas within Manitoba where the community itself has said that those areas are very likely to wish to become a part of the Francophone system, and so the Monnin Committee will be then working with those communities first of all, and we expect to have the numbers within those communities fairly soon. Then there are other parts of Manitoba in which the Monnin Committee will then go out and provide information, but those communities will know

already that there are a number of families who have committed to sending their child into the Francophone division.

The Monnin Committee will then be able to go into those other communities with that information and also the information contained within the booklet which describes very clearly what the goals of the Francophone governance system are.

We understand from the community members and also from groups which we have been working with over the past year, 18 months, that this will really be a very important feature in terms of Manitobans understanding the Francophone governance system.

Mr. Plohman: The minister has included in her policy book on Francophone school governance a map of the province, called Area of the Francophone School Division. Can the minister tell the committee what the purpose of that map is?

Mrs. Vodrey: The map is to indicate primarily where a large portion of the Francophone community is at the moment existing within Manitoba, and also, as the member would know, in the creation of a new school division, we needed to look at what the area of the school division may potentially be, where those people, those families, may come from.

All of this, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, is information which I believe we will be able to debate very fully in the process of bringing forward the legislation, where the member may have questions on this and where I will be pleased to provide him with very full and complete answers.

Mr. Plohman: Well, the minister is talking about second reading, and the last time I asked her a question on a bill, she refused to accept the question, so we cannot really have that. Of course, we have had second reading occur already, and the minister gave her speech at that time.

There is another opportunity to discuss this under French language governance in the Estimates. That is true. There is also the general Planning and Policy Development area of the department, which covers all the areas of policy, including French language governance as well as English language governance. So I think the Chairperson can feel quite at ease to allow the discussion on this area to go forward.

The minister has said that this map is here to show some of the extent of where the students for this division could come from. Is it not a fact, Mr.

Deputy Chairperson, to the minister, that students could come from anywhere in the province of Manitoba if there were sufficient numbers and that the colours on this map do not really mean anything?

* (1500)

Mrs. Vodrey: It is true that students may attend the Francophone division from other parts of the province other than in the shaded areas on the map. The shaded areas on the map are there to indicate, again, where there are known to be larger numbers of the Francophone community, parents who would be eligible to send their children to the Francophone division, to give some form to what the geography of the Francophone school division might look like.

Mr. Plohman: So there is no particular meaning to the shaded areas, other than to give some indication—it is not what the minister envisages as the scope of the Francophone division.

Mrs. Vodrey: The member is really moving away from issues of policy. He is moving into detail now of how the area of the Francophone school division was determined. He is also moving into areas of looking at how Manitobans who live outside of the area of the school division may, in fact, be included within the school division or may choose to send their children into that school division while their geographical area may not be a part of the shaded area.

He has certainly moved away from policy questions. He has certainly moved into a very detailed discussion of the development of the bill.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: I would like to remind honourable members that we are moving toward line 3, which is the Bureau de l'éducation française. I would ask the committee, if we are going to move into that line, possibly to consider passing a number of the lines ahead of it to get down to that point.

Mr. Plohman: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, for your helpful suggestion. However, it may be some time before we get to that line in the Estimates. We may have a substantial number of issues to raise as we go along to that process.

This is a very timely issue at the present time, one of policy the minister has actively worked on over the last while. I am sure she has spent a lot of time with her senior staff arriving at final positions on this that could be brought forward, and I might add that in the presentation of this policy booklet, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, is included, as a matter of policy, a

map. It is the minister's policy, undoubtedly, that a map be included, because that is why it is in here.

The question I am asking is one of policy regarding the map. Is it the minister's policy that the Francophone division be limited to the shaded areas on this map? If not, why has the map been included at all?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I think the presence of the map is a visual way in which to describe the information which is currently in the bill.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the minister says this visually describes what is in the bill. The bill does not provide any of this information. We are dealing with a piece of policy here, a policy booklet by this minister. She will give effect to policy through the bill, but the geographic area is not described in any way, shape or form in the bill.

I ask the minister to just provide us with some information as to why the map was provided and if it is her policy that the provisions of policy on Francophone governance apply only to the shaded areas.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, let me answer again so the member perhaps this time will understand.

There is an area that is noted on the map, and that notes where larger numbers of Section 23 eligible Francophones would be currently living, areas where there are français schools operating and where we know, by census figures, where the concentration or the larger numbers of Francophone Manitobans who hold these Section 23 rights as parents on behalf of their children are currently living.

However, I have said from the beginning, and this government has said from the beginning, Manitobans will have the opportunity, if Manitobans live outside of that shaded area and wish to have their child educated by the Francophone division, that in fact will be possible.

Mr. Plohman: I thank the minister for that clarification, and can she answer the other obvious question: Why has she included the map if indeed it is possible to have areas throughout the province included in the Francophone school division?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, again, the process of looking at the whole issue of Francophone governance was a very complicated one, and also, there were a number of legal

requirements to be satisfied and a number of requirements to make sure that we were complying with the results of the Supreme Court decision.

I would say that further discussion regarding some of the details that he is asking about would best be covered when we are able to discuss the bill at the committee stage or in the process of debate.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, this is not the bill that I am discussing. It is the minister's policy with regard to the map that she has included in her policy booklet, and I am asking why the minister arrived at the policy decision to include a map.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, again, the answer is the same. There is a very complicated process which we have undergone in terms of complying with the Supreme Court decision and also the legal requirements to create a new school division.

When we are in the process of actually discussing the bill and the details of the legislation, then that would be an appropriate time for us to discuss some of the detail which he is asking for at this time.

Mr. Plohman: I will ask the minister, is it not a fact that the legal requirements apply to all of Manitoba where numbers warrant?

Mrs. Vodrey: The issue of where numbers warrant, as he knows, we have looked at in the process of the bill. We certainly will be looking to accommodate Manitobans who indicate that they wish to have their child enrolled in the Francophone school division, making sure that those parents who do indicate that they would like their child enrolled actually do hold rights as Section 23 parents or in fact meet the other requirements which have been set out within the legislation.

* (1510)

Mr. Plohman: As the minister envisages it, is the Francophone school division not limited to what is designated on the map? I believe the minister has said no, it is not, from what I understood her to say.

On that basis, why was a map which therefore has no significance as to the limitations of the Francophone school division included in the minister's policy book?

Mrs. Vodrey: I can go back to saying that the map indicates areas in which there are concentrations of Section 23 rights-holders and areas in which it reflects that there are certain numbers of Manitobans who may wish to take part within the

Francophone school division. But, as I have explained to the member before, that where there is a parent who does meet the qualifications that have been set out as Section 23 rights-holder, or meets the other qualifications which are noted, that person may wish to have their child educated within the Francophone governance system.

Mr. Plohman: Just to understand why the minister bothered with the map when the rights apply to Manitobans throughout the province, can I ask whether this map is to delineate all municipalities where the number of potential students exceeds 50? Is that what this map does?

Mrs. Vodrey: Yes, that is correct.

Mr. Plohman: It would have been nice for the minister to tell us that earlier. It might have saved some time on discussion on this issue, simply to say that the potential students exceed 50.

Now can the minister indicate why that number was chosen? Is that an arbitrary number based on certain facts? Is it determined that if there were 50 perhaps that would be enough to make it viable to have a class of students? What is the rationale there?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, this number is one which is identifiable through the most recent census, but also this does take into account areas in which we know that there are français schools operating and areas that have been identified to have numbers of families which would be eligible to become a part of the Francophone school division. Again, they are areas in which there are schools currently operating.

Mr. Plohman: Just to clarify from the minister, are there any other municipalities not shaded in on the map where there is a potential of 50 students or more?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am informed that this shaded area does include the areas in which there are français schools operating. However, the bill—and I hesitate to get into a detailed discussion of the bill at this time, during the Estimates of the Department of Education—does provide for the Francophone school division then, as trustees and members of regional committees, to look at extending the actual territory of the Francophone school division when it is requested or when there is a requirement to do so.

So there is a provision which is available and a way in which the board may then wish to begin to

accommodate other eligible Manitobans. However, I have said from the beginning, and it has been government's policy from the beginning, that where there is a family who holds the rights of parents and wishes to have their children educated within the Francophone school division, that would then be made possible.

Mr. Plohman: Yes, then just to clarify, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the map is irrelevant to the extent that the division, the Francophone division, is not limited to municipalities where there are 50 or more potential students?

* (1520)

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the map, we believe, was an important way to look at where the concentrations and the largest numbers of eligible Section 23 Francophone families would be residing, in areas which would then be considered, potentially, to wish to indicate their right to join the Francophone school division. But, as I have said before, where an individual wishes to take part in that program and is a child of an eligible family, that provision will be made for that child then to attend a program within the Francophone school division.

Secondly, I have also said that where there are areas within the province—this is provided by the bill—who wish to become included by the Francophone school division, within the Francophone school division, that provision is there for the Francophone board—a mechanism for the Francophone board—to then consider this and to look at it.

So there are two issues which I have been attempting to clarify during the course of the discussion this afternoon.

Mr. Plohman: Is it the minister's belief that there are no municipalities other than those that are listed, that are shaded on the map, where there are 50 potential students or more?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, that is correct.

Mr. Plohman: Just another aspect of this discussion dealing with the minister's policy, and that goes back to what I asked earlier at the outset of this discussion.

Can the minister indicate why she has taken a position or established a policy that the new Francophone school division being implemented as a result of the Supreme Court decision would not be

the exclusive provider of French language first programming?

Mrs. Vodrey: The question before the court was the management rights of the Francophones over their school division. The court decision did grant exclusive rights of management over the Francophone school division. Manitoba has complied with that in our legislation. The court did not go so far as to grant monopoly rights over all français education within this province.

Therefore, in the system which we have put forward, we have provided for a Francophone governance model in which there are exclusive rights, in which the board will operate with exclusive rights of the Francophones and entitled individuals to operate the school division. We have not chosen a model which is representational or which is a ratio model. We have, in fact, chosen a model which will give the exclusive rights of governance within the Francophone school division to the eligible Manitobans.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the minister's stated policy here today to the committee seems somewhat different than her policy in the briefing material that she has provided to members, and that is that there would be powers to continue to offer français programming to existing school divisions, even though those existing school divisions have turned over a major part of this programming to the Francophone division. So we would indeed have parallel programming going on in these divisions potentially.

Mrs. Vodrey: Again, the issue is one of exclusive jurisdiction over the Francophone board which we have allowed, but the court did not go so far as to say that this board had monopoly rights over français education within the province.

Because the court did not go so far as to discuss monopoly rights, we have set up a system of governance in which there is exclusive jurisdiction over the Francophone board, but where Manitobans wish to remain within their own school divisions, then they continue to have the right to do so as we understand the court decision.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. I would like to remind honourable members that we are dealing with 1.(c)(1) Planning and Policy Development.

We are now starting to deal directly with the legislation, as the honourable member has quoted

exactly from the briefing list provided to him by the minister according to the legislation. So I would ask that we get back to Planning and Policy Development at this time.

Mr. Plohman: Well, the minister has indicated in her policy paper that, in fact, existing school divisions would be empowered to continue to offer français programs even in school divisions where the Francophone school division has jurisdiction.

I have never stated in my questions that all of the province of Manitoba should be under exclusive jurisdiction of the Francophone school division, but what I am asking about is why the minister has chosen as a matter of policy to have parallel French language first programming in school divisions. Does she not think this is a very costly way to proceed?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, in all the discussions which we have held and spoken about in terms of our model to implement Francophone governance, we have also respected individuals within this province, and we have also respected the fact that some individuals and some communities may wish to remain within their current school divisions.

We will not know until the Monnin Committee has, in fact, finished its work which, if any, of those communities may wish to remain within their home school divisions, but we have respected the right of Manitobans where they wish to remain within their home school divisions and have allowed programs to continue within their school divisions if that is what the community wishes.

However, we have through our legislation come forward with a model for Francophone school governance which does put the governance of the Francophone board under the exclusive management of the Francophone community.

So we have certainly been very active in meeting the requirements in terms of forming the Francophone school division and also in providing the exclusive management rights, but also accepting the fact that some Manitobans may wish to remain within their current school divisions, and we have respected the rights of those Manitobans to indicate that this may be the choice they would like to make.

Mr. Plohman: Just for clarification, the jurisdiction of the Francophone school division would not prevent immersion programs, for example, from existing in existing school divisions. Is that correct?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, that is correct because French Immersion programs do not speak to French first language education.

* (1530)

Mr. Plohman: Then why would the minister opt for an expensive option of having parallel French first language programming in both the school divisions existing at the present time and the new Francophone school division? Why would she not have had a clear-cut decision that parents would have to make here?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, because, as we have said from the beginning, Manitobans may wish to make a choice about remaining within their own school division and programs as they currently exist within their own community. That has been discussed from the announcement of this particular model for Francophone governance.

The Supreme Court chose not to comment on the particular model and also, as I said, came short of and did not, in fact, discuss the issue of the monopoly rights of the Francophone community.

So we have put forward a model which allows for the exclusive management of the Francophone school division by the Francophone community. We have also allowed for Manitobans to indicate if they wish to become a part of that Francophone school board or if they wish to maintain the programming within their current division.

I quote from Chief Justice Dickson, in terms of his remarks, in saying that the government should have the widest possible discretion in selecting the institutional means by which Section 23 obligations are to be met, and the court should be loath to interfere and impose what would be necessarily Procrustean standards unless this discretion is not exercised at all or is exercised in such a way as to deny a constitutional right.

Mr. Plohman: Did the minister consider the costs of the various options she had?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, as the member knows, children are currently being educated within a school division and within a school system, and the funds provided do flow, one, through the education funding formula and, secondly, through funds provided by taxation.

When children move into the Francophone system, that system will be funded, No. 1, by the education funding formula and, secondly, by

taxation, by those funds which will then follow the child into the Francophone governance model.

Mr. Plohman: Is it the minister's understanding that her choice of a parallel programming model will cost more than having programming provided by one jurisdiction, rather than parallel.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, the total costs will become known when we have the details of the registration. Again, I will remind the member that he is getting into some very detailed discussion of legislation which is before the House, and he is asking for information that generally would be covered within debate and within questioning around the issue of the legislation.

Mr. Plohman: The only other option to discuss any of these items, of course, when we get into specific enactment of these policies, will be when we deal with clause-by-clause discussion of the bill. There is no opportunity for the opposition to raise questions with the minister or to discuss it in the House, at least in terms of a two-way discussion. We have what is on the record by the minister, and that is probably all we are going to see until the clause-by-clause discussion. So we are talking what could be a period of weeks or months even before further discussion can go on.

I think it is important from a policy point of view that the minister is prepared to answer the policy basis for her legislation. That is what I am asking about: the principles and policy behind that legislation. I said that a number of times—and no reflection on the Chair, I must say, but I have to say that the Chair has brought to my attention that I should be asking in a different line.

The minister has attempted to procrastinate on this issue on numerous occasions during this questioning. I am simply asking a matter of principle and policy here whether the minister understood when she chose the option, the policy option, of allowing for parallel programming in areas where parents had opted for the new Francophone division, that that would cost more than if she had gone with exclusive jurisdiction for that Francophone division in those areas where they had opted for the Francophone division.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, again, as I have explained to the member, there is a basic cost of educating the pupil in one division or the other. I have explained how that funding flows, whether it flows to an existing division or whether it flows to the

new Francophone division. He then has moved from that issue into asking questions about specifics, and as I have said to him, we have to wait until we find out exactly how many pupils will be moving into the Francophone division, their age, their grade, their particular needs. Then we will also have to look at the operating costs of buildings and so on. We will need to look at the salary of instructors and so on.

There is a great deal of work which will be done over the next while, one by the Monnin Committee, and then secondly by the new Francophone board, before students are transferred. We expect students to be in the schools for September '94.

So, again, there are a number of details which the member would like to have specific numbers for, and which are very dependent upon some of the decisions which will be made in the next while by the community. But I think that it is important to look at the answer as I have given it to him so far, and that is that funding is provided per pupil and that funding will flow through the funding formula.

Also, as he knows, there is a formula which allows for the money which is collected by taxation to also flow with that student into the Francophone division. So there are students who are currently being funded in one division. Those students will now be funded in the Francophone division.

Mr. Plohman: If the minister wants to characterize my questions as specific, then she should realize that I could be asking questions of precisely how much money per pupil will be transferred from the provincial grants, how many will be transferred as a result of property tax levy, and how large the cost savings would be precisely by having a single program offered as opposed to a parallel program in terms of dollars. Those are specific questions. I am not asking those specific questions.

I am asking about the policies and principles behind the decisions of the minister. The minister has chosen a policy option that results in parallel programming potentially in many school divisions for French language first instruction being that offered by the Francophone division and that offered by the existing division. I have to ask the minister, as I said, whether she is aware that offering parallel programming such as that costs more than having individual programs, regardless of what grants are transferred.

There is only so much money there. The minister would be the first to tell us that to justify her cuts this

year in education generally. So, if she is not indicating that she is manufacturing more money, we have to explore that whole area with the minister, because there may very well be—there are, as a fact, additional costs associated with implementing the Supreme Court decision.

* (1540)

The federal government has recognized that to a certain extent. Even with the small amount they have announced to all the provinces over a six-year period, they have recognized that. So we know there are going to be additional costs, and at some point we have to quantify what we are talking about here and how the decisions of this government are going to impact on existing school divisions and on existing programming. Pretty important issue, and we have to find out from the minister how much she has thought this through in terms of this impact.

I am asking the minister on the issue of parallel programming whether she realizes that has a greater cost to it than allocating the exclusive jurisdiction of French language first programming to the Francophone division where parents have made the decision that they would like to become part of the Francophone division.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, in putting forward this model, we did respect the right of Manitobans to make choices and that was a very important issue of respect, but I think now Manitobans, as they work with the Monnin Committee, will now determine where they will be registering their children. It will not be, until we have the information regarding where children will be registered, what parents' intention is in terms of their registration for us to really be able to provide him with the details of any places where there may be a parallel system or where some families choose simply to have things remain as they are, or, in other cases, where some families and school communities choose to become a part of the Francophone-governed model totally.

There is a process in place. As I have explained, the process is started, and the process was put forward to assist Manitobans in terms of information, but behind the piece of legislation that we have introduced, I have explained to the member, is the right of choice.

Mr. Plohman: So the minister would acknowledge that there are significant costs associated with offering a specific program and that there is a

significant potential savings if that program does not have to be offered by a particular school division?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, no, I did not say that.

Mr. Plohman: Well, let us go back over it again. The minister has said that the matter of choice was her guiding principle, and I respect that decision if that is the minister's decision in terms of having students or parents being able to choose whether they want to become part of the Francophone division or whether they want to have français programs offered through the existing school divisions. That is the principle that the minister has chosen as the overriding principle.

What I simply wanted to have the minister deal with here in terms of her response and her policy is whether she recognizes an additional cost when there is parallel programming. The minister seemed to indicate that she did recognize there could be additional costs. She did not know how much yet, she did not know where this might happen, until the committee had made its report; but, in fact, she acknowledged, I guess, grudgingly, that this could exist in some cases. There could be parallel programming, and there would be a cost associated with same.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I know that this is really a lot of new information for the member, and so let me just remind him again that the right of governance is conferred upon the individual. The individual, then, is the one who will determine what they wish to have happen on behalf of their child.

As the court decision says, the rights provided by Section 23, it must be remembered, are granted to minority language parents individually. Their entitlement is not subject to the will of the minority group to which they belong, be that of a majority of that group, but only to where numbers warrant condition.

So our government, in putting forward its plan for Francophone governance, did respect the right of the individual and the right of that individual then to make a choice. We have to now look at communities, look at individuals within communities, and, as they work with the Monnin Committee, to determine what their interest is in terms of registering, or if they would like to remain within their community and within their school division as they currently are, that they wish not to make a change.

We will have to look at, then, whether or not that indicates that there would be, as the member has called it, a parallel system or not. We have to let the Monnin Committee do its work. When we receive more information from the Monnin Committee, then we will be able to give him that greater detail. I think, again it is important, that he respect the process that is currently in place for Manitobans and that Manitobans will listen to the information, will understand what the bill provides, will understand the system of governance within Manitoba, and then they will indicate their interest in terms of registering their child.

It will be an indication of wishing to register their child, or, in some cases, some Manitobans may wish to remain within their local school division.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Item 1.(c)(1).

Mr. Plohman: I want to respect the process, certainly, but I just want the minister to give clearer answers.

Will the minister acknowledge, then, that she intends to provide for parallel programming in her policy?

Mrs. Vodrey: There is only one system of Francophone governance, and that is the model that we have put forward. However, we do understand that some Manitobans may wish to remain within their current school division. We will have to see what the community's wishes are, and if, in fact, from that community, there are families who wish to be part of the governance model.

The member is really asking us to anticipate and to hypothesize on issues which really have to take place with the work of the Monnin Committee.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the minister seems to indicate there is only one system of Francophone governance. Well, there will be only one system in this province depending on which one is legislated, but that does not mean that there is only one model that the minister could implement. There are a number of different models. One would have the Francophone school division having exclusive jurisdiction once parents have decided in a particular area over a French language first programming; another might see a parallel programming which the minister seems to have adopted in her policy at this particular time.

I am simply wanting to get from the minister whether she will acknowledge that there are significant costs associated with offering a specific

program in a school division and that those costs will have to be borne by someone. The minister may have some responsibility there.

* (1550)

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we come back then to the point that children are currently being educated within a school division. They are currently being educated with funds that flow on their behalf from the ed funding formula and also by funds which flow from taxation.

Those children will then either continue to be educated within their current school division providing for a program, or those children will then be educated within the governance model. There is only one system of governance. The funds that flow on behalf of that child will flow either to the current school division if that is where the child wishes to remain or will go with that child into the new governance model, into the Francophone school division.

So we are not looking at a whole lot of children whom we did not know about before. These children are currently being educated within a division. It is, as I have said in my remarks in the House, an administrative matter, and children will then be educated within the Francophone model if that is what parents choose, and the funds will then flow to that model.

The member seems to have a view that somehow there will be more children involved, and we are not speaking about more children. We are speaking about children who are being educated in one division who may wish to then move to the Francophone governance model or whose families may wish them to remain within their current system.

Mr. Plohman: But the minister has said that she will require both programming, the same français programming to be offered in both school divisions at the same times with half the numbers potentially, if it is divided in half, or maybe one-third in one school division and two-thirds in the other, or whatever ratio happens to work out.

Does the minister not acknowledge additional costs when you are offering the same programming in both school divisions?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, because it is still the same number of students.

Somehow the member has a view that everything would remain the same if students were not

attending within an existing school division, for instance. What we are saying is that the funding, on behalf of those children, would flow into the Francophone governance model.

Mr. Plohman: The minister has to acknowledge that there are administrative costs. There are general costs associated with offering a program. If the program does not have to be offered, there are significant cost savings for school divisions. If it has to be offered, there are significant additional costs.

Will the minister acknowledge that?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, again, the member is trying to speak about something that we have to let the Monnin Committee do its work on.

We have to look at the number of students that families say they wish to register within the new Francophone governance model. We will have to look at students in areas where families do not wish that to occur. We will have to look at the number of students to be transferred, the age and the grade of students to be transferred.

So there are a number of factors which are still in the process and in process with the Monnin Committee.

Mr. Plohman: So the minister is acknowledging that students will be transferred, and along with their transfer will be their funding, funding that is allocated on a per-pupil basis, both at the local level as well as by the Department of Education.

With the students being transferred, the school divisions are going to lose that funding with those students, but they are still going to be required, if some numbers remain behind, to offer that program in their school divisions. They will not be able to save money in being able to discontinue that program. They will have to maintain that program. So they are still going to have costs associated, only they are going to have a serious problem of declining enrollment.

Surely the minister knows how declining enrollment affects programming in schools. So maybe that is the way to make it easy for the minister to understand what I am getting at here.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, again, the member asks a number of questions—if students, when students, what if students, and, again, these are all hypothetical questions because we have not yet seen that the work of the Monnin Committee has been completed.

Divisions will then be able to look at within their school division when parents have indicated their wish to register or to remain within their local school division, and then the divisions will then look at how they will accommodate. They will be able to look at the numbers. They will be able to look at all of the issues which we have been discussing.

So, again, the member is asking questions which at this point are not possible to give detailed answers to because the Monnin Committee is continuing its work but, again, I would remind the member that it has been very important to this government to allow for Manitobans the choice, to indicate if they wish to join the Francophone governance model or if they wish to remain in a program operated by their home school division. Perhaps that may be the area that the member would like to be talking about.

Mr. Plohman: The minister acknowledges that she intends to allow français programming to continue in existing school divisions, as well as the Francophone division. The minister knows that it is extremely unlikely that, as a result of the Monnin commission's work, there will be no cases where some parents want to remain to have français instruction continue in existing school divisions, while others want to go to the Francophone division.

I mean that is a pretty obvious outcome of these deliberations. We are not talking about great hypothetical situations here. We are talking that which is almost a certainty of how this will fall out in terms of the decisions. That is why I wanted to explore with the minister.

I think it is important that parents know what the options are and what the reasoning behind the minister's decisions is on this. The acknowledgment that there are additional costs to the model that the minister is putting forward is a significant acknowledgment in this particular instance.

I think it is incumbent upon us to ask the minister—and it is something that parents should know about, school divisions should know about—whether the minister intends to provide transitional funding to existing school divisions to offset the additional cost that they will have as a result of loss of students—with them, all of the grant money locally as well as from the province.

* (1600)

Mrs. Vodrey: Again, the reasons that the member speaks about, that I have given him during the

course of the afternoon, are reasons of choice, and we believe that the rights conferred are rights conferred upon individuals to make a determination.

In terms of the costs, we need to look at the work of the Monnin Committee. Then we would have an idea from their work about whether or not some areas and some individuals wish to remain in a program within their own school division, or if they wish to move into the Francophone model. In terms of making sure that school divisions are well aware of the impact, we have a representative committee, and this has been the way that we have operated in terms of an implementation committee from the time of the announcement.

We have said, from the time of the announcement, there should be representatives of the Francophone groups on the implementation committee, and there should also be a representative of the Manitoba Association of School Trustees, where existing divisions then would be able to fully understand the process, and also what is happening in terms of the movement toward the Francophone school division.

In terms of the three questions that we have continually gone around for the afternoon, again, issue of choice. We need to have the Monnin Committee do its work. The Monnin Committee does consist of representatives of people who will represent the Francophone community and the movement toward the Francophone school division. It also represents people who are representative of existing—Manitoba Association of School Trustees, for instance. So the issues will be able to be worked out in the process.

Mr. Plozman: The minister has to acknowledge that, while we are talking about using her numbers, 4,000 to 6,000 students estimated to be involved, it could be many more. I noticed the minister, in her introduction of Bill 34, said that there are 11,000 whose mother tongue is not French but whose parents have rights under the Charter, so the potential numbers are much greater.

Even if we acknowledge the 4,000 to 6,000 that we are talking about at this particular time, the minister's numbers, we are talking from \$16 million to \$24 million in provincial grants being transferred in addition to the money lost from local levies to school divisions. That is a lot of money. We are talking, you know, \$20 million to \$30 million. It could be greater. Surely the minister does not think school

divisions can just absorb the loss of this and still offer the same services which will be the case in many school divisions if they have to offer parallel programming, even with fewer students.

So the writing is on the wall for a tremendous loss in revenue and a significant impact on school divisions faced with pretty difficult times at the present time. So that is why I asked the minister the question—and surely she should be thinking about that—about the issue of compensation or a transitional funding to ease the impact of this transition. That is why I asked the minister if she has any plans in this regard.

Mrs. Vodrey: Again, I take the member back to saying that it is students who will be moving from one division to another, and therefore students who are at the moment being served by one school division will then be served by the Francophone school division.

We have also discussed this afternoon how the funding will flow on behalf of students from an existing school division to the Francophone school division, but then, of course, there will be a change of students. We are not talking about a whole lot of new students, we are talking about students who are currently in a school system in Manitoba, and the funding on behalf of those students will remain the same.

It will be funding through the ed finance model, and it will also be funding which will flow from taxation. There is a formula identified to allow for the transfer of those taxation funds into the Francophone school division.

Mr. Plozman: I guess it is quite understandable why the minister does not understand the questions I am asking about increased costs associated with parallel administrations and parallel programming, because she has continued to promote the private school funding at a much higher degree than the public school system over the last number of years without regard to how that impacts on existing school divisions in terms of lost students, in terms of grant money, in terms of money associated with offering programming in a parallel way because of the additional costs of administration and programming that I have mentioned.

So I guess the minister is not prepared at this time to admit that there are additional costs associated with parallel programming. It is a simple concept for

the minister, but she is unwilling to accept that particular argument.

(Mrs. Shirley Render, Acting Deputy Chairperson, in the Chair)

I can say to her though that she will not be able to keep her head in the sand forever on this. It is just a question that we are asking out of concern about all the children in this province, all schools in this province.

We believe that the federal government along with the province have a responsibility to implement the Supreme Court decision, not the local school divisions having to carry the burden of implementing the Supreme Court decision. That responsibility lies with this minister and with the federal government.

Clearly the minister is not going to get away with offloading this onto the local divisions by ignoring the factors associated with declining student numbers and how that impacts on programming in those schools.

The minister has had representation from school divisions since she has been minister, and certainly the previous minister had, about how declining enrollment was impacting on their ability to administer the school division and offer quality programming. Many times there had to be special funding offered because of declining enrollments. We are looking at declining enrollments here, in effect. So the minister should recognize that, and not continue to deny that reality.

That is why we are going to continue to ask the minister for clear answers on this issue. It is not sufficient. We may move on to other areas in this department, but we are not doing so with any satisfaction till the minister has dealt with the issues raised in any way satisfactorily. She will have to continue to contend with them until she does have satisfactory plans to deal with these important issues.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mrs. Render):
Line 1.(c)(1)—pass; 1.(c)(2)—pass.

We will now be looking at line 1.(d) Human Resource Services (1) Salaries \$329,200—

* (1610)

Ms. Avis Gray (Crescentwood): I have a couple of questions in this area on a number of different issues. One is in relation to the clinicians who were employed with the Department of Education and now a number of them have been asked to seek

employment either elsewhere or through school divisions. There seems to have been some confusion as to what the rights were of these particular employees and what their severance packages would be, et cetera.

I am wondering if the minister has information on that today, if she could clarify what information was given to these staff persons. First of all, does she have documentation indicating that they were going to be laid off or that their employment would be terminated? What were the details of that?

Mrs. Vodrey: For the clinicians, they were entitled to the severance package, but for clinicians who have been re-employed by school divisions, they were not entitled to the enhanced severance package.

Ms. Gray: Can the minister explain why that decision was made, or the rationale behind it?

Mrs. Vodrey: This was an interpretation of the civil service, and the interpretation is that where people leave the employment of government, but become re-employed by a body which directly receives grants from government, then they would not be entitled to the enhanced severance package.

In the case of school divisions, we as government do provide direct grants through our ed funding formula to school divisions. So it was the interpretation of the civil service that for clinicians who became re-employed by school divisions again, they would be entitled to a severance package, not to the enhanced severance package because of their employment by a body which received direct funding from government.

Ms. Gray: If a clinician then was hired by, let us say, an institution such as a hospital, what type of package would they receive? What would the interpretation be?

Mrs. Vodrey: Well, I am informed again, this being a civil service interpretation, that for clinicians who have more than 10 years of service, and who go to work, not in a school division, but perhaps in a hospital, as the member suggests, they would then be entitled to the regular severance and the enhanced severance.

Ms. Gray: Can the minister explain then for my clarification, what the difference would be between a hospital that receives also direct funding from a government and a school division which receives direct funding?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Acting Deputy Chairperson, well, again I am informed that these individuals are school clinicians, that is in fact how they are certified to do their work as a school clinician. Therefore when they become employed by school divisions they are still employed within an area for which my department and this government provides direct funding, my department in particular. Where people wish to apply their skills, not specifically as school clinicians but as people who have a type of training which might be useful within a hospital setting, they have in fact and I am led to understand this, then they are not operating as school clinicians within that job description.

Ms. Gray: Can the minister tell us where does the certification come from as school clinicians?

Mrs. Vodrey: The certification comes through the Department of Education and Training.

Ms. Gray: Can the minister tell us, when she says this is an interpretation of the civil service, who within the civil service? Was it the actual board of commissioners or was it the bureaucrats?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Acting Deputy Chairperson, it was an interpretation of the senior officials of the civil service.

Ms. Gray: I understand that some of the clinicians did write and ask for clarification of this particular issue. Can the minister tell us, have those staff received any further word back in writing from the department clarifying this position in regard to severance packages?

Mrs. Vodrey: Yes, I am informed that the individuals have received many letters in writing from the department.

Ms. Gray: Can the minister tell us, have these letters outlined that in essence the difference is that because they are certified as school clinicians that is why there would not be the enhanced severance?

Mrs. Vodrey: The information that the individuals received related to government policy as I have described it in terms of the employment, and employment again as a school psychologist, and when that person becomes re-employed by a school division.

Ms. Gray: What is the effective layoff date for these clinicians?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Acting Deputy Chairperson, the effective layoff date is June 30.

* (1620)

Ms. Gray: Can the minister tell us, does she have figures as to how many of these clinicians have been rehired by school divisions?

Mrs. Vodrey: This has been described as the concern and, I suppose, the business of the clinicians themselves, and they have decided not to specifically inform us of where their employment is.

Ms. Gray: Madam Acting Deputy Chairperson, if the effective layoff date or termination is June 30, if then a clinician is hired by a school division effective July 2, does that constitute a break in service? Would they then be eligible for the enhanced severance?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Acting Deputy Chairperson, I understand that, yes, that would constitute a break in service, but in order to collect the severance the employees would then have to sign a letter placing them in the permanent layoff category and allowing them eligibility to be rehired by government over a period of one year.

Ms. Gray: Can the minister tell us then, she has indicated that in regard to the clinicians, there is not an indication from them as to if they have been rehired though. Can she tell us from the school division point of view—she had indicated earlier I think in remarks in Estimates that she was not aware of any school divisions who were not going to use clinician services—does she have more details on those particular specifics in regard to school divisions, how many clinicians they would use and what number of personnel that might involve?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Acting Deputy Chairperson, the finalizations of employment have not occurred yet, but we have not had an indication from any divisions to this point that they will be reducing their clinician services.

Ms. Gray: If these clinicians for whatever reason choose to be on a permanent layoff list, in other words, if they do not have other employment, will school divisions then have access to those lists? Will school divisions be required to use those lists, or is there any obligation on the school divisions at all?

Mrs. Vodrey: The potential for the hiring of clinicians is 59.5 positions. School divisions can, however, choose to hire whomever they wish to fill those positions. I am also informed that, again, the employment that clinicians choose is certainly up to them as individuals. They will be able to decide where they wish to be employed. However, I am told

that some have in fact turned down some re-employment with government.

Ms. Gray: Basically what she is saying then is that school divisions have no obligation to hire these particular clinicians if in fact they happen to be looking for a clinician, so that the layoff list that these clinicians may be on really has no effect or has no influence on a school division. Is that correct?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Acting Deputy Chairperson, school divisions are, as I said, able to hire whomever they choose, and so the layoff list does not specifically affect school divisions.

Ms. Gray: Perhaps the minister can clarify for myself then what I would think is a bit of a contradiction, because then for clinicians who are laid off and are told that if they want enhanced severance, it would only be when they were not rehired by a school division, and that is because of the fact that government gives direct funding to school divisions. So we are making an interpretation about someone's benefits based on school divisions and their funding, yet on the other hand, school divisions have absolutely no requirement to even utilize government layoff lists to hire these staff back. To me they are not parallel relationships, and that is why I do not understand the interpretation of the civil service.

Mrs. Vodrey: In terms of the enhanced severance, the member may know this, but people would be entitled to that enhanced severance only if they had been in the employ of government for 10 years or over, so that it is not a matter that would affect all clinicians. In fact, it has only affected, my understanding is, six clinicians who have been employed for that time period of over 10 years and might have been eligible for the enhanced severance.

Clinicians will in fact go on a re-employment list within government over those who wish to work specifically as school psychologists and to apply their training specifically as school psychologists and, as they are certified as school psychologists, would then obviously indicate that they wish to be hired by a school division and make application in that area. They may then determine that their work as a school psychologist may be what they wish to do. In terms of the enhanced severance in that particular condition, it would only apply to people with a certain level of service anyway. Otherwise, people may wish to take those particular skills but

not act as a school psychologist and in fact go on a re-employment list in government.

Ms. Gray: Madam Acting Deputy Chair, that still does not explain to me what I see as a bit of a contradiction, but can the minister tell us, does she have a written interpretation, or does her Human Resources Branch have a written interpretation from The Civil Service Act in regard to this interpretation that she could share with the committee?

* (1630)

Mrs. Vodrey: I have instructed our Human Resources area and director to ask for a written ruling. We have not received a specific written ruling back from the Civil Service Commission.

Ms. Gray: If there has not been a written ruling back, what exactly is Human Resources writing to these particular commissions in regard to the reason and the basis for a decision?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am informed that we have received verbal statements several times from the Civil Service Commission to our Human Resources director. Also the clinicians who had placed their inquiry have written to the civil service and have been advised to check with our Human Resources department.

Ms. Gray: Just to clarify, have those particular clinicians received in writing the interpretation from Human Resources?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Acting Deputy Chairperson, I am informed that they have received that information in writing from our Human Resources services. As well, in writing they have also received an outline of the benefits which they are eligible to have.

Ms. Gray: Can the minister's staff in Human Resources, just for my own education so I can look it up, tell the committee what section of The Civil Service Act is this interpretation regarding the fact that school divisions are funded directly by government, therefore, a change in employment from government to a school division is not seen to be eligible for enhanced severance if you are over 10 years? Can she just indicate, in The Civil Service Act, what section that is so I can review that at some point on my own?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Acting Deputy Chairperson, I am informed that it is not in the act. Instead it is in the government employees' master agreement,

Section 22 which refers to layoffs and Section 23 which refers to severance pay.

Ms. Gray: Just switching track slightly, but in the area of Human Resources, can the minister tell us, in regard to the affirmative action program, how the goals of affirmative action are achieved in the Department of Education?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Acting Deputy Chairperson, there are a couple of ways that we are looking at issues of affirmative action. First of all, on our staffing authorization there is a section which deals with affirmative action. We then have a series of affirmative action guidelines for recruitment and selection which apply to all formal interviews.

Affirmative action as a selection criteria, according to the guidelines, shall be weighted with the same value as all essential criteria. Usually the value is 10. All affirmative action candidates shall be awarded a rating of no less than three, adequate on a scale of zero to five. Therefore, a minimum point award would be no less than 30.

* (1640)

Some underrepresented areas could be rated as high as five for a total of 50 points. We do have further information regarding representation of affirmative action groups—females, natives, disabled individuals, physical minorities—as well as information on representation of women in senior management positions.

Ms. Gray: The information the minister just referred to, does she have that in a table form that she could share or explain to us?

Mrs. Vodrey: I do not have any problem tabling in terms of the Education and Training affirmative action numbers. I do not have any problem tabling that. Also, I am prepared to table, not only to make copies, representation of women in senior management positions for the member.

Ms. Gray: Can the minister tell us what does the Department of Education consider senior management positions—a definition?

Mrs. Vodrey: In terms of the information, could we table it tomorrow in terms of providing the copies and the information of the total numbers? I believe the member also asked, who would be considered senior management positions? We have considered those director and up.

Ms. Gray: It would be useful if we could at least table the information for this evening at eight o'clock,

because we would like to ask questions on that and be able to probably move off that section before tomorrow.

Mrs. Vodrey: We will certainly have that available for the evening session tonight.

Ms. Gray: The minister indicated senior management positions were considered at a director level and up. Could she just quickly tell us how many director positions are there within the Department of Education? How many classifications above that? I am assuming most of them are assistant deputy minister. Then, within that, those number of positions, how many of those positions would be represented by the four target groups of affirmative action?

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

Mrs. Vodrey: We do not have the specific information for the total numbers with us, but we are certainly able to get that, in terms of total numbers of directors and the total numbers across the department that the member has asked for.

Ms. Gray: I do not recall, is there a person within the Department of Education who is responsible for affirmative action in Human Resources, or does the deputy minister sit on an overall committee or how does that work?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, in terms of the affirmative action committee, it is chaired by a member of our department whose name is Louise Ulrich. When our colleges left the direct employ of the Department of Education and Training, we did have to restructure that committee. I am informed that our committee members are now in place. We have not had the committee members named by the union. However, I am also informed that when informed of this and requested to name the members, the union will be naming the members very shortly.

Ms. Gray: Can the minister tell us, and I should know this for the structure, how many assistant deputy minister positions are there in the Department of Education?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, there are four ADM positions in the Department of Education and Training. One of those positions is filled on a permanent basis by a woman, and the other is filled in an acting status by a woman. The other two are filled by men.

Ms. Gray: Can the minister tell us, the assistant deputy minister position, when Mr. Ed Buller was in the job—and I know the minister had a bit of an opportunity to answer a question in the House that was asked before Christmas, but just to refresh our memories, perhaps the minister could tell us the reasons why Mr. Buller was relieved from his duties as assistant deputy minister.

Mrs. Vodrey: I think it is very difficult to discuss the personnel matters of a specific individual, as well, at this time. I can say, as I said at the time, that we were looking for, in the Department of Education, fresh ideas. We were looking to move ahead. However, the details of that personnel matter would be, I think, I would have to consider the appropriateness of the discussion here in committee.

Ms. Gray: Is that particular ADM position currently filled on an acting basis, and is there a move to fill it on a permanent basis?

Mrs. Vodrey: That position is being filled on an acting basis at the moment, and there has not been a specific action at this point to fill it on a permanent basis.

Ms. Gray: Can the minister tell us: Is there a plan to fill that on a permanent basis or, in the scheme of things, is that a staffing decision?

Mrs. Vodrey: I can say, first of all, the individual who is filling that position in an acting role is currently here at the table, and I would like to say that the discussion certainly is not to be reflected on her specific performance. I can tell the member that, in terms of our staffing in the Department of Education, we are having a detailed look at our staffing now.

Ms. Gray: Is the minister suggesting that the position might not be filled because you are looking at restructuring? Is that what she is—or am I reading into things?

Mrs. Vodrey: Yes, the member would be reading into it in terms of that answer. No, we are not looking at restructuring in terms of that position.

Ms. Gray: My question would be: Do you plan to open this position up as a civil service bulletin at least internally within the civil service? Are there plans to do that? Again, with no reflection on the individual who is in the position now, my question would be: Would it be opened up to give people an opportunity to apply for that particular position?

* (1650)

Mrs. Vodrey: As I have said, we are looking at our staffing. We have a number of staffing actions which are underway and others which are contemplated, and we will be making decisions about that staffing in the near future.

Ms. Gray: With the acting positions—I cannot remember if it was one or two at the ADM level—when people are put into an acting position, what is the policy in the department or what has been the past practice in regards to how someone is chosen for an acting position? Again, this has nothing to do with individuals who are currently in positions. It is just a question in regards to policy and opportunities for people to move into acting positions.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, in most cases we would be looking at a competition for an acting status. In terms of looking for an individual to fill a position on an acting status, we really look at things such as quality, issues of demonstrated leadership. We look at the ability to work as part of a team as well as offer that leadership. We look for initiative. We look for the person's ability in terms of responsibility and also problem-solving skills.

Ms. Gray: Can the minister tell us, in vacant positions in the Department of Education over the last year, does she have a breakdown of the number of waivers of competition that there have been?

Mrs. Vodrey: Without the details it is hard to make an absolute categorical statement, but I am certainly informed that to our knowledge there has not been one position filled by waiver.

Ms. Gray: That would be throughout the whole department? There have been no positions filled by waiver for a whole variety of reasons?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, again, I am informed that to our knowledge throughout the department competitions have not been filled by a waiver. Where there may have been some exceptions, it may have occurred within the community colleges when they were directly tied to government. I am informed that in some cases, in an instructor's position, there may have been a need and an urgency to hire an instructor who was known to be available to then take that position.

Ms. Gray: Can the minister tell us, with the board governance now of the community colleges, their human resources, the work that must be done in human resources, is that done at all through the Department of Education's Human Resources Branch or how is that managed?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, their human resources is done by the colleges completely.

Ms. Gray: Can the minister tell us, is this one group of people or does each college look after that themselves?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, again, each college does have its own director of human resources at each college and those directors of human resources, I am informed, have the final say. I will say also that there was some staffing authority provided to the community colleges before board governance as a lead-up to the governance process. However, they do now have sole authority, though I am informed that we are still assisting in some areas of labour relations.

Ms. Gray: In the community colleges and their governance, was there any thought given to any type of centralization of the human resources branches or sections of those community colleges for perhaps more efficiency and more co-ordination?

Mrs. Vodrey: We did look extensively, as the colleges moved to governance, at the authorities required by the colleges. We also looked at where the colleges might need flexibility but also where we would look for the colleges to operate as efficiently as possible.

We do have central purchasing and procurement for the colleges. We also have one general ledger for management for the colleges to operate under. However, we have understood from the colleges that personnel is a very important matter and also seen as a management right for the colleges. In fact, each of the colleges has their own human resources director.

Ms. Gray: Can the minister tell us, was there any other analysis, other than listening to the colleges in regard to what they thought was best, as to maybe some creative ways of looking at, as one example, the human resource management of the colleges in the province?

Mrs. Vodrey: We certainly were interested in the issue of co-ordination, so when the colleges moved to governance, we formed the Colleges Advisory Board. That Colleges Advisory Board will have representatives. The CEOs from each of the colleges, the board chairs from each of the colleges, the deputy minister will also sit on that Colleges Advisory Board so that there will be an opportunity for the sharing of particular concerns and also

issues which the colleges would like to bring forward.

In the area of personnel, we have allowed human resource directors. We also have tried to plan for the co-ordination among the colleges by this Colleges Advisory Board.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: The time is now 5 p.m. and time for private members' hour. I am interrupting the proceedings of the committee.

The Committee of Supply will resume consideration at 8 p.m. Thank you.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Madam Chairperson (Louise Dacquay): Order, please. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

This section of the Committee of Supply will be dealing with the Estimates of Executive Council. Does the honourable First Minister (Mr. Filmon) have an opening statement?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Chairperson, as is customary, I have some brief introductory comments to make.

The changes in this year's Estimates for Executive Council are quite straightforward and are readily apparent from the figures in the Estimates book. The overall appropriation at \$2,976,700 is some \$193,300 or 6.1 percent lower than the Adjusted Vote for last year. In fact, this year's Executive Council Estimates total is the lowest print figure for the department since our government has been in office.

The staff year complement in the department is now 44, which is 15 fewer than the total complement of 59 when we took office in the spring of 1988. That represents a 25 percent reduction.

The principal change in Executive Council this year has been the transfer of responsibility for the French Language Services Secretariat to the Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission (Mr. Praznik). Both the 1992-93 and 1993-94 totals reflect the transfer: \$118,800 in salary dollars and two staff years.

In making the transfer announcement, I emphasized it will facilitate an even closer working relationship between the officials whose job it is to co-ordinate the implementation of the government's French Language Services policy and the officials in the Civil Service Commission who have overall

responsibility for staff development and personnel administration.

As I said at the time, much of the policy development work has been done, and effective implementation is now the central focus for the secretariat. That is why this transfer of functions was timely and logical and why it has been received quite positively, I believe, in the Francophone community.

In preparing for this year's debate on Executive Council Estimates, I reviewed last year's discussion in Hansard. I could not help but be struck by how much has happened in just a little over a year.

The last time our Estimates were up, at the end of March 1992, was just a few days before First Ministers were scheduled to meet on the economy, and only a few days before last year's Estimates started, the formal multilateral process that became known as the Canada round got underway in Ottawa.

In retrospect, it is possible to see some interesting ironies in the debate that took place here in the House at that time. For example, in talking about the upcoming First Ministers' Conference on the economy, I pointed out that Manitoba had proposed three major initiatives to encourage recovery and help build confidence across the country: firstly, a tax freeze; secondly, an agreement to control government spending and deficits; and thirdly, efforts to use capital works expenditures to encourage employment and build up Canada's productive assets.

* (1430)

That was a year ago, and back then we were one of the lone voices making those suggestions. That is not true anymore. Unfortunately, the March 1992 First Ministers' Conference on the economy did not lead to any hard agreements, and unfortunately, as well, there has not been another economic conference with the Prime Minister and the Premiers since that time.

Now, though, there are some promising signs. The federal government appears ready to exercise some positive leadership and virtually all governments have now endorsed the importance of far greater co-ordination of budgetary policies in Canada.

More than a year ago and earlier, we were calling for a national strategy to reduce the deficit and public debt. Now such a strategy is being demanded by virtually every province and every political leader.

In the past, some accused our government of partisanship in making those kinds of suggestions. Now we hear talk of partisanship far less often and for good reason. Every government in Canada has to face up to the same problems and the same realities. On May 30 and 31, the Finance ministers will be meeting to begin framing a more co-ordinated approach to deficit and debt reduction.

I believe it is essential that a new Prime Minister call the First Ministers together, as soon as possible after taking office, to review the progress which the Finance ministers are able to make and to set some firm deadlines for decisions once the federal election is over with.

Deficits and the debt, along with the economy and the need for stepped-up co-operation among the western provinces, were to have been front and centre at the Western Premiers' Conference in Canmore, Alberta, last week, but the postponement of the conference will not change that focus.

Since our government took office more than five years ago, we have been strong supporters of closer working relations among the western provinces, and we can point to some solid accomplishments including the western trade barrier reduction agreement, the first of its kind and a model for the rest of the country.

Although the members of the official opposition may not have been totally comfortable in their relations with the other western provinces when they were on this side of the House, I know that they supported improved western co-operation as well.

What is interesting to me is that the Liberal Party, or at least the federal wing of that party, has now tried to jump on the same bandwagon. Unfortunately, some of them seem to have jumped too far.

Firstly, no one needs to lecture the western provinces on the merits of co-operation, but in some cases, the federal Liberals seem to be going far beyond advocating greater co-operation. They seem to be talking with hardly any qualifications about substantial integration, perhaps total integration. Put bluntly, that could mean muffling the voices of the smaller provinces by effectively wiping them off the map. That may not be what they intend, but exactly what they do mean is far from clear.

It is hard to reconcile their current position with their apparent support a year ago, at least from some of them, for a Triple-E Senate whose basic

objective was to give each province an equal and effective voice democratically elected.

I am happy to say that on this side of the House, our support for those principles has not wavered one bit. I want it to be clear, though, that although I have major questions about the advisability of anything approaching total western or prairie integration, I am 100 percent in favour of targeting specific areas where savings can be realized and economic benefits can be gained from a co-ordinated western approach.

The possibilities include reducing duplication and overlap and partial integration or rationalization of some services. Each of the western provinces has a different combination of strengths, and each of us can assist the other and ourselves by specializing in the things we do best. Clearly, partial integration could mean economies of scale and real savings in some areas. It is well worth pursuing and we will do so.

Total integration, on the other hand, could mean some very high costs to Manitoba. A single western province with decisions made in Vancouver or Edmonton or Calgary is no answer to the needs and aspirations of Manitoba.

Just as we are working to improve our relations with the other western provinces, we are also taking a similar approach in our international relations. Manitoba already has some productive ties with individual American states, and we will be working to broaden and strengthen those ties.

Members should be aware, if they are not already, that in early June the U.S. Department of Transportation will be holding a major policy round table in Winnipeg on north-south trade and transportation corridors. The corridors which originate in our province in eastern and western Manitoba have positioned us well. Now it is important to press for new efforts to build on those linkages. We plan to do so as strongly and effectively as we can in co-operation with our neighbours in the central region. But, important as it is, better co-operation among provinces and between provinces and states is not as important for Manitoba as adequate co-operation from the federal government is.

Here in Manitoba we know from experience what can happen when federal-provincial relations break down, and we know what can happen when they turn around. In the months to come, we look forward

to improving relations with the federal government and with a new Prime Minister.

Manitoba has some critical priorities which must be addressed: firstly, the awarding of the main contract for the Laboratory Centre for Disease Control, getting it built and getting it operational; secondly, finding an acceptable formula for a new development agreement for the city of Winnipeg to replace the expired Core Agreement; thirdly, reinforcing Manitoba's position as Canada's international leader in sustainable development by locating the national state of the environment reporting centre here in our province; fourthly, securing the future of the Port of Churchill both by assuring that it has enough tonnage to show a profit and by pursuing aggressively all the opportunities Churchill has to offer as we are doing through our Arctic Bridge initiative.

As we all know, Churchill has its detractors, in the federal system and elsewhere, who, using highly debatable arguments about efficiency, continue to advocate the closure of the port and the rail line. Those individuals and organizations fail to recognize the strategic importance of our inland northern seaport and its vast potential for transporting the produce of the entire Great Plains region, especially as new markets develop in eastern Europe in the next decade.

Let me be as clear as I can be. The federal government has a responsibility to do all it can to keep Churchill viable. It must live up to that responsibility, and we intend to see that it does.

There are other commitments which must be met as well along with other priorities and opportunities for co-operation which we will pursue with the federal government.

To his credit, the federal Minister of Agriculture, who is now the lead federal minister for Manitoba, has put a great deal of personal effort into trying to improve Canada-Manitoba relations, and I commend him for it.

To be fair as well, there are very real limits on what is realistically possible and deliverable by the federal government during a time of major restraint and during a time of leadership change at the federal level, but the basic message from our government to Ottawa in the spring of 1993 has not changed. It is the same basic message Manitoba has sent year after year after year. The message is, Manitoba is not looking for special treatment, just fair treatment

and the fulfillment of promises which have been made.

This is a time for shared commitment and for shared purpose in Canada when Manitobans and Canadians in every province and territory are ready to take on a fair share of the burden of restoring fiscal and economic health in this nation, but Manitobans are not prepared to bear an excessive share, nor should we be.

The federal government has a responsibility, in its policies, to make sure Manitoba's interests are respected and that Manitobans are treated fairly. For our part, our government has a responsibility to assert our province's interests effectively and to make our positions known firmly and clearly. We will continue to do so.

Finally, before we begin detailed consideration of the Estimates, I want to express my appreciation to the entire staff of Executive Council for their hard work and dedication in the past year. Their numbers may be small, but the value of their work to the government and to the people of Manitoba is substantial and unquestionable.

Thank you.

* (1440)

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Chairperson, I just want to say a few things as we start the Premier's Estimates again this year and thank him for the statement that he articulated in this House.

Madam Chairperson, there are a number of statements that have been made and there are some positions that have been excluded from the Premier's statement. Let me go through them just very briefly to start with.

First of all, the Premier, of course, is the head of government and we will be dealing with all issues in government dealing with the priorities of the people of Manitoba—the economy, our health care system, our environment, education and training, aboriginal people, et cetera. Of course, as the head of government, as the person who chairs cabinet and articulates the policies of the existing government, we will be exploring many of these issues, I would expect, in the Premier's Estimates.

I would note too that the Premier, who is responsible for Federal-Provincial Relations and is also chair of the Economic Development Committee

of Cabinet with a separate secretariat, actually has a couple of other bodies that report to him.

As Minister responsible for Federal-Provincial Relations, he has the Ottawa office that would be responsible for federal-provincial relations, even though the line item for that item is in the Industry, Trade and Tourism department but, of course, that is an office that deals with, allegedly or purportedly, federal-provincial relations in the province of Manitoba.

Secondly, the Premier has the economic committee, the economic secretariat that he chairs, that he is the head of, he has the authority for. The spending item is in another department, but the Premier is the boss in terms of that operation by the Order-in-Council that has been signed. Therefore, when we look at those two other bodies, there is not a total comparison between previous years on the Premier's spending and the spending of Executive Council.

We would note the change in the French Language Secretariat from the Premier's office to the Civil Service Commission and the reconciliation as appropriate in the Estimates process. We will be asking the Premier, obviously, questions later on of why and what was the rationale for changing that particular function in government and why did it go to the Civil Service Commission and not some other entity in government itself.

We will be raising questions of fairness. The Premier ended his statement by saying that the province must—its expectation from Ottawa is to be dealing in a fair and reasonable way with the federal government. We do not want preferential treatment, but we want fair treatment. I also think that that will be the test of all citizens in dealing with its government, whether they were in fact treated fairly as we proceeded throughout the last year and as we set course for the '93-94 fiscal year.

The Premier has mentioned the three major initiatives that they had placed before the previous federal-provincial meetings dealing with the economy: a tax freeze, a co-ordinated approach to government spending, and capital works.

You will excuse us, Madam Chairperson of the committee, if we pause a little bit on these so-called three initiatives. The Premier may not believe that a reduction in property tax credits is a tax increase, but most people receiving their tax bills will believe this year that a reduction in the property tax credits

and in the manner in which it was implemented is in fact a tax increase.

I noted that when the Province of Quebec proceeded with a similar kind of initiative, it was called a tax increase. Now, it may have been difficult, it may not have been always understandable to everybody on the first day of the budget, but we do not consider a reduction in expenditures dealing with property tax credits to be a tax freeze. We also do not believe that an expansion of the areas in which the PST is covered is in fact a tax freeze. It is a tax increase. We also note that the increase was also made on the tax for gasoline. That is not a freeze.

Now we may argue about this later on, what the Premier's promise was. I noted in his debate in the 1990 election, he was quite vociferous in his criticism of the Liberal Leader during that debate on taxes, and I just want to say that we do not believe that the Premier followed through on what his commitment was in 1990 and what his commitment was at those First Ministers' meetings. I mean, the bottom line is we did not have a tax raise in the last budget, and that is fairly straightforward. In fact, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has stated as such with his calculation of the \$114 million in the budget itself.

In the area of government spending, you will excuse us as well if we get a little curious about this point of the government. At the same time the government was saying that we are going to freeze government spending, the deficit went up—according to the member for Rossmore—to \$862 million. It was a doubling of the deficit between the last fiscal year and this fiscal year.

The Auditor is going to report it somewhere in the range of \$762 million to \$862 million. So while we were sitting in this Chamber talking about the priorities of the provincial government for the First Ministers' meeting, the government knew, and the Premier knew, that the amount of money we were spending per month was the highest on record. It was doubling the deficit over one year, and so you will excuse us if we find that there is a little difficult reconciliation between the statement the Premier made in this House and what the Auditor will eventually produce in terms of the bottom line of the provincial government.

Point No. 3, a co-ordination of capital works, I thought that was a good idea, certainly one which

we had proposed in December of 1990. We had proposed nationally to follow through on the proposals made by municipalities and provincial governments and some people in federal government, particularly in opposition, to have an attempt to rebuild the infrastructure of this country, rebuild the environmental structures of this country, and we applauded the Premier in that proposal.

It is unfortunate that the application of that proposal was very disappointing to Manitoba. The Premier has already stated in November—the first week in December rather, I am going by memory—that Manitoba was shafted. We were one of two provinces that were left off of the list from the federal government of specific proposals. There was a subsequent announcement about the highways project, but clearly, when eight provinces are mentioned in the Mazankowski statement of 1992 and one province is left out, something is wrong. Something is wrong in terms of Manitoba.

I do not know whether we are making a mistake in spending the amount of money we are in the Federal-Provincial office. We should not be relying more on our direct political relationship with Ottawa rather than another administration? I do not have the answers to that question, but we will be asking those questions of the Premier.

It is great to leave a fundraising dinner for the Prime Minister, but the bottom line is the Premier's disappointment was the same kind of disappointment we expressed when the Mazankowski statement was tabled in Ottawa. We were both, quite frankly, quite at opposite to the position that the Minister of Finance took when the finance statement was released, which was, in fact, the real budget.

All the cutbacks were in the mini-statement. I mean, that was the budget. The one that was tabled a couple of months ago was—well, we have all made statements about it. We do not have to repeat it; it is not germane to our discussions. But I was quite surprised that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) was embracing the Mazankowski statement of December, and it took the Premier to raise the fact that the whole kinds of ideas that were contained in the Premier's statements and the First Minister's statements had not been contained.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we believe, therefore, that we should evaluate the Premier and the government on the basis of results, bottom-line

results, not on the basis of statements of ministerial meetings. The government has mentioned that it wants more co-operation on the budgetary policies and co-operation with the budgetary policies of Canada, and I agree with him, but I go back to the statement the Premier made in Ottawa in November of 1989. It was somewhat overshadowed by the Wellsian comments on Meech Lake, where we had on page 14 of the Premier's statement compliments to the federal government on its policies on spending on health and post-secondary education, which, I believe, have been extremely detrimental to smaller provinces like Manitoba and have placed a very difficult burden on this government in its budgetary challenges dealing with those very, very important priorities.

The Premier indicates some optimism towards the May 30 and 31 meeting. Given that is two weeks before the federal leader is elected, or the federal Prime Minister is elected, I hope it will have positive results. I suspect we are in a bit of a state of suspension while we are awaiting the election of a new Prime Minister and ultimately a mandate that he or she will seek which will obviously be shortly after, given the fact we are in the fifth year and counting of the existing mandate of the existing federal government which was re-elected in November of 1988.

* (1450)

Madam Chairperson, the Premier has raised the issue of western co-operation, and it is an issue we want to raise with him. I think that this is a very important issue. I guess the slogans are easy on this issue, because we all believe in western co-operation. I would like to start at a very basic level of western co-operation, and that is, have an agreement between all western provinces that we are not going to be in a bidding war for corporations that will be located in each other's province, as a fundamental starting point for western co-operation.

We have a spectacle of Pocklington locating and relocating his plant in Saskatchewan, or Saskatoon, when the former Getty government would not compete with the old Gainers operation before it went bankrupt. We have had the Simplot operation outside of Brandon be in jeopardy, Madam Chairperson. I noticed the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson) called it a downsized expansion—downsized modernization, I think, if I recall his words in Hansard, which is a fairly

Orwellian sign, in terms of what challenges are in play for Simplot.

Of course, I recognize that the Saskatchewan Conservative government put lots of money into another operation in Regina, putting taxpayers' money into Saskatchewan, obviously that the people of Saskatchewan could not afford, into that plant, a detriment for the people of Manitoba.

There are other examples at clothing plants and other operations that I am sure the Premier is aware of, where we see constantly the whole issue of one province bidding against another province. I noted some optimism of co-operation on the Piper aircraft proposal. I am hoping some change in government in Saskatchewan, because I do not think the people of Saskatchewan and the people of Manitoba can compete on these projects, will make some difference. I am hoping, whatever happens in Alberta, that there will be a greater appreciation in the province of Alberta. They are running a massive debt right now, Madam Chairperson, in that province. They have lots of issues to deal with. I am hoping there will be greater co-operation.

I have discussed this issue before with colleagues of mine in our party, Premier Romanow and Premier Harcourt. I know they feel the same way as I do about this. We cannot compete if we are just stacking up the money on the table. I would like to see some agreement in western Canada and, quite frankly, an agreement at the First Ministers' meeting to stop this bidding war.

I know this government has had to bid with Saskatchewan on other marketing operations, for Sears, I believe, and has been successful in the Canadian Pacific operation and been unsuccessful in other operations that have been announced in New Brunswick. It is surely the time. If all of us are agreeing that we have to do something about our debt, surely we can come to a federal-provincial agreement on this ridiculous bidding war that is going on in Canada. Let us compete on our educated workforce. Let us compete on our health care system. Let us compete on the tremendous affordability of our province, Manitoba. Let us not compete collectively with taxpayers' money for various jobs and enterprise in our economy.

Madam Chairperson, we are pleased that the government is proceeding with a conference dealing with north-south co-operation on trade and transportation. I am pleased to see that Manitoba

will be hosting the meeting dealing with transportation and highway transportation.

We have lost a lot of jobs in the trucking industry. We have lost a tremendous amount of jobs. If Manitoba can be the centre of trucking transportation north and south from Canada, I think that is tremendous. We are competing against powerful forces. I pledge you our party's support in trying to restore some of the trucking jobs and trucking opportunities in the province of Manitoba. We also pledge to you our continued support for the railway part of the transportation industry and the airline transportation industry, Madam Chairperson.

On the airlines, I wrote to the Premier last year proposing that Manitoba be the new head with this proposed merger of Canadian Airlines and Air Canada, that if we are going to need a new holding company, Manitoba was the logical place and Winnipeg was the logical place, with United being involved in Air Canada out of Chicago, with the whole operation of Calgary and Vancouver for Canadian and, of course, Air Canada out of Montreal. That merger apparently is not on today, yet the report is not in on the federal transportation bureau. It is expected this week, and I believe we will await that, but I think the airline industry is equally important and I would note that in terms of the Premier's comments today.

On the railway side, Madam Chairperson, I asked the Premier a question, I applauded him for getting some jobs in Canadian Pacific. We are still very concerned about the head office jobs in western Canada, or regional jobs in western Canada, being moved from Winnipeg to Edmonton. We are still worried about the impact of Canadian Pacific moving their track south through Moose Jaw. We understand—and I asked a very serious question of the Premier and he accused me of playing politics. Sometimes, you know, this is a political forum, but a lot of questions we raise I would hope would not always be received by the Premier as just political questions.

There is an opportunity now for Canadian Pacific to cancel some of the running trade changes in jobs because the locomotive overhaul base, as I understand it, cannot handle traffic through Moose Jaw. There is an opportunity for us there, and we asked that question hoping that we could pick up that initiative and stop another erosion of 300 or 400 high-paying jobs in the province of Manitoba. So we would note and are pleased about the trucking

development, but we would also consider other parts of transportation very, very important to Manitoba, and very important to all the other value-added jobs we can get in the province of Manitoba.

We also think it is essential for the province to proceed to protect the airport. I think we want legislative protection of the airport. We do not want to delegate it to the City of Winnipeg. We saw what the Pines fiasco—by not having some kind of sovereign or legislative protection for that airport we could get a vote of 8-7 or 8-6 dictating future opportunities for our airport. We cannot rely on the kind of ad hoc potential zoning decisions of a council to override the long-term Manitoba interests in the transportation area and the air transportation area. We are in the centre of the country. We have a tremendously affordable and skilled workforce here in Manitoba. We have the best time zone, a terrific asset with our existing airport, a terrific asset with the present circumstances surrounding the airport.

I know as Minister of Urban Affairs we stopped a zoning change in north St. James. I know it was considered essential to zone land out there, but we thought that it was important to have the bigger interest for the public, the airport as an economic asset to Manitoba and to Winnipeg.

We noted, in terms of dealing with the federal government, that the Premier has stated that they are looking at renewing Development Winnipeg, a new Core Area Agreement. I had the pleasure of renegotiating that last Core Area Agreement as a rookie minister. I know the kind of decisions we had to make working with federal Minister Epp and former Mayor Norrie on trying to get an agreement on the new Forks proposal to put public money from the Core Area Agreement into a public acquisition of that 50 acres to augment the 20 acres that had been negotiated between the former Liberal government and the former NDP government on the ARC programs.

I think those 50 acres of land are well received. We also negotiated—I know my instructions from cabinet was to try to get greater access to the riverbank and river area beyond the ARC program that was negotiated, and we also were able to negotiate a \$5 million expenditure into river access programs. I think those are fairly well received by the public in terms of the agreement we reached in May of 1986 and signed in early October of 1986. I think that those things continue to be very positive.

I notice from Tourism announcements that The Forks is considered to be a very, very positive development. The Forks was really well known, not just for those capital developments like The Forks, which are very popular, but also for the housing, the infill housing, for the training and development of people.

* (1500)

I just met last week with some banks who still talk about the success of the Core Area training agreement to getting aboriginal people trained as tellers for banks. You can only go two blocks down the street to a local bank and you will see a couple of aboriginal tellers that were trained under the Core Area Agreement and are now providing meaningful employment through training that was arrived at between the private sector and the Core Area Agreement that expired a year and a half ago.

I have not agreed with the government strategy of how to deal with this core area. I thought it was foolish for them to extend the Core Area Agreement because, I think, when you have an agreement like this, you have to bring it to a culminating point. If you let things fizzle away, or just fritter away, your chances of renegotiating some of the key components in it—you obviously must change each time when you reach agreements, but I thought their strategy was not a wise one. I hope I am proven to be wrong, but we have lost two important years in the Core Area Agreement under Federal-Provincial Relations.

The Premier has mentioned the Sustainable Development Centre and the hope that this will be the international centre for that project. I hope he is successful in that, and he has our full co-operation with that proposal. I think Manitoba is well placed for health care initiatives and the lab that was announced, I believe, according to the Premier's statement in November 1989. It was announced in November of 1987. We hope six years later that we can see, not just the bricks and mortar—I guess we will have to evaluate it one brick at a time and one scientist at a time coming to Manitoba, but we certainly hope it will come to fruition.

We are pleased to see that the Premier is proceeding with the Port of Churchill. To date we are not aware of how many ships will be in the harbour this year. We are very concerned about what we consider to be a corporate and subtle strategy of the railway to undermine the tonnage to the Port of

Churchill and undermine the kind of rail service that is necessary to enhance that port.

We were very disappointed to see a week ago that the federal government had not agreed to the private proposal, the rocket proposal for Churchill, the spaceport. Last week, the federal government changed the rules in midstream. We will be asking the Premier about that. It has now gone from a two-to-one ratio to a three-to-one ratio for private and public support.

Obviously, the Richardson proposal was based on \$600,000 and being matched by the federal government and matched by the community. We are quite worried about what that will mean for the spaceport proposal. We are competing against Alaska for this kind of environmental facility and this communications facility, and we hope that this is successful.

Madam Chairperson, there are a couple of very important omissions from the Premier's statement today: the whole issue of trade and NAFTA, which of course comes under the bailiwick of the Premier with his economic committee and under the auspices of Federal-Provincial Relations. This week, the federal Conservative government is proceeding on the fast track with NAFTA. At the same time, the United States is asking for major changes to the NAFTA agreement. I would like to see the Premier call a moratorium for Parliament and all the leadership candidates and all the rest of them to cease and to desist from passing a proposal for NAFTA that is inconsistent with the best interests of Manitoba, and inconsistent with what may finally be the final report.

Surely the electoral concern of the federal Conservative Party should not be a higher priority for the federal House of Commons than what the substance of the agreement will be ultimately and what they are going to pass in the House of Commons. It is absolutely ridiculous. I have never seen such a process where we are going to pass something that is not even the last part of the agreement.

I would like to see Conservatives who are opposed to NAFTA and the present NAFTA call publicly on the federal government and the Prime Minister to halt this ratification. I would like to see the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) go into that meeting on May 30 and 31 and say, this is absurd, we are going to pass a major trade agreement which

we know will have a detrimental effect on Manitoba, and call on the federal government to not ratify an agreement that is not even in place.

I note that the Premier did not mention the NAFTA agreement in his statement. I think that it is a very, very important issue. We have raised questions, and we have had some disagreements with his minister on the six conditions of his statement that he released in this House in December but, surely, we should be all in agreement. You should not ratify something that is in the process of being renegotiated. You would not buy a house that way. You would not operate in your private life that way, and I think it is quite concerning for us.

Another issue that we thought was excluded from the Premier's statement is the position on—he mentioned the western co-operation and some of the problems with it. I would like to see an analysis of the Canada West Foundation report on the jobs that will be saved and how many jobs that will be in Manitoba, because we know from the Stettler experience with the lotteries, the last time we had a co-operation between the three provinces, co-operation meant that the jobs went to Stettler and we had less jobs in Manitoba. If that is co-operation, I think we should be careful about it.

I would also like to see an analysis that is being done, and I will be asking the Premier later on so I can put his staff on alert, on the impact of this Oregon, Washington, Alberta and B.C. group that is co-operating now on Pacific trade and Pacific co-operation. I forget the exact name of it, but there are quite active meetings going on between the states in the northwestern United States and the provinces in Canada.

I think we have to deal with this issue of western co-operation with real numbers, real impact and with some real fairness as the bottom line. As I say, maybe we should just eliminate some of the easy things first instead of co-operating. I have never seen any numbers from Lloyd Axworthy. I have read it. I have read the reports. He talks about telecommunications. We know even in Manitoba when we are having competition in telecommunications, we are going to lose a thousand jobs on the one hand and get potentially 400 jobs in the private sector on the other hand. Amalgamating those three provinces, I wonder what that will mean as well.

We cannot afford to lose jobs right now. Rationalization and co-operation, yes, but maybe

we should be saving taxpayers money on the subsidy-to-corporations side rather than on a race to the bottom but, needless to say, we need real numbers in this issue.

I also find a lack of an analysis from the Premier's statements on population and changing demographics on the aboriginal people. I believe that the population changes and the contraction of population will have an impact on obviously our equalization, obviously on our economic activity, and the demographic changes for aboriginal people are very important as well. The Premier did not mention the whole area of access, that he was renegotiating access programs and education and training in his education and training strategies. In fact, we note that the opposite is happening. We note cutbacks in New Careers. We note cutbacks in ACCESS programs themselves. The Premier, two years ago, said this was a high priority to renegotiate, and we see absolutely no evidence of this at all. In fact, we see the opposite with their own provincial government spending on people who need the greatest opportunity I believe in terms of where they are starting from in our Manitoba province.

These are some of the points, Madam Chairperson, that we will want to raise, as well as specific questions dealing with the Estimates themselves. We will want to go through these very carefully and ask a number of detailed questions to the Premier and his staff. I thank the Premier for his statement here this afternoon.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Madam Chairperson, I have very few things that I want to talk about today, and I want to focus them on decisions which are primarily budgetary in nature but for which this Premier as the Premier must take responsibility.

The Leader of the Opposition made mention of the fact that the Premier has often said that he has not increased taxes and that there were no new taxes in this particular budget. I think it is clear to all Manitobans that is just not true, that whether it has been change to the property tax, whether it has been change to the provincial sales tax, all of those have had significant implications.

* (1510)

Unfortunately, every time this First Minister chooses to allow his Finance minister to increase a tax, it is always done in a way which is more

advantageous to those of upper incomes than it is to those of lower incomes. One can only assume that this is a Conservative strategy which believes in the trickle-down theory, that if you leave more and more money in the hands of those who are wealthy and more fortunate economically in our society, that they will use that money to stimulate the economy and that will get people back to work.

It does not work, and it has been proven time after time after time that Reagan economics and Mulroney economics, which are based on the trickle-down theory, simply do not work. Those who have more money keep that money. If anything, they invest it in long-term investments that continue to turn around. They are the very people who will go out and buy Builder Bonds at 6 percent because, quite frankly, it is the best opportunity on the market at the present moment in terms of any kind of a bond or any kind of long-term GIC or other security. They save their money. They do not use their money to stimulate the economy, so trickle-down economics and the theory that you leave money with the wealthy does not pan out.

When you look at cuts that the government has made, it has been unfortunately exactly the same attitude, that the cuts are made to people who can least afford those very cuts, so you do not, for example, charge those with upper incomes more for child care despite the fact that they are still not paying the full cost of child care and never have paid the full cost of child care because of the subsidies that go directly to the child care centres. You hit the woman or the man who is a single parent of two, who at \$16,200 is now asked to pay an additional \$650 in child care for that child. They cannot pay it, and so what you are really saying to far too many of them is go on welfare, quit your job, take your children out of the child care centre and live on welfare which I think is a very major step backward.

The cuts to student social allowances, same type of thing. Those who were on social allowance of a student variety were those very people who had chosen within the social allowance system to do something that would help them to develop and encourage their own long-term goals, to hopefully receive the training necessary to get back in the workforce. I mean, every study, every statistical analysis that is done shows very clearly that those without high school education, by the year 2000, will find it almost impossible to find employment.

Those who were on student social allowance were upgrading their skills because they did not have that high school education, and they were attempting to obtain that high school education. Unfortunately, we have already seen indications that most of them will turn to the social assistance system again. So they have saved no money. You have just moved the social assistance bill from student social allowances to social assistance. The tragedy is that what you have done is to discourage those very people who were trying to get on with their lives.

If one looks at cuts to foster families, if one looks at cuts to the Manitoba Foster Family Association, if one looks at cuts to the Manitoba Anti-Poverty Association, if one looks to the cuts to the Indian-Metis friendship centres, if one looks at the gamut of groups and organizations that found their funding either eliminated, which was the case of all of those except the foster families themselves, and you look at the organizations that were left with funding, you are struck by the fact that it was always the ones who were most vulnerable who found their funding cut. Those who had other sources of revenue, those who had an ability to stand on their own, they seemed to continue to get government funding even though some of it was cut by 3.8 percent, which seemed to be a reasonable target across most government departments, but the ones that were eliminated entirely were among the most vulnerable people in the entire community.

Obviously that is the philosophy that pervades the government, but it is a philosophy that I simply do not understand and do not relate to that it is true, that there have been other budgets in other parts of the country that have made significant changes. Many of them have made changes in a way that the most vulnerable were protected at the bottom, but we have not done that. Every change that we have done has hurt the most vulnerable to the greatest degree.

So the sad part about the whole Estimates process is that we will spend the next three or four or five hours, depending on how much the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) wants to spend, but we will not learn very much, and we will not change very much, because the philosophy is prevalent. I will, quite frankly, have very little to say in this process because I just simply do not believe it is worth anybody's time. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson: I would remind the members of the committee that debate on item 1.(b) on page 12 of the Estimates manual, the Minister's Salary, will be deferred until all other items in the Estimates have been passed.

At this time, I would invite the honourable First Minister's staff to enter the Chamber.

Mr. Filmon: I do not like to have any empty time, so I will fill in by saying that I find it interesting that the Leader of the Opposition presumes to be more intelligent and more knowledgeable than the bond rating agencies and the financial experts in the financial community who have looked at the budgets across the country.

He made a, what I think, rather rash and very unsupportable statement when he said that we were preaching deficit control last year, and at the same time, while we were overspending and creating this larger deficit in Manitoba, the highest deficit on record, we were preaching deficit control.

I want him to reflect and look at the figures that are within the Estimates of Expenditure and the budgetary comparisons, and he will know why agencies such as the Dominion Bond Rating Service called us one of the two most fiscally responsible governments in Canada, and this is over a period of five years, not just this past year, and why the Investment Dealers' Association of Canada again reflected very favourably on the work that we have done in controlling our deficits and why, as well, the BCNI, Business Council for National Issues, brought across a dog and pony show, you might say, in which they compared where we were in terms of deficit and debt as a proportion of gross domestic product when we took office and where we are today and how favourable those comparisons really are.

The reason is that all he has to do is take a look at page 11 of the Manitoba Budget Address and find there, that out of a budget of program expenditures of \$4.905 billion, as was projected at the time of last year's budget, the amount of overspending by this government was \$4 million—\$4 million out of \$4.905 billion of program expenditures. So one one-thousandth of the budget was an average of spending.

* (1520)

He knows, although he may find it useful politically to go on public forums and misrepresent the difference between what was projected in the

budget as it was presented last March, March of 1992 in the Legislature, versus what was actual, that virtually none of it, all but \$4 million, was as a result of adjustments to revenue that were made in figures from Ottawa.

The first major adjustment was Ottawa's reduction of the projected incomes from personal income taxes. That was a major difference. The second was, of course, Ottawa's reductions in equalization transfers to this province primarily based on their post-census adjustment in which they not only adjusted for our expected incomes for 1992-93, but they did a back-casting—two years back-casting to correct for this census.

That was unprecedented. It never happened in the history of this country, and it was imposed upon us totally, totally unexpectedly and totally against, obviously, our will and in a way in which nobody in this provincial government could be blamed for that particular decision.

So no credible observer, whether they be Business Council for National Issues, whether they be Investment Dealers' Association of Canada, whether they be bond rating agencies, nobody has said that this government and its actions caused that deficit to be larger than projected.

The fact of the matter is that is why it is there, and everybody understands that, understands it far better than the Leader of the Opposition, and his petty partisan politics will not work when it comes to try to convince anybody in the finance community, any banker, any bond rating agency, any investment broker, or anybody who knows anything about business, as to whether or not this government and its actions have caused that.

That is why we are labelled as one of the two most fiscally responsible administrations in Canada and that is why there is absolutely no truth whatsoever to his assertions that this government's actions in some way caused it to have the highest deficit on record.

The reality is that they were things totally outside of the ability of this government to react to and to adjust for and that is why we had the deficit that we had. What is important and why everybody else as well with any credibility in the financial community has said that this government is to be lauded is that we took what was a structural deficit after you adjust for the use of the Fiscal Stabilization Fund of \$762 million and reduced it in one fell swoop to \$367

million, more than a 50 percent reduction in the structural deficit.

That too gave great credibility, because the members of the finance community know and understand that we are committed to keeping the deficit well under control as we have always said that we would.

I will just also address his comments with respect to the bidding wars. We included that in a proposal to the western Premiers last year where we said we wanted to expand the agreement on removal of interprovincial trade barriers to also address what we call the destructive competition for investment using taxpayers' dollars to try and fight for the establishment of businesses in our province.

I might say that we have steadfastly avoided that kind of destructive competition. Where we were being drawn into it, as we were in the Purolator case, a case in which the government of New Brunswick essentially went out and bought those jobs by offering an amount that I think was something like \$7 million for a number of about 400 jobs, we would only go to the extent that our existing programs do allow and would not get into that kind of bidding war; we rightfully, I think, walked away from the table, saying to Purolator, sorry, we are not prepared to get into that game.

He mentioned the others. We have not put a nickel into Unitel's establishment here, which will create 400 jobs. We have not put a nickel into Canada Post's establishment here, which will create over a 100 new jobs. We have not put a nickel into Canadian Pacific's establishment here, which I believe is forecast to be something in the range of 210 jobs. Those are ones in which we have made the case about the competitive advantages of Manitoba versus other provinces and have succeeded in getting them here without government money.

So we know and understand completely what the negative impacts are of going out and trying to convince people to locate by virtue of putting a lot of money on the table to get the business to relocate to Manitoba and we do not believe that is the way to go.

We are not going to be so pure as to suggest that there are not relocation costs from time to time, that there are not training costs from time to time and other legitimate things that come under the Manitoba Industrial Opportunities Program that was

set up under a New Democratic administration and continues to be utilized by our administration primarily utilizing repayable loans and other vehicles to ensure that we maintain and enhance job opportunities here, but the tack that is taken by far too many, regrettably, provinces in Canada of simply going out and upping the ante to convince private corporations to locate here we do not believe is an appropriate one.

Mr. Doer: Before I ask a few questions, I never alleged that the problem was on the spending side—

Mr. Filmon: You did.

Mr. Doer: There are two sides to a deficit. I talked about the record-high deficit when the government was talking about controlling the deficit levels at the First Ministers' meeting.

Mr. Filmon: You answered that. You said while we were creating the highest deficit on record, implying that it was spending that we were in the midst of creating.

Mr. Doer: The problem with this government has been the economic performance under the Premier. Last place, in 1991, is continuing to trickle through the Manitoba economy. The GDP decline in Manitoba was 3.3 percent. No other province was even over a 1.5 percent decline, the revenues, all the way through the revenue lines.

If I said anything in my comments that twiggled the Premier to think it was on the spending side, I will say that I believe it has always been on the revenue side, and I want to make that clear. The last place performance in 1991 was one of the reasons why we declined so radically, as we saw the effects of the economic policies trickling into the Manitoba economy.

Our revenues were down on personal income tax, he is right. Why is personal after-tax income gone from eighth place in 1989—it was a positive number—ninth place to 1990? When the federal government released the after-tax disposable income of families in 1991, which were the last figures released, why was Manitoba in last place again?—and that of course affects our budget.

I do not disagree with the Premier. It is all on the revenue side. Why is our population basically stagnant? Two thousand to 3,000 people more per year, when we used to have 8,000 to 9,000 per year in the 1980s. Why are people not moving to this province? We have had the baby boom's baby boom in the last couple of years and it still has only

resulted in a couple of extra thousand people per year.

Our out-migration numbers, we can go back and have that debate about how many years have happened, but the magnitude of that is a serious problem. Now some people say, well, that is great. If we have less people here, it is a better place to live. That is one theory. I will take them to Elliot Lake, Ontario, perhaps, and they could take a look at what has gone on there.

Because equalization, yes, there was a change in the calculation, but there was also a major flattening out of Manitoba's population since the Premier's been in office. I know he does not like to accept any responsibility for these things, but the revenue side has had the impact on the deficit. If I was unclear about that in my comments, I will clarify it, because I agree it was not on the spending side, it was on the revenue side. That is where the major changes took place in the deficit and that is where the major impacts are made.

Some of those items were below 1988 levels when he came into office, Madam Chairperson. Some of the areas like land transfer taxes, I look back on new building starts in the 1987 year. New housing starts were 6,000, now we may get to 2,000 this year. You go through all the factors and, yes, there is a national recession, but why are we in last place in so many areas? Why are we in ninth place in so many areas? Why are we in eighth place in so many areas, only behind Newfoundland and P.E.I.? This is what concerns us in terms of the deficit number of \$862 million.

Why are all these operations that the Premier says, the so-called independent operations, almost every one of them—I think the last time I looked, five out of six of the forecasting agencies, after we were in last place in 1991, after we were below the national average in 1992, why are we projected to be below the national average in '93 and then again in '94? I think only the Conference Board—I will have to go back, but most of them have us below the national average again, even the investment dealers that the Premier quotes. So if being below the national average is the goal, then the Premier is achieving it, but if being at or above the national average is the goal of any government, which I think it should be, then the government is not succeeding.

* (1530)

Of course, we are dealing with the effects of that in the revenue items. Whether it is sales tax, land transfer tax, corporate tax, which used to be over \$200 million and is now just barely around \$100 million, equalization which is also impacted by population, whether it is all these factors, ironically, out of the so-called private sector, we are down and down more than, I would suggest, other provinces.

The Premier talks about the five-year performance. He and I could argue all day long about '88-89, and we are not going today because we have a lot of other issues to deal with, but suffice it to say that the \$900 million that Romanow inherited in Saskatchewan after the Tories left office was quite a different situation than Manitoba. Today the Premier is showing a higher deficit than Saskatchewan.

Now I am not saying Manitoba and Saskatchewan can be compared equally, Madam Chairperson, but suffice it to say that the member for Rossmere, the former member for Rossmere, has stated that the deficit was 862. The Premier has stated it is 762 minus the \$200-million fiscal stabilization. They are hoping to arrive at a deficit of 367 next year. I hope they are right, but if you are off about 50 percent in your deficit projections last year from the revenue side, then you will excuse us if we wait till we see the Auditor's report before we make any judgments on the government.

I think Manitoba is in a better shape than other provinces in terms of their per capita debt costs on the operating side, and I think that is good. I am pleased that our borrowing costs are second lowest behind, as I understand it, British Columbia, and I think that that is very positive.

I want to ask some questions now, and the Premier and I can rebut these issues, I guess, at Question Period. I am sure he is pulling out all kinds of articles and quotes to make the statement. I just want to say that I understand it was on the revenue side that the deficit resulted in 862 last year.

The whole issue of federal-provincial relations is an area I want to start with. How does the Ottawa office report to the Premier in areas of federal-provincial relations?

Mr. Fillmon: I think that the member opposite, firstly, indicated something incorrectly. If he will go back and read any discussions that we have had in the past and also the news release that was issued and all of the information we put out when we set up the

office, we did not say that it was a federal-provincial relations office. We did say that it was there to ensure that Manitoba's interests on the business side were worked on, that we would be aware of procurement opportunities, of opportunities for a business for Manitoba companies and that we could track and keep on top of a number of issues. There are things such as the LCDC, the Laboratory Centre for Disease Control. I want to just update both Leaders.

They may be aware of this, that the invitation to tender is in the paper today. We were alerted to the fact by the Ottawa office last week that it was rumoured that it would be put in the paper today. It is in today's Free Press as well as probably The Globe and Mail and some other national paper. So this is a step in the right direction. This is the kind of tracking of issues but, believe me, they are not responsible for federal-provincial relations. They are responsible for tracking of issues and for keeping work on the business side, in effect the kind of work that consulates do as opposed to the kind of work that embassies do.

Mr. Doer: Notwithstanding the competence of the people chosen—I think the individual running the office is very capable—the Province of Saskatchewan I believe in its last budget year cut it because of its lack of cost-effectiveness. Did the government look with all the cuts that were being made last year, antipoverty groups, et cetera, that this was a "frill" that was no longer sustainable in terms of the budgetary process?

Mr. Fillmon: I think the Leader of the Opposition should know that British Columbia continues to have a very large operation; Alberta does as well. Saskatchewan is, I know, revisiting their decision because they were able to have a continuing presence there through a SaskTel office. We do not have that luxury. We have absolutely no presence if we do not have this office, so we are satisfied that the budget is as lean and as low as any operation of this nature in Ottawa.

We are doing it on a very, very low-key basis and on that basis we think that it can continue to be justified. It does provide a valuable source of being able to track. I mentioned the example that we were tipped off by the Ottawa office that this invitation to tender might be coming out this week. The information obviously was accurate. There have been a number of other such similar incidents in which they have alerted us to things that are

happening by virtue of their ability to access knowledge in the federal system.

Mr. Doer: Does the Premier have any cost benefits of the procurement policy before and after the Ottawa office was established? I know there were some numbers bandied around here a couple of years ago in our Estimates process. Information we receive informally says that we are not doing that well in federal procurement. Business people that we talk to are quite concerned. They feel that there are a couple of federal centres of activity on the procurement side; one is out of the Edmonton-Calgary area and another one is out of the Quebec area. They feel that the decisions are pretty highly centralized on major policies of procurement in the two Conservative centres of support, they feel.

This is business people talking to us. I do not know whether it is accurate or not. They feel that the bulk of the procurement still goes to eastern Canada and, if there are procurement decisions made, the majority of the decisions go to Alberta with their considerable clout in the federal cabinet table and that Manitoba is not treated fairly. Of course, the most classic example of that was the CF-18 and the long-term impact that will have on dealing with new technologies. Do we have any numbers on this? They have had five years of operation. Do we have any numbers indicating that we are succeeding or not succeeding in this matter?

Mr. Fillmon: Madam Chairperson, we do not have five years of experience. It opened in the fall of '89. We perhaps have three and a half years of experience.

* (1540)

I think it can be said that we have not had any CF-18s since we have had a presence in Ottawa. I cannot give him comparative figures as to what proportionate share we have received out of federal procurement to Manitoba, vis-à-vis, what it was in 1989 or '90. We will try and dig those figures out, if they exist. I am not sure.

Mr. Doer: I look forward to those numbers.

The second question on federal-provincial relations has to do with the Core Area Agreement or the, I believe the Premier used the term, development of Winnipeg agreement.

When I asked the Premier the question the Friday before the Monday budget of Finance Minister Mazankowski, the Premier indicated there were, quote, positive developments going on in the

negotiations. The last agreement of course expired on April 1, 1991, or 24 months beyond that. We have extended the coverage where we are just phasing out some of the spending decisions that of course were always calculated to flow a couple of years later.

Can the Premier indicate the status of those negotiations?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Chairperson, the lead minister for that negotiation is of course the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst). I can say the status is that negotiations are ongoing. It appears as though it is a priority issue that the new lead minister for Manitoba has more interest in than we had seen indicated in the past. We are more optimistic.

We were in a position, sometime ago, to consummate an agreement with no new federal money in it. We did not think that was in Manitoba's interest, so we did not accept that proposal. The federal government, despite facing a limited resource situation, is now I think legitimately trying to turn up opportunities to put some new money into a proposed agreement. We remain optimistic that they will find some.

Mr. Doer: Are we talking in the magnitude of the last agreement, \$100 million cost shared three ways? Is this the kind of magnitude we are talking about?

Mr. Filmon: We have been talking about a minimum of \$75 million, with provision for ancillary side agreements that might add to it.

I might say—and this is not a shot or a political statement—the federal government argues that in the renewal of the Core Area Initiative—the member opposite talks about how he was involved in negotiating of Core II. Of course, our predecessor Conservative administration was there in the negotiation of Core I. The arguments that are put forward are that in neither of those agreements was there new money, so to speak. It was always a reprofiling of existing program money that had been previously committed. The federal government has argued that we ought to be happy with that being done for the third Core agreement. We do not agree with that. That is what our position has been.

Mr. Doer: I think that is always a problem when you are dealing with the federal government. We were particularly concerned that they were double charging on training in other areas that they were responsible for. We were fairly confident on the projects like The Forks that even they could not

figure out a way to recalculate it a second time on the waterfront proposals, et cetera, but, particularly in the supplementary agreements, we always watched them. We were more concerned about their supplementary agreements.

A couple of times, of course, I think Mr. Duguay confirmed to us that the federal government had run out of money in the summer of '87 under the old Western Diversification program. They had allocated it all before the last federal election and some of that was not flowing to Manitoba. We suspended some of our money going to various proposals that were a priority of the federal government until we could clarify that. I recognize that it is a difficulty.

We also had certain commitments we made to the City of Winnipeg out of their capital project that we were not entirely happy with either, so I know that is also a part of negotiations.

With the City of Winnipeg, we did not see the York-St. Mary's as our priority. I hope the government is not saying that the provincial government is not foisted with a new cost for that, because there should be a record on the file dealing with that as an existing—they wanted to change the priorities. We were not willing to put up extra money. I know the Premier (Mr. Filmon) will have that letter in his negotiations with the city government—just a small bit of a carryover item from that item.

That last Core Area Agreement has got some recognition from the public in terms of some of the capital developments, the Exchange development, some infill housing, The Forks and the river walkway program, but there are also priorities of the human kind, the education and training.

I noted the former Minister of Urban Affairs when he was a councillor I think received an award in Paris, if my memory serves me right, on the Core Area Agreement, receiving international stature in terms of being the only urban renewal program that included not just capital renewal but also human renewal.

Will the priority be for the new project to have an equal part of human priority such as education and training with capital redevelopment?

Mr. Filmon: I just want to say that probably the best example of double counting in the era of the member opposite when they were negotiating an agreement was the Canada-Manitoba transportation agreement, in which almost the entire money was

probably double counted, most of which went to the airport, but these are things that happen. That was in the New Democratic era and we are trying to avoid that.

With response to his legitimate question, there will be some elements of human resource development, we hope, within a new or renewed Core Agreement. Having said that, it is really up to the negotiated final package as to what the proportion is vis-à-vis capital, vis-à-vis human resource development.

Mr. Doer: Can the Premier indicate the boundaries that the province is utilizing as their own boundaries for negotiation of the—is it a core agreement? Are there boundaries in this? The Premier used the term Winnipeg development agreement as opposed to a Core III. Is there a geographic priority to this, or is there not?

Mr. Filmon: We do not have a geographic area outlined. We have looked at it in terms of addressing particular issues, some of which know no particular boundary, but we have talked about the possibility of doing some work on the North Main strip, for instance. That has been an area for discussion. We have talked about it addressing the urban aboriginal issues in general terms, and there, I think, it would be difficult to set particular boundaries for the programming that might be invoked. So it has not at this point resolved itself to a particular diagram or geographic area on the map.

I just pause at this point as I look down at my staff to say that I know that both Leaders do know who the staff members are, but I will just, for the sake of the record, introduce the Clerk of the Executive Council, Mr. Don Leitch; the Deputy Minister of Intergovernmental Relations, Mr. Jim Eldridge; the Principal Secretary, Jonathan Scarth; and our Finance and Administration Officer, Karen Popp. I am sure that you know them from previous meetings.

Mr. Doer: I even had an opportunity to go to a celebration for one individual.

* (1550)

I mean, we talk about the aboriginal issue, and there is a concentration in the UR II area of the city of Winnipeg but not totally in the UR II area of the city of Winnipeg. I just worry about a focus in terms of inner-city versus suburban redevelopment. Obviously there is a geographic—there is no such thing as a population in need that is located in one area of the city of Winnipeg, but there is a very high

degree of concentration and focus in terms of poverty, in terms of aboriginal people, in terms of aboriginal people that need education and training and some of the physical areas of the city that need the greatest redevelopment. The Premier mentioned North Main, et cetera. Is there going to be no geographic consideration?

I am very worried because there have been proposals before that have been cancelled, like the Winnipeg Education Centre and other proposals that have been added, such as some business development grants. The business development grant was great. It was a wonderful project, but it was not as important, I would think, as the Winnipeg Education Centre that was cancelled by the government, and that was just dealing with the last agreement. Is there going to be some focus on the inner city and the inner-city challenges that we collectively have?

Mr. Filmon: I think the member opposite is probably trying to avoid taking a direct political sort of an approach on this, but we all remember, in the last Core Area renewal, how Osborne Village was added because Mr. Axworthy represented it and it was his baby, and how Provencher and that area of St. Boniface was added because it was my old colleague from City Hall, Bob Bockstael's, area. I mean, we know how these things are politicized. If he is trying to anticipate how he might criticize us for politicizing this, I cannot help him, because we are not looking at it in terms of political dimensions. We recognize that some areas might—if you were to take North Main and a renewal proposal for much of that area, you might be able to identify that geographically.

I tend to think that if you are looking at some things that involve, for instance, urban aboriginal strategy, it would be more difficult to set boundaries around where that strategy would apply.

Just in response to his question about the Winnipeg Education Centre proposal, the main concern that our administration had on it was that the primary investment was going to be in a new building as opposed to creating a centre for that facility. The work of the Winnipeg Education Centre was not necessarily going to be markedly improved by simply spending millions of dollars on a new building in the core area, when there were much more economical alternatives that would have allowed them to carry on their programming in a very positive and effective way without just simply

throwing the money at a new building. That was ultimately the conclusion that was derived by a number of analyses that were looked at.

Mr. Doer: The urban aboriginal strategy—is there one, and is it part of the negotiations that are going on with the Winnipeg development?

Mr. Filmon: Part and parcel of a renewed Urban Development Agreement for Winnipeg would be addressing what, I think, are pretty readily identifiable issues with respect to urban aboriginal population; one being the tremendous increase as aboriginals migrate off reserves to the city of Winnipeg. The increasing numbers are substantial.

I recall from a discussion in a meeting not long ago that the figure was stated that one in four people entering the workforce in Winnipeg by the year 2000 will be aboriginal. These numbers are known. The magnitude of the challenges is recognized. The kinds of programs that are going to be necessary to address that have not yet been developed. There is no question about that. That is why we had hoped that funding could be allocated within a new urban renewal agreement that would allow us to develop some programming to address these issues.

Mr. Doer: Does the Premier have a 1993 strategy on urban aboriginal people? I know the description of the problem, the demographic changes and the migration of some members of the aboriginal community from remote communities to urban centres, et cetera. I know those descriptions are there.

I know that we have read a paper, I think, it cost us about a quarter million dollars in '88 or '89, kind of general—I do not want to get the Premier to comment about the cost benefit of that paper because I think it is not a very substantive document. Do they have an updated 1993 urban aboriginal strategy that goes beyond just a description of the problem but ways of addressing what will be a major, and is right now a major, challenge in our province?

Mr. Filmon: I suppose that people within the community, within the business community—the member opposite talked about, for instance, the banks and how they had trained a number of people for entry level positions with the banks, who were aboriginal in their heritage, under the Core Area Agreement.

I have met with recently our lead bankers in Manitoba, from the Bank of Montreal, Royal Bank

and CIBC, all of whom have developed a strategy for increasing the number of aboriginal people working in their banks and going up through the ranks through their various training programs and developing their skills and abilities so that they can be promoted and contribute substantially to the banks. They, here in Manitoba, are the leaders for their banks right across Canada. In fact, the genesis of their training and development, human resource development programs for the aboriginal communities, is here in Manitoba in every case, these three banks that I speak of.

I met them and complimented them and told them I thought that this was very appropriate. The whole area of training, education, adjustment programming, all of those things, I think, are recognized as where the money needs to be invested in urban aboriginal strategy, but in terms of putting it in writing, I cannot say I have anything of that nature.

That does not mean to say that there is not a sense that people are working on the right direction of creating role models for our young aboriginal people. Those role models are people who are obviously showing success in a variety of fields, some of them professional, some of them artistic, some of them semiprofessional and managerial jobs, and those things are happening. We believe that it is a process that we would like to see accelerated, and the only way we are going to have it accelerated is if we had some specific targeted money through something like an Urban Development Agreement.

Mr. Doer: Yes, the banks do have a strategy, and they are to be complimented on the urban aboriginal training period. They took the experience of the Core Area Agreement. It was very successful. They carried it on. They are continuing to carry it on through community colleges, and hiring and the work of Charles Coffey, previously, and now continued on by the banks subsequent to that is, I think, very commendable.

* (1600)

But my question is more fundamental. I understand what the banks are doing and their strategy, and I think it is laudable. The question is: When the Premier sits down with his cabinet in 1993 to look at the various population changes, the population challenges, to look at the economic realities of those things, does he have a strategy involved, or is it all, you know, the banks are doing

this, we may do that, we may have another agreement? Is there a strategy developed beyond the general paper that cost us about a quarter million dollars in 1988-89 that the Premier is utilizing, and could he table it if he has one?

Mr. Filmon: I have said that there is not something informal written for him that can be tabled. On the other hand, there is an understanding that we have identified areas of endeavour that work.

One is a working with and encouraging our major corporations. Winnipeg 2000 is doing that. The figure that I quoted about one in four comes out of Winnipeg 2000's analysis. Many of the people involved, Kerry Hawkins, formerly Charlie Coffey, now Denniece Leahey of the Royal Bank, are community leaders and leaders within their sectors of the economy in bringing aboriginal people into their employment systems and also in training them for future growth and development.

So it is not just a matter of saying this is not enough. It is the best thing we have got going. What we have to do is encourage the things that are working well, try and add to them, increase their effectiveness and, at the same time, recognize that underpinning all of this has to be the commitment on our part to continue to identify opportunities for training, for increasing their skills, ensuring that we are in some way helping them in their adjustment as they come into the urban area perhaps lacking the skills not only to compete but to cope with the changed environment that they face. All of those kinds of things are what government has to be alert to in providing.

We continue to fund the aboriginal women's organization, the Indigenous Women's Collective. We continue to fund the Urban Aboriginal Council, I believe it is called, so that they can be working in the community and identifying opportunities.

In the final analysis there is going to have to be, through something like the renewal of an Urban Development Agreement, an allocation of resources to take us beyond what we can do at the present time. That is why we see it as an appropriate, major element of that agreement. Certain things were done in the other agreements like the Chinatown redevelopment, like The Forks redevelopment, like the North Portage redevelopment. They had particular focuses. They had the focuses that the member opposite referred to in the human resource capital side.

We believe that, in this case, if there is going to be a capital focus, that North Main is one area that would be appropriate. Secondly, if there is going to be a human resource dimension, that the urban aboriginal issues would be that focus. So that is the way we have strategized the putting together of our position on an urban renewal agreement.

Mr. Doer: ACCESS—a couple of years ago when the federal government withdrew from ACCESS, the provincial government, the Premier, when I asked him questions, talked about what a serious mistake this was, how outrageous this was, the federal Conservatives to withdraw from this program because of the cost benefit of these particular programs and, of course, the success from these particular programs.

The Premier, in mentioning the areas that they are negotiating with the federal government, did not include ACCESS. Has the Premier discussed ACCESS with the Prime Minister when he met with the Prime Minister in December of '92—two questions here—and has he discussed this issue with the minister responsible for Manitoba, after the resignation of Jake Epp in January '93, Charlie Mayer, in light of his comments about the new positive relationship with the federal Conservatives?

Mr. Filmon: We certainly did talk with the federal government at the time when they withdrew their funding. We made the plea to them that this was a continuing responsibility of the federal government in this area and that investments in education and training and ensuring that there were role models in all fields of endeavour—medicine, law, engineering, particularly in nontraditional areas like that, of course, our commitment to nursing for aboriginal and northern residents and so on, bachelor of nursing program. We made the case as strongly as we possibly could. The federal government did not respond in any positive way.

Now I think we are into a phase in which we are trying to evaluate the effectiveness of it, because I think there are some arguments that are being put forward—I can use from memory, and we are into an area in which, to be honest with you, if you want to talk detail, you should be talking with the Minister of Education (Mrs. Vodrey) but, from the figures that I saw, there were concerns about the amount of money that was put in.

For instance, for engineering students and the number of graduates that turned out at the end or at least six years later, we were dealing with a situation in which after five or six years, there had not yet been an engineering graduate despite a very substantial amount of money put in. I think that amount of money may well have been in the millions, not just hundreds of thousands of dollars, for not one graduate.

So if we are going to make the case in terms of cost-effectiveness, then we have to have a base that is a statistical base that we can use to try and convince the federal government of the value of the investment. At this point, we absorbed what we could of the pulling out of the federal government, and we have not been able to carry the load by ourselves. So we are faced with trying to target perhaps a little better, to try and see where the dollars spent are paying better results and, suffice it to say, that we know that there is a need for such funding. It is a question of how much can be justified and in what areas will it pay the best dividends.

Of the two who were just about to graduate in engineering, neither of them were from Manitoba. One was from Northwest Territories, and I believe the other was one of the other provinces of Canada. So it is difficult to try and put actual results and actual achievement values on some pretty big dollar investments.

* (1610)

Mr. Doer: Yes, I understand that the program for medical doctors, talking to people, doctors in the North and doctors at the University of Manitoba, the medical doctor program was one of the finest programs, they thought, in North America. The program to train in ACCESS nurses to return to their communities was again one of the finest around. There was great success into areas of social work and in training teachers.

I did hear of some greater difficulty with engineers, and the Premier did note that, but do we have similar data in terms of the success for people, because I think it is important for the priorities that the Premier takes as Minister responsible for Federal-Provincial Relations negotiating these priorities.

He is the one who sits in the room with the former Prime Minister, or the existing Prime Minister—the farewell tour is not completely over with, a Freudian slip—and will be sitting in the room with perhaps an

interim Prime Minister or perhaps a longer-term Prime Minister—the people will decide, which is fine—but will be sitting in the room with that person as Premier of the province.

Is there other data that the Premier is utilizing in terms of the successes of ACCESS, particularly in terms of the role models we talked about and what that means for the dignity and the economic pride of a community and of a people?

Mr. Filmon: All I can say is that the broad overall problem that we want to try and debate with the federal government and gain their support and understanding on is the continual offloading onto the provinces of the responsibilities for aboriginal people.

Whether it is in social services to aboriginals living off the reserve or whether it is something like ACCESS which is a program that is entirely targeted to aboriginal peoples to create of them professional graduates and role models for the communities in the North, I think that the greater debate that I want to get into is that of the federal responsibility.

You know, we went through this last year we were talking in constitutional terms. That is why we were talking about self-government in that whole context that it is primarily—well, at the moment the federal government has the primary responsibility, and until anything changes, that remains the case.

And here we are being asked to take on some pretty big-dollar items just bang, overnight, \$17 million, \$18 million worth of services to aboriginals living off reserve was transferred to our budget in one stroke of the pen. These things here add up in smaller numbers, but they are a million here, a million there, and we just keep adding to the toll. That is the area in which I continue to make the case with the federal government.

Unless we get them to the table accepting responsibility that where we are dealing with aboriginal peoples they should continue to bear a significant responsibility, we are not going to get anywhere.

With respect to the stats on what is happening in nursing, what is happening in medicine, what is happening in law or social work or whatever, I would recommend that the member opposite go into the Estimates of the Minister of Education (Mrs. Vodrey) which are going on concurrently with us, and I would imagine that she has some pretty decent level of statistics on it because I know that I obtained the

statistics on engineering because I was particularly interested from my own relations with the Faculty of Engineering.

Mr. Doer: Yes, I would agree with the Premier about the responsibility of the federal government, and that is why we are raising it under federal-provincial relations because we concur with him that the federal government has walked away from areas of their responsibility, has walked away from Manitoba citizens that they had responsibility for.

We noted that the Premier did not mention it as a priority for his negotiations with the new minister responsible for Manitoba who was going to potentially be better for our province.

So we raise this issue with the similar goal of the Premier. We agree with him that the federal government is walking away from a number of their responsibilities, leaving it with provinces, and then provinces must deal with it as they may, and ACCESS programs are one of those and we believe that his discussions with the new Prime Minister—I am assuming we cannot budge the old Prime Minister—either this will be on the list, and this will be on the list from the Premier.

So I would encourage him to—[interjection] Okay, sorry.

Mr. Filmon: Can I just respond to that? When we talked about the issue of ACCESS earlier, I did not say that it was on the list for the Prime Minister. What was on the list though was offloading of aboriginal program responsibility, in general terms. I am almost certain that I used as examples the services to aboriginals living off reserve and ACCESS as examples of just the continuing erosion.

There is no question that that remains because we have that list of more than a dozen items that we left with the previous Prime Minister—and in fairness, three or four of those have already been stroked off. Perhaps with this calling of tenders on the LCDC another one will be stroked off. We are making progress and we will certainly push that one.

I know that I have a stronger position on that when I raise it in a global context because as hard as it is on Manitoba, it is probably equally hard on the Province of Saskatchewan. I know my colleague, Roy Romanow, is absolutely as committed to trying to get the federal government to own up to its responsibility and to accept its responsibility in these areas.

I just in leaving—a little more information on the record before we go into what may be the next question of the member opposite—say that these are some of the things that we have done with respect to initiatives in the field of education and training for aboriginal people. It is just a summary list. One is the native education policy which is being developed in consultation with our aboriginal community.

We are encouraging parent-community participation through workshops that focus on parents as partners in educational decision-making and community empowerment. We have a draft policy circulated for review and revision this fall which is the draft native education policy.

The K to 12 curriculum guides are being revised for the Cree, Ojibway and Dakota. Native perspectives are being integrated into Core curricula. Aboriginal career awareness days are now being provided, which is a new initiative. A native student resource centre was opened at Assiniboine Community College. Red River Community College set up a task force to make recommendations as to how to serve aboriginal students more effectively.

Community-based adult literacy programs are being provided now for aboriginal people, and our government is providing \$3.5 million to school divisions to address the English language development needs of native students this year. Our department co-sponsored the Thompson-based native language instruction certificate program in which there were 22 graduates in 1991, for instance.

Our government is providing support for Children of the Earth aboriginal high school which operated under the joint governance of the Winnipeg School Division and the urban aboriginal advisory council.

These are all initiatives that admittedly more can and will be done but are an indication of some of the current issues that are addressing that particular focus.

Mr. Doer: Well, that leads me to my next question. Why is the government cutting back on the enrollment of opportunities and their own funding for New Careers which is primarily for aboriginal people?

Mr. Filmon: I have to say—and I know that the members opposite would like me to get into a whole range of discussions—I do not have the detail at my

command on that, and I would encourage that question be asked of the minister responsible.

Mr. Doer: It is well known that in the 1978 period Sterling Lyon and Sid Spivak intervened when there was a proposal to cut New Careers because of the benefit of it. There was a lot of confidence that the Premier would intervene when the Department of Education was proposing to cut it in this year's budget. He did not intervene.

I was wondering why the government allowed this cut to take place. As I say, successive governments, successive Premiers from different political stripes had rejected proposals from the Department of Education when they were made. A lot of people were counting on the Premier to say no to the cuts and were very disappointed.

* (1620)

(Mr. Ben Sveinson, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

Mr. Filmon: I do not think that question has been asked of the Minister of Education (Mrs. Vodrey), and I know that the figures that have been bandied about were not accurate as to the level of cuts. There was a change of responsibility for programming, and the figure that was bandied about of \$1.6 million was totally inaccurate as I recall from the briefing notes I have seen, but I do not have that information in front of me so I cannot really address the question.

Mr. Doer: Well, we cannot get the answer in the Department of Education Estimates either. Believe me, we have tried. We cannot get it at Question Period, and we have been told by staff that it has been cut by the province, not just the federal government. We have been told that there is a net reduction in the ability of enrollees to enter, and we have actually been told that there is less support by the existing Minister of Education on this program than the former Minister of Education on New Careers. We do not know whether that is true or not, but—[interjection] Well, I say that in all sincerity, and that the people were counting on the Premier to stop what people felt to be a very, very, very unfair cut in this last set of Estimates.

What is the exact number, because we cannot find out in the Department of Education and ultimately these cuts have to go to the cabinet table and the Premier chairs cabinet?

Mr. Filmon: I am sorry, Mr. Acting Chairperson, but we did not go on a line-by-line basis through cabinet, so it did not come to the cabinet table in that form.

Mr. Doer: Can the Premier tell us in what form it did come to the cabinet table? Why did the government accept the cut when it has to be inconsistent with any policy dealing with Education and Training, with any policy dealing with aboriginal role models that we talked about? Why are the banks proceeding in one direction and why are we proceeding in the opposite?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Acting Chairperson, we are not proceeding in the opposite direction. The government, as I said, continues to provide a myriad of educational opportunities for aboriginal students which results then in these people with that quality and calibre and status of education being good candidates to go into the banks' training program. So the two work together.

Mr. Doer: In past Estimates processes the New Careers program, as we understand it, was not offered up. Departments are asked to come up with proposals, and ministers approve those proposals. In past Estimates processes this New Careers program was not offered up. This year it was.

Can the government tell us why they accepted it this year in the cabinet, whatever format they accepted it on? I just think it is absolutely opposite to what people believe the Premier would accept, quite frankly, and what people believe is fair for aboriginal people in this whole area of education and training.

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I repeat, cabinet did not deal with it. We did not deal in any way with the line-by-line approval. That is the responsibility of Treasury Board.

The member opposite held me responsible for every decision of Treasury Board in previous years. I have not been there throughout this budget cycle. I cannot tell him what was offered up and what was not offered up. I was not there.

The only way in which the results of the Treasury Board review would come to cabinet would be through approval of the minutes, globally, of the entire Estimates process. That is the only way in which it would come.

Mr. Doer: I was just going to say—but the Premier said it. The minutes from Treasury Board go to cabinet. The Premier's staff briefs the Premier

obviously on the implications of the Treasury Board decisions.

Was there any analysis done of what impact this would have for the Premier ultimately in the budget for purposes of the aboriginal strategy that the government has in terms of the statements the Premier has made about providing role models, providing dignity, providing success? It seems to me this is in the exact opposite direction, whether it is 1.6 or something less.

I know there is some controversy about the Stevenson program—or the aircraft program. I just want to know, where does the buck stop here? Was it just the Minister of Education? Was it the Treasury Board? Certainly it goes to cabinet for approval. The minutes are approved. Why did it take place?

Mr. Filmon: Firstly, the member opposite knows—and I do not want to go into a repetition of comments that have been made many times in this House. That is every department had to participate in the process of meeting deficit reduction targets. The member opposite pounds me over the head about a 762 or 862 number and takes great glee in saying that we are much too high and we are setting record deficits. When we move to reduce those record deficits, he hits me again.

You cannot have it both ways. With all due respect, that is the luxury of the irresponsibility of being in opposition. You do not have to decide that anything needs to be reduced. You do not have to decide that anything needs to be reduced from the vantage point of the Leader of the Opposition. We as a government have to decide whether or not we are going to take the unacceptably record high, as he puts it, deficit level and reduce it and reduce it dramatically and get it on a path towards a balanced budget or whether we are not. We made the decision well before he ever attacked us that we would.

Implicit in that is that every department has to do with less resources, because you cannot take Health, Education and Family Services, that collectively are two-thirds of the budget, and not touch them and achieve any targets. The Department of Education, the Department of Health, the Department of Family Services put up as options a spending reduction, options that would perhaps not have been considered in any previous budgetary cycle, because this is the first time in the

history of the province that year over year we have actually reduced the program spending.

I might say that I read last week that was the first time in the history of the province that year over year we have actually reduced the program spending.

I might say that I read last week that that was the first time in the history of the Province of Ontario that year over year they actually had to reduce program spending.

(Madam Chairperson in the Chair)

I know that they are going to have massive reductions in health care because, even though they are showing some minor reductions today in health and in education and in social services, they have a figure of \$2 billion that is not allocated yet and most of it is going to have to be allocated to the big spending areas for that so-called social contract reduction. So the real reduction in spending in those departments is going to be considerably higher as you allocate that \$2 billion to each of those departments. They are going to be faced with seeing numbers that are awesome in terms of their reduction in health and education, family services or social service safety net.

That is what we are faced with. The decisions were made based on the priority recommendations put forward by each of those departments and, believe me, none of them were ones that I would choose to make. That is exactly what the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) said. We would not choose to make those reductions to programs that have existed in some case for a decade or more, but the alternative was to leave the deficit at an unacceptably high level, and we will not do that. So that is why we are where we are.

Mr. Doer: The government did have to make choices and did have options. Can the Premier table today any financial analysis of how New Careers fits into the federal-provincial training agreement they signed where unemployed people would be the No. 1 priority for training dollars versus corporate training would not be the No. 1 training with the \$3.5-million proposal that went up to \$5 million under training in terms of corporate grants. The Premier says we are wrong in asking the question. We are wrong, you know, in terms of the data.

We look at their own federal-provincial training agreement, which I am sure the Premier reviewed as Minister responsible for Federal-Provincial Relations. It clearly states unemployment should be

the No. 1 priority for training. It clearly states that corporate training should be way down the list. Then we look in the Department of Education and what they are saying is, the priority for their own retraining strategy with the federal government seems to be the opposite of the tough choices they made in the department—\$1.5-increase million over here for corporate training and a reduction—the Premier says it is not 1.6, I would like to know what the number is—over there in terms of New Careers. Do we have any studies or anything to go on except just instinct in the Chamber?

* (1630)

Mr. Filmon: First and foremost, you know, the cost effectiveness of making a minor contribution towards training investment in the private sector where we may get tens of thousands of people trained for a matter of \$5 million versus a program in which for \$5 million we may be training a few hundred people at great, great expense, obviously there is a huge difference there. We talked earlier about how much it has cost so far to perhaps get two graduates in engineering, and the figure is in the millions. So that is what you are talking about in terms of cost effectiveness.

Surely he is not suggesting that we ought not to participate in the private sector training programs that see tens of thousands of people trained for a matter of \$5 million. There has to be room for both. I do not have the figures that he is talking about. I do not have the responsibility for that training agreement. That is totally the responsibility of the Minister of Education and Training (Mrs. Vodrey), and I just have to say to him that he will have to ask that question of her. She is in her Estimates right now.

Mr. Doer: I guess we have to start with the issue of what is the goal of training. Is it to get people off dependency in the long run, or is it to provide orientation sessions, many of which were conducted by the private sector group itself?

We will just agree to disagree. I think the government is spending its money in the wrong place. I believe that the government should be spending its money on reducing dependency, on getting people employed and getting people into long-term careers. That is where our Education and Training dollars should go, not going to companies that are responsible to some degree for orientation and training themselves.

Most of us get trained on the job, even MLAs get trained on the job. I believe that we just have to agree to disagree. We cannot get any numbers from the minister. We have not been able to yet. I do not know whether they have achieved any success in getting numbers from the Minister of Education across the way on this program. But we have tried it for about 15 hours now, and we have not moved off line 2 in the Education Estimates, and we are not getting anywhere.

I am going to move on. The Premier talked about the issue of the changing population, the changing demographics. How did the cutback to friendship centres fit with their federal-provincial strategy in dealing with the tremendous increase in aboriginal people in many of our urban centres and the tremendous increase in population?

Mr. Filmon: Well, I mean, it is an indication that, firstly, the primary responsibility for the aboriginal people is in the federal jurisdiction. Where the federal government is obviously offloading on us other responsibilities, we are saying that they ought to be primarily responsible for a number of areas that we have been funding in the past. You may use the Indian-Metis friendship centres as one of those examples; you may use the grant to the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs as another example.

When we are accepting offloading of \$17-20 million in a variety of other areas, we are going to have to be very circumspect in deciding where we spend our tax money. If it is in areas in which there is a primary federal responsibility, we are going to say, okay, it is your responsibility, you take that responsibility and you fund that responsibility because you are transferring other things over to us.

Mr. Doer: Did you negotiate this with the federal government or try to arrive at some agreement? It seems to me that the victims of this are the people themselves, the Manitoba citizens, caught between a jurisdictional fight. Was there any discussion with the government about their support for centres like Portage and The Pas, and I visited the one in Thompson, what the impact will be in terms of housing, what the impact will be on counselling, on employment, the drug abuse programs for kids, those kinds of programs that those friendship centres run? Was there any discussion with the federal government on this reduction, and what was the answer from the federal government? I assume it must have been Minister Mayer who would be responsible for that.

Mr. Filmon: Those discussions, if any, would be between the Minister responsible for Family Services and his counterpart in Ottawa. They would not be at the First Minister's level.

Mr. Doer: The Premier mentioned "if any." Were there any discussions prior to the decision being approved by the Premier?

Mr. Filmon: I repeat, the Premier did not approve that decision other than in the global approval of the budgetary amounts that were allocated to the departments. Any individual line situation was not something that was a matter of coming to the Premier's office or the cabinet table. He would have to ask the minister responsible for Family Services.

Mr. Doer: The Premier is the Minister of Federal-Provincial Relations. The Premier mentioned that this was a program that they felt was more adequately funded by the federal government, and that was one of the rationales, which is a different rationale than we heard earlier that this was just an "advocacy body."

It seems to us that anybody in the Federal-Provincial Relations branch, whether it is the Ottawa office or the Manitoba office—did anybody discuss this with the federal government before the things were just changed, because we have heard from people who feel this is a front line service with a growing demographic change, and more people, less resources? Was there any discussion with anybody prior to the decision being made, or is it just internal to the provincial government?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Chairperson, there was not any one answer as to why all the various reductions took place in grants. Some of the answers were that if they were primarily an advocacy group or solely an advocacy group, they were reduced. Others were that if they happened to be in an area in which there was an overlap of jurisdiction, where it was more appropriate that the federal government do it or the civic government do it, there could be that element to it.

In the area of, as I recall—and again, this is not in my Estimates area. It is not in my area of expertise. The member, if he really wants to have answers on this, should be talking to the minister responsible for Family Services. In no case was this the lion's share of any budget, the provincial allocation. There were a number of other sources of revenue, of which the federal government was always a pretty major

source of revenue. So there continues to be funding for all of these Indian-Metis friendship centres.

It is a question of how they allocate that funding and where they choose to make their cuts if they are facing reduced funding. Then one would see whether or not these areas that they are reducing are areas of lower priority. One would assume that they will make their reductions in terms of their operations based on what is the lowest priority being the first thing that they reduce.

* (1640)

Mr. Doer: I want to ask the question on the off-reserve funding, the \$15 million to \$20 million. Can the Minister responsible for Federal-Provincial Relations indicate the status of that amount of money and the status of negotiations in that area?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Chairperson, we continue to push the federal government. We raise it as an issue every time there is an analysis of federal-provincial disagreements, disputes, irritants between Manitoba and Canada, and they continue to refuse to recognize their responsibilities in these areas. I believe that the most accurate figure is \$17 million in last year's budget. That is the amount that was solely in the area of offloading of responsibility for social services to aboriginals living off reserve.

Mr. Doer: Is there any greater sensitivity for potentially new Prime Ministers who may be elected in the next three weeks to this issue? Is there any possibility that this is going to be a change in the status of this issue with the change in the head of government?

Mr. Filmon: Also add to it and say there is an extra \$4 million for Child and Family Services that was offloaded from the federal government to our province. So that makes a total of 21. In addition to that there was the offloading with respect to ACCESS and other areas that will accumulate.

But is there a possibility of them going back on it? That is a very difficult one to say. I think in this whole area of constitutional discussions in which we try and identify who has got the major responsibility and try and ensure that those who have the constitutional responsibility live up to that constitutional responsibility, it will have to be one in which there is very, very strong pressure from all provincial governments towards the federal government to try and make them move. I do not believe that Manitoba by itself could initiate this kind of change of attitude in the federal government. I

might say that change of attitude I think stemmed from the bureaucracy who identified it as an area in which they felt they could get out of significant responsibilities.

We hope that there may be something that evolves from the federal government's aboriginal royal commission report that might serve to strengthen our case. It is going to take something as strong as that to help us in making the case.

Mr. Doer: One of the issues that the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) has talked about as a federal issue has been the—and I raise this with the Premier then because it was moved over to federal-provincial relations—whole treatment centre proposed by the MKO for northern Manitoba to deal with solvent abuse, and clearly the Minister of Health has indicated in this Chamber that in his opinion it was not a provincial health issue, it was a federal matter.

Has this issue been raised by the Premier with the federal government, and can he advise us on the status of that proposal?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Chair, it has not been raised by me.

Mr. Doer: Has the Minister of Health raised this with the Premier as a matter for the federal-provincial negotiations? Has this been raised as a priority by the Minister of Health internally and now a priority for the provincial government in dealing with federal-provincial relations?

We have had questions in the House for years. The Premier has raised the issue. Has it been raised in the House of Commons or not? I think this is an issue for all of us.

On the one hand we have to deal with economic dignity, social dignity in the communities. On the other hand, how is our best approach to deal with abuse and programs of that nature, and I just asked what is the status of it internally with the provincial government?

Mr. Filmon: Since it is a matter that we believe very clearly is outside of the jurisdiction of the provincial government, there is no internal status on it. It is a matter between MKO, the northern bands and the federal government, and I believe that they have made their proposal directly to the federal government.

Mr. Doer: Given we are dealing with citizens who are both located directly in aboriginal communities

affected by the federal government and dealing with people off reserve that are dealing with the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), has the government considered this proposal at all?

The federal government will surely rely on some advice from the provincial government on behalf of its citizens. Is the provincial government going to support this proposal? Is it going to support it in a modified way? Can the Premier (Mr. Filmon) add some oomph to this—I guess you cannot translate that in Hansard—but add some strength to this proposal for the people of northern Manitoba?

Mr. Filmon: The proposal has never been before the provincial government. It went straight from the northern bands to the federal government. It has not been on our cabinet table to deal with.

We could go on looking at every possible thing that happens in this province and put it at my doorstep and say the Premier ought to be the one who goes and takes us on and becomes the champion and take that issue, and that issue, and that issue. If we do that, I obviously will not have time to do all the things I am expected to do as Premier and Minister of Federal-Provincial Relations, and Chairman of the Executive Council, and Chairman of the Economic Development Board and so on.

We can go on and deal with all of those issues, and you want to pick them out of everybody's portfolio and say, this is my key issue in that area, and I want you to take it out of the Minister of Health's hands, and I want you to take it out of the Minister of Family Services' hands, and take this issue out of Education. But I do think that we are getting a little far afield. I am quite happy to sit here and talk all day, but we are really not talking about things that come under this Premier's direct responsibility.

I am really unable to give the kind of answers that the member is looking for because they simply are not under my jurisdiction. [interjection]

Mr. Doer: Well, I will see if I can accommodate the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns). I tried to do it in my late question, but I could not get the Premier up on it. I did get him up on a point of order, I must say.

I will review the answer the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) gave in this Chamber when he described it as a, quote, federal issue. They are our citizens, and it is a huge, huge problem. We have, of course, introduced ourselves private members' legislation

way back in 1989, dealing with a little bit of the issue. Certainly, the treatment centre is dealing with part of the problem.

I am not going to raise every matter in every portfolio with the Premier. I will raise some of the ones that I think are important under federal relations. This is this province and its people.

Its citizens are very directly impacted by the federal government, and this Premier is responsible for federal-provincial relations. That is why we pay the Premier's staff the big money that we pay them and why they have had such a long and illustrious career, because they have done a good job on behalf of Manitoba. But that does not mean to say that we cannot stop pushing on issues and raising them.

I am raising them for the Premier (Mr. Filmon) not to say, not my job; I am raising it for the Premier to say, I will make it a priority.

So I am not going to raise 150 issues, but I will raise some of them today. I will leave the list, the MKO proposal. I think a treatment centre for people involved with solvent abuse—I do not want to see Davis Inlets in Manitoba in terms of international coverage, even though I know there are similar situations that go on here. I think we have to be dealing with it in a nonpartisan, quiet way. I think we have to have strategies to deal with the economic challenges, to deal with the housing challenges, to deal with the social challenges in the communities. I think we need an Education and Training strategy. I think we need to deal with the retailers. I also think we have to have a treatment program.

* (1650)

I say to the Premier, I would ask him to reconsider his opinion. He sometimes tells me I am off base and he sometimes tells me I am on base, but he rarely tells me that it is not his job. I would ask him to look at this. I think it is his job. I think under federal-provincial relations, I would ask him to pursue this. If he has not looked at it from the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), who was aware of the proposal, the Minister of Health gave an answer in the House—I will check back in Hansard, I will write the Premier on it directly. I think it will help to get his support if he believes it is a good program. If he does not believe it is a good program, I believe it helps to find out why and to potentially revise it or deal with some of the issues in it.

I want to move from there to the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry. I know the Premier had questions in the Chamber today on that, and I just want to deal with the federal-provincial relations part of it. I do not want to deal with all 300 recommendations, but the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry is also being dealt with by the federal government, and as I understand it, there are federal-provincial negotiations going on.

Which minister is responsible, the lead minister for the AJI? When the government had the joint press conference with the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs, (Mr. Downey) the Deputy Premier; and the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), the government at that point announced that the Minister of Native Affairs would chair a cabinet committee to look at the implementation of the AJI. Today the Premier answered in the House that the Minister of Justice was the lead minister. Who is the lead minister on this matter?

Mr. Filmon: The lead minister throughout the AJI was the Minister of Justice. There was no question about it. Yes, there is a committee that is being chaired by the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey) with respect to certain elements of the implementation of that. He is responsible for all other aboriginal issues and so he obviously has an interface.

There is, in addition to that, of course, a responsibility which we have acknowledged that from time to time the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) is involved, from time to time the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) is involved with some of the recommendations of the AJI, but the co-ordinating, the lead responsibility is still in the hands of the Minister of Justice, and he has reported from time to time in this House about progress being made.

There was a Youth Court Initiative that was announced that flows from the AJI recommendations. There were a number of things he has done that flowed from the responsibilities or from the recommendations. We have, for two straight years, I believe, allocated a million dollars for some of these programming areas for implementation and much of it has been spent in these areas of implementing and responding to AJI recommendations.

Mr. Doer: Many of the recommendations of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry are germane to the provincial government. In dealing with their

committee and their minister, can the Premier advise us of the status of negotiations dealing with some of the recommendations dealing with the federal government and the federal Department of Justice? Are they being actively discussed in the federal government? Have they been discussed between the Premier and the Prime Minister at his November meeting or December meeting with the Prime Minister? Will it be discussed with the new Prime Minister, who is—both of the leadership candidates, as I understand it, are planning to abolish the Indian Affairs Department.

Where are these recommendations? The Premier has met with the former Minister of Justice, now Defence Minister. Where are these recommendations with the provincial government and the federal government?

Mr. Filmon: My understanding is that they are actively being discussed between the federal and provincial Justice departments.

Mr. Doer: Can the Premier indicate when we can expect a result of these discussions between the provincial and federal government in terms of the recommendations affecting the federal jurisdiction, and when will there be a tabling of the status of the recommendations between the committee that is chaired by the minister and the lead minister, the Justice minister and the recommendations being dealt with by the federal government?

Mr. Filmon: I can say firstly that I cannot give the member any indication as to when the federal government might initiate any responses. I can say to him that there will not be any all-encompassing response to the report, because it is an ongoing thing.

There have been accelerated discussions of co-management of resources in the field of natural resources, for instance. There is the Sagkeeng-Sturgeon Memorandum of Understanding. There is the Split Lake First Nation settlement agreement. There are the discussions underway with Moose Lake, Chemawawin First Nation, Easterville, Cormorant communities, sturgeon fishery on Nelson River and Waterhen Indian Band. That is in the natural resources field.

In the area of family services, there is the Task Force on First Nations Child and Family services that will examine the provision of Child and Family Services by First Nations agencies, identify strengths and weaknesses of the current system

and develop a plan of action to improve the quality and management, governance of service to First Nations children and families. That comes out of the AJI report.

There is the Service Appeal Panel, the establishment of a panel which will receive and investigate complaints and concerns regarding case mismanagement, process or the perceived conflict of interest affecting the best interests of an aboriginal child.

There is the Quality Assurance Program, the enhancement of the department's Quality Assurance Program that will enable the increased monitoring and support of aboriginal Child and Family Services agencies. There is the study of Metis children on welfare jointly by the Manitoba Metis Federation and the Department of Family Services undertaking a study to find out how many Metis children are being cared for in the child welfare system so that enough culturally appropriate services can be provided.

Under Northern and Native Affairs, there is the ongoing tripartite process for Metis self-government issues. There is the northern fly-in sports camp funding; the pilot project for recreation directors in the north; the Treaty Land Entitlement discussions underway between communities, the province, the federal government.

There is the settlement of I believe it is two Northern Flood Agreement band financial settlements and the prospect of another two coming forth in the next year or so, so good progress being made on that, a major, major concern of the AJI.

In the area of justice, some of the areas that have been funded that come out of—[interjection] Yes, here we have the St. Theresa Point Youth Court, a \$100,000 commitment there; the Human Justice Training Program for Winnipeg, a \$50,000 commitment; the aboriginal court model consultation, \$30,000 commitment; Hollow Water sexual abuse project, \$60,000 commitment.

In the courts area, Legal Aid has been authorized to grant interim certificate over the phone in cases dealing with aboriginals. They developed, in conjunction with the Aboriginal Advisory group, a proposal for changing the operation of circuit courts on a pilot project basis. The justice of the peace program is being reviewed with a view to appointing native justices of the peace. That comes out of the AJI report as well.

In the corrections area, for instance, elder services are available at all seven provincial correctional institutions. There is an elders council that meets quarterly and consists of elders from five institutions and the co-ordinators of chaplaincy services and inmate programs.

In the area of cross-cultural training, a native awareness training program has been revised and updated by two officers of aboriginal ancestry. The program is part of a basic training program for all recruits. Correctional officers who have not taken the course in the past five years will be enrolled with a view to their completing the course within the next two years.

Native advisory committees have already been formed at Brandon and Dauphin. We are attempting to create them for all other institutions. The Dakota Ojibway probation services agreement has been extended for another year. The community service orders fine option fee has been adjusted to reduce the financial strain on organizations providing the supervision.

In the area of prosecutions, we have implemented all the recommendations that are within provincial responsibility, arising from the Harper and Osborne reports, including amendments to The Fatality Inquiries Act and Law Enforcement Review Act, the review of provincial policies regarding granting of immunity and retaining of independent counsel.

We have reviewed with the RCMP and Winnipeg police all recommendations regarding notebooks, investigation of shootings, gathering of evidence, resulting in significant changes to policies. We have had the participation with the federal Solicitor General and the RCMP in community meetings to explain the new federal police policy.

In the area of Women's Directorate, there has been a development of the aboriginal women's policy in partnership with the aboriginal women's community.

* (1700)

All of these come out of recommendations from the AJI in all of these different areas of government. So it is in fact an all-encompassing kind of thing as it was expected to be, and that is the kind of progress report I can give, but each and every year, there will be more initiatives that come forward.

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. The hour being 5 p.m., time for private members' hour. Committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS— PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 200—The Child and Family Services Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: To resume debate on second reading of Bill 200 (The Child and Family Services Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services à l'enfant et à la famille), standing in the name of the honourable member for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans), who has one minute remaining, and standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? [agreed]

Bill 202—The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: To resume debate on second reading of Bill 202 (The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la location à usage d'habitation), standing in the name of the honourable member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Pallister).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? [agreed]

Bill 203—The Health Care Records Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: To resume debate on second reading of Bill 203 (The Health Care Records Act; Loi sur les dossiers médicaux), standing in the name of the honourable member for Emerson (Mr. Penner).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? [agreed]

Bill 205—The Ombudsman Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: To resume debate on second reading of Bill 205 (The Ombudsman Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur

l'ombudsman), standing in the name of the honourable member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? [agreed]

Bill 208—The Workers Compensation Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: To resume debate on second reading of Bill 208 (The Workers Compensation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les accidents du travail), standing in the name of the honourable member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? [agreed]

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready to proceed with second reading of public bills? Bill 209?

An Honourable Member: No.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Bill 211?

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Bill 212?

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Bill 214?

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Bill 216?

An Honourable Member: Stand.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Res. 26—Aboriginal Justice Inquiry

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), that

WHEREAS the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry found that the justice system has failed Manitoba's aboriginal people on a massive scale; and

WHEREAS the AJI report released on August 29, 1991, is the most comprehensive study of the justice system ever done in this country; and

WHEREAS the AJI report made 306 recommendations and only a tiny fraction of them have been acted upon by the provincial government; and

WHEREAS the provincial government has refused to release their studies and analyses of the recommendations; and

WHEREAS the provincial government has also refused to release an action plan for implementing the recommendations of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request the provincial government to release all studies and analyses of each of the recommendations of the AJI report; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly request that the provincial government consider immediately commencing work with aboriginal organizations to implement the recommendations of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly request that the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) release publicly an action plan for the government on implementing the recommendations of the AJI.

Motion presented.

Mr. Lathlin: Madam Deputy Speaker, the resolution which we have just put forth today deals with an issue that is crucially important to the future well-being of aboriginal people, and I think that it should also be just as important to this government here today. The issue, of course, is one of justice, justice for First Nations and Metis peoples.

Manitobans have spoken strongly of the necessity of rectifying the generations of injustice suffered by aboriginal peoples. Madam Deputy Speaker, almost two years ago the government of Manitoba received reports from two consultative processes, the Manitoba Constitutional Task Force and the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry of Manitoba.

Few governments have enjoyed such an unequivocal direction from their constituents. The people of Manitoba demand justice for aboriginal peoples. When I read the reports of the task force and the inquiry, I was elated, Madam Deputy Speaker, because I thought that no government could afford to ignore such adamant statements from the electorate. I hoped that responsible action and real change would finally come about.

Two years later, I find myself bitterly disappointed and outraged at a government so contemptuous of the public. This is a government committed to doing as little as possible. For the benefit of the members

here today, I want to review what has happened with the report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry. It is a shameful story, not only because the government has failed to act, but because of the tactics that they have used to dodge their responsibility. When called upon to see that justice is done for aboriginal people, this government's response has been to mount an attack on the institutions and leaders that give a voice to those suffering injustice, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Is this what Manitobans wanted? The answer, of course, is no, that is not what Manitobans wanted.

The story begins a full six months after the release of the Report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, with the government's first response to the report. I say, Madam Deputy Speaker, first response. I might as well also say that was the last response in terms of what has happened since then. The response was a policy position on implementation which could not be acceptable to aboriginal people. It was a policy that the government has firmly adhered to ever since, a cynical strategy to ensure inaction on the most comprehensive study of the justice system and aboriginal peoples ever done in this country.

* (1710)

Aboriginal leaders were united in their outrage, but as months went by and dust started to collect on the inquiry's report, leaders of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and the Manitoba Metis Federation repeatedly sought some compromise, some way to meaningfully participate in the implementation process. The inquiry was simply too invaluable. It could not be allowed just to die.

Madam Deputy Speaker, there were meetings with the Premier and cabinet, proposals, rejections, further compromises were made, some further rejections were made. Aboriginal leaders know that involving their people in the reform of the justice system is not a simple or cost-free undertaking. They need resources if their participation is to be meaningful, Madam Deputy Speaker.

The government's response was: First, fanning the fires of the residual racism by portraying aboriginal leaders as simply being greedy and irresponsible; secondly, yanking the funding and thus silencing the voice of dissent—some \$325,000 was slashed from the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs' budget; thirdly, finally, to just let the issue quietly disappear.

I am told that this government's smug complacency on the AJI is now so entrenched that they have not even responded to a February 23 urgent request to meet jointly with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, the Manitoba Metis Federation and the Indigenous Women's Collective. These are the leaders of the aboriginal peoples which our Premier has acknowledged that they have the inherent right to govern themselves. We, on this side, are appalled and, quite frankly, embarrassed by the government's inability and unwillingness to act on the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry. I for one am not content to sit in this Assembly and allow this kind of injustice to go on and on, Madam Deputy Speaker. The report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry is a great resource for Manitoba. It is, as Grand Chief Phil Fontaine said, a blueprint for the future.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, we must not let this opportunity slip through our fingers. It is too important for us to do that. As members of the Legislature, we must uphold the honour of this House and respect the government institutions that are there at the First Nations and the Metis people's level.

Thank you for listening to me.

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs, responsible for Native Affairs): Madam Deputy Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to respond to the resolution presented by the member for The Pas, representing the New Democratic Party.

I may say at the outset, I noted the questions in Question Period today from the member and also the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) during the debate of the Premier's department, the Executive Council. I guess the question that the Leader of the Opposition had to the Premier (Mr. Filmon) as to whose responsibility it was, that being the AJI or the response to the AJI, I think it clearly is noted by the fact the resolution is directed at the Attorney General's office that there is an understanding by the New Democratic Party that it is the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) who has been handling the detailed response as it relates to the activities of the AJI and the recommendations.

Just a little bit of history, and I will say at the outset, Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like notification some four to five minutes prior to the conclusion of my remarks so that I can in fact amend the resolution

put forward by the member for The Pas, and I would like ample time make sure that is done.

I think, Madam Deputy Speaker, at the outset, we should be clear as to the work that the AJI was challenged with, and that of course their report was to detail the tragic circumstances of the deaths of Helen Betty Osborne and J.J. Harper. The fact that they did find mistakes, and there were difficulties within the justice system in both cases, the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) assures us by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Winnipeg City Police Department that they have reviewed their practices and changes have been made in line with the commission's recommendations. I say that at the outset.

Changes have also been undertaken in the Crown's office to implement many of the recommendations made by the commissioners. Let me say as well that the commission went far broader in the work that they carried out, far more time and detail in a lot broader range of recommendation. Something that, quite frankly, I say at the outset, they were not requested to do, but took on more work as they saw fit.

So let us remember the objective was to deal with the handling of the tragic situation of the Helen Betty Osborne case and the J.J. Harper incident and they are both very unfortunate situations. That is what the job of the AJI was commissioned to do; however, they went far and beyond that.

The resolution put forward by the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) today addresses the AJI and the government's response to it. I must strongly object to this resolution on a number of grounds.

First, the resolution states: WHEREAS the AJI report made 306 recommendations and only a tiny fraction of them have been acted upon by the provincial government.

In fact, the AJI report contained 335 recommendations: 293 in Volume 1, and 42 in Volume 2. Only 107 recommendations fell within the provincial responsibility. Over a half are outside of our pure provincial responsibility, a large number are within the mandate of Canada, and specific institutions such as police and parole agencies. Furthermore, numerous recommendations required constitutional amendments that cannot be effected without the co-operation of all provinces and of Canada.

Again, one could talk for a while on the constitutional change that was rejected, which I think would have shown progress. Again, we, this House, supported the change, but again rejected by the people of Canada. As I will outline below, it is clear that the government is moving in a number of areas which directly or indirectly relate to AJI recommendations.

Second, the resolution states: WHEREAS the provincial government has refused to release their studies and analyses of the recommendations.

Let me speak to that, Madam Deputy Speaker. Our government has indicated that recommendations and the report would be discussed in the proposed AJI working groups. The working groups represent a forum in which aboriginal concerns, recommendations and advice can be communicated directly to the government. It is also a forum in which the impact of reform stemming from the AJI can be gauged by the people most affected by the initiative—aboriginal Manitobans.

Thirdly, Resolution 26 states: WHEREAS the provincial government has also refused to release an action plan for implementing the recommendations of the Aboriginal Justice report.

After reviewing the 293 recommendations contained in this report, myself as the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs, the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), announced the government's response to the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry on January 28. Working groups, central to the government's strategy for change, was the establishment of four working groups in the area of Northern and Native affairs, Natural Resources, Family Services, and Justice.

Due to the large number of recommendations for change to the justice system, we also announced the formation of three subcommittees on police, courts and corrections which will report to the main justice working group. These groups consisting of both government and aboriginal representatives have the mandates to review, evaluate and prioritize all recommendations accepted by government; study areas where viable and proven models are known to exist and build upon them; and recommend specific pilot projects in untested areas.

* (1720)

Leaders of the Indigenous Women's Collective, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, the Manitoba Metis Federation and the Aboriginal Council of

Winnipeg were invited to identify their representatives to participate in the working groups. The government of Manitoba views their participation as vital and necessary to ensure the positive substantive changes to the relationships between the justice system and their aboriginal people in Manitoba.

The aboriginal leaders in Manitoba have accepted in principle their willingness to participate in the working groups. Subsequent to the government's response to the AJI, the Premier (Mr. Filmon), the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey) and the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) met with leaders of the aboriginal groups invited to participate in the working groups.

We agreed that aboriginal and government personnel would co-chair the working groups and subcommittees. Furthermore, the government offered to pay per diems to aboriginal officials attending working groups meeting on behalf of the agencies.

I will summarize the working groups' comments, Madam Deputy Speaker.

I would submit that the proposed working groups, their mandate and agreement to the aboriginal government co-chairs and the agreement to fund the participation of aboriginal officials represents an action plan that was not only made public over a year ago but which is sufficiently detailed to ensure clear understanding by all Manitobans.

A fourth part of the resolution states, be it further resolved that the provincial government consider immediately commencing work with aboriginal organizations to implement the recommendations of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the government has been carrying out consultations and work in numerous areas and directly or indirectly addressing recommendations contained in the AJI. This work was begun well before the AJI was submitted and continues to this day.

The work and the consultations include a response to an initiative brought forward by the Aboriginal Court Worker Advisory Committee, which consists of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, the Manitoba Metis Federation, the Indigenous Women's Collective, the Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg and the Manitoba Association of Friendship Centres.

Manitoba Justice began extensive consultations in December with provincial aboriginal leaders, tribal councils, Metis locals, community members, elders and senators to introduce, receive and feed back the aboriginal court model. This initiative was begun prior to the report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry. If implemented, the court model will greatly enhance services to aboriginal members.

The entire initiative is based on local involvement in the resolution of cases that normally would be subject to hearings conducted by a circuit court. It is our hope that through the appointment of local magistrates and other justice officials and their activities it will be adjudicated and resolved in the language of the participants. Disposition will reflect the culture and community standards and hearings will be better understood by participants and the communities.

Madam Deputy Speaker, it is our intention to augment the court model with the appointment of magistrates in numerous aboriginal communities throughout all regions of the province.

I will proceed to move rather quickly so that I may conclude with the amendment to the resolution.

As well, of course, there has been additional work with the DOTA police, a police cadet program within the aboriginal community, corrections, new and enhanced correctional services including elder services. Many of these the Premier commented on earlier in the Estimates process which he was in.

The province has also established a million-dollar fund for the second year to support new and innovative aboriginal justice projects, the St. Theresa Point Youth Court program, a hundred thousand dollars over two years; Hollow Water community holistic circle healing, some \$60,000 bridge financing for a three-year pilot project; Island Lake family violence program for some \$18,000; aboriginal spouse abuse intervention training; cross cultural awareness; northern distance bail hearings; Southeast tribal council workshop on family violence. These represent many areas in which the government has participated.

In conclusion, Madam Deputy Speaker, the government of Manitoba has taken an active role in consulting with aboriginal communities and leaders on justice matters in developing and supporting new justice initiatives. The government has also put forward a detailed strategy and offer of support for ensuring aboriginal government dialogue on justice

matters. The working group approach represents an excellent vehicle through which additional reforms can be discussed.

Madam Deputy Speaker, while I am disappointed that the invited aboriginal groups have not accepted our offer, this has not stopped the government from working and consulting with aboriginal communities and their local regional leaders to improve justice services. The government of Manitoba is moving ahead in virtually every sector of the justice system from policing to courts to corrections to ensure that aboriginal Manitobans receive services which meet both their culture and community needs.

I, therefore, Madam Deputy Speaker, would like to move, seconded by the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst), that Resolution 26 be amended by deleting all the words following the first WHEREAS and replacing them with the following:

The Aboriginal Justice Inquiry found that the justice system has failed Manitoba's aboriginal people on a massive scale; and

WHEREAS the provincial government issued its response to the report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry on January 28, 1992, with the proposed initiatives in the areas of policing, courts, corrections and other justice services, as well as Family Services, Natural Resources and Northern and Native Affairs; and

WHEREAS the provincial government announced the creation of four working groups to deal with the recommendations of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry;

WHEREAS the provincial government met with and invited officials from the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, the Manitoba Metis Federation, the Indigenous Women's Collective and the Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg to participate on the working groups to 1) advise to the review, evaluate and prioritize all the recommendations accepted by the government; 2) study areas where viable and proven models are known to exist and build upon them; and, 3) recommend specific pilot projects;

WHEREAS the provincial government has worked and consulted with the individual aboriginal communities and leaders to improve police, court and correctional services.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this Assembly encourage the provincial government to continue its consultation and work with aboriginal

communities to improve the administration of justice for all Manitobans.

Motion presented.

Mr. Downey: Madam Deputy Speaker, I believe, as well, in concluding my remarks on this debate, that it is extremely important that we continue to work as has been led by this Premier (Mr. Filmon) and this government the opportunity for educational, for preventative mechanisms to be put in place so that our aboriginal people, young people particularly, do not find themselves having to fall into the justice and the corrections system to get on with their way of lives, that there are other ways. I think it is up to us collectively to work to give those individuals the kind of support and strength that they need.

I thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker, for this opportunity to speak on this matter.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I have reviewed the amendment, and it complies with the rules and practices of the House.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to speak on this resolution, and I wish I was speaking on the original resolution rather than on the amendment, because I think the original resolution expresses the frustration of our aboriginal people to the lack of response of this government to the AJI. What we have experienced in the province of Manitoba is systemic discrimination towards our aboriginal peoples almost from the moment when the white settlers came to this province.

What we have experienced is a group of people, our first peoples, who tragically and unfortunately, and as identified so clearly by the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, represent a disproportionate number of people in the penal institutions of our society and particularly in this province. When we examine, as did the AJI report, why there has been what can only be defined as systemic discrimination against our aboriginal people, we know that many factors are at play here. Some of the factors are, quite frankly, a lack of understanding on the part of many aboriginal peoples of how the justice system even works, and that is why there was a call for making the justice system more responsive to their understanding of what basic and essential justice was all about, because basic and essential justice was not being received by aboriginal peoples.

* (1730)

I was somewhat amused at the final comments by the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey) in his amendment which, like every other amendment which the government seeks to introduce on a private members' resolution, attempts to congratulate the government. He said, we have to look at some of the more root, fundamental causes so that we can enter a prevention mode. This is exactly the government that has cut programs which would enhance the educational opportunities of aboriginal people in the province of Manitoba. This is the government who has cut ACCESS programs which had a quota of 60 percent aboriginal participation, and yet the ACCESS programs were cut.

So if the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs is really sincere about encouraging the kind of educational opportunities necessary so aboriginal peoples would understand the justice system as it now exists, then he had better talk to the Minister of Education (Mrs. Vodrey) because she does not seem to understand that. If he believes that there has been genuine consultation with aboriginal peoples, then I would ask him to ask the aboriginal people why they do not feel there has been that genuine forum of consultation. I would ask, if he really and sincerely believes that young aboriginal people have to be taught how to work within the community that exists, why did he and his government choose to completely, not partially, not by a small percentage, but totally and completely, eliminate all funding to Indian and Metis friendship centres in the province of Manitoba in one quick stroke of the pen in the last budget.

What we know exists in the province of Manitoba and which the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey) knows exists in the province of Manitoba is a situation in which far too many aboriginal people, beginning with young people and moving through all age areas, find themselves in the penal institutions of this province. They find themselves in violation of the law, that their sentencing frequently reflects far higher terms of service in penal institutions than the same sentence given to white men and women. That we know is fact.

It was clearly depicted within the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry report, and it still very much exists that there is blatant discrimination against aboriginal people. The government has done nothing to change that. There has been no changing in the

sentencing processes that exist in the province and, tragically, we are no closer to an aboriginal justice system in the province of Manitoba than we were before this report was written.

The minister says, and in the one area that he is correct, that much of the change requires participation of not only the provincial government but also the federal government. But I have not been able to identify a single instance in which the provincial government has gone to the federal government and said this is a particular model we would like to try on an experimental basis in the province of Manitoba. We want to set this system up. We want to examine it carefully. We want to try it for a period of time. Do we have your approval to do this? That is not happening in the province of Manitoba.

We know that you cannot change an entire justice system overnight. Nobody is asking that. Even the aboriginal community is not asking that, but they are asking, and in fact they asked in such eloquent terms in this report, for an opportunity to try some things in new and innovative ways and to see if we cannot make them work. We do not even seem to be able to come up with a reasonable policy in the area of natural resources and a recognition of hunting, fishing and trapping rights which were recognized under the treaties and which have been blatantly ignored by the Province of Manitoba and other provinces across the country, and for which there has to be a change in attitude and policy so that those recognitions of those rights are truly and legitimately recognized through the province of Manitoba. But that is not happening.

What kinds of changes are we seeing so that an aboriginal young person who finds himself or herself before the courts for the first time is given some help to relate to that court in an appropriate fashion? Many young people, not just aboriginal young people, but many young people are frightened of the court system. They do not understand it. They are easily intimidated. Well, if they are easily intimidated when they have grown and been raised in a white culture, can you imagine how intimidated they must be in a nonwhite culture.

I remember frequently saying to my students, if you are stopped by the police you are polite, you are excessively polite. You give them your name, you give them your address, you give them your telephone number, and you shut up. You do not tell them any other things because as soon as you do,

you lose your rights. You are always polite and you give them the basic information they require, but you do not give them any more information until you have legal counsel.

How does an aboriginal child feel when they are taken into a system for which they have no background, no understanding, and what are we doing about that?

I would suggest to you that we are doing nothing, Madam Deputy Speaker. We are doing nothing to ensure that their rights are adequately protected and, as a result, they often give up those rights before anyone has had the opportunity to teach them that their rights are as valid and as correct as the rights of anybody else.

I read just over this weekend that the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) is finally reviewing some words expressed by a judge in the province of Manitoba, and thank goodness for that, but we have been calling for training of our justices, not only on women's issues but on aboriginal issues, and that training is not taking place.

We have not seen that kind of cross-cultural training. We cannot even get that kind of cross-cultural training within the Legislature for members of this Chamber, let alone to have it take place across the body politic.

So here we are with a report which cost us a great deal of money, bound and full of wonderful recommendations, that sits on a shelf gathering dust and nobody does anything.

The member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin), who is himself a member of the aboriginal community and who was once a chief and who understands full well the impact of much of this directly in a way that I could never understand it, stands up in this House and says, this work is not being done, my people are not being served, and the government's reaction to that is to amend his resolution.

Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, it simply is not good enough. It is not good enough when we know that our aboriginal people still are the most discriminated people in the province of Manitoba. They are discriminated in ways that most of us will never, ever, understand.

They do not have, for the most part, opportunities to have dignity, because they cannot get employed. There are no job opportunities for them in most reserve communities in the province of Manitoba,

and there is nothing in this government's economic initiative which would change that.

They are discriminated against in the courts. They are even discriminated against in health care service, because how else can one explain that they still have the highest mortality rate, that they live shorter times on this earth than the rest of us live?

They are discriminated in terms of education, because how else does one explain that they have the highest dropout rate of any group within our society? We talk about a 23 or 27 percent dropout rate and we cannot get the Minister of Education (Mrs. Vodrey) to tell us which figure she happens to think it is.

We talk about a dropout rate among aboriginal communities of 35 and 40 percent. That is the kind of discrimination that exists out here.

When commissioners Hamilton and Sinclair prepared this report, they did not talk just about the justice system, although that was their primary purpose. What they did was that they recognized that the justice system is merely a reflection of the entire society and how we respond to people in terms of the justice that they get is a reflection of the way society treats those people in general. The way in which the province of Manitoba treats our aboriginal people is a reflection of the discrimination that is levied against them day after day after day.

* (1740)

Has this government done anything? Yes, there are a few pilot projects, very few. There have been a few new services available in some of the provincial penal institutions that can make some of the residents there feel a bit more as if the system was culturally sensitive, but very small, very minor, insignificant changes.

The minister points to the fact that he thought that the constitutional proposals last summer would dramatically change that. There is only one problem with that. The aboriginal people themselves indicated that it was woefully inadequate, that it did not recognize their needs, and far more damaging, seemed to be stepping all over their treaties, the treaties that they believe recognize the fiduciary relationship with the federal government. Yet they are being asked, and they were being asked, in my opinion, back in October of 1992, to buy a pig in a poke, and they were not prepared to do that.

They asked for time; they were denied time. They asked for opinions; they were denied opinions. So

why should it surprise anybody that the aboriginal people rejected it, because they said it did not serve them well?

We cannot expect our aboriginal people, quite frankly, to trust very much that is provided to them by white society. They want to be involved at the moment that a new system is in its evolutionary period. Many of them are even—and I am sure that the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) would agree—fearful of self-government, fearful because they do not know what it means to them. They do not know if it will mean a better way of life for them.

I believe it will, but only the aboriginal people themselves can ultimately decide whether it is in their best interests, not me, not a member of the white culture can make that decision for them. Only aboriginal people can make that decision as to whether they want to trade one system, which is obviously not working, for another system which they also may think does not work to their advantage. At least they feel they have now some protection. So while I would have been delighted to have supported the member for The Pas' (Mr. Lathlin) resolution today, I cannot accept the minister's self patting on the back of this government because it has failed miserably to answer the requirements of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry.

Mr. Lathlin: Madam Deputy Speaker, I wish to speak further on the resolution, particularly to the amendments that were put forth by the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey).

I want to advise the minister. He seems to have great difficulty with the way the inquiry was conducted, especially the scope of the inquiry, Madam Deputy Speaker. I would just like to remind the minister—[interjection] Yes, he did. Yes, he did.

I would like to remind the minister that it was an act of this Legislature that finally got the inquiry going some time ago now. I would just like to read to the minister, for the record, Bill 28, An Act to Establish and Validate the Public Inquiry into the Administration of Justice and Aboriginal People, and the scope of inquiry says: "The commissioners shall investigate, report and make recommendations to the Minister of Justice on the relationship between the administration of justice and Aboriginal peoples of Manitoba, guided by but not limited to the terms of reference set out in the Schedule." I would like to, if I could, table this document, Madam Deputy Speaker.

The other thing that I wanted to say was the response by the minister to the resolution and the way that he has amended the resolution, virtually rendering it, in my view, useless, because what the amendments in fact do—Madam Deputy Speaker, they are self-congratulatory. The minister is trying to congratulate the government, for having done what?—in terms of implementing the recommendations.

The minister talks about these projects that his government has been involved in. Yes, there are some projects that are going on right now, being funded by the provincial government, but I would also say that those projects that are being operated by various First Nations communities came to happen as a result of much pressure and lobbying on the part of those groups.

I remember particularly the St. Theresa Point project which finally received funding from the provincial government after much lobbying and pressure put on the government by the St. Theresa group. The St. Theresa group held a press conference in this building, and it was long after that the government—

Point of Order

Mr. Downey: Madam Deputy Speaker, I apologize for interrupting the member's comments. I wonder if he would submit to a question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Does the honourable Minister of Native Affairs have leave to pose a question to the honourable member for The Pas? No? No.

* * *

Mr. Lathlin: Madam Deputy Speaker, I do not want to stay on that area too long. I just want to say about the protests that are going on right now, I wonder what would have happened if there had not been that support from the communities, lobbying and pressure put on the government by those various groups. I wonder what would have happened if the pressure and lobbying had not been there by those groups.

The court model that the minister talks about is not an aboriginal court, but it is a proposal for reform of the existing circuit court system that is there now. It has merit, and there is community interest. However, there are concerns that are being put forth by the aboriginal community. That has to do with the involvement that the aboriginal community, the First

Nations had on the original development of the concept through the Aboriginal Court Worker Advisory Committee. The aboriginal groups have been more or less shut out since the Justice ministry took it on as a pet project.

The government has undertaken direct consultation with some communities and is now dealing with the court model through an internal committee of Manitoba justice people without any aboriginal representation, Madam Deputy Speaker. The projected annual budget of some \$800,000 for that process has not been explained or justified, and they are also negotiating a \$400,000 contribution from the federal government through the Aboriginal Justice directorate, again, without any involvement on the part of the aboriginal people.

* (1750)

So the minister can go on and on, I guess, and congratulate himself on the tinkering that has been done on the part of the government on the justice system as it relates to aboriginal people here in Manitoba, but the fact of the matter is, Madam Deputy Speaker, the situation is still the same today as it was when we started to request for an inquiry into the two specific cases that the minister referred to earlier, the Osborne and the J.J. Harper cases. The situation, I am afraid, has not changed. The government may say all it wants to this Chamber here and to the people that they are doing as much as they can, but in our estimation, very little has been done, and that does not make it right.

The minister also talks about the internal working group. The internal working group has not been able to work with the aboriginal representatives here in Manitoba, Madam Deputy Speaker. As a matter of fact, it has resulted in a conflict where, through the Ministry of Justice, the difficulties that are being experienced by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs with the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) has been personalized by the minister himself who does not help, just as he did here one afternoon when he started to take personal attacks on myself being a former chief of my band. But that kind of attitude is not helping the aboriginal community.

So what I am saying is, I am not supporting the amendment. The amendment really, as I said before, renders the original thrust of the resolution as being virtually ineffective. According to what I have seen here thus far as to how resolutions are dealt with, Madam Deputy Speaker, I am not

surprised really at the kinds of amendments that the minister has put forth this afternoon, because those amendments clearly reflect the attitude of the government and its members as far as aboriginal people are concerned.

So, again, I would like to thank you once again for listening to me, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Madam Deputy Speaker, yes, I rise to speak on the amended resolution as put forward by my colleague the member for The Pas. I, too, am unable, not surprisingly, to support the government's self-serving amendment to this resolution, a resolution that we all in this House would prefer not to have needed to put forward, but like every other major piece of work that this government has undertaken in the over five years since its first election, the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry is seen by this government as nothing more than a stopgap, a way to shut somebody up, not as a guide to action.

That is too bad, Madam Deputy Speaker, because the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry is a remarkable piece of work. It took years to put together. Over 1,000 people were interviewed, two extremely competent and capable jurists in this province were the chief investigators for this document, and these recommendations, whether there are 293 of them or 400 of them or whatever the actual number of these recommendations are, are a marvelous guide to action.

Instead of action, this government has done what they have done with every other major piece of work that has been done at their instigation and before that. They have ignored it, they have said that it is not perfect, it needs more work, it needs working groups, it needs more study, it needs everything but actual action on the resolutions.

We should not, Madam Deputy Speaker, have been surprised at what has not happened over the last year and a half actually if you look back at what the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) said on January 28 when he announced the government's response to the AJI.

Actually it was August 29, 1991, when he released it to the public that the Minister of Justice said, and this was not in his comments releasing it but on the radio station the next morning, that the AJI was simply the report of two men. Right there we see the revisionist history beginning its work. This was not just a report of two men, and everyone

in this Chamber and everyone who participated in the work of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry knows that it is accurate, knows that it is far more than the work of two men.

For the Minister of Justice to begin the analysis, if you will, of this report by saying it was only the report of two men shows the disdain with which this government deals with issues that deal with the aboriginal community.

Not only that, he stated again just two weeks after he had received the report, governments are not going to accept everything in this report and that the final report goes beyond its mandate, yet again. The Minister of Native and Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) in his discussion this afternoon has made that same comment, and we have put on record, Madam Deputy Speaker, that the scope of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry allowed for expansion beyond the Helen Betty Osborne and J.J. Harper instances, and this government is deliberately misinterpreting the scope of the AJI and trying to trivialize it. So from the very beginning, we have seen the stonewalling that this government has undertaken in regard to the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry.

A year after the inquiry had been announced, the Minister of Native and Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) said, and I quote: In those areas that are within our jurisdiction, we will proceed to implement aggressively as both resources and human capabilities allow us to do so. This is not going to be a doorstep in someone's office.

Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, I beg to differ with the Minister of Native and Northern Affairs. It is a doorstep. It is a thousand pages of a thousand interviews, years of work, \$3 million, and it is a doorstep. This government is doing nothing to implement this report. Again, the Minister of Native and Northern Affairs said at the year anniversary of the AJI report, and I quote: We will be judged by time as it goes on.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the government will be judged. Again quoting the minister: But once again, one year after receiving such a substantive

document, it is a little much to expect miracles to take place.

No one in this Chamber, no one who had any input in the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry expected miracles. What they did expect was some action, some legitimate, concrete action that said to the community, we believe that the aboriginal community has been done a huge disservice by the nonaboriginal community for hundreds of years and we are bound and determined to begin to make restitution.

This government has done not only nothing to make restitution, Madam Deputy Speaker, it has caused the aboriginal community untold grief in its five-plus years in power, untold grief. One can only use the words of the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey) when he said in this House, they voted wrong. They will not vote wrong again, you can guarantee that.

I would like to conclude my remarks, Madam Deputy Speaker, with the end of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry in its conclusion and I quote: "To fail to take every step needed to redress this lingering injustice will continue to bring tragedy and suffering to Aboriginal people, and to blacken our country's name throughout the world. By acting now, governments can give positive expression to the public support and good will we have encountered from Manitobans during the past three years."

Madam Deputy Speaker, I only wish that the government had acted now in a positive manner, but the government has acted by not acting, by stonewalling, by trivializing the recommendations in this report by saying it is somebody else's business, they have put an—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hour being 6 p.m., I am interrupting the proceedings. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) will have nine minutes remaining.

I am leaving the Chair with the understanding that the House will reconvene at 8 p.m. in Committee of Supply.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, May 25, 1993

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