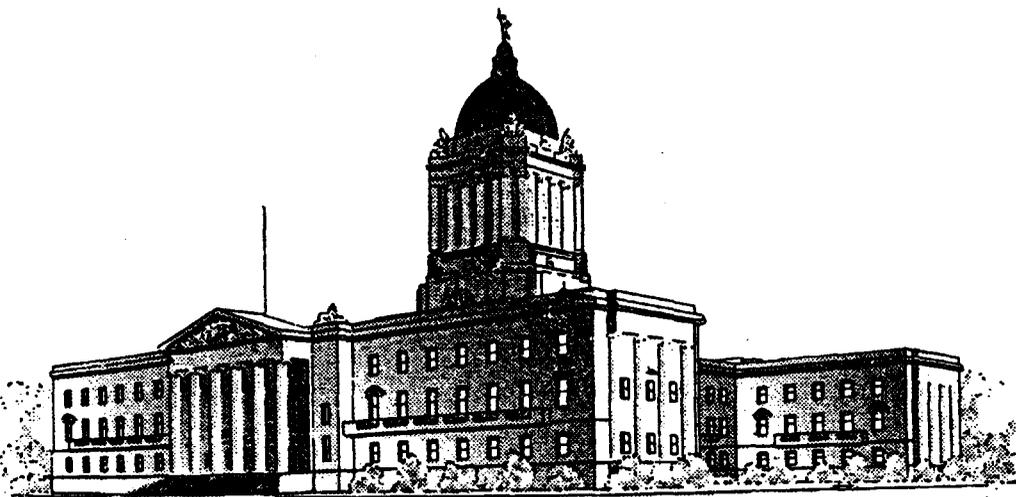




**Fifth Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature**  
of the  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**  
**DEBATES**  
and  
**PROCEEDINGS**  
**(Hansard)**

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Speaker*



**Vol. XLIII No. 25 - 1:30 p.m., Wednesday, May 11, 1994**

**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Thirty-Fifth Legislature**

**Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation**

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	NDP
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	Liberal
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	NDP
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, Clif	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
KOWALSKI, Gary	The Maples	Liberal
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Liberal
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	NDP
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MACKINTOSH, Gord	St. Johns	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	NDP
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	PC
McCORMICK, Norma	Osborne	Liberal
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
ROBINSON, Eric	Rupertsland	NDP
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	NDP
SHELLENBERG, Harry	Rossmere	NDP
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	PC
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	NDP

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, May 11, 1994

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

### PRAYERS

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

#### TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the 1992-93 Annual Report of the Department of Labour.

#### Introduction of Guests

**Mr. Speaker:** Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery, where we have with us this afternoon from the Crystal City Elementary School twenty Grade 6 students under the direction of Mr. Larry Hamilton. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose).

Also this afternoon, from the River Elm School, we have twenty-six Grade 6 students under the direction of Mrs. Jennie Bellino. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Concordia (Mr. Doer).

From St. Norbert Collegiate, we have twenty-five Grade 9 students under the direction of Ms. Michelle Beaulieu. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau).

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

### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

#### Goods and Services Tax Replacement—Manitoba Position

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Finance. It is dealing with the goods and services tax.

We asked the Premier (Mr. Filmon) during his Estimates whether Manitoba would be presenting

a position to the federal Finance committee of Parliament dealing with the so-called scrapping of the GST and its replacement, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier could not indicate at that point to his knowledge whether Manitoba would be presenting a position paper. He thought they would not. Five provinces and the territories have presented a position to the federal government on the replacement of the GST. We note that the former Minister of Finance, in 1989, presented Manitoba's position to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance in October 1989.

I was wondering whether the provincial government has presented a position to the federal government on this tax, which I would suggest most Manitobans hate. What is our position to the federal government on this tax?

\* (1335)

**Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, as the Leader of the Opposition knows, the current federal government campaigned on the basis of a replacement to the existing GST. This is all a part of their initiative. They have a committee that is holding various hearings, and they attended here in Manitoba.

I do not believe that any representation was made from the government or from the two opposition parties, to the best of my knowledge. We had officials in attendance gathering information.

I have met with various groups on this issue, but, really, we are utilizing that process as an opportunity to hear from Manitobans, to hear from Canadians, on the particular issue. It is on the agenda for Finance ministers' meetings at the end of June, and we will have an opportunity for input at that meeting.

**Goods and Services Tax  
Replacement—Manitoba Position**

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, the minister will know that during our discussions of the GST during the Premier's Estimates, the Premier indicated that the discussions between the provincial government and representatives of the federal government—two themes recurred in those discussions. One is that they want to have the tax hidden, and two, they want to have some form of harmonization collection with the provinces, harmonization to overcome the criticisms coming from small business.

I would like to know from the Premier, is that still the position that we are hearing in terms of what will happen with the GST from the federal government?

We are expecting a report from the federal Finance committee. Certainly, I do not believe that Canadians want to go from a bad tax that is visible to a bad tax that is invisible.

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, I mentioned to the Leader of the Opposition during the Estimates that those were the only themes I had heard, not that I had heard them recently. Those were the themes that occurred, in fact were under discussion last time we got together with the federal leader, Mr. Chretien, which was back, I guess, in December.

Since then, we have not heard anything other than that they are out for consultation, presumably listening to what Canadians are telling them about what ought to be done with the GST, but those were the only ideas that it appeared the federal government had at the time. Whether or not they adopt some of the suggestions that are being made to them by Canadians—there may well be better suggestions put forward by people across Canada.

**Goods and Services Tax  
Replacement—Manitoba Position**

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, one of the proposals that the Finance committee is dealing with, allegedly, is the whole issue of replacing the GST with a business transfer

tax. All of us have been briefed by a large coalition of people against that proposal, primarily a business coalition. We have not had the capacity to review except on a very, I would say, superficial basis the business transfer tax and its impact in Japan, the only country where it is applied.

But this coalition of small business, retail business and other business argues that the business transfer tax is a tax which would be imposed on food, residential rents, financial services, educational, health and government services.

I wonder whether that is the analysis or assessment of the provincial government about replacing the GST with the business transfer tax. What is Manitoba's position on a business transfer tax, on its impact on our consumers and on our citizens, particularly on the issue of food and education, health services and housing in terms of how it will impact on Manitoba?

**Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, we are in the process of looking at the various alternatives that are being put forward. The Leader of the Opposition is correct. One suggestion has been a business transfer tax, and we are in the process of determining what the ramifications of that kind of a tax could be here in Manitoba.

He also did indicate, I believe, that the coalition that I think he met with and we certainly met with, the Manitoba coalition for GST replacement, is promoting a different approach, really a broadening of what currently exists. They have eight or nine fundamental principles in theirs, and we are not convinced that all of the principles necessarily correlate to one another.

There is some suggestion you might be able to lower the overall tax and so on, but there are other aspects to the tax in terms of input tax credits which do not necessarily allow for the kind of reduction that many people are talking about. So it is a very detailed and a very complex issue, obviously, when you are dealing with taxation.

We are analyzing all of the approaches being put forward, and as I indicated to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer), we will have an

opportunity for input at the Finance ministers' meeting in June and certainly, I am sure, First Ministers will be discussing the issue.

\* (1340)

### Health Care System Funding

**Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan):** Mr. Speaker, first the government had a plan to cut hospital beds and put in place community services. They did not put in place community services; they only cut beds. Then the government brought in Connie Curran, and she was going to do all of the reforming of the health care system, and we know what happened to Connie Curran, and we know how well off she is today.

Yesterday, we learned from the minister that for the first time we have heard that a hundred million dollars is going to be cut from the urban hospitals and that the management of those hospitals are saying that this arbitrary decision is without any apparent understanding of the service implications.

My question to the minister is, can the minister table the plan for the cutting out of a hundred million dollars, and could he advise us what the effect is for each hospital and how many jobs will be lost in the health care system as a result of the government's hundred-million-dollar plan?

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, I have been consistent in making it clear not only to the honourable member, but to all facilities and the Manitoba Health Organization, anybody involved in the operation of acute care facilities, saying to them that whatever proposals they make, I will not accept any that have any negative impact on patient care.

The honourable member wants me to table a plan. I have not made a plan. The honourable member should be aware that I have asked hospitals in Manitoba how they propose to respond to the declining demand that will be placed on acute care facilities as we continue to build services in the community, build services and spaces.

For example, the honourable member's question takes no account of the fact that River East Personal Care Home has established 120 new personal care beds; Kildonan Personal Care Home has established 120 new personal care beds; Concordia Hospital has established 60 beds; Deer Lodge, 44 beds; the municipal hospitals, 20 beds.

The honourable member's question does not take into account that the shift from acute care to community care is happening and is working and working well.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Speaker, the minister knows that their cuts to this point have affected patient care.

I ask the minister, again, it is their plan. They have told the hospitals to cut a hundred million dollars that will affect jobs, that will affect beds and, most of all, will affect patient care. The minister cannot have it both ways. He cannot set out a plan for a hundred million dollars and then say, oh, it is not going to affect patient care.

Will the minister table the plan to cut a hundred million dollars that they have asked the hospitals in Winnipeg and Brandon to cut?

**Mr. McCrae:** The honourable member's question assumes that nothing has happened in the last six years in the community. I remind him that the government has increased spending for home care services by 93 percent in six years.

The honourable member has to look at this in a historical perspective, too. That program began in the mid-'70s. Before that, there was almost total reliance on acute care spaces in hospitals. Average length of stay has changed very, very considerably.

The honourable member and his colleagues want to continue to see patients in hospitals who do not need to be there. That is not an appropriate place for people who can be looked after at home and who can heal better at home. The honourable member seems to be saying, scrap the Home Care program, and I will not do that.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Speaker, the minister knows that most of the increases in Home Care in this budget is as a result of the user fees that have been imposed on home care supplies.

Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary: Will the minister outline how much of that hundred-million cut has already been realized and how much remains to be realized from the urban hospitals, and how much, in addition, are rural facilities to cut from their budgets?

\* (1345)

Mr. McCrae: Because patient care is the bottom line of this government, last fall, those hospitals moving to comply with staffing guidelines were asked to put on hold any layoffs at that time while we could review those guidelines. We have the help of the Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses. We have the help of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, the help of the Manitoba Association of Licensed Practical Nurses and others involved in the review of those staffing guidelines.

I suggest to the honourable member that what he wants to defend is hospitals in Manitoba with low occupancy rates having the capacity to look after large numbers of patients who are not there, who do not need that service. What the honourable member wants to defend is the old way of delivering service to people, which is not going to be appropriate in the future and is not sustainable.

I want to preserve the health care system, but the honourable member wants to destroy it.

#### SHI Limited Government Loan

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I questioned the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism on the wisdom of raising expectations of the people of Selkirk about 600 jobs and about a \$2.5-million loan to a company called Saskatoon Heavy Industries.

Mr. Speaker, in 1990, just before the Conservative government of Saskatchewan went to the polls, the same company, a one-man company led by a man by the name of Blue Taylor [phonetic] made a promise to the people of Cornnan Park, just outside of Saskatoon, that there would be up to 10,000 jobs, doing what? Manufacturing heavy equipment.

Mr. Speaker, not one of those jobs was ever created. The man has not registered that company in Saskatchewan since that time. It has lost its federal registration in the last two years.

Why is this government hopping into bed with a fly-by-night operation which has never built anything?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, it is not this government's or any member of this government's intention to raise expectations. I think the member should refer to his question yesterday as to the way in which he approached it. He was criticizing this government for working to create jobs in Manitoba. We have not lent any money to anyone in SHI. We have said if 18 conditions are met, we will negotiate with them the possibility of some 600 jobs in Selkirk.

By the way, the member is saying we are jumping into bed. No, it is the community of Selkirk, the chamber of commerce, community leaders who have come forward asking for consideration, so he should refer his comments, I believe, to the Selkirk Chamber of Commerce. That would be more appropriate, Mr. Speaker.

#### SHI Limited Government Loan

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, this government saw fit to pass an Order-in-Council guaranteeing up to \$2.5 million. They will not loan any money to students, but they will sure loan to Saskatoon Heavy Industries. They put that money on the table, committed it in the event that conditions are met.

Saskatoon Heavy Industries have led the people of Selkirk in this province to believe there will be hundreds of jobs. They did the same thing before the 1990 election with Repap when they promised 800 jobs which did not materialize.

Why is this government going down the road that even Grant Devine pulled away from before the election because he realized what he had gotten into? Why is this government prepared to get into bed and commit this money and raise these

expectations unfairly for the people of Selkirk when this company has never built anything and went through this four years ago with Mr. Devine?

\* (1350)

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, I think the member opposite ought to firstly consider his words. He is the one who raised this in the House. We did not put out any press release—

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Edwards:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a press release entitled Progressive Conservative issued yesterday by this—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable member does not have a point of order.

The honourable Leader, would you kindly take your bench, sir.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Filmon:** Mr. Speaker, this government did not raise the issue in the House. That member raised the issue in the House. This government did not—[interjection]

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable Leader of the second opposition party, you have already put your question, sir. He is attempting to put more questions on while the honourable First Minister is trying to attempt to respond to the first question.

I would ask the honourable First Minister to deal with the matter raised.

**Mr. Filmon:** I know that the Leader of the Liberal Party knows he is looking foolish on this issue, but I will just ensure that he knows he is the one who raised the issue, that this government responded to the work that has been done by the economic development group in Selkirk, by the chamber of commerce, the local community and all the interested people to attract an industry.

This government has only agreed to put forward loan money provided that they meet 18 conditions that include them raising \$24 million of available capital financing.

I think what the member opposite ought to be doing is trying to tell the public how he can square

his position yesterday about being against government financing for business when he put out a news release on the eve of the opening of the Legislature entitled, Liberal legislative agenda, that says that the Liberal Party legislative agenda will lead with a dual strategy, training strategy focused on youth and tax incentives for business.

This is the most confused individual we have sitting in this Legislature. He does not know what he is saying. He changes his mind from one day to the next, and he is acting as an absolute fool. If he wants to dig himself out, that is fine, Mr. Speaker, go ahead.

#### SHI Limited Government Loan

**Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, what I am against is a government trying to dupe the public just before an election, and that is what you are trying to do.

Let me just remind the Premier of a headline in the Saskatoon Star-Phoenix two years ago. Forty million factories still remains a dream—and it is going to be a dream here, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism why he put forward an Order-in-Council naming a company as being deserving of a commitment to a \$2.5-million loan, albeit on certain conditions, when it is not even a registered corporation. It has lapsed. Secondly, where and when has this company ever built anything, because yesterday the minister said on the record in response to my question, he specifically said, this is a company which constructs or manufactures or makes heavy manufacturing or heavy mining-type equipment.

What have they ever made, Mr. Speaker? Why is this government leading the people of this province to believe they are creating jobs? They are creating false hopes. They know they are not coming. They have no intention. They did it in 1990, and they are doing it again.

\* (1355)

**Hon. James Downey (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism):** Mr. Speaker, it is not the intention of this ministry or this government to

falsely raise expectations. It is not our intention at all.

Yesterday, I responded to a question in the Legislature which the Liberal member raised, which I think he is finding extremely embarrassing today and by which he has now caused himself some embarrassment and is trying to dig out of it.

Mr. Speaker, it is a federally registered company. It has exclusive production rights for a product from Germany that manufactures heavy industrial equipment for mining and that like-type of activity.

I would agree. Maybe I misstated yesterday that they have built something. They probably have not, but they have a proposal, Mr. Speaker, that the community of Selkirk found acceptable. The Economic Development Board, the chamber of commerce, they came forward requesting that this government give consideration to their proposal. We said if 18 conditions are met, we will entertain a loan proposal. We will not give it unless certain conditions are made, one of which is there has to be \$24 million of equity and/or loan capital raised by that company.

That is pretty clear, Mr. Speaker. Maybe the Liberal Leader has a hard time understanding it, but I think the general public will clearly understand it, if communicated properly.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Edwards:** Mr. Speaker, the minister has, I believe, put on the record that I was misleading the House about the federal registration. The company has had its registration lapse—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable member does not have a point of order.

#### Grow Bond Program Jentan Project

**Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk):** Mr. Speaker, last night I had the opportunity, along with 50 residents in Selkirk, to attend a public meeting in Selkirk concerning the proposed Jentan project which could create 15 to 35 jobs in Selkirk.

As the Minister of Rural Development knows, this project is endorsed by the Triple S business development centre in Selkirk.

I would like to ask the minister today if he can tell the House when the firm will know whether or not it will be accepted for a Grow Bond program.

**Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development):** I would like to tell the member that the company Jentan has been working with the community of Selkirk for some time in putting the proposal forward, but there has been no application to the Department of Rural Development for a Grow Bond to my knowledge.

Now, I think there has been some work done as background work, Mr. Speaker, for the potential of a Grow Bond, but I do not believe there is an application that has come forward for a Grow Bond or for any amount.

Mr. Speaker, the project would be examined, as all projects are. The review committee would examine it, as well, but we will wait until there is indeed an application forwarded to the department and to the review committee.

**Mr. Dewar:** Fortunately for Selkirk, Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Leader nor was any of his candidates there at the meeting last night, opposing jobs, opposing development for Selkirk. Fortunately for Selkirk, they were not there.

#### Grow Bond Program Jentan Project

**Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk):** Mr. Speaker, my next question is for the Minister of Environment. This project depends upon the price for recycled tires remaining at the current level, and I ask the Minister of Environment, will he assure the House and the people of Selkirk that the program will continue and that these rates will not be lowered?

**Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment):** Mr. Speaker, this system that Jentan is proposing has certainly been one that has been intriguing from the start. Their proposal is certainly eligible if they meet certain criteria. However, I would caution the member and anyone who would apply under the Used Tire Program that it would have to meet particular criteria, as the

establishment of this plant would have to meet environmental criteria.

### **SHI Limited Government Loan**

**Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk):** Mr. Speaker, my final question: I would like to table a letter from the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Downey) thanking me for my support of the SHI program and the 600 jobs that will come to Selkirk. I guess the minister has a poor memory, and he forgot that he signed the letter on March 18.

My question to the Minister of Rural Development is: Can he tell the House whether the SHI project will find out whether or not it is in line for a Grow Bond as well?

**Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development):** Mr. Speaker, I believe the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism laid out the conditions that have to be met prior to any funds being made available to the company. Indeed, no application at this point in time has been made, as far as I know, to the department with respect to a Grow Bond.

Before we would even consider it, those conditions that have been outlined by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism would have to be met before we could even take the first step.

\* (1400)

### **Brandon General Hospital Funding**

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Health.

The Brandon General Hospital has suffered serious cuts in its budget by this government in the past few years, forcing it to close the palliative care ward, the gynecology ward, and reducing the level of nursing care in that hospital. Now it has been required to cut another \$4 million in the next three years. One option being considered is the elimination of one-third of its surgical beds, but this will only save about \$300,000.

My question to the minister is, where is the Brandon General Hospital supposed to find the remaining \$3.7 million it has been ordered to cut?

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health):** Well, I thank the honourable member for raising this question, because, like him, I share the view of the importance of the Brandon General Hospital today and the services it delivers well into the future for future generations of western Manitobans. That is why we are looking at a phased approach to the delivery of services in Westman.

We do not start, as was done in 1987, with no planning whatsoever for the permanent closure of 42 beds at Brandon General Hospital by the honourable member and his colleagues. I remind the honourable member, he sat in the cabinet that made that decision, and after it was made, he went away and hid.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** The people of the city of Brandon and Westman want to know of this minister and of this government, when will these cuts to the Brandon General Hospital's operating budget cease? When will the downgrading cease?

As the minister knows, over 5,000 people in Westman signed a petition in 1992, and they believed that the quality of health care at BGH was suffering. The minister knows that.

**Mr. McCrae:** The honourable member has already proved that his thinking is the thinking that goes back 25 years. We know that. He has demonstrated that in this House.

The honourable member says, when is it going to end? Reform of the health system and change in the whole world's industrial, economic and political system is going to go on for a long time. The honourable member should have gotten used to that by now. He has been around long enough.

The point is, you cannot continue to apply the solutions of 25 years ago to the problems of today. The fact is the honourable member and his party did little or nothing to promote and to enhance home care services, little or virtually nothing to promote seniors services in our communities, little or nothing to promote adult day clubs in this province. Those are the things this government has been promoting and funding.

By way of illustration, to show who has the interests of the health of Manitobans at heart, I point to the record of spending of our government on health care as a percentage of total spending and compare it to that of the government represented previously, in the olden days, by the honourable member, and his government looks very shoddy indeed—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Well, the people of Brandon and area know that we built \$18 million worth of nursing homes in three years, '86, '87 and '88—\$3 million, and the member knows that, too.

On behalf of the people of Brandon and Westman, I ask the minister, what is your long-term plan for the Brandon General Hospital? The people out there want to know, how far is this minister, is this government going to go to cut levels of services? How many more beds are you going to cut? How many more staff are you going to lay off?

**Mr. McCrae:** It is exactly long-term planning that we are trying to do and that honourable members opposite want to stop. I think it is paradoxical that they rise in the House so sanctimoniously, when really, if we followed their advice, we would have destroyed the health care system about a year ago.

The honourable member asked about a long-term plan for Brandon General Hospital. Our government, not the one that he used to be involved in that cut hospital beds at Brandon without any plan, has approved the first phase of a \$72-million redevelopment for Brandon General Hospital. That redevelopment will take place over 10 years and will take into account the population health needs of western Manitobans, and we will do so far more efficiently than the honourable members opposite ever dreamed of doing. In fact, whenever they dreamed of efficiency, they felt they were having nightmares.

#### **Provincial Judges Early Retirement Package**

**Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns):** Mr. Speaker, we now have record backlogs in the provincial court. For young offenders, this means that

consequences are not meaningful and are not related to the offence. For abused partners, it makes a mockery of the zero tolerance policy against spousal violence.

My question for the Minister of Justice is, now that the government has made a back-room buy out of eight judges at a cost of \$1 million to Manitobans, meaning, by the way, that Manitobans will be short 11 full-time judges by July 1—that is a quarter of the bench—will the minister advise of the projected impact on the court backlog?

**Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Mr. Speaker, as the member tries to characterize an agreement which was offered, I totally reject his characterization of back-room. He is entirely wrong.

I would also like to remind him, I tabled in the House information which spoke about a severance package which the NDP offered to judges when they were in government. What has been offered is a severance package. I would like to say also that I have received no confirmation from the chief judge as to those judges who are accepting the severance package, so I am not able to confirm for him exactly an amount.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to say that there are currently three vacancies in the provincial court, and we are moving with the Provincial Court Chief Judge to deal with those vacancies. Then for any judges who do accept the severance package, we will be working with the chief judge to determine replacements.

**Mr. Mackintosh:** If the minister is saying this is not a secret back-room deal, will she now immediately table this deal in the Legislature at a minimum, or will she do the right thing and bring in the arrangement as provided under The Provincial Court Act?

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Mr. Speaker, as I have said before, the agreement that was reached is outside of the scope of what the member refers to in terms of The Provincial Court Act. This is a one-time-only severance package, time limited.

As I said to the member, when the NDP were in government, they made an agreement, a severance

package with judges which covered a year, and I believe he knows the terms which we have also provided.

**Mr. Mackintosh:** A simple question, Mr. Speaker: If it is not a secret deal, why is she not tabling it in this House so that Manitobans can look at it and determine, in light of the backlogs, in light of the layoffs, the cuts, a flat budget for Corrections, if that is a good deal for Manitobans?

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Mr. Speaker, the member makes a number of accusations as he asks his question. I will be very happy to deal with each of those accusations in detail when we get to the Estimates. However, I think he should not attempt to dangerously exaggerate facts to Manitobans in terms of how the courts are operating.

I can tell the member that, certainly, all the courts are operating within the time lines of the decision that the Supreme Court brought down, so they are not operating outside of that in any way, shape or form. However, I will say that in terms of court procedure, I am working with the chief judge to ensure that it is the most efficient procedure that we can have for Manitobans.

#### **Hog Farming Operations Moratorium**

**Ms. Norma McCormick (Osborne):** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Rural Development.

Yesterday, about a hundred residents attended the council of the Local Government District of Armstrong to ask for a proper review of the issue of hog plant development. The LGD of Armstrong Council committed to the preparing of a development plan and to pressure the Minister of Rural Development to place a moratorium on the construction of large hog operations.

Can the minister tell us what his position is on this request for a moratorium?

\* (1410)

**Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development):** Mr. Speaker, the LGD of Armstrong did in fact request in a resolution that a moratorium be placed on the expansion and the construction of hog barns in the LGD of

Armstrong. They also, in their resolution, indicated that they want to get on with their development plan.

I can tell the member this afternoon that indeed staff from my department will be working with the LGD immediately on the development plan, but I have to indicate to the House that there is no way I have the authority to put a moratorium on the construction or the expansion of hog barns in the LGD.

I must also add that indeed there are new regulations that have now been put in place, and the interdepartmental committee has met with the proponent, and the proponent is meeting the conditions of the regulations. So although there have been some statements made by a consultant, I must indicate that, obviously, the consultant did not know or did not read the regulations, according to the comments that he made on the radio.

#### **Hog Farming Operations Moratorium**

**Ms. Norma McCormick (Osborne):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is to the same minister. The LGD of Armstrong in the resolution that the minister speaks of is in effect rescinding its support for the hog barn construction, including the Pur-A-Tone's feed project which is currently underway.

Will the government commit to a review and approval process which ensures that the site selection for these operations will include a mechanism whereby the local people's concerns can be addressed and their land and water is protected from environmental degradation?

**Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment):** Mr. Speaker, the environmental consultant who was leading the charge last night at the LGD is a former member for Wolseley—what was his name—Harold Taylor. I believe he is a close personal friend of many of the members of the Liberal delegation in the House here. I quote from his comments. He says: There is absolutely no damn scrutiny of these applications.

Well, I wonder if he has not read our regulations that we have just put in place that refer to storage

facilities of sufficient capacity to store the fertilizer used for the effluent; must design and construct so as to prevent escape of any livestock waste.

There are about 10 pages here that I would like to read into the record, Mr. Speaker, but I think he has missed it.

**Ms. McCormick:** My final question is for the Minister of Environment.

Will his department conduct a review on the development of hog farm sewage lagoons which will result in serious pollution if not— [interjection] No, you have not; you never have—which will result in serious pollution if not properly designed and managed?

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Speaker, I hope you will indulge me for a moment. I am afraid that the member does not appreciate the significance of the livestock waste management regulations that we have recently proclaimed that refer directly to the standards of construction and management of livestock waste.

It speaks to the technical aspects of the construction of the lagoons. It directly addresses the handling of dead stock. It has been consulted with a very broad base and brought in specifically with the intention of making sure that the construction of additional livestock lagoons and livestock waste management in this province is well handled, well managed and within safe environmental standards.

#### **Workforce 2000 Northern Blower**

**Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education.

Over the past two years, Northern Blower has received \$80,000 worth of tax rebate to train its workers in what government documents call technical education.

Would the minister, who has had advance notice of this question on April 19, tell the House today which classification of worker was trained and what curriculum was followed?

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training):** Mr. Speaker, I do not have that

information. When I do, I will share it with the member.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Speaker, the minister promised that information on April 20.

#### **Management Training**

**Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley):** Will the minister then tell us what proportion of the millions of dollars spent on Workforce 2000 has been spent on management training? Will he undertake now to table that analysis in this House so that Manitobans may know how their tax dollars have been redistributed?

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training):** Mr. Speaker, I will undertake to determine whether or not I can provide that information in the detail sought by the member.

**Mr. Speaker:** Time for Oral Questions has expired.

#### **NONPOLITICAL STATEMENTS**

##### **YM-YWCA Women of Distinction Awards**

**Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Mr. Speaker, may I have permission to make a nonpolitical statement?

**Mr. Speaker:** Does the honourable minister have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to say it was a privilege and a pleasure last evening to bring greetings on behalf of the government of Manitoba to the annual YM-YWCA Women of Distinction Awards dinner. The awards dinner was extremely well attended by Manitobans who have become longstanding supporters of this established award.

Eighteen years ago, the YM-YWCA established the tradition of celebrating the outstanding achievements of Manitoba women. Through the years, many women of distinction have inspired us by their commitment and their dedication. Their contributions and their commitments have enriched all of our lives.

Last evening, 27 women who are recognized as leaders in their respective fields were recognized through their nominations for this award. They are all a confirmation and a celebration of the valuable

contributions that women make to every aspect of our society. These women are each role models who have the power to inspire dreams and to challenge women's career choices. As more women distinguish themselves in nontraditional fields and in every sector, business, volunteerism and community development, young girls will be encouraged by their horizons.

I would like to extend my congratulations to each nominee and recipient of the Women of Distinction Award for their inspiration, commitment and their hard work. Our communities are enhanced by their efforts, and the Province of Manitoba is proud to have these women of excellence publicly recognized for their contributions that their lives have made to the status of Manitoba women.

The recipients of the 1994 YM-YWCA Women of Distinction Awards are: Vanaja Dhruvarajan, Janice Dodd, Shirley Matile, Katherine Pettipas and Win Torchia.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to give our congratulations to the Women of Distinction who were nominated and selected last night at the awards dinner.

I would like very briefly to mention a bit about the background of the five women who did get the award this year.

Vanaja Dhruvarajan is one the few women of colour to become a full professor at the University of Winnipeg. She is instrumental in raising the consciousness of her students and colleagues around issues of racism and gender exclusion.

She was awarded a professorship in women's studies at Simon Fraser for her education and advocacy on behalf of immigrant women and women of colour, and was instrumental in getting the Margaret Laurence Chair in Women's Studies at the University of Winnipeg and the University of Manitoba.

Janice Dodd received her Ph.D. in molecular biology at the University of Toronto in 1981, is now an associate professor in the Department of Physiology, Faculty of Medicine, at the University of Manitoba and directs a research program in molecular endocrinology and cancer.

She has been instrumental in improving the opportunities for women in science, and has helped develop a course unique to western Canada within the women's studies program entitled Women in Science.

Shirley Matile has broken ground again for women in the traditionally male occupation of engineering. She was the only female in her 1977 graduating class at the University of Manitoba in Civil Engineering, and 17 years later she is director of admissions for the Association of Professional Engineers of Manitoba, the first woman in this position. Among her achievements in the post has been the creation of the first directory of women engineers in Manitoba.

Katherine Pettipas has been for the past 19 years curator of native ethnology at the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature. She has been at the forefront of discussions between First Nations and museums and has contributed to the recent national task force report which has become a blueprint for defining a new relationship between museums and aboriginal peoples.

She was given last year the Canadian Museums Association Outstanding Achievement Award.

Finally, but certainly not least, is Win Torchia who is at Red River Community College. She was a pioneer in the field of assisting women in nontraditional or alternative careers. She was co-ordinator of women's awareness for CN Rail in the 1970s and developed a first step employment equity program before this term had ever been even designed.

She is currently department head of women's programs at Red River Community College and has been working in the area of freeing the college publications from sexist language. She was the first chair of CN's fundraising campaign in support of the United Way, the Cancer Society and the Salvation Army.

I think these five women, as well as all of the women who were nominated, show what women can do, and it is up to us as members of our society to ensure that all women are given the opportunity to fulfill their dreams and desires.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

\* (1420)

**Mr. Speaker:** Does the honourable member for Osborne have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

**Ms. Norma McCormick (Osborne):** Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to add my words of congratulations to the five women who were honoured in this way yesterday.

I had the privilege of receiving this award in 1977, and I know from personal experience that the recognition is indeed heartfelt, but when we accept an award like this, there is an overwhelming feeling that we accept it on behalf of all women.

We are honouring women who have made contributions in the academic world, for advocacy, public and community service and to business and industry, but we must recognize that these contributions as exceptional are only so in addition to making their day-to-day contributions in their personal lives to the benefit of their children, their families and to their community.

Again, on behalf of our caucus, I congratulate them.

#### Committee Changes

**Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Economic Development be amended as follows: the member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer) for the member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Downey); the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Pallister) for the member for Charleswood (Mr. Ernst); the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) for the member for Assiniboia (Mrs. McIntosh).

Motion agreed to.

\* (1430)

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

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

#### COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

##### EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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

When the committee last sat, it had been considering item 2.(b)(1) on page 38 of the Estimates book. Shall the item pass?

**Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin):** Well, we were just talking about professional development at the time that we had to adjourn yesterday, and I expressed my concern about the minister's discussion or comments about professions in his view and also the way that teachers were being treated by the government measures, and that it was contradictory to anybody's definition of a profession.

I wanted to ask the minister briefly, as we talk about this whole area of reform, whether he finds the move to eliminate professional development days, which has been initiated as a result of his government's action, somewhat contradictory with the needs for teachers in a time when he is saying major change is required in the public school system—major curriculum changes. We see that a

new blueprint for reform of the education system is going to have an impact in the classrooms. How does the minister rationalize this reduction, or is it just convenient to find the dollars for a short time and that he would not want to see that happen over a longer term? But how does he rationalize those two views of the world, when in fact there is more demand for professional development, and, on the other hand, those days are being eliminated to a great extent in many divisions across the province?

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training):** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the question is fair. It is one that has been posed to me many times by presidents of local associations and, as a matter of fact, by chairs of boards of trustees.

As I have said on many occasions, the government believes in professional development. As a matter of fact, my predecessor, the member for Roblin-Russell (Mr. Derkach), when he brought in the new formula, one of the very significant variables within that was support for the first time, or certainly increased support, of professional development days. I can remember the minister bringing that to cabinet and what a strong proponent he was of that commitment by way of funding formula. That was readily accepted by the government of the day.

So I would say in the broader context the government understands the importance of professional development days and hope they will continue. We still provide workshops during the school day—I am talking about the department now. Of course, we are always mindful that professional development, or lifelong learning or anything you want to call it, is a responsibility not only of employers but indeed employees. As I said in this very committee room to representatives of the Teachers' Society and, indeed, some representatives of the local association in attendance, when we considered Bill 22 when I was the host minister, at that time I said, was there anything with respect to Bill 22 that prevents you as teachers from attending, without pay, professional development days? I did not receive, at any of those questions that I posed to those who were here to provide information with respect to Bill 22, any contradictory statement indicating that

the legislation prohibited anybody from attending professional development activities, because indeed nothing prohibits that.

If the element is that you have to be paid to attend those days, then that becomes the issue. I am saying that the higher order then, even overriding the commitment we made to professional development days by way of the funding formula, was indeed the sharing of the limited and finite dollars within the public purse.

That was the overriding consideration, and as I have said to people everywhere, trustees, teachers, superintendents, 100,000 of us, including every person around this table, take our salary and our remuneration from the public purse, every one of us. And the very essence of Bill 22 was to ensure that everybody made a commitment to that without exception.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we stand by the higher order, in this case being Bill 22 which, in some cases, obviously, worked against or at cross purposes with the professional development support that we have built into the new formula.

**Mr. Plohman:** There are so many contradictions in the minister's statements because, in fact, he is saying, well, nothing prevents teachers from undertaking professional development on their own time. That is part of being a professional, and many, many teachers if not all or most do that, and in fact it points back to the ridiculousness of reducing their annual salary by one two-hundredth when they miss five and a half hours in the classroom because they are forced to do so by way of Bill 22.

It shows how ridiculous that is and unfair to deduct one two-hundredth and that is why I said to the minister there should have been another system for determining the amount to be deducted, and certainly not one two-hundredth because it really belittles the job of the profession.

The minister did not seem to have thought about it other than to say, well, they said the maximum was eight days and the rest had to take 10, but there are divisions now taking 10. That would demonstrate to me that everyone is being asked to take and can take, in that legislation, up to 10.

[interjection] There is no 15; I do not know where the minister came up with that. I guess the minister may have been advocating 15.

So that makes my point, when he talks about teachers as professionals engaging in professional development activities beyond school hours, and as I say, most teachers do that.

I think the minister also has to look at how efficient this is. Would he agree with me that as a result of the elimination of the days that were provided for this in many school divisions, more and more teachers are engaging in professional development during class time, so it is cutting into class time, contact with students, which is I would say undesirable?

The minister can indicate if that is true, and whether that means that the department out of another budget, through the support for professional development that he just referred to when he talked about his predecessor increasing funding for support for professional development, that there has been increased—a draw for substitutes and for workshops that go on during the school day because there is no time to do it on professional development days. Those days do not exist any longer.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we do not have at this point any evidence of the assertion made by the member for Dauphin. We have not received letters from school divisions, particularly with respect to the increased call on substitution dollars.

I am disappointed that the member would not be prepared to accept my challenge in his statement. He can talk about my contradictory statements in his terms, but, again, I told him the higher orders. The higher orders were this. One hundred thousand of us draw our support from the public purse, and what we said was there only are 500,000 tax filers in the province of Manitoba. Twenty percent of us draw our livelihood from the public purse, and what we said was, given the difficulties of the time, everybody, whether you work for Hydro or Telephones or are a teacher, or indeed, even if you are engaged within the health care system, everybody should be expected to

share the difficulties around the shortage of money in the public purse.

\* (1440)

The member refuses to accept that that is the higher order. I guess that is why we are philosophically apart, and that is why we are in different parties. Because if you accept that as the basic principle, then you have to try and engender some element of fairness across all of us who draw our support again from the public tax dollar.

**Mr. Plohman:** First of all, that is another debate, and I have put all my comments on the record, and our party's comments on what we felt with Bill 22 years ago, so we are not going to get back into all that again. It is a matter of record.

The issue is, of course, it is kind of odd that the minister would talk about fairness and equity and that, when in fact the way he has applied Bill 22 to the education system is not fair and equitable at all, because there are many teachers who have not been subject to Bill 22. So the minister cannot talk about the higher order being that everyone should—

**Mr. Manness:** Is that what you recommend?

**Mr. Plohman:** I am telling the minister he has not accomplished that. I never said I recommended it or did not recommend it. The minister is in the position of having been in [interjection] Well, the minister has no courage. When he starts to stand up in this House and in this committee and tell Manitobans that in fact he has an equitable system when he has not an equitable system because he wants someone else to do the dirty work for him, and that was the school boards, you see, to pass it on to the middle man to do it, that is in fact what has happened—

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** Order, please. Can I ask the honourable members to curtail from the debate that we are having without coming through the Chair and put their comments through the Chair so we can keep the decorum to a level that Hansard can copy us?

**Mr. Plohman:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I find also a contradiction between the relegating of professional development to a lower-order need,

that the minister has said. He says that professional development is not as great a concern as saving those dollars when in fact—and I say the contradiction is there because his own document, in providing a summary of consultations to division staff and consultation and dialogue with stakeholders, said that in order for change to be brought about successfully, staff within a division, as well as in the schools, need to be provided with effective opportunities to develop and enhance their skills.

It is recognized within this document and has been recognized by many who are consulted that this is a major concern and therefore a higher-order requirement, using the minister's words. I wonder how he is going to rationalize that statement with regard to future directions with his past action, which in fact has relegated professional development to a lower order. In fact, the minister has made an issue of stating that in this committee today.

**Mr. Manness:** Well, the member overstates the case, and he attempts to put words in my mouth. I said this government fully understands the importance of professional development days. The question here is, who is going to pay for them? We are doing everything we can within the department time, given that the departmental staff, too, have had a reduction in their salaries and yet are expected to work the same number of hours, and indeed no different than anybody else, but we still expected the department, within their time and their effort, to outreach and deliver professional development in the way that we can.

The question is here now, should teachers continue to be paid during this time for these days? Is there no other set of circumstances that could cause the activities around development to occur at some other time. [interjection] Well, if they are, then the system is working, but the question is, can we not grow, can we not build upon that? Can we not build upon that?

I honestly believe that as a professional, if you wanted to increase your knowledge base, which I fully understand many teachers do, and I support them, then I would think that given these difficult

times, you may want to do that on your own accord, and you may want to, through your societies and your associations, try to develop a model which would provide other opportunities than have existed in the past.

I say to the member, that does not mean that it is a lesser priority in the scheme of all of the changes we are considering. It is not. It is a very high priority, but with respect to fairness, I have said there are higher priorities, and the priority was that somehow we had to save the jobs of 500 to 600 people in the public sector. The only way we could do that was to pull \$25 million out of the public payroll, and the only way we could do that was ask that each and every one who draws from the public payroll take a reduction. In doing so, we saved \$500 or \$600 across all of government. That is the higher order, the saving of \$500 or \$600 across the public payroll.

**Mr. Plohman:** It is odd to hear the minister talk about fairness as being the higher order and to talk about saving jobs when in fact this government has eliminated jobs in addition to imposing Bill 22 and reducing salaries.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Manness:** I just want to correct the record. I think in my emotional outburst, I used \$500 or \$600. I meant positions and/or people, to correct the record.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** We thank the minister for that, but there was no point of order.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Plohman:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I know that we certainly got the meaning of what the minister was saying, regardless of whether he stated it correctly during his emotional outburst. The fact is that we find it odd that the minister talks about fairness when he was party to and perhaps responsible for the imposition of reductions rather than negotiated reductions or settlements, thus admitting failure to be able to negotiate, which is the traditional way that these have been dealt with in the past in Manitoba. I said I do not want to get back into that debate.

The minister wanted to ask me earlier on what I was recommending. Of course, we have made it very clear what we recommended, and that was that there should have been some negotiations as we had done successfully in the past to formally save jobs, a freeze on layoff in return for reductions or zero percents and so on in salaries. That is the real way to handle these kinds of situations. This is a false way because, in fact, the base continues to grow for salaries, and once this bill no longer applies, in fact, we have got a higher base for salaries than we had previously. And that has to be paid for by future governments. It might have been politically expedient for the short term for the minister, for him to try to justify to the public at large that he was getting tough with the public sector workers, but, in fact, it is not long-term savings. It is only temporary, and they have to be made up later on.

Getting back to the issue of professional development, which his staff have identified as a major need in the future, the staff in the school needs to be provided with effective opportunities to develop and enhance their skills. Is the minister now saying that, as far as he is concerned, if he has an opportunity to remain in this position or his government, and be in government in this province and be the Minister of Education, and, in fact, he would like to see a formal end put to paid professional development days, as they have been historically known in Manitoba? Previously 11 days and now 10 days—not all for professional development, some for administrative days, some for evaluation in the schools and so on. But is he saying now that he believes that that is a frill, something that is not required, cannot be justified, and therefore should be eliminated?

\* (1450)

**Mr. Manness:** Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I will not be drawn into this debate very far. I mean, I can indicate to the member that I wish the world could return to the way it was. All the wishing in the world is not going to necessarily provide that if the Minister of Finance, or new Minister of Finance, indicates to us that we have a revenue problem and that we are still going to have to deal on the expenditure side and that education is going

to have to have some prominence in that area. So what I wish is, of course, a return to the old system in all respects, including the funding formula we have in place now, which recognizes, by way of dollar support, this government's commitment to professional development. But ultimately the Minister of Finance of the day will dictate through the global revenue consideration how it is that we are going to have to still find possibly savings within the field of education.

Now, maybe there will be a different focus. Who knows? Maybe the government will have to come to grips with resolutions that have been passed by the Association of School Trustees in due course. I am hypothecating now, and maybe the government of the day and the Treasury Board of the day are going to focus on another line of the expenditure envelope. Who knows? It is just too soon to say. I am not trying to take away a benefit that the member would portray, of course, as a long-run benefit to education in this province. I would support his statement, but the reality is we are caught in a time, which we have not been basically for 40 or 50 years in this country, and we are having to make decisions different than otherwise have been made in the past. I am just telling him my view in a philosophical sense.

**Mr. Plohman:** The minister talks about this being a benefit to education, not to necessarily educators. I am pleased to hear him say that. By definition, if he is talking about other pressures and concerns, he is—and that this is perhaps something that has to be sacrificed—relegating it to a lower priority. I have to ask him how he can rationalize that, when his own department, in the consultations done on this in the programs division, have come to the conclusion that in fact this is one of the greater needs that is being identified? If he is talking about major change in the education system, how is he going to accomplish it? Is he just going to work with teacher education with new teachers? How are we going to deal with the current teaching staff throughout this province that has to conform or adjust to the changes that are required, in the nature that they might be thrust upon them?

Sure they can do some on weekends and summers and evenings, like they do now. But if the

minister is indicating that it is not a high enough priority to include some time for professional development in the existing school year, as it has been done in the past, then what kind of a message is he sending out to the professionals in the province of Manitoba in education?

(Mr. Jack Reimer, Acting Deputy Chairperson, in the Chair)

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, it just cannot be my priority. I mean, I am sorry. During these difficult times, if it is the highest priority too of the teachers, then I would say they are also going to have to take that into account. I am telling you, we would not have given these powers to school divisions if teachers themselves had voluntarily agreed to roll back their wages. Then this would never have happened.

So it not only has to be a priority of the government, it has to be a priority of the teachers. If it is a priority of the teachers, which I think it is in some respects, then I would say, if it is the priority to the teachers, then indeed they would voluntarily agree to a 2 percent reduction in their agreed-upon settlements with the local school divisions, and then this would not have been necessary. It still would have been in place. So it is not just the government's priority. It has to be the educators' priority too. If it is, then this will come before the hard maintenance of the agreed-upon salaries, won through arbitration in most cases, as between teachers and the local school division.

You see, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, it is so easy to put it into the context of the old-think of government. If you do not give money to it, it is not a priority to you. Never is the focus turned to the person who is receiving the money and saying, if it is a priority to you, then we would think then that you would be prepared to take a little bit less and then this still would be in place.

You see, it has to be a shared priority, just not the government's. Because in believing that, then that is old-think. That is saying that government can do everything for everybody, and it is just a matter of shifting priorities, and of course that is the essence throughout the country. I do not care what political party is in place, but that is the

essence of all of the difficult decisions that are being made today in provinces across the land. The member can say, ah, that is a bunch of hokey, but the facts will bear me out.

This is happening in NDP administrations, Liberal administrations and Conservative administrations across the country.

**Mr. Plohman:** The minister can talk about old-think, new-think. We are interested in this government's think now. What we are concerned about is the fact that the minister has to take responsibility for the actions he undertakes. He selected those days through the legislation. He selected the professional development days and so then we are talking about his relative priorities. That is what I was zeroing in on with regard to the minister's statements and the fact that I see contradictions between his desire to have major change at a time when he is not ensuring that he is supporting professional development, which is essential to that change.

Does the minister think that there, or is it his plan, is he considering, and let us put it that way because the plan has not been tabled yet, and I expect the minister, as he has indicated, does not want to be definitive about what is in that plan, perhaps it is not fully decided what is going to be in the plan—is he contemplating extending the hours of the day and the length of the school year?

I understand the standard day is five and a half hours, or a minimum day is, as I have been told, five-and-a-half-hour school day. It does not take many minutes in a day over 200 days to make up another 10 days to the school year. Has the minister been considering that as an option in terms of the number of days that are available for contact to students? Has he also considered whether this would be made available as an optional thing for school divisions, schools at the school level, for committees to decide within parameters whether they could alter the school day or the school year? There has been some discussion about that in southwestern Manitoba recently, about a four-day week. I just wondered whether this kind of thing is something that we can

expect to see in the minister's plan that will be coming out hopefully within two months.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, right today, I imagine the member is aware that school divisions can extend beyond five and a half. I mean, I only approve one thing, and that is the make-up of the calendar for the year. As far as the length of the day, school divisions today have that option and can go beyond five and a half without my approval. [interjection] Minimum, five and a half, but they can go far beyond that. I guess the question is then, are you considering increasing the minimum? I can tell you, we have not internally seriously discussed that issue, and yet I am contemplating throwing that out as a question mark at the time of the forum.

Again, I have no strong view on that. I honestly believe that if the school is really focused, and when you look at effective schools, an awful lot is done in a five-and-a-half hour day. So I do not have a strong affinity to either, at this point, increasing the school day length and/or even significantly increasing or increasing at all the school year in terms of days. I think that there should be discussion around both of those points, and I probably will seek views in coming out with the blueprint, but in all honesty, to me, that is a relatively minor issue associated with reform.

**Mr. Plohman:** I have asked the minister what his views are as well on something that was stated at a forum that he was a participant in for principals, I believe, at Tec Voc School, not something he said, although I could quote him a lot of things he said because I have—

\* (1500)

**An Honourable Member:** A transcript.

**Mr. Plohman:** No. I kept close touch. Not a transcript. My own transcript. My own notes.

At that time, Gail Watson, the past president of MAST, was speaking as well on the panel, and she talked about Alberta's situation. She has very strong views, as the minister knows, about what is happening in Alberta, but the minister never commented on the actions that have been taken in Alberta to any extent. She said that in Alberta they are prepared to risk the future of the next

generation, a quote that I took, and now it is a paraphrase because I wrote this. These are my notes, but I recall very clearly her saying that.

Rolling back to a 1930s system was another comment I took down that she referenced, going back to the 1930s. She said that superintendents will become inspectors hired by the province. A basic education is defined only in the narrowest terms, the three Rs plus social studies and nothing else, and funding will be based on 30 students per class, a student ratio, which means, of course, in terms of contact, it is much higher than that, because when you have a ratio of 1 to 30, in fact, when you consider all the other staff that are involved, like administration and so on, that in contact terms, a 1 to 30 teacher-student ratio would probably mean like 1 to 40 or more, 1 to 45.

All grants for older students will be cut out. No education tax can be levied locally, massive layoffs, and some trustees retained, of course, a number of divisions, I think, cut in half. She said, trustees retained in fewer numbers, and I do not know whether this is my editorial comment or hers, but I think she said, to cushion the impact or take the blame for the government on these decisions. I would not want to on that particular item say that she definitely said that, but I think she referenced the fact that they are more tokenism than real in terms of decision making.

Now, those are sweeping changes by the Alberta Conservative government, which are—well, it is worth stating. It is of, I think, concern to many people in education that that model may be copied to some extent by this minister. He has not said anything in the Estimates that would indicate he is contemplating anything quite as sweeping as that, although he has not really given us cause to believe that that could not be possible.

It is something that many people would view with a great deal of deep concern and alarm for the future of the public education system in this province. They are also going into charter schools as well, which I have some of my own biases about and concerns about. Without bringing in that issue, just on some of the changes that are made, the comments made by Gail Watson, rolling back to

the 1930 system, the narrowed definition of basics and the higher student-staff, teacher-student ratios, does the minister have any concerns about those kinds of moves and would he contemplate those kinds of things in Manitoba?

**Mr. Manness:** I am not going to be drawn very far into these third-party comments by a person whom we all respect, the former head of the association of trustees. I would sense that these are Gail's interpretations or the conclusions that she senses will result from some of the actions taken by the Alberta government. I have been in conversation with the minister there at meetings, and I have asked, what plan of implementation? It is one thing to state goals and it is one thing to state objectives and how it is you plan to do things, but quite often it is more difficult to put it into a plan of implementation.

I would think that that government is wrestling with some of those issues right now. I am no more or less interested in what is happening in Alberta than any other Minister of Education across the land. I can assure the member that the NDP Ministers of Education are watching Alberta just as closely as I am, because the fiscal reality in their provinces dictates that they do that. So yes, Alberta certainly seems to be moving on, some would say, a radical but certainly a different approach, and everybody is watching.

I am not losing any sleep over what is happening there. I have my own responsibilities to lead here. I do not think, within the Manitoba context, that we have as many financial difficulties, because we have managed extremely well, if I do say so myself, over the course of the last six years. A lot of the decisions that we have made have precluded us from having to take some of the very hard measures which apparently are being taken in Alberta at this time.

But just like I would not look kindly on Alberta, a government, a leader there and/or a minister there reflecting on how we are trying to do things in Manitoba, I am sure they would be of the same opinion if I were to reflect on activities there, that they would also sense that I had overstepped my bounds.

Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, therefore, I will not comment on provinces elsewhere. I never have made a habit of doing that and I will not engage in that at this point.

**Mr. Plohman:** I think the minister is quite prepared to reflect on actions in other provinces when it suits his political agenda, and when it does not, obviously he does not want to reflect. As Minister of Finance and in speeches in the House, we have many times heard stories about how Ontario was doing things in terms of finance. His Premier has been one of the experts at that, I would think, and so this is rather foreign, for any minister to say that I would never contemplate reflecting on what another province has done. As a matter of fact, it is a very positive reflection to be able to indicate whether—[interjection] It could be a positive reflection for this province if you were to say that he rejects most of the measures undertaken. The minister is not prepared to do that, so then he is not prepared to reflect.

I also want to ask the minister about something that was raised—in the interest of time, I am not pursuing that any further, incidentally, insofar as Alberta. There is a lot of discussion that could be undertaken there in terms of whether the minister is moving in some of those areas. But I want to ask about the issue of curriculum and what model will be followed with these teams that the minister is putting in place.

When the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) was asking some questions about this area the other day, I noted the minister's comments regarding emphasis on curriculum, and I am wondering whether he would agree with the statement that it is not so much the curriculum that is centrally prescribed that is so critical for maintaining some degree of uniformity in education in the province, but the standards and the bench marks that are established by the province. There has to be much more flexibility in the curriculum in terms of what is actually the recipe to get there, as long as the students get there and meet those standards and benchmarks, and there is room for flexibility in curriculum. It is standards and bench marks that are the key here.

\* (1510)

**Mr. Manness:** In theory, I support what the member says. I might not have. I mean, coming into this office, I sensed that the only way you could still work toward greater uniformity was a greater focus on a consistency of curriculum being presented. But through the discussions—and as I said, I will try and stay open-minded—I have learnt too that there are different ways of doing different things. I will at this point withstand the pressure being presented by some that we move to a very specific curriculum in some of the core areas, which would allow for lesser experiences with other sources or differing sources. But then the pressure is going to come very much onto—but then there is going to be added pressure with respect to grades, grading, standards, benchmarks, because we cannot have it both ways.

So to those who of course do not really want that either, but who want standards and/or grades in some terms of some subjective overview, then we are going to have some difficulty. What some are seeking to do, then, is to maintain the good-faith model which says: Hey, just tell me what the concepts are and let me bring my various sources in; I will bring into the classroom from my various reference sources—one of which may be the provincial textbook or which may not, as one of many sources. And then let me also do testing or do my evaluation based on subjective measures. I am sorry, that model has failed, and we are going to have to address it on one or two issues. I do not think right today we can go hard and fast in both areas. That means there is a hard-fixed curriculum and a hard-fixed test or evaluation or benchmarks or standards issue, whatever term you want to use.

We are heavily involved in discussions around these points, and how can you fairly then—if then you are going to put this added pressure on, because you still have flexibility on the curriculum side, and I am saying, okay, then if we are going to put added pressure on the standards side, how then do you constitute the test? The member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), I know, is keenly interested in this. He and I have had a lot of dialogue, and I am sure anybody that has been close to the education community has. That will become a challenge, but,

my goodness, everybody then better contribute meaningfully to that challenge. If turf protection or some way of moving to where we are now—which, in my view, is unacceptable—results, then obviously we are going to have some problems.

**Mr. Plohman:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, it is interesting to hear the minister differentiate on this area in response to the question. I think, perhaps, if we went back in some of the Estimates during discussion when he was critic for Education years ago, we might find maybe a more strident view and rigid view on curriculum. We could dig that all out and it might be some interesting reading, but we do not have time, quite frankly, for old news. We are more interested in what the minister has to say today rather than trying to find contradictions in what he said years ago. We know they are there—

**An Honourable Member:** So they are hard to find.

**Mr. Plohman:** No, they are not very hard to find, as a matter of fact. So, if the minister wants to throw out a challenge, we can all do that, but clearly there has always been a difference between the printed or prescribed curriculum, the taught curriculum, and the learned curriculum.

Some people have done a lot of writing on this kind of thing, and what we have seen is a tremendous variation because, even though you try to prescribe curriculum centrally, it very seldom manifests itself in terms of actually what is being taught in a uniform way in all the classrooms of the province. Perhaps it is not even desirable—I do not believe it is—to have a uniform curriculum across the province for every detail as to prescribe precisely how certain outcomes shall be met and how the standards shall be met. I think the key is the standards and the bench marks.

If the minister is showing some flexibility in that regard and some inclination to look to the standards and the bench marks as the key areas here, then I think he is on the right track, and so I was interested in seeing whether he did differentiate between the two.

I notice, as well, when you look at some of the concerns that were raised in the consultations on

the reorganization, that one of those that was focused on, No. 6—there needs to be an increased focus on classroom issues and recognition that these needs will be different from region to region and from school to school.

So I find a bit of a contradiction when we are trying to prescribe everything that shall happen, recognizing these regional differences and school differences. That is one of the difficulties with standardized tests, depending on what they are being used for, because of the regional and cultural differences, different socioeconomic conditions and so on that impact on the ability and readiness of children to learn certain things at certain times. If there is some flexibility in how the material is taught, as long as ultimately the benchmarks and standards are met, then I think we can still accommodate differences from region to region and school to school.

**Mr. Manness:** Two points, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson. I guess I can say yes, generally, to the member's comment. That is why I want the department to be very involved in some of the core subject areas. There will be basic concepts there that will have to be learned. Outside of that, if we are going to reach out to the community, there is still a lot of time in the day—the five and a half hours we have talked about—where the community can reflect itself.

I would hope that in some of the other courses however they are constituted and indeed in some of the core subject areas that teachers who have these special gifts will take time to introduce to our young people the issues of the day that are important to Canada and to Manitoba. To me, that is what knowledge is all about. The department does not need to reflect upon that and/or certainly test for that, but the department, I think, should focus its attentions more on some of the core subject areas.

**Mr. Plohman:** One other statement that was made in the dialogue, No. 8—there should be an increased emphasis on early identification and intervention, since this approach is the most effective and least costly way of helping students.

Does the minister agree with that statement as a principle? It is not stated as his policy; it is stated as an identified concern by those consulted. Does the minister endorse that statement? If he does, does he feel that he is putting sufficient priority on that issue insofar as the reform of education is concerned?

(Mr. Edward Helwer, Acting Deputy Chairperson, in the Chair)

**Mr. Manness:** Well, I certainly agree with the statement in principle. To that end, the reading recovery pilots that we have now in two divisions are very relevant to us and we will make every effort to shift resources to the extent that we can to give greater support to this area, because I am more convinced than ever that unless we begin to deal with some of these basic issues at an earlier age, we will end up with a much larger problem at a later age.

I do not know whether society is going to support, and I have said this, a very risky statement on my part; I will say it anyway. I do not know whether the way I see society unfolding, whether or not many of our citizenry are not the magnitude today, that exists today, will be given a second chance to, I mean, funded by the state at least.

**Mr. Plohman:** Second funded chance.

**Mr. Manness:** Second funded chance to improve their skills, their basic literacy skills. So I think then we are going to have to do a better job at the beginning.

**Mr. Plohman:** This is a key area and one in which I agree completely in terms of being the most effective and cost-efficient in terms of the future impact on society. If we have students who have learning disabilities that are not detected early and go on and languish in the school system, inevitably it is going to cost society more in the long term in terms of not only direct disruption of the classroom and difficulties in dealing with the child in the classroom therefore causing lost productivity for the other students in the class, but to society by way of frustration and by way of drugs and violence and ultimately perhaps frustrated individuals who will commit serious crimes and who have to be housed in prisons at a cost of

\$50,000 a year. So it is all very much related. We have to do more in this area, and yet I think that the government would have to be found guilty of not making this a priority over the last number of years.

\* (1520)

Now, there was one decision taken last year, and I would like the minister to comment on that. I will get into this whole issue of protocols for special needs children and who delivers the service and how can we ensure that all the services are available at the earliest possible age for children and what action is being taken there, but we also had the situation where clinicians involved in this type of activity in school divisions across the province were eliminated from the department. Then school divisions were given a grant, albeit not sufficient to cover their total costs, to hire these specialists in their divisions as an employee of the division.

In retrospect, considering the minister's recognition of the importance and the priority placed on this issue, does he not feel that that was a step backward in this area and one that perhaps may have to be addressed as part of reform in order to ensure some equity in providing for these services throughout the province?

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, answering the last question, no, I do not agree with the member at all. Our indications are, given that clinicians are now employed by divisions, for the most part it has gone very well. The sharing model is working. We can detect no apparent problems from where we are today as from where we were previous to that.

This is what makes the member and myself belong to different political parties. In principle, and the member brought up the issue under early identification and we agree, in principle we agree, but you see, as he then stated and the record will show that, he seems to say, well, if you throw enough resources at it, you will be able to fix the problem, or if you throw more at it than you have been in the past, this government should be able to fix the problem.

Well, the reality, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, we have thrown an awful lot of money after early identification, and we have helped somewhat, but we still have these growing problems. So then what is it that we have to do? Something is not working right, even though we share the same principles. Something is just not quite working as well as we would want. No, it is not. It is not.

The member then assumes and accepts then it is society's responsibility, in totality then, to deal with this problem. I guess I reject that. I am saying it is the state's responsibility to identify where there may be shortcomings in abilities and learning. I also accept that it is the state's responsibility within the given resources to try and do what it can but not accept for itself as either the final success as to how well the state is doing as to whether or not everybody is successfully brought to the highest level, however you define that.

I think this is where we have to turn back to the community and say to the parents, well, this is what we found. This is the short gap coming; this is the gap. We will try and find the resources that we can to help, but you have a significant responsibility also, because remember, the child is with us, as we said, five and a half hours a day, and there are other influences in that student's life which I would say are even more powerful.

So to those households then that want to also make a shared commitment to helping and indeed those communities outside of the household who want to make a shared commitment through volunteer efforts of service clubs and whatever, they are going to have to make that commitment also. Yes, it is the government's responsibility to identify. It is the government's responsibility to the extent we have resources through reading recovery. We hope that is a better thrust, and we will do what we can, but I think it is foolhardy to leave the false expectations there that if there were even unlimited funding, we could do it all.

That is what makes the member opposite and me different. That is what makes him different, because he will try and leave with society the false expectation that it is a money issue. Put more

money at it and you will, after the early identification, be able to provide the solution. I am saying no. Even if we did have all the resources available to us, or even if we shifted them all into this very identifiable need, that in itself would not do it. I guess that is what makes the difference between him and me.

We know that we are going to have to make some of the changes. They will never satisfy the community in totality, but the community to be totally satisfied is also going to have to be a real partner in this attempt to identify early, react early, and that is why I am so convinced that these standards that we talk about have to be imposed at an earlier age in a diagnostic sense so that we know if any gap exists as early as possible.

**Mr. Plohman:** Well, the minister unfairly characterizes our position. Of course, it is very unfair because he is not considering that we may take issue with the priorities and decision making that he has undertaken in terms of the approach and its impact insofar as efficiencies. We are not convinced that this approach that was undertaken last year with clinicians and specialists was the most efficient way to go.

The minister is talking about throwing unlimited amounts of dollars. That is not what I am saying. What I am saying is that it is more efficient to have a team approach, where you have all of those specialists who are available to deal with a myriad of different kinds of difficulties that are out there in terms of identification and early intervention. It is way beyond what one school division or even a group of school divisions in a particular geographic area could contemplate in terms of specialists. They cannot afford it, but if they are housed centrally, they can respond. It is a team approach and therefore much more efficient at dealing with the problem. So that is what we are saying to the minister. I mean, he has adopted the team approach in Curriculum. Instead of having individual specialists for each subject, he is taking a team approach, and I think that is not a bad way to go.

I think it is an excellent way to go with regard to identification of special needs problems, and I

think the minister has gone the wrong way here. It has nothing to do—well, it has something to do with dollars but that is not the major overriding concern here. As a matter of fact, it took some time before the minister even admitted there were any dollars saved last year in this change.

It is a different way of doing it, and I was asking the minister about that, whether he felt this was a better way, it was more productive, it was more efficient and met the needs better. The minister went on a tirade about differences between him and I in terms of spending money. I recognize that there is also a community responsibility.

\* (1530)

I know that many of these parents are at their wits' end in trying to deal with behavioural problems particularly, which come about as a result of some other problem. If the child has a hearing problem or some other disruption to their development, very often behaviour is the way this is manifested. Those parents are at their wits' end and they have nowhere to turn for help. Their children then are ultimately going to end up costing society a lot more, so why not the team approach? The specialists are there to be sent out to deal with these kinds of situations. Also the diagnostic centre which was there to accommodate diagnosis and prescription for treatment to plan a program for children from rural Manitoba, that was eliminated by this government.

I have to say that completely contradicts the minister's understanding of the need to deal with this problem. If he was not responsible last year directly, then he has an opportunity now as a new minister to perhaps take another look at this issue and see whether it is not a better way to go and perhaps say, well, I would like to move away from what we did last year. I think it was wrong.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I have to reject most of the statement made by the member. I do not see where the team approach, to use the words of the member, has been violated. The employer is different, yes. The employer is no longer the department. The employer is a division and/or a group of divisions. I do not know why the source of employment breaks down any team

approach. There may be some slightly different roles than existed in the past—[interjection] Oh, so it is not the team approach he is talking about. It is the resources he is talking about.

I am saying, in my view, we maintain the service enhanced, and what is wrong with that? I think the client has better service today because the employer is not the department but indeed is the division and so the client is closer to the resource. I say that nothing is materially changed except the employer. The team approach still is—if it has value, its value is made continuous because of the willingness of people to work together, and nothing has prevented that.

**Mr. Plohman:** I am not going to say too much else except to say the minister is oversimplifying this issue. He is forgetting in his response that when you have a variety of professionals available, made possible by the sheer numbers of students who are being serviced by one jurisdiction, that being the province as opposed to school divisions, then you can respond more accurately with the kinds of professionals that are needed for a particular situation than school divisions can now because of their limited numbers. They only have one of these allocated for what—is it 700 students—I do not know what the number is. I think it is 700. I know in the city of Winnipeg under Division 1, they have a much lower ratio of one to 390 students. But the province's ratio of support, I believe, is on the basis of one to 700. The minister can correct me if I am wrong. [interjection]

The point is though, there are very few of them in a division. That is my point. They cannot afford to hire the kinds of specialists, because there is hearing impairment, speech pathologists, behavioral psychologists, many different professions within this discipline. They are specialists, and you cannot have all of them within a particular division or even a region.

You can have more of them available if you house them centrally and respond as need be. That was the concept, and that is why I am questioning the minister on it. I think he should address that, part of it, rather than just simply trying to confuse the issue by saying that it is a matter of our

advocating and throwing all kinds of money at a problem and not recognizing limitations in resources.

We recognize there are limitations in resources, but there are two aspects to this, priorities, and it is the way it is done. Both are important.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** I wanted to ask a number of questions in this area still. The first is to just pick up on what the member for Dauphin was talking about with reference to the actual curriculum. The minister made reference to the hard, fixed curriculum, or there was discussion about a hard, fixed curriculum.

I am wondering if the minister could comment to the extent that there might be a need to have some sort of local discretionary authority for possibly the principal to be able to look at individual students and make some sort of a value judgment, whether or not it is in that student's best interest to be taking a particular course?

**Mr. Manness:** The question is put in very general terms; therefore, I will give a general answer. My general answer would be yes, but within the core subject areas and those leading to greater literacy, those leading to greater understanding and comfort or ease of manipulation. I am thinking computing and mathematics. Those in my view have to be made pretty uniform across the province. But within the school day there is an awful lot of opportunity for the community to reflect itself, and I dare say even by way of curriculum in a number of other subjects.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** The other day I had mentioned the individuals, and I had asked the minister in terms of he might even have been made aware of it. He indicated that in fact it does happen, when you get someone graduating from Grade 12 and not being able to read or write.

I have had some discussions with, in particular, administrators with respect to, how does something of that nature happen? It was indicated to me by at least one individual, whereas they do not have too much of a choice in the sense that you have a core curriculum which dictates that you have to teach this, in some cases it might not necessarily be in that child's best interest, possibly

because of an inability, if you like, whether it is through fetal alcohol syndrome. There are some problems that are in fact there.

I am wondering if the minister could comment in terms of whether he sees some flexibility in that specific area of the core curriculum where a valued opinion from, say, an administrator at a local level is that this particular student maybe should be spending more time and effort in an industrial arts program as opposed to as much time in some of the other areas?

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I am flabbergasted by the comment from the Liberal. I mean, today society is going to have to give a focus in our industrial arts and indeed within our vocational education system like it has never given before. I dare say, if it is not happening now it will happen in such dimension in the next couple of years. The so-called deemed to be better students are going to be focusing their futures and their attention on some of the vocational courses in a technical side like never has been the case. That is what we have to take into account when we provide the blueprint. It is something that we are trying to come to grips with internally.

I can foresee when the demand to move into those courses is going to be by students of all ability, and we are going to have to come to grips with that.

\* (1540)

The member, I do not know what he is suggesting. I sense he is suggesting that there are inherent reasons, no fault of the child, of the student, as to why they cannot achieve at a level that is consistent with what we would hope and want. I do not know what he is saying in his statement. Is he saying, well, take that into account and make sure that student then proceeds orderly through the school period and is not held back, taking into account that reality? I am not troubled with that, personally.

All I am saying is, though, the standards that apply to the grade average have to be at a level that significantly challenges those who are going to make up the reality of society in the years to come. That is not necessarily the individual to whom you

refer. It is not necessarily the very, very gifted person to whom the member did not refer. Indeed, my concern is the great, great majority who had to be challenged at a higher level and the standards that apply to them and, as importantly, the honesty with which we make the system accountable to their better understanding as to how they are doing. That is what will drive me.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, the reason why I bring it up is that the minister was making reference to that hard-core curriculum and the vocational schools, industrial arts or whatever. No doubt there is, I would argue, a demand today for those sorts of courses, and it will continue to increase. There is no doubt in my mind whatsoever.

The question that I was asking the minister to be more specific on, and he did answer it, if not indirectly, was the individual decision or the possibility of having the local authority to be able to have some discretionary power on what is in the best interests of the student. The minister has indicated that authority would in fact be there. I am not convinced that it is there right now, and that is the reason why I put forward the question.

I wanted to move on to the reshuffling that was done within the department. I know the minister had made reference to the regional teams as being one of the higher priorities for replacements. Under the regional teams he used the example of I believe it was the Parkland, and within the Parkland for example there is—[interjection] Parkland-Westman, the member for Dauphin points out—that there are, from what I see, currently six vacancies in that area, two from within Parkland-Westman. I am wondering if the minister can give some sort of indication when he believes that they will be up to staff.

**Mr. Manness:** In the examples referenced by the member, one of the positions, vacancies, has just been filled. One is still vacant but will be filled after the full impact of the reorganization has been felt through the organization. We give very high priority to filling these vacancies.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** The minister made reference to, under the education reform I believe it was

supposed to be nine individuals that were going to be brought aboard, six for Curriculum, one for the library resource, two for Distance Education. Would these individuals now be in place, or are they looking for these individuals currently?

**Mr. Manness:** No, these positions have not been filled. They though are a very important placement to us, but more importantly than filling them is to find the right people to fill them. I mean, these are crucial positions.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** The minister had indicated that the regional teams were in fact a priority, and just going through the number of vacancies, there seems to be a good number of vacancies through the department. I am wondering with these new positions being created and there is the—I do not know if you want to call it unwritten or a statement that the minister made in terms of 5 percent, a general rule 5 percent for vacancies. I am wondering what sort of impact that particular rule is going to have on the hiring or filling of the positions in the regional teams.

**Mr. Manness:** I think I answered that question yesterday. It is part of the record. I said that within that general guideline—and the government vacancy right now is not too far away from it—but within our department that we have to set into place priorities. We always do have positions that come open, but to the extent that we have to fill a position here or somewhere else, or another division in the department, I mean this one will receive the higher priority.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Can the minister indicate what percentage we are at right now of vacancy?

**Mr. Manness:** As a department?

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Yes.

**Mr. Manness:** As I said, at the end of the last fiscal year, end of March, we were at 7.2 percent, and last month that is dropping off to a little below 7 percent. It cycles. It cycles from department to department. For the whole year, indeed for '93-94, when the same guideline was in place, it seemed to me the average vacancy was 4.8 for the department for the whole year.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, in terms of actual numbers, what would that work out to?

**Mr. Manness:** On a base of 700 employees, we are looking at roughly 35 positions.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** In going through some of the vacant positions there is—

**Mr. Manness:** I am sorry for interrupting, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson. The member should realize that if we went to 100 percent employment, the best that we could ever achieve as a government, I mean we would have—it would almost be impossible to drive the vacancy rate below 2.5 to 3 percent. It would almost be impossible to drive it lower.

To give a specific answer, 712 total positions at 5 percent, the guideline then would call for 35 staff years to be vacant.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** I have noticed that there are in fact currently a couple of current Curriculum vacancies right now out of the department. I take it that those would be a higher priority also than, let us say, the regional teams.

Where would the Curriculum consultants fill in for vacancies that are currently there, or are there any current vacancies in Curriculum Development?

\* (1550)

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, we thrashed this all out yesterday. We spent a considerable time doing so. I do not mind re-entering it all into the record, but as I said yesterday, and I will try and be very brief, as we come to a clearer understanding how our protocols are going to work with other provinces, and as we get a clearer understanding of the reform package, then we will begin to fill the remaining positions within the Curriculum Development area.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** My apologies if the minister feels that it is somewhat repetitive, but I still am interested in knowing now—unfortunately, we do not have yesterday's Hansard—if you like, in terms of what the current number of Curriculum consultant positions that are vacant.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I remind the member that we have changed around the reorganization. It does not lend itself to a comparison, as similar as it might have been in other years. I point out to them that within the ed reform package, out of the nine positions as shown, eight are going to be directed towards Curriculum. We hope to fill them, or a significant number of them, by the end of June and within the regions, well, in two parts: six in one part, Curriculum Development; and the other two were also Curriculum Development but in a computer-assisted learning area. So they are all program development consultants.

Then within the regions, there are five vacancies out of a total of, I think it was, 33.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I know that in terms of the reorganizing of the department itself, you bring in a new initiative in terms of education reform and allocate out a considerable amount of dollars and say that you are going to be hiring some individuals to deal with curriculum, if you like, and then yet we have a number of positions that are in fact vacant.

I am wondering why that would be, why you would not be necessarily hiring, at the very least, individuals to fill these positions and possibly put them, on an interim basis, on the regional teams or whatever.

**Mr. Manness:** We just announced the change to the field a month ago, and we are trying to fill these vacancies as quickly as possible. We filled one last week. As I have stated again, we will try and fill as many as we can by the end of June, but you must remember there are procedures in place. There is still impact of some of our previous staff. There are redeployment issues here. The member should know that. He has been in government long enough. There are some other people within government and within the department who have now found their way to the redeployment list because of decisions made elsewhere, and they have to have an opportunity and a time to determine whether or not they fit these positions.

That is the very meaning of the redeployment process.

**Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson,** yes, again I will try and reflect more detail. We still do not have a cleaned-up copy, but we will endeavour to have that in place for tomorrow.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

**Mr. Lamoureux:** All I know is that I get representation and it is saying, look, industrial arts, phys ed consultant, gifted education consultant, English as a second language—there was some concern with respect to a co-ordinator from the heritage language which the member for Dauphin had mentioned, and there were some vacancies that are currently in place. The minister talks about establishing priorities. Is he talking about the new individuals coming from education reform plus filling these vacancies, and none of those are going to be dealing with those that I just finished listing off.

**Mr. Manness:** I cannot answer that question right now. I have listed out the priorities. Obviously, some of the areas the member reads out because he has been heavily lobbied to ask this question. I mean, I have frozen the firings—or pardon me, the hirings. Well, which sounds better, though? I have frozen the firings. That is kind of a partial alliteration.

As I have indicated, we are putting our priorities into other places right now, and ultimately how and when and if these positions are filled, the hard ones are the ones put on the record by the member for Inkster and yesterday by the member for Dauphin. Mr. Deputy Chairperson, that will be determined in due course.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** I do not realize why the minister would take great offence to some questions that he might have felt were asked yesterday. I have seen duplication of questions within Question Period itself. A minister tends to give different answers even to the same questions at different times.

The minister is expanding the whole Curriculum area, or at least making the commitment to expand the whole Curriculum area. I think it is fair to ask the minister to try to give more clarity to the issue of what he intends to do with some of the areas in

which he has cut in the past. If he is hiring additional individuals to deal with the curriculum as consultants/co-ordinators there should be some sort of an indication of whether or not ones that have been cut are going to be reinstated.

If he does not want to give that sort of clarification, that is fine. I will go on to the reform area where he mentioned two pilot projects, one which was with respect to the special needs. Under this particular area, I wonder if the minister could give a bit of detail on that. Hopefully, that question was not asked yesterday.

**Mr. Manness:** We are doing no pilot with respect to special needs. We are doing a special needs review.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Can the minister indicate what that will include?

**Mr. Manness:** I can, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, but I would ask to wait for some information to come to me.

What we are proposing to do is to identify all special ed programs and services provided by divisions and districts throughout the province. We do not have a strong catalogue of the programming throughout our province. We would like to examine the operational effectiveness of provincial policies and special education. I mean, we have heard the word "effectiveness" being used and we are going to try and determine if it is done better in some areas as compared to others. We have all been working in this for several years now. It is time to do an effectiveness analyses.

\* (1600)

We would like to review the quality and cost effectiveness of special ed programs in our province, given that we have some benchmarks of comparison. We would like to review the effectiveness and efficiency of the current provincial funding mechanisms in meeting the intent of the provincial policy directions in Special Education. This is a program that obviously has grown in significance now for, what, 15-20 years, and it is time to do an evaluation. That is what we propose to do.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I know one of the concerns that has been brought to my attention with special needs is in fact the funding formula. The argument that I have heard is that the province is not contributing the actual cost, if you like, of having this particular program instituted throughout the province. I know, for example, in Winnipeg School Division No. 1, where there is a higher per capita of special needs students, there tends to be more reliance on the school boards to make up for some of the shortfalls of the government's inability to provide enough resources to be able to service special needs students. I am wondering if the minister might want to comment on that.

**Mr. Manness:** Well, I have no comment to provide. I am aware of the arguments also, basically, but the reality is, this is not a funding issue, this is a society issue. I mean, we have to decide, we have to do the evaluations and see whether or not the present model is one that we want to continue to support either in greater or lesser fashion into the next century.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Could the minister indicate whether or not he believes that the financing does cover the cost of the special needs, the current financing?

**Mr. Manness:** Yes, I think our support is fair under the circumstances. What else can I say, Mr. Deputy Chairperson? I mean, the funding formula is in place, I believe an adjustment was made again two years ago again to take into account the view of some and obviously the view of the government that maybe the funding was not quite adequate, and so we provided a 20 percent increase in this one envelope in 1992-93 funding changes in the levels. So today, in Level II we provide \$8,520 for each pupil identified, and we also pay \$18,960 for Level III. Then, of course, we also provide for the severely—so those are the increased levels under support under Levels II and III.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Under Level I, from what I understand, it is based more on a percentage and, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am wondering if the minister can indicate or give me a better idea in terms of the Level I special needs student in terms

of how the percentage dollars are broken down, not the actual number of dollars, but I am referring to I believe it is 5 percent or the actual percentage.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I do not know if he is talking about percentage of students who are in Level I—[interjection] The member is right in his latter comments. We just take the number of students within the school division, divide that eligible enrollment by 180 and multiply by \$43,700, but that money has to then be spent. If a lesser amount is spent, then that is what is received.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** I am wondering if the minister would acknowledge that there are some school divisions that might have a higher percentage than other school divisions of special needs student, or does he find that that is not the case?

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, that is the way we used to do it. It became such a bureaucratic nightmare because it called upon resources of school divisions and departmental staff at such a high level, we were spending so much money on book work and monitoring that this was an agreed-upon approach, acceptable to the school divisions and all.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** I am surprised that all school divisions would have agreed to it. I know if you take a look at demographics of the province of Manitoba, socioeconomic strata, that there might be an argument, and I would put it forward that there is a need for some variances between the school divisions. I would ask the minister specifically if his review will take this into account.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it seems in this job you are damned if you do and you are damned if you don't. You set up advisory committees to try and openly consult with people. The former minister, Mr. Derkach, set up an advisory committee to deal specifically with this problem and this issue.

He sought wide-ranging views and they came in, and I am led to believe that the majority of you strongly supported, let us say we go to the model that we do and then we abandoned the old model which, of course—well, they recommended

staying with the model that had been introduced back, I believe in 1986, introduced by the other government, the government before us, and not to go back to what had been in place before then.

That is what we have done, except we have also put additional funding taking into account Level II and Level III, and Level I too.

That factor of 43,000 has been going up. It went up as high as 45,000, and we have reduced it slightly this year, but I am indicating to the member that we followed the process the vast majority of education community wanted.

Now, if he says that he is here now speaking specifically for one segment of that, and that is more important than the process, then the strong chorus of voices in harmony who have asked us to follow this, then he should state his position clearly and tell us who he is speaking for and who he is speaking against.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I will try to be very clear for the minister. Even though this policy might have been implemented in 1986, I still believe that it is wrong. I will again ask the minister, does he not believe that depending in different geographic areas of the province of Manitoba, that some have a higher percentage of special needs children than other areas, or does he believe that there is no differences between the different geographical areas in the province?

**Mr. Manness:** Special needs, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I tend to favour staying with what we have. That is why we are trying to go into the study. We are trying to more readily define in a uniform manner across the country who we should include in that label, special needs.

There is quite a little education industry that has developed around that, and so we are trying to get clarity. Maybe at that time, we will be better able to address the issue as far as the differences that may or may not exist as between school divisions.

You must remember that this funding was also put into place for special needs of all descriptions. Some school divisions now seem to take the funding and target it specifically at those who would have learning disabilities. There was a time when this money was put into place to also be

directed to those who had high academic achievement potential. I mean there have been focused changes too, and within the latitude provided to school divisions they have made decisions accordingly.

The level of funding, through this period of time, has continued to increase pretty significantly, much to the chagrin of those of course who say that where it is coming from is basically the portion that should be directed to the great majority who are in regular instruction.

\* (1610)

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I indicated yesterday we would table some of the detail associated with the reorganization within this division. I am prepared to do so. Also I would like to table—this was requested by the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen)—Student Records System, 1989-90, Pilot Evaluation. This was prepared by the Planning and Research Branch. I would also like to table A Statistical Portrait of University-Level Education in Canada brought forward as a joint effort between Statistics Canada and the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** I thank the minister for that.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, again my final point that I would make is what we are trying to do in the special needs review is that we will be looking both at the financing and of course the outcomes. It is time to do an evaluation to see how successful the program has been.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** The minister continuously defends it by saying that this is in fact a model, and the model used to be worse. We would like to think, as we move on that—[interjection] Worst, whatever you want to call it—worse. What is the difference?

Let me start over, as the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) would say. Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the Minister of Education, in the Chamber, talked about being fair, especially when I brought up the special needs or the Student Services area. He said that there is a general cut in the budget, but this budget is in fact fair.

I would like the minister to answer the question specifically on whether or not he believes it is fair for some areas that have a higher percentage or per capita of special needs children getting the equivalent in terms of percentage of other areas that would not require as much as areas with a higher per capita. Is that fair?

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it may be fair. It is a hypothesis though at this point. In the mind of the member it is a conclusion. In my mind it is a hypothesis, and we are going to test that hypothesis by doing this study. So where there is already a lead pipe guarantee in the mind of the member that that is the way it is, I am saying let us do the study and then we will know and we will be able to reflect some numbers, just not speculate idly.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** I would like to think that it is not just a hypothesis, that it is fairly clear in terms of—just by looking, as I say, at the social strata, demographics of the province of Manitoba. If the minister is indicating that there is no difference throughout the province of Manitoba and he needs to have a study in order to make any sort of conclusions, I believe that he is somewhat off tune with this particular area.

It is unfortunate that the Minister of Education and the critic for the NDP party are not quite happy with the words that I am using. That is fine. I will still talk the way I know best. [interjection] You are trying to help him out, I appreciate that.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I do believe that the Minister of Education does have a responsibility. I am glad to hear him say that will be part of the study or part of the review. I look forward to seeing that review. I am convinced that if in fact it addresses this issue, that it will point out that the Minister of Education is wrong, that there are some differences, and this Minister of Education is not reflecting those differences.

I know, for example, even in private schools, the private schools are given the percentage. Maybe the member for Dauphin might even want to defend that, but I do believe in a very strong way that is something that does need to be looked at so that the school divisions with the higher demand

for special needs services are in fact receiving a fairer portion of the finite amount of resources that are there.

Having said that, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I did want to move on. I know the Minister of Education wants to respond to that.

**Mr. Manness:** The member is not going to get away with just sort of doing a little guerrilla warfare here and then running off. I am going to share with him the facts. He will not say it, you see, he talks in terms of generalities and he does not have the courage to state his hypothesis.

I mean, is he talking about Winnipeg 1 specifically? Did he indicate how many dollars they do get today, what percent of the share of the money that is available for special needs supporting? I want to indicate, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, for the record, that today within the categorical grant area, \$10.2 million is set aside. Winnipeg School Division No. 1, with 30 percent of the students in this province, receives 59.6 percent of that \$10-million-plus figure. In other words, for '93-94 they received \$5.7 million.

Those are the facts. If the member wants to say they should receive 70 percent or they should receive 80 percent, let him state his case. Right now the 30 percent of the students in that division receive 60 percent of the funding in that categorical line.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** The funding formula is this, that every school division has a number of students. The number of students determines the amount of money that they are able to receive. If Winnipeg 1 is maximizing their percentage because of the 33,000 students that attend Winnipeg School Division No. 1, I would imagine that would in fact be what I would personally expect to see. If because the special needs students are there or the percentage or the population of the student base, if you like, which justifies the percentage of dollars that it would be receiving, because I take it that they are living within the funding formula, because if they are not living within the funding formula then the minister is doing what it is that he is saying that he is not doing, and that is, giving them a higher percentage.

**Mr. Manness:** The member does not understand categorical grants. The special needs grants come within the existing formula. I was not even talking about that. At Level II and III you divide by certain numbers and that generates almost a per capita basis. I am talking about categorical. The recognition that some divisions, by the demographics indicated by the member opposite, have special call beyond the formula—\$10.2 million is set beyond in the categorical sense.

I am saying, the division today in Manitoba that has one-sixth basically of all the students in Manitoba receives 60 percent of the funding.

\* (1620)

**Mr. Lamoureux:** But you are factoring in Special Needs II and III.

**Mr. Manness:** No, I am not. Special Needs Levels I, II and III all come under the general funding formula. This is in addition. So the member, I do not know what he is trying to say other than, it is still not enough. If that is his claim then get up and say, it is still not enough. But I mean the recognition that Winnipeg School Division has this special call has been there by governments before us and has certainly been maintained by our government.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am sorry for being unkind, but I just do not need the Liberal critic to come in here pretending that nothing has been done, because it has been done over successive governments. Now, if he says, but you have not done enough, fair, let him state it that way. But do not let him make it appear for the record that this is a whole new issue and he has just somehow fallen upon this great discovery and that he is now going to become a crusader to bring forward formulas that are going to be fair. The formulas are in place. If he thinks there is not enough money there to support the formulas, say so.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Can the minister then provide me Special Needs monies for Special Needs I for Winnipeg School Division No. 1 in, let us say, Seven Oaks, the actual dollars and percentage?

**Mr. Manness:** We can do that, but that is under the schools finance area. I mean, that is the funding formula, and we are coming up to that sometime

this month maybe. At that time we will gladly present that information.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** I would appreciate if in fact the minister could attempt to provide that information possibly even before we get to that line and then maybe we can continue this particular debate at that point in time?

I wanted to ask the minister, there were the two initiatives, Distance Education was the other pilot project, if the minister can give some sort of an outline. I know in his opening remarks he did make some reference to it, if in fact he might want to add anything to what is being reviewed or if in fact it is a review, just give some sort of a background.

**Mr. Manness:** What we are going to try and do is, we are going to try to support some of the field-initiated distance ed proposals that are coming forward. I must be honest with members here, there are some individuals within certain school divisions who really are advanced in their thinking and who have some interesting models to explore.

I guess what we are saying here is, look, we certainly do not have the monopoly within the department, in all of government for that matter, as to this distance education model, the ultimate model that we would want to support. It is therefore worthwhile to look at some of the field-initiated proposals, see whether or not some of them might be worthy of putting a methodology into place. We have set aside this money to do that. Hopefully, we can cover at least a handful of them to give support to what is happening in the field.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** The minister had indicated earlier that it was more of a pilot project. So are we talking about a series of pilot projects throughout rural Manitoba?

**Mr. Manness:** What we are saying is that there might be several pilots. How related or unrelated they are to each other, it is too soon to say. It is just not rural Manitoba. It is wherever it makes good sense to deliver education, but certainly I would have to think the greater focus would be in rural Manitoba.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Can the minister indicate in terms of how he or the department is going up with

the selection of which school divisions or which projects would be taken on?

**Mr. Manness:** That is just evolving at this point in time, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. I have nothing to offer in a hard, fast criteria for selection. We are trying quickly to build a criteria for that selection so that we can move on with the process. What we do not want it to become is a bureaucratic process, where we spend a year building the criteria for pilots. I have seen that happen too many times in governments before, and we are hoping to flow money certainly by September.

I have watched very carefully, as I wear my labour market development hat, how it is the federal Minister of Human Resources development, Mr. Axworthy, has tried to encourage pilots to come forward with respect to social reform. Although I may be troubled in one respect because I have not seen how it fits with another, indeed, whether the federal government even understands the area in which they are trying to lead and yet, on the other hand, I am impressed with the quickness, when they do see a decent candidate come along, I am impressed with the quickness in which there is response.

Now, of course, the aside to that is that a lot of the minister's own cabinet members are not that impressed, because they want to have greater involvement in the selection and location of these plants. Well, the process is the same everywhere. If you give greater power to a ministry like ours to select, then obviously we would like to keep the criteria more narrow so that we can get on with it. To the extent that you involve more people and you have more hoops to jump through, then it takes longer. It is a fact of life. So we would like to keep it narrow to the extent we can so that we can live up to the commitment.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** In the interim while the department is trying to establish some criteria, I would anticipate or would have anticipated that the minister's office would have had some sort of contact from other school divisions to participate. I am wondering in terms of what it is that he would be telling these divisions in terms of a process and

more so, I guess, if he can better define some form of a time frame as he sees this being implemented.

**Mr. Manness:** Well, again, the general criteria would include, is there a specific need in the proposal that comes forward? Is it innovative? I am talking now about concepts that are worthy of test. Does it have a good chance—I am talking about the concept now—of being used elsewhere? Will it integrate delivery as between not only education, but does it lend itself or add on other delivery application? Those are going to be the general, broad range and certainly everybody will have a right to access, but not everybody obviously will be selected. That is a given. There just are not enough resources available.

We are hoping that quickly divisions will understand the ground rules. I might say, this is not just for divisions. There is a post-secondary dimension, too, so it is just not divisions. [interjection] That is right. We are setting up partnerships between all of the providers of education. So we are hoping that the ground rules are understood with greater certainty within the next month and a half. We hope people will spend some time through the summer in bringing forward their proposals, and we are hoping that we can agree to some by September.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** A major aspect of the distance education is in fact the infrastructure program between Canada and Manitoba. I am wondering if the minister can give some sort of indication in terms of how that application is going and in particular how that would be implemented into the reform itself.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, that is a fair question. Certainly, I think it is going fairly well. There is a real strong commitment by both levels of government. The lead minister in our case is the Minister of Finance in all infrastructure programs.

The federal government is at a kind of a slight disadvantage because education per se is a responsibility of a provincial government. Yet, we are working in harmony. We understand that it is best to, in unison, try to put in place the remaining links so that the highway can be built. The member

should know that. I mean, most of it has already been built.

\* (1630)

The Manitoba Telephone System, when we committed \$800 million upon coming into government to the Manitoba Telephone System, a significant part of that was for fibre optic cable throughout rural Manitoba. Now you have digitalization technology coming in, you have advances in microwave that were never contemplated; yet, a lot of that system is in place, either with your Telephone System or the private cable carriers. So there is an awful lot of the system that is in place.

What is not in place though in some cases is the linkages between the end of the fibre optic and the facility. In those cases, I mean, that would be an education facility, i.e., a school, but when you are putting all this money in, you just cannot have purely education ultimate application. That is now the challenge, the challenge for our government particularly, because we want to see these integrated. I mean, anybody and their dog can build these things, but it takes incredible resources to maintain them if they are not built properly.

This is where we hope that the federal government will certainly buy into our greater program and that they will encourage municipalities to the extent they are interested, encourage, as we are trying, the business community to the extent that they want to be part of this to come forward with a Manitoba integrated model.

There is no doubt that in the first instance, and for several years, the main user will be government, and within that sphere, it will be mainly education, but libraries, of course, are—I mean, they can hardly wait to be part of it, and they will have a key responsibility. I look at the member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer), who is in charge of library outreach in this province. There is no doubt he is keen and his department is keenly interested in this whole development. I look at the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Downey) and the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach). I mean, it all has to be integrated.

In response to the member's question, right now there is a good working relationship between the federal government and ourselves. Right now we sense the greater amount of dollars here has to be directed towards completing the linkages that will provide an opportunity for every community to come on to the highway. Yes, there are some nuances around that. I know Minister Axworthy particularly would like to see an outreach component of it within the downtown area, and those are all dimensions that we are discussing at this point in time.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** The timing of that particular agreement being achieved, will that have any impact in terms of the pilot projects themselves, in particular, the starting point of the pilot projects?

**Mr. Manness:** No, they are two completely unrelated activities. The pilots are purely the provincial government activity. It is sort of a bilateral. It will be a bilateral as between our educational institutions and the department. The other issue is again directed more purely to building a capital structure or an asset, pardon me, a fixed asset.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** I would ask the minister if there is anything in place that ensures that there is in particular school board input into the infrastructure or potential infrastructure agreement. I am thinking in terms of, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) is leading all the discussions and debates with the federal government. Are there areas in which the school boards have or potentially could be assisting?

**Mr. Manness:** Well, the very essence of what Beth Cruikshank has been doing for six months is all that consulting and indeed dialoguing with school divisions. I do not know if I have ever seen a person work harder and try and reach out to the education community to try and bring forward their views so that all that could be taken into account when we are building the project and the proposal to be shared with the federal government.

**Mr. Plohman:** Yes, just to pick up on some of these items dealing with distance education, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I wanted to ask the minister whether in fact some of the already existing

projects will be eligible for this funding. For example, Evergreen-Interlake, or I think it is Evergreen-Lakeshore, or is it, yes, they have put in place linkage between Gimli, Riverton, Arborg and Fisher Branch.

By doing so, they tell me that they have saved the Riverton School from being closed because they are able to offer courses from one of those centres to the others and in some cases, perhaps seven in one location, five in another and eight in another. So they are able to continue to offer courses they would never be able to offer with one instructor in one of those centres, completely interactive two-way television. I do not have to describe it further to the minister. He is obviously aware of it.

Is that project eligible, even though it was built, put in place prior to this money being available, because one of the biggest problems they have is provincial funding and support? What they have been telling me is that there was very little provincial support. If anything, it went into this program and this project except for an evaluation. They said that the province was going to do an evaluation on the project, but there was no other provincial money, from the Department of Education and Training at least. I do not know if there was any from other economic initiatives or area from Industry, Trade and Tourism or Rural Development, but the question is, now that they are operating, and they did sacrifice other things to put this in place because they felt it was important, will they be eligible just as a new project in another division be eligible under the minister's criteria, and will the dollars available pay for operating as well as for capital?

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the member states for the record fairly accurately what has happened. To the Evergreen project in particular, we have committed \$30,000 for an evaluation phase and we are presently doing that in two phases at this point in time. But the member asked the hard question whether or not this pilot will be supportable.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the pilot the member talks about has been in use now, or will be at the

end of this school year, a year. We are very mindful that we have been watching it carefully. We are going to do the evaluations. At that time, I guess, we will determine whether or not it fits into a model that should be in place for the rest of the province. This is what we are trying to do. We are really trying to work towards a model.

We are not so naive to believe that one model can address all situations, and yet, from the very beginning, we have been a little bit troubled as we have watched a couple of these from the beginning because of the very high cost of operation, and notwithstanding the remarks that the member said, that this has saved a school, which is very important in itself.

The very fact is if you do not build these very efficiently and are very resource conscious at the beginning, everybody of course will demand whatever it is that you provided elsewhere, and all of a sudden you cannot provide the model over the whole plant, so to speak.

So again, to reiterate, I made comment with respect to \$30,000 and that was provided for the operation of the Evergreen project. In turn we got to work with them, learn, and we will get an evaluation, which we are taking right now. So we put \$30,000 into that project. Right now I do not contemplate how it is we can put more into that until we understand fully how it is performed vis-à-vis the changes that occur almost daily, not with respect to the transmission of signal and how else put it in the classroom, but the costs associated, which, of course, have come down and continue to come down because of some of the competitive factors at work, not the least of which is the competition between the Manitoba Telephone System and some of the other providers.

So here we have Evergreen, which in itself, if the world had not changed over the last two years would be a model which I would say would be too rich, that we could not support it through all of Manitoba.

Coming up from below are the new technologies, an incredible competition, people who are getting very interested in delivering an

education signal and who are honing their pencils on a daily basis, providing cheaper and cheaper rates. Now will the two meld? Obviously, there is going to be a delivery mechanism of some sort in that district. There has to be because the very essence of keeping our schools open is to try and use this meeting. Is it going to be exactly today, what Evergreen has in place? It may, but it may not. It may be different.

These are all of the variables that are at play right now, and, obviously, we will know a lot more once the evaluation is done. Again, the hard question, is it seeking support or will it be provided support under the infrastructure program proposal? I cannot say that it is, because we are still putting some significant detail in place with respect to that whole plan.

**Mr. Plohman:** The interesting thing is that other pilots will not have to prove their effectiveness prior to getting funds and/or their efficiencies.

**Mr. Manness:** We put \$30,000 in pilot funding into this.

**Mr. Plohman:** The minister knows that the evaluation at \$30,000, while a significant amount, is still rather insignificant in terms of total cost of the project and its ongoing operating costs. The question is should they get some support?

\* (1640)

My position would be that since the evaluation will undoubtedly assist the government in determining future projects and the shape and form of those projects—in other words, there is a great deal of benefit to the government—this project perhaps should at least get some portion of their costs funded for a period of time, in any event until they can move to a different, more efficient perhaps, more futuristic or whatever you might want to call the system for that particular division.

So since there was that benefit, since they were pioneering, I would think that there would be some validity to a portion of their costs being covered and ongoing costs. That is why I asked the question earlier and the minister really did not answer, and that is: Is it the intent of the government to cover operating as well as capital expenses involved with these projects? In other

words, ongoing day-to-day operating costs, is there going to be an operating grant involved here?

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I know the member wants a definitive statement, but the issue here is not add-ons; the issue is using Distance Education to be able to work towards savings. So right now, the way the member has broached the question, it would smack to me of meaning add-on costs right now.

Let me say, in fairness to the Evergreen situation, to the extent that we have some flexibility with an agreement that is ultimately reached—and if we have not learned enough, we would like to—I mean, it should be considered as a pilot. We will try and be pretty open-minded as to whether or not we can find some additional resources.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** Could I ask the honourable members to carry on their conversations at the back. It is a little bit disrupting.

**Mr. Plohman:** I think what is important here is that they are not automatically disqualified because they are already in place, and I think that the minister is fair for that. In addition, he did not answer the question regarding operating. He says that I am trying to get him to be very explicit. It is just that, it is a general question really, not one that narrows it down to a specific project or anything. In any of these, there are capital costs associated and there are operating costs, line costs and so on, depending on the nature of the service to the pilot that is involved. There are operating costs involved, and I am just asking if it is part of the plan, if there is a plan, for this money, that some of it will go to ongoing operating support for these projects?

**Mr. Manness:** Absolutely not, when he talks about "this money," because that would be setting ourselves up as the government of Manitoba, and if we are going to support operating costs, we are going to have to do it in the context of the realization that we are going to have cover them for years to come and then that decision has to be made on the basis of where the savings can be found elsewhere. That is a completely different position or situation

than taking the money that may come forward by way of an agreement, and hopefully it will, and saying, okay, we are going to use this to put in place for operating.

Once the federal government is gone two years from now, then who has to pick that up? By disqualification, obviously, the provincial government. If we are going to support operating, it will be done in the context of our model that we believe makes good sense in providing education wherever we can and either supporting it through additional money that is provided by the Treasury and/or savings within some other dimension of the public school system funding. We will make that decision in isolation, not on the basis of having been dragged there by way of some federal support at this point in time that will last for only basically two years.

**Mr. Plohman:** I was not assuming that the \$750,000 that was being used for projects as outlined in the budget news release was to be cost-shared by the federal government. [interjection] I am talking about that \$750,000 —[interjection] Not the infrastructure program. Why I was asking, and that is what all my questions were related to insofar as the Evergreen School Division, was whether the minister on those pilot projects meant—I was shocked when he said operating would not be covered because, in fact, that is one of the major costs and you are trying to find out whether this is efficient.

It seems to me operating should be included for at least the duration of the pilot. That is all we are talking about, and that is how the minister can prevent himself from having to build these costs forever into the provincial responsibility, because it is a pilot, and it naturally should be funded, maybe on a shared basis or whatever—we have not got to that question yet for the minister as to what kind of formula might be used in terms of how the division shares the costs. I just want to know on principle whether the pilots would include operating support.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am not trying to duck the question. Our thinking is not hard and fast yet in this area. We are grappling

with that very issue right now, and I cannot indicate whether it will or will not be.

**Mr. Plohman:** That is fair enough, although I am sure school divisions will want to know very soon, if we are talking about next fall. Obviously it is too late for them to set aside additional dollars. There is not necessarily dollars available and savings immediately. It may be that through these pilots the government and divisions will be able to quantify what kinds of savings they can have as a result and how they will change the delivery of their services in order to accomplish those savings. It may not happen necessarily in the first year or the initiation of the pilot project, and that is why there may be a need to have, in the initial stages, some operating fund support from the province.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I guess we are contemplating that we are going to have such a wide array of concepts come forward, many of which will not be in the traditional department division model. I mean, I can think of some divisions where the business community is very involved, and there could be a source of revenue that is provided by them. So we are keenly awaiting the proposals that come forward, and the call then on operating funds in those divisions as supported by the department, there may be no call. So this is the wide array of models that we are expecting to be presented to us.

**Mr. Plohman:** By the nature of the minister's answer, we can assume then that we are talking about integrated services here rather than just education services under this pilot project.

**Mr. Manness:** Well, certainly we would list the pilots that come forward, yes. I would like to see if we do five, if we do eight, if we do as many as 10, yes, I would like to see three or four of them come forward hopefully in an integrated one, yes.

**Mr. Plohman:** Does the minister at this time, from the work that has been done by Beth Cruikshank and others in this department and other departments, in the Telephone System and perhaps cable companies, does he see fibre optics cable being used to connect as clusters in any approach that is taken or are they also considering possible digital microwave for this purpose?

\* (1650)

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, this is the most fascinating area of advancement that exists anywhere today in our jurisdiction and, I dare say, in most. Two years ago when we started this, or indeed when the Distance Ed Task Force started, I mean, there were basically two options, hard wire or fibre optic and/or satellite. Yet now, just two years later, we have moved in to realize that the Distance Ed report, which focused very heavily on clustering by way of fibre optic, now is challenged to suggest why it is not that we might be able to use an even lower cost digitalized microwave, and that is where we are at.

Of course, we are trying to draw in all the resources of government, including Manitoba Telephone System, because they have a plant there, to the extent that they become more competitive in their fees. Naturally, we might as well use whatever we can in fibre optic because there is a capital debt there that has to be considered. So it is fascinating. It is as flexible and diverse and dynamic as any issue I have ever seen, but right now, you know, we are trying to work towards that model.

**Mr. Plohman:** It is a very exciting emerging area and it changes from almost month to month if not more often than that, but I guess I just wanted to know whether there are limitations with the microwave in terms of two-way transmission. Is it now possible with digital microwave to have two-way transmission of television and computer link-ups rather than using fibre optics? Is that capability there?

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, not yet in all instances. I mean you still have topographical issues. I mean, if you have got a big mountain in the way it is pretty hard to do, but still specific to the technology, yes, and given that there are not topographical issues, yes, we can do two-way voice and two-way video.

**Mr. Plohman:** Okay, that is very interesting, and certainly all of those options have to be considered and, I am sure, are.

I wanted to know what role the contract that AT&T had under—I think it is Rural

Development, the Premier's Estimates now. I know that if the contract was not let by this department, the minister can easily say, well, that is not my jurisdiction. But I want to know what role they will be having in determining what pilot projects should be pursued and what concepts should be pursued by the government—priorities and so on in this area, in Education.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am not going to comment on AT&T Canada and the proposal they have made to the government. I will let the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach) comment upon that. But I can indicate to the member, because this government is so committed to doing an integrated approach throughout all of government, doing a corporate approach to the provision of distant technology services—since Education, as I said previously, will be the prime user in the foreseeable future, obviously Education will have an awful lot to say.

But this government prides itself in the approach it tries to take with respect to a corporate overview. To that end, realizing that there are significant requirements to enhance service delivery in the area of libraries, also a growing need in health areas, and obviously, hopefully, the business community becoming involved, we are trying and we are quickly putting into place internally an integrated approach. Education, though, without question, will be significantly involved and close to the leadership.

**Mr. Plohman:** The minister obviously wants to leave the issue of the AT&T proposal, and, of course, that—

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson.

**Mr. Plohman:** He said that he wants to leave it for the Minister of Rural Development.

**Mr. Manness:** I do. I just want to correct the member. It is AT&T Canada proposal. There is quite a difference, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, as between AT&T Canada and AT&T.

**Mr. Plohman:** Well, AT&T Canada, if the minister he wants to get into that, we can talk about how big a presence it is at the present time. Certainly it will be huge in the future with the kinds of contracts that there will be made

available, so it will become a growing concern in Canada. But it is based in the United States; it is a major communications company; and that is why we are concerned about why the government was pursuing or responding to proposals by American companies in Canada. I mean, you say it is Canada because they have incorporated in Canada, and that is certainly fine, but we would have liked to have seen the telephone system and other Canadian companies playing a major role in this in terms of the studies on Manitoba's needs.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, for the record, much of the \$800-million activity that Manitoba Telephone System engaged in—the buying of digitized switches, the fibre optic—much of that equipment was purchased through AT&T in, I believe, Canada. I mean, there has been a longstanding business relationship between the Manitoba Telephone System and AT&T Canada and also AT&T U.S. That is part of the record.

**Mr. Plohman:** Since the minister wants to get into that, then I will not take any more time than to ask him how long, how many years has AT&T Canada been operating? Is he aware of how long this relationship has been in place?

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I cannot answer that question.

**Mr. Plohman:** Okay, I wanted to ask the minister about one of the pilot projects, and he has obviously responded with this initiative in the budget to developments that were taking place. It is not a matter of just calling for them; there was a lot of pressure building. The Evergreen was one area where there was not operating funding available or support dollars except for the evaluation.

I know there are some in southern Manitoba as well, and I believe there has been a lot of activity from the context I have had in the Parkland region and north actually to The Pas and Flin Flon [interjection] and, yes, Swan River. The activity centred really in Swan River but all of those areas included and involved in the consortium that has been established there, and I am wondering whether this is one of the prime candidates for

consideration under the funding that is now available for next year.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I cannot indicate one way or the other, and I am not even sure that we have had application. I do not know how anybody could apply when the criteria I have put into place for selection has not even been provided. I am well aware, though, of the good work that is being done in the Parkland north area.

**Mr. Plohman:** I can see where the minister would be—if he has not established the criteria and he has not had applications formally accepted now that he does not want to prejudge them, but I want to just draw this to the minister's attention. He is obviously aware of what has been happening there to a certain extent, that I think there is a great amount of interest and initiative being taken, and they have some pretty innovative people, forward-looking people that have been working on this, and I am really impressed with what kinds of things they have been proposing and putting forward, and I hope they will be successful—I think that if they are not, I will be rather surprised—in receiving some funding from the minister.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we are just at the point of adjourning for the day, and I want to indicate that we still have some questions on the special needs area, the protocols, for example. I meant to get into that previously, and I still want to deal with that and a couple of other questions as well before we move on, but we will have that opportunity tomorrow.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** The hour being 5 p.m., time for private members' hour. Committee rise.

## HEALTH

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

This section of the Committee of Supply is dealing with the Estimates for the Department of Health. We are on item 2.(b)(1), page 82 of the Estimates manual.

Would the minister's staff please enter the Chamber.

Shall item 2.(b)(1) Salaries and Employee Benefits pass?

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health):** Madam Chairperson, I propose to let the honourable member go ahead if that is his wish, but I was dealing yesterday, when we were closing, with our Support Services to Seniors groups. I was prepared to continue with my answer on that, or I can wait until someone asks a question. Whatever way the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), who was on his feet, wants to do it is fine. If he prefers to go ahead, I will be quite happy to allow him to ask his first question.

**Madam Chairperson:** What is the will of the committee?

**An Honourable Member:** Because I was going on a different line of question, so—

**Mr. McCrae:** Oh, well, maybe I should finish up then.

**An Honourable Member:** If you are bound and determined to finish up, you may as well do it now.

\* (1430)

**Mr. McCrae:** Madam Chairperson, yesterday I was dealing with new and expanded Support Services to Seniors organizations in Manitoba in the last year. I want to deal with the Support Services to Seniors organizations that continue to receive funding from the government. There are two reasons for doing this. One reason is to respond to those who make the allegation that services in the community are not there, so I want to make sure that it is very clear that is not the case. The other point I want to respond to is that, as I began to address the issue of Support Services to Seniors organizations, the suggestion came from across the room, I think the honourable member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) made the suggestion, that Support Services to Seniors organizations were only being supported in Progressive Conservative ridings. Of course, that is not true, and I want to make sure the honourable member and his colleagues know that is not true and that there is indeed support for Manitobans wherever they need it.

I also pointed out that yesterday there was support coming for a Support Services to Seniors group in Transcona, and I think that was important to underline for the honourable member who perhaps does not know what is going on in his constituency, but the fact is there are seniors in Transcona just as there are seniors everywhere else in the province, and seniors in Transcona are entitled to the services that government can provide province-wide. Certainly Transcona is a very important part of our province.

If the honourable member who represents Transcona does not know anything about what is going on in his riding, well, even I know that there is support for Support Services to Seniors organizations in Transcona, just as there is in Ashern. That is in the riding held by the honourable member for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans) and the Ashdale Holdings Inc. is the group in Ashern. The approved level of support for 1994-95 is \$11,900. We are providing support in the amount of \$34,500 to the Gimli Seniors Resource Council Inc., \$29,300 for the Bethel Mennonite Care Services Inc. of Winnipeg, \$19,800 for the Manitoba Housing Authority Inc. in Brandon. I think that is in Brandon East which is the riding of the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans).

Madam Chairperson, \$24,900 for Chalet Malouin in St. Malo, \$34,900 for the Community Help Centre Inc. in Roblin, \$33,300 for the Dauphin & District Community Resource Council Inc. That would be of interest to the honourable member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), and the honourable member for Transcona ought to be interested in that too because last I checked, Dauphin was represented by the honourable member for Dauphin in this place who is a member of the New Democratic Party.

There will be \$15,000 available for the Ethelbert Support Services to Seniors Inc. and if I know where Ethelbert is, which I do, that is in the constituency of the honourable member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), presently a New Democratic riding.

The Fisher Branch Medical Facilities Inc. will be receiving \$11,100. The Foxwarren Leisure Centre Inc. will receive \$23,400. Foyer Vincent Inc. of Winnipeg will receive \$9,500. The Gateway Manor Inc. in Teulon will receive \$11,500. Gladstone Area Seniors Support Program Inc. will receive \$26,400 and, Madam Chairperson, a whopping \$74,200 will be going to the Gordon Howard Senior Centre Inc., and that is in Selkirk, Manitoba, presently held by the New Democrats. Last time I looked that was an NDP riding, next time I look it will probably be a Conservative riding.

**An Honourable Member:** I think so.

**Mr. McCrae:** I think so too.

The Gretna Prairie Seniors will receive \$6,600; the Hamiota Seniors Council will be receiving \$10,800. I remember a few months ago visiting Hamiota. Their health facilities there operate much like a community health centre. There is a real team spirit there. They work together very well. Their positions there are salaried. They have a very progressive outlook on the continuum of health care in their area, and we are pleased to support the Hamiota Seniors Council for \$10,800.

Six thousand nine hundred dollars will go to the Hebrew Sick Benefit Association Seniors Group; \$32,300 will go to the Home Assistance in Neepawa and Districts Incorporated; \$41,800 will go to the Seniors Home Help Project Incorporated of Winnipeg; \$11,500 will go to the Inwood Manor Incorporated; \$19,900 will go to the Deaf Centre; \$20,000 will go to the Broadway Seniors Support Project; \$25,100 will go in 1994-95 to the Living Independence for Elders Incorporated of Ashern and Moosehom.

Ashern, now I think I mentioned already. This is the second time I have mentioned Ashern. Ashern and Moosehom are in the riding of the honourable member for Interlake (Clif Evans). [interjection] No, these are the ones we are continuing to support. [interjection] Not on these ones. The reason I raise this is because of the allegation that somehow our support for seniors is targeted to something other than New Democratic Party ridings.

Some of these no doubt will be Liberal ridings as well, although so far most senior support service groups are found in rural Manitoba, though some are coming in Winnipeg. That process is accelerating, and then some of the Liberal ridings will have Support Services to Seniors organizations as well.

Forty-eight thousand two hundred dollars will go to the LGD of Piney Community Resource Council; \$35,500 will go to the MacGregor-Austin Seniors Support Program Council; \$6,600 will go to the McCreary Support Services to Seniors. Here we have Moosehorn again. I do not know what it is about these NDP ridings getting all of these grants, Madam Chair, but \$9,900 again there; \$41,500 to the Morden Services to Seniors.

I do not know how many ridings in north Winnipeg are Progressive Conservative, but \$64,900 is going to North Winnipeg Co-operative Community. In one of these organizations the honourable member for—is it not one of these organizations that the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) is involved with by way of membership on the board? I think it might be one of these organizations. He is not saying one way or the other. I am not sure which one it is, but I understand he has an understanding of the way Support Services to Seniors works.

Madam Chairperson, \$64,900 will go to the Council for Seniors, the Winnipeg Presbytery, that is Society for Senior Citizens Homes; \$56,800 will go to the Oakbank-Springfield Kinsmen Seniors Complex; \$13,400 to the Oak Park Lodge. This is in the Woodlands area.

Parkissemo Lodge at Miniota will receive \$11,500. Plumas Senior Citizens will receive \$9,200. Maple Manor Meals Service will receive \$9,300. The Poplar Field Development Corp. will receive \$6,900. I think that is in an NDP riding.

\* (1440)

The Portage Services for Seniors will receive \$57,200. The Rhineland Community Assistance for Elderly Inc., \$46,200.

Last I checked with Riverton, it was in an NDP riding, and Riverton and District Friendship Centre will receive \$24,300 under this program.

Rorketon, well, that is in the Dauphin constituency, I believe. That is held by the honourable member for Dauphin (Mr. Plobman), a New Democrat, although I think that Dauphin may not continue to be New Democratic. But it is right now, and it is receiving \$6,900 for the Rorketon Support Services to Seniors.

Then what will we do when it is a Conservative riding? Will we remove those grants? Is that what the honourable member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) is suggesting? I hope not because the seniors of Rorketon would not be very pleased if we followed the advice of the honourable member for Transcona to remove services from people in Conservative ridings.

The Ste. Rose Support Services Inc. will receive \$11,500. Seniors Access to Independent Living in Virden will receive \$52,200.

Seniors for Seniors Inc. of Brandon: Now that might have some honourable members wondering, because I am sure that there are people from Brandon West who receive services from Seniors for Seniors Inc. in Brandon where they receive a \$25,900 grant, but the offices are actually located in Brandon East which is in a New Democratic Party riding.

That riding, too, is one which may well become a Progressive Conservative riding for a lot of reasons, but certainly the position of the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) and the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) and all of the colleagues over there on such issues of the future of Ayer Organic is that they would like to shut it all down, and we certainly disagree with that approach.

The position of the member for Brandon East on GWE and all the jobs that were created there, his position about those jobs, how he does not think they are good enough and how he does not think McKenzie Seeds and that the seed house can be viable in a place like Brandon, his personal attacks on the integrity of Ray West, the president of McKenzie Seeds, will long be remembered by the citizens of Brandon. You do not start taking personal shots at Ray West unless you are well

armed, and the member for Brandon East is anything but.

You know, Ray West's dad worked for McKenzie Seeds for 44 years, and Ray West has worked for McKenzie Seeds for 37, and the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) comes along and he takes personal—

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan):** On a point of order, Madam Chairperson, of what relevance is the minister's personal reminiscences about Brandon? The minister is completely off base, is completely off target, is completely off the line. He is wasting the time and the taxpayers' money. If he wants to continue doing this, let him do it on his own time, but he is wasting valuable time. It is completely irrelevant to the questions at hand, the minister's personal reminiscences about his political successes or failures.

I wish he would get back to answering the question dealing with the matters that are relevant to this Chamber and not going on and off on some kinds of tangents to obviously waste time and obfuscate the answers to questions that he cannot deal with, Madam Chairperson.

**Madam Chairperson:** Order, please. Regrettably, relevance is a point of order, and the honourable member for Kildonan I believe has implied that perhaps some of the comments of the minister are less than relevant. I would appreciate the co-operation of all honourable members in the House in keeping their points relevant to both the questions and the responses. Thank you.

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**Mr. McCrae:** I appreciate your advice, Madam Chairperson. I would like to point out that in the context of what I am saying here today, the position of the member for Brandon East on the whole issue of McKenzie Seeds and Ray West is indeed relevant to the point raised by the honourable member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) when he made the point that support services—

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Chomiak:** On a point of order, Madam Chairperson, I have no idea what the minister is referring to. If you wish to check the record, I do not think you could find anything in the record dealing with what the minister is even remotely referring to in terms of the comments or comments from any members in this Chamber. If the minister wants to deal with a point raised, let him put it on the record; let him deal with it.

But, again, it is not relevant to this issue. There is nothing on the record that deals with what the minister is trying to deal with. Relevance, Madam Chairperson, is a brick in a brick wall. This has nothing to do with even the minister's attempts to form a defensive maneuver around himself.

**Madam Chairperson:** Order, please. I believe there is some dispute over the facts here. However, because we left off the previous day at a point and my understanding was that the minister was completing his response to the last question posed that day—I do not have a copy of Hansard in front of me to clarify that either.

The honourable minister, to quickly finish his response. I believe the members of the committee are wanting to put more questions on the record.

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**Mr. McCrae:** All right, Madam Chairperson, I will discontinue my response. I am sorry that the members in the New Democratic Party are not interested in Support Services to Seniors, not interested in hearing what is going on in Manitoba with respect to the expansion of programs and the continued support for programs to help people living comfortably in their homes so they do not have to be in acute care centres.

I understand their position, because they think that all we need are acute care centres and we do not need any supports in the community and we should just have these great big hotels and call them hospitals. That is the position of the New Democrats. They do not want to hear about the very, very significant and growing support that is being placed in communities throughout Manitoba. They are going to hear it at some point.

I will make sure I get it into my answers, Madam Chair. I will stop now because the honourable members are just clearly so disinterested or uninterested in seniors in Manitoba that they want to stop me from answering questions, and so I will sit down.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Chairperson, the minister knows full well we asked him to table the document that he is reading from, but he has refused to do so.

While we are at it, I asked the minister on Monday to table a number of documents which he promised to table. I am wondering if the minister has those documents, namely the letter to all the health facilities.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. McCrae:** On a point of order, Madam Chair, the honourable member says I refused to table this. I thought I gave this list to the honourable member yesterday.

**An Honourable Member:** You said you had two lists and one you were not going to table because you were reading from it.

**Mr. McCrae:** Yes, the one I am reading from here I gave to them yesterday. So the honourable member is putting false information on the record—

\* (1450)

**Madam Chairperson:** Order, please. I believe it was my understanding that there were two documents shared with both critics; however, neither of those items were tabled. Regrettably, the table officer is unable to clarify for me whether indeed they were.

I remember distinctly drawing to the attention of the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) that the minister had indicated he would be sharing the information, and I was of the impression copies had been distributed. However, I drew attention to the fact that they were not tabled with the Clerk.

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**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Chairperson, to resolve the issue I will table the documents in this

Chamber so that they can be on record as soon as I locate them.

My question to the minister was, the minister promised me on the last several occasions we had met that he would provide information, namely, the letter that went to all facilities concerning the three-year cut. The minister promised that he would provide that.

Also, the minister indicated that he would provide some other documentation. On May 4, he said he would get back to me on the letter to the facilities. Also on May 2, he said he would table the terms of reference concerning the committee that has been set up to study personal care homes.

**Mr. McCrae:** Madam Chairperson, the honourable member asked about the personal care committee, and I am just having the names brought forward so that I can read those names into the record. The terms of reference, I already put on the record. So they are on the record of Hansard. The letter that we sent to MHO and all its members, I will be getting that. I do not have it here, but I will be making that available to the honourable member. That letter sets forth our intentions with regard to the next few years and also sets forth our intentions with regard to Bill 22.

Before I go further, I have to observe that what the honourable member has been consistently arguing for is that we allow the system to continue. Our only response is the kind of response that we have seen in NDP jurisdictions and that I am not willing to do. I do not agree with that approach of hacking and slashing and burning and trashing hospitals at will just to find savings.

We know we are going to produce savings in hospitals because we are not going to have the same demand on hospitals in the future because of the reduction in the average length of stay and because of so many services that the honourable member does not want me to go on and explain about in the House. I cannot really co-operate with that approach because I do need to put on the record what is happening in the community in Manitoba, because the honourable member and his friends continuously and repeatedly suggest and state as fact that nothing is going on in our

communities so therefore bed closures at hospitals are out of line and inappropriate.

Well, what is inappropriate in my view is closing down 52 rural hospitals in Saskatchewan. What is inappropriate in my view is closing down 5,000 acute beds in Ontario. Just in case you think the honourable member has some different kind of approach, the person responsible for all those closures in Ontario is his very own soul mate, Michael Decter, who used to work so closely with him and his colleagues when they were in government in Manitoba. The member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) himself was involved with that government as I understand it, working very closely with people like the Premier of that administration.

So what we are really talking about is a difference of approach. My approach is a phased approach which takes from the hospitals over the next few years, certain savings which happen as a result of patients not having to resort to acute care as if they were hotels. That approach has been tried and its time is up.

The honourable member thinks we can continue to go on that way, but New Democratic administrations and certainly in one case led by his old soul mate Michael Decter—I do not know maybe they were best friends too, perhaps they were—that system is not the system that we embrace here in Manitoba. We think working with health care professionals and consumers in the system, thousands of them, over an appropriate time period has the least traumatic impact certainly for patients, but the least traumatic impact for wage earners who work so hard in our acute care facilities in Manitoba. We think that is the kinder, gentler approach to health reform. The slash-and-burn approach of the New Democrats is not one that I accept.

With respect to these so-called targets at our community and urban hospitals, that letter that we have written to the members of the MHO, I will make available to the honourable member. I do not have it in front of me, so I cannot do that. The personnel involved with the personal care home review committee are Kathy Yurkowski, who is

the head of the Seniors Directorate in Manitoba, Wes Henderson of the Family Services department, Carolyn Park, the nurse adviser to the Department of Health, and Scott Murray of our Policy and Planning office will form the nucleus of that particular effort. They will be consulting organizations like the MARN, College of Physicians and Surgeons, as well as MHO, organizations like that, in their review of regulations, their review of inspection procedures and their review of standards and acuity levels and staffing levels at personal care homes in Manitoba.

Another issue raised by the honourable member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) had to do with a proposal to use American Express for booking elective air travel under the Northern Patient Transportation system. What is happening is an exploration of this issue at this time. The administration of the elective program is the responsibility of the regional hospitals and this decision, any decision will only be made with their unanimous consent.

In January of 1994, a travel agency submitted a proposal for central bookings offering a 3 percent reduction. The Northern Patient Transportation Program advisory committee comprising northern hospital executive officers requested research on other major travel agencies. American Express' proposal was 4 percent based on 1993-94 expenditures of \$951,000. This would mean a cost saving of \$38,000. So, for the interest and information of the honourable member for The Pas, this matter is still under consideration.

I guess the honourable member wants to ask his next question, but I still regret that he does not want to hear details of what is going on in the community in Manitoba.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Chairperson, the minister indicated he is going to table a letter, MHO and the facilities. I hope he understands that on May 4 when he promised to table the letter to me, it was the letter advising facilities about their three-year reductions.

I am not looking for the May 5 letter that was sent out by Tim Duprey following the MHO meeting. I am looking for the previous letter, the letter that was sent to facilities where the minister

promised outlining what their cuts would be or what their budgets would be. That is the letter that I am making reference to, not the May 5 letter that came from Tim Duprey. It was the previous letter. I asked that on May 4.

**Mr. McCrae:** I believe I understand, and I will take that question under advisement.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Chairperson, we are on 2.(b) which is the promotion of Health and Wellness, one of the areas through improving status regarding air, food and water quality. With respect to the testing of water and the like, can the minister outline for me what the procedures are that municipalities and others use, which lab they use and how they go about in terms of testing water samples?

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

\* (1500)

**Mr. McCrae:** Welcome to your chair, Mr. Acting Chairperson. Nice to see you.

The honourable member asks about testing of municipal water supplies. We will prepare a response, and I will put it on the record at a subsequent time.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I appreciate that. If you could also outline for me how they go about doing it, which lab does the tests and what the costs are involved in that, that would be helpful. The minister is nodding in the affirmative.

In addition, one area I am not completely familiar with, and I could be off base, is also the testing of food quality and the like. Could I also get similar information with regard to that? Would that be possible as well?

**Mr. McCrae:** The whole effort about which the honourable member speaks is a fairly large partnership in the sense that it includes people from the Department of Health who make policy and see that policy is carried out, people who work for the Winnipeg Public Health office, people who work for the Department of Environment here in Manitoba. A lot of people are involved in carefully monitoring to ensure that the food supply and food

served in public places in Manitoba is of a quality that is safe for Manitobans.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I appreciate that.

Will the minister also then be providing me some information similar to what he is going to provide me in terms of water, as to where it is tested and how it is done, et cetera?

**Mr. McCrae:** Yes, Mr. Acting Chairperson.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Thank you.

**Ms. Avis Gray (Crescentwood):** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I just want to clarify something we were discussing the other night in Estimates, and the hour was close to twelve o'clock. We were talking about an act to protect the health of nonsmokers. I think the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) talked about adding the word "knowingly" to the legislation. Perhaps the minister can clarify. Is it not that we want to remove the word "knowingly" from the legislation? I am citing from the Council for a Tobacco Free Manitoba. I did not bring it up at the time because it was late and I figured I was probably confused.

**Mr. McCrae:** Yes, Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am glad the honourable member brought that up, because it was late. I think we were all sort of nodding a bit and getting ready for bed actually.

What we want to do is make the law—I forget the word I am looking for, but make it such that you do not have to know you are serving a minor. If you are serving a minor, it is an absolute offence to do that. So it would be taking the word out rather than adding the word. Yes, that is what we are doing.

**Ms. Gray:** Just also as a reminder to the minister, the minister has indicated that he will present to us the Capital Planning budget. I ask that because we are coming to the point where we will be dealing with Capital Planning in the Estimates. If the minister knows, when might that be available?

**Mr. McCrae:** I just assumed, Mr. Acting Chairperson, that honourable members would keep the Health Estimates going for a very, very

long time. So we have not finalized our capital program. We know how much we are going to be spending and we know it is going to be a large amount of money, but there are some details yet to be finalized. I cannot even say that it is going to happen in the next day or two. So I am not able today to give the honourable member the information she is looking for today. I will bend every effort to make as much information available as I can with respect to the capital program. Hopefully, we will have it all completed before these Estimates are over.

**Ms. Gray:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, we do not exactly know how long the Estimates are going to go on, but there is some sense—the member for Kildonan and I agree that, with the nature of this department, we could probably use up 240 hours in asking relevant questions about the Department of Health. We recognize that there are many other departments that need an opportunity to have questions asked, so we are trying to, even in these sections, limit some of our questions to some of the major issues.

It is quite possible that certainly by next week we would need Capital Planning because—I am not guaranteeing we will finish up at the end of next week but it is certainly a goal that we are working towards. We are quite prepared to certainly move Capital Planning to the last part of the Estimates, if that is the case, but if that gives the minister some help in terms of time frame.

**Mr. McCrae:** I appreciate that, Mr. Acting Chairperson. Up until this moment, no one gave me any hint or any inkling as to how long these Estimates would last. I just assumed with the New Democrats and the sort of position they have been trying to take that we were going to be here a good long time, and so that I had lots of time. I will bend every effort to move this along as quickly as I can, keeping in mind that I am in this Chamber all the time answering questions.

As I say, I will do my very best to move that along. I note that it does come near the end of the Estimates in any event, but I really appreciate the member telling me this because up until this

moment I had not any inkling that we might finish up Estimates as early as next week.

**Ms. Gray:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, that is why the member for Kildonan and myself wanted to apprise you of that.

The other question that I had asked, too, which we are awaiting the information on, just to remind the minister, is he was going to provide for us some information on what the various steps were for merit increments for the staff who are senior officers or outside the union? He was going to compile that information, so just as a reminder.

I want to ask a question in this section on fetal alcohol syndrome. I would like to find out from the minister what steps his department is taking either on their own or in conjunction with other departments to address this issue. It is certainly an area where dollars put into prevention can save millions of dollars afterwards when we consider that children who are born with fetal alcohol syndrome oftentimes come in conflict with the law, have behavioral problems in the school system, oftentimes may be unproductive adults and nontaxpayers because of the difficulties they have experienced in the school or in conflict with the law.

I think the more we can do as a society to prevent fetal alcohol syndrome, not only are we saving taxpayers' dollars in the long run but we certainly are providing a much better quality of life for those potential children who are born and also for families and communities.

**Mr. McCrae:** The honourable member identifies something that really is extremely important. I did not learn how important it was—only just since becoming Minister of Health, because I remember as the Minister of Justice, our department came across many people who end up in conflict with the law, whose lives are very much affected by symptoms of fetal alcohol syndrome, and, through no fault of their own, they are stuck with problems that are not of their own making.

It is very important that there be programs to remind families of the damage that can be done through inappropriate use of alcohol and other substances during pregnancy.

I remember receiving information sent out on a mass basis by the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba, but I know that day in and day out, week in and week out, our public health nurses throughout Manitoba carry out an extremely important role in their duties, delivering services to people throughout the province and putting on presentations at schools and in their dealings with the public.

The public health nurses incorporate work in the area of fetal alcohol syndrome counselling into their work schedules on an ongoing basis.

\* (1510)

**Ms. Gray:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I wonder if the minister can tell us, he speaks of public health nurses providing information and prenatal classes, and I am sure that is true. One of my concerns would be that even in terms of knowledge of fetal alcohol syndrome, when you look at the statistics, it is pointed out that those individuals who are less educated are the individuals who tend to not have the same information about the effects of overconsumption of alcohol. In fact, many of those people can be categorized as functionally illiterate.

My concern is what are we doing to address the issue of reaching people who are in those categories in terms of trying to assist them in terms of the negative impacts of drinking excessively during pregnancy?

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, if I understand the honourable member's question, I think it is: How are we proposing to put a focus to this, to reach the people who need this kind of thing the most? The honourable member will recall previous discussions during the review of these Estimates dealing with epidemiological units being set up in the Department of Health and work done by the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation as well.

The centre, of course, provides us with population health information that is important, but the epidemiological unit will be used to help us do exactly what the honourable member is suggesting, that is, provide a better focus so that we are going to be spending our resources, human

and financial, in such a way that we do reach the people who need to be reached.

I think it is all very nice to give out a broad public message. A lot of people, I think the honourable member knows, already know some of the things that we are putting out, and there are people who actually do not know that it is bad, very, very bad to drink while you are pregnant due to illiteracy or due to whatever reasons. As usual, I am always looking for partners.

I talked the other day about the absolutely horrific circumstances of many aboriginal people in Manitoba in their—either in certain areas of our towns and cities, but also in the more remote reserve communities. It is from those reserve communities that we have people coming to our acute care centres requiring help as a result of some of the circumstances under which they live.

I said I am looking for partners, and I am indeed looking for partners among aboriginal politicians in Manitoba. I say to them, and I hope the honourable member joins me in saying to them, I hope that the discussions with Ron Irwin and his department that will lead to greater levels of self-governing status will actually have some meaning other than just to the governments of First Nations.

It has got to have a meaning to the people of First Nations, or I am not going to support it. I support what is happening, and I will continue to do so, and we will continue also to urge First Nations leadership to look at what is happening in their communities and prioritize their efforts and expenditures to help alleviate these things too.

I also say to the honourable member that we know that community health centres focus on this particular population, and they develop programs, and we propose to help and work with them in doing that. They develop programs that are aimed to reach low literacy and high-risk individuals.

That is part of the reason for having community health centres—they take their work seriously. We appreciate that, and we propose to continue to work with them and to assist them in designing and delivering programs that will get at the problem identified by the honourable member.

**Ms. Gray:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I hope we will see some more work being done in that area and some specific programs that could be developed in terms of preventative measures of FAS.

Another question in the area of health and wellness: I am wondering if the minister could tell me what programs or what leadership the ministry provides in the area of ensuring that nutrition information is disseminated, particularly to school-age children who, I think, are the best group of people to provide that information to, as they are then our future parents and leaders of the community.

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, my answers will be similar to my answers to the last set of questions about fetal alcohol syndrome. In the area of nutrition, our public health nurses are using the opportunities available to them, again, to focus on those areas in our communities where nutrition instruction or counselling or advice is given to people who are likely to benefit from receiving that. I think in some communities parents and families are better equipped to properly nourish their children than in other areas. That is a role for public health nurses, and they understand that and focus their work accordingly.

In nutrition, I think we mentioned the other day too that community health centres have a role there and we are encouraging them with respect to that. Of course, the diabetes centres that we support, part of their program is nutritional education.

\* (1520)

While I am on my feet, there are a couple of things the members have asked about. The member asked about salary classifications for senior people. I will deal with Executive Officer 3, Executive Officer 2, Executive Officer 1, and Deputy Minister 3, the highest level of deputies. There is Deputy Minister 1 and Deputy Minister 2, but Deputy Minister 3 is the highest level. So I will begin with Executive Officer 3, which is a person at the level of an assistant deputy minister. Executive Officer 3s are paid—this is without reference to any Bill 22 provisions, which applies to all these people—these are the base numbers:

\$77,260 at the lowest level of Executive Officer 3, the lowest level of the last group.

Let me start at the very top and work my way down. That might be better. Executive Officer 3, \$92,579, all the way down to \$77,260 in this particular classification; Executive Officer 2, which is another level of ADM, \$89,213 down to \$74,574; Executive Officer 1, \$82,952 down to \$69,335, and there are six steps along the way; Deputy Minister 3, the highest level of deputy in Manitoba, \$116,088 down to \$96,173, and there are six steps in that particular classification.

The highest number I have given is \$116,088, and that compares with \$152,000 in Ontario, \$122,000 I think it is in Saskatchewan, and of course depending on who you happen to be, if you happen to be a New Democratic Party supporter like Marc Eliesen, I guess you can get \$195,000 salary and a \$58,000 bonus in B.C., and then I think they kick you out.

I have not kept track through the last few days whether they have actually fired him or what they have done with him. They did fire him? [interjection] I am told he was treated even better in Ontario, but I am not sure about that, but then in Ontario, as I say, Marc Eliesen was one of the poor, Michael Decter was one of the poor cousins, because he was only getting a salary of \$140,000; the range goes up to \$152,000. I guess if he had closed more beds in Ontario they might have given him a raise, I do not know. Maybe there is some kind of reward with the New Democrats, the more damage you can do, the more you get paid; I am not sure.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Chomiak:** Yes, with the previous Chairperson, I raised the point of order of complete and total irrelevance on the minister's comments, and again the minister is sliding completely into irrelevance, not answering the question, dealing with something completely remote.

The previous Chairperson admonished the minister and asked him to get back to answering the question, dealing with the questions on the basis of relevance.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Sveinson):** Order, please. The honourable minister on the same point of order?

**Mr. McCrae:** Yes, if I understand the honourable member's point of order, he is saying that reference to deputy ministers and so on is not relevant to the discussion. I was asked a question about the rates of pay of senior officers in Manitoba.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Sveinson):** Order, please. I would just like to rule on this, and that is that the honourable member for Kildonan does not have a point of order.

The honourable Minister of Health, to finish his comments. I would ask, though, all members to try to keep their comments as relative as possible to the lines in question.

\* \* \*

**Mr. McCrae:** Yes, I was just bringing some perspective to the whole issue of senior salaries in the public service. I think it is important to put into perspective the rates of pay of senior people in Manitoba, who, some of them, have worked long and hard with the government over the years to work their way up. On the other hand, in Ontario, they did not choose people who worked their way up. They took somebody who went out with the Pawley government in Manitoba and made that person their Deputy Minister of Health.

At that time, Michael Decter was not living in Toronto, he was living in Montreal. He was a Manitoban living in Montreal being hired for a position in Queen's Park in Toronto. I do not know how it worked, but he probably said, well, \$140,000 a year is not enough. I have to move my belongings from Montreal to Toronto. So I do not know if they checked with the Mayflower moving company or not but—

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Chomiak:** I am asking the minister to address the Chair and to try to determine how the question of the Mayflower moving company has any relevance to the question posed by the member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray) concerning the increments, merit increases of salaries of ministers,

deputy ministers in Manitoba, any relationship whatsoever, one scintilla even of relationship; can the minister show how the Mayflower moving company in Quebec has any relationship with this whatsoever?

It is wasting valuable committee time.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Sveinson):** Once again, the honourable member for Kildonan does not have a point of order, but I do ask the minister to keep his comments, again, as relative as possible to the lines.

\* \* \*

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I hear what you are saying. It was the honourable member for Crescentwood who asked to be brought up to date. I think it is rude of the member for Kildonan to keep jumping up and down when it is none of his business. He was not even asking about this, it was the member for Crescentwood. It is none of the business of the member for Kildonan to get in the way of my trying to give and impart appropriate and relevant information when it is being asked for. So I cannot help but observe that, but I do hear what you are saying, so maybe if I just keep my answer brief it would help, and I will try to do that.

Unlike the way they do things in New Democratic administrations elsewhere and unlike the previous New Democratic administration, which had no sense whatever of fairness and fair play and value for money and protection of our health care system for the future, unlike the former NDP government, that really all they want to do is destroy the health care system so that our children will have nothing whatever, we are working very hard and working with thousands of Manitobans to ensure that the health care services are there for them when they need it now and in the future.

We are not going to do it by rewarding our friends in the way that New Democrats do and have done here in Manitoba and do in Ontario and B.C. and reward them in a despicable way. And the Mayflower moving company does have something to do with it, because Mayflower says \$3,000 for a move like that. I do not know why Michael Decter needed \$38,000 for a move like that, but that is

what he got. You only get to keep that money if you stay in the employ for two years. That is a rule like we have here in Manitoba. I remember that.

Mr. Acting Chairperson, how long did Michael Decter stay? Well, he satisfied the requirements of the Ontario rules. He stayed two years and one month, and that is how he was able to collect the \$38,000 for his moving expenses.

\* (1530)

But the honourable member for Kildonan wants to be rude and interrupt my answers when I am trying to answer the honourable member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray). I am not surprised. I should not be surprised because that is his demeanor in this place. He and the fellow sitting behind him are very rude people and very arrogant.

The member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) would do well to stay out of this, because the member for Radisson is well known for the positions she has taken with regard to the future of our health care system, because the future of our health care system is driven by the economy that lies under everything in this province.

(Madam Chairperson in the Chair)

The member for Radisson and all of her friends over there, they want to kill all the potential for job creation. They want to kill all the work that is being done by people who work hard to earn a living and feed and clothe their families, and the members opposite want to put an end to all of that. I just do not agree with it.

Now, I am not sure which honourable member asked about the cost of the Bell-Wade Report—it was the honourable member for Kildonan, so maybe he will be kind enough to be quiet and listen to my answer. That cost us \$230,000 for the Bell-Wade Report.

The honourable member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray) also asked—she was asking me questions about nutrition. I have a little bit of further information for her.

A review of all services involving nutrition and nutrition programs is being conducted, and it is co-ordinated by the Health and Wellness Branch in Manitoba Health.

The Nutrition Services Review Committee, another committee, comprised of seven members, developed a questionnaire to gather information on existing nutrition services throughout Manitoba. The questionnaire is being pilot-tested and after review will be distributed to at least 200 dietitians and other nutritional workers from all sectors throughout the province.

Gaps in service, if any, and the identification of target groups are anticipated outcomes, as is the cost-effectiveness of existing services. A report is expected in May, that is this month, and it is expected to reflect the spectrum of all nutritional services. Lynda Corby is the chair of that committee.

Madam Chairperson, welcome back to your seat.

In addition to what I said about when we were talking about fetal alcohol syndrome, what I am going to say is not directly related, although it is very, very relevant. It is not directly related to the honourable member's question, but it has to do with other services provided by the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba.

A rural and northern youth intervention strategy was in place in 18 high schools at the beginning of January 1993 when staff were placed into the high schools. A physicians' handbook was developed by Addictions Foundation of Manitoba and distributed to 2,200 physicians. This strategy is now complete. I think that is a round number. I am not sure precisely how many physicians there are now, but maybe not quite that many.

An addiction counsellor for job placement program was established in Brandon in June of 1992. The position is now funded as an ongoing program with Canada Employment in Brandon.

The funding of community grants programs that was announced in late April 1993 has been completed. The youth fund encourages local communities and organizations to develop and deliver alcohol and other drug abuse prevention and education programs for adolescents.

Funding decisions about successful grants to the community groups were made by August 31, 1993; 79 applications were received, and 65 were

funded for a total of \$100,000. We are just checking, but we think some of that went to NDP ridings as well.

**Ms. Gray:** Madam Chairperson, I thank the minister for that information. Just a couple of quick questions related to some of his answers he was getting back to us on. In regards to salaries of ADMs, deputy ministers, et cetera, I am assuming that when we have listed overtime costs that those overtime costs are not associated with ADMs and deputy ministers. In other words, we do not pay our senior staff for overtime, do we? I know they do overtime, but we do not pay them for it.

**Mr. McCrae:** Sometimes I like to think of myself as senior staff and I could only wish that they would. I know our other senior staff put in many, many hours beyond the average eight-hour day. That is very well known in senior levels, but the senior levels do not get any overtime provisions. Other people in the civil service do. If we followed the advice of the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), everybody would have no overtime and everybody would have their salaries rolled back, those who have not reached the top of their classifications. That is official New Democratic Party policy.

**Ms. Gray:** Madam Chairperson, the cost of the Bell-Wade Report the minister mentioned is at \$230,000. What is included in those costs? Were we paying salaries of people to work on this?

**Mr. McCrae:** There was a consulting contract with Ernst & Young and the money, however Ernst & Young used it, would no doubt have been used to pay staff for work done by them.

**Ms. Gray:** I just have a further question on immunization. It has been talked about for a number of years that we have two types of professionals providing immunization services in this province. We have nurses and we have physicians. A number of provinces have only one type of professional providing immunization services and that is nurses, R.N.s, who are quite capable of doing that job.

Is there any move by this minister to look at a system where in fact physicians do not provide that kind of service? Because I would think it would

tend to be costly when you do have community public health nurses who are able to provide that kind of service.

**Mr. McCrae:** I think it is clear, Madam Chairperson, that nursing professionals are quite qualified and able to assist in the delivery of these kinds of programs. In fact, in rural Manitoba you will see that those kinds of programs are delivered probably more than in the city of Winnipeg. It is an issue that we need to pursue. It is one that, I think, further discussion needs to be had.

The whole idea is one that I have been engaged in some discussions about, not only with nurses but also with physicians, and I think the best way to come to some resolution is to get the two professions into the same discussion at the same time.

I am finding that there is some success in using that approach. The recent midwifery report has input from various people from various professional disciplines. We got a report, we got a resolution that we think we can move forward with. I am not saying that everything has been resolved yet, but we have come a long way from where we were, and I think the honourable member is more or less suggesting that we continue with that work, and we will.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Chairperson, what forum does the minister suggest that that discussion take place?

**Mr. McCrae:** Perhaps the honourable member will be clearer in his question when he gets a chance to clarify his question, but certainly with all of the professional issues outstanding amongst nurses, the forum I chose was a room to bring the various leaders together to discuss a number of issues.

I gave both honourable members yesterday, although I acknowledge I did not table and maybe the member for Kildonan will table it if he sees fit, a chronology of events with regard to nursing that spans 28 years, and still we have outstanding issues, so what I used was a room at the Assiniboine Hotel here in Winnipeg to bring the various people together.

\* (1540)

The first responses I have received have been positive, that people are talking and listening that did not sit in the same room and talk and listen in the past, so I am looking forward to further developments as to that particular matter with regard to issues involving nursing and physician professionals. Maybe we need to use a room for that particular thing too.

However, it was disappointing to me that at the very last minute the Manitoba Nurses' Union decided not to come to that meeting. I cannot think of anything more important than roles and education for nurses as we look to the next century, and the Manitoba Nurses' Union did not come. That is very disappointing to me, but I was very glad that people representing nurses' aides came to the meeting, people representing LPNs came to the meeting, people representing registered nurses came to the meeting, people representing registered psychiatric nurses came to the meeting, in addition to department staff and Dr. John Arnett to more or less help out with the discussions.

Dr. Arnett is a psychologist and served a useful role that day but, as I say, we were discussing the more crucially and fundamentally important items, I suggest, to nurses in Manitoba, and the MNU would not come. I received word the day before the meeting was scheduled that the MNU was not going to come to the meeting. I phoned up Vera Chernecki more or less to say, please, Vera, we want representation from your union at that meeting, and I was turned down. I feel very badly about that, but it reminded me so much, Madam Chairperson [interjection] I hope so. I tried to make myself understood.

When Vera Chernecki turned me down like that I could not help but think of the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) because he too I have asked repeatedly, let us sit down, let us talk. Let us talk without using the media to get our message across or, you know, that approach the member for Kildonan tends to use.

I see him trolling out in the halls after Question Period every day. He is out there hoping for an interview, that somebody will record what he says. The people in the media say, yes, we sort of let him

talk at our cameras for a while, let him think that the cameras are actually being turned on and going to be used. They humour the honourable member for Kildonan as he trolls for attention to his message. The message is lost. The message is forgotten.

See, the message is, keep going the way they did, the way the member for Kildonan wants us to keep going, and we will destroy our health care system because we will choke it to death. That is his message. When Vera Chernecki did not want to come to the meeting, I was reminded of the member for Kildonan, who I have asked many, many times to sit down and let us talk as I have done with so many other Manitobans. He is consistently—

**An Honourable Member:** They do not believe you.

**Mr. McCrae:** The honourable member says they do not believe me. I would like to show him my calendar of all of the people who have asked for meetings to discuss health issues. In fact, just the other morning some people that the honourable member might be familiar with, the medicare alert coalition people, met in my office and we talked about the budget, and we talked about health care issues. So when it comes to being believed, I think it is the honourable member for Kildonan who has a bit of a problem, because people will only believe the truth, Madam Chairperson, and I think maybe they are wondering about the truth when it comes to some of the things the honourable member for Kildonan says.

**Madam Chairperson:** 2.(b) Health and Wellness  
(1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,321,700—pass;  
(2) Other Expenditures \$7,568,200—pass;  
(3) External Agencies \$508,700—pass.

2.(c) Women's Health.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Chairperson, perhaps the minister can confine his questions and deal with the issues at hand and the questions that are asked. If he wants to continue to go off on tangents, that is fine, but he is wasting valuable committee time and the time of not only members of the Chamber but his own staff, I suggest. If he wants to take his political shots, that is fine, but I hope he recognizes

that some of the public do read these debates, and I think it is pretty clear from the tenor of the comments what the minister's position is.

I am wondering if the minister can outline for me what he sees as the major priorities in Women's Health, the top three priorities in Women's Health presently.

**Mr. McCrae:** Madam Chairperson, some of the things that reflect our priorities, we either have heard about or will be hearing more about. They are in the area of obstetrics, for example, where we are working to implement very soon an obstetrics plan for the city of Winnipeg. We have also work to do to complete our plan for obstetrics in rural Manitoba. Certainly midwifery is part of this, as evidenced by the announcement made recently. Breast and cervical cancer issues are priorities for us in the area of Women's Health.

We are talking about, we are doing comprehensive planning in the department dealing with all these issues, but they also include issues relating to adolescence and abuse and violence in our society. We work together with other departments on some of these areas. Violence is an area that, very shortly after taking my appointment as Health minister, I let the department know that the violence issues that I was working on previously in my previous portfolio, that the battle against that would continue in my work as Health minister. We can work on those issues together with other departments such as Family Services and Justice.

With respect to that first item I mentioned, obstetrics, I think we discussed before that Winnipeg is the safest place in the world to have a baby. That is something we feel quite good about. We want to make sure that we can maintain that record of excellence, that record of achievement.

As part of our work in addressing the Manning report, the Lloyd report and the midwifery report, we need to look at the best and most efficient way to deliver obstetric services in the future, not only in Winnipeg but in rural Manitoba.

In doing that, we want to tell the health care professionals that their contributions of the past that have made us the safest place in the world for

delivering a baby is very much appreciated. You only have to talk to a new mum these days, as I have done in several facilities, to know how much they value the high quality service they get from people providing obstetric services in our hospitals.

\* (1550)

You only need to talk to people who are supporters of midwifery to know how much they really do want to see that happen in Manitoba. I attended International Midwifery Day observances there on the same day that we announced our plans for midwifery. I was touched by the support that midwives in Manitoba have received in the past and by the enthusiasm with which, if you can call it the midwifery community, accepted or greeted our announcement that we are going to have regulated midwifery in the future.

I talked about the introduction of midwifery. I was reminded that this is a reintroduction of midwifery, but I think it is the introduction of regulated midwifery which is something that governments have to take a part in. I have made some references to Ontario previously, but in this area Ontario leads in Canada in the area of midwifery, and we are looking to see what is going on there as we develop our own plans.

We are doing this with the help of our midwifery implementation council, which will be headed by Dr. Carol Scurfield. We are very fortunate to have Carol Scurfield's assistance in this, because her commitment to midwifery is not questioned by anybody. Her commitment to developing a safe and very, very acceptable midwifery system in Manitoba is very clear. So it was with pleasure that we were able to announce that Dr. Carol Scurfield would head up the council. We are going to move quickly to make sure the rest of the members of the council are appointed and in place soon so that we can get on with the work, but certainly obstetrics, midwifery, breast and cervical issues, and abuse and violence issues and work to assist the adolescent community as well to take their place in the future—these are all priorities of the Department of Health.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Chairperson, I understand that the Norplant system has been approved in Canada and that there have not been extensive Canadian studies, and I understand there was talk of a project with respect to Norplant running out of the Health Sciences Centre. I wonder if the minister might outline for me what the status is about that potential study.

**Mr. McCrae:** Yes, if the honourable member agrees, I will prepare some information and put it on the record.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I wonder if the minister might outline if there has been any expenditures or education on specifically the issue of menopause for women in this branch.

**Mr. McCrae:** Manitoba Health has prepared a booklet on menopause, which is available in physicians' offices throughout Manitoba. The Women's Health Clinic puts on classes dealing with menopause, and the Health Sciences Centre is also setting up a clinic. Health Sciences Centre is working with the Women's Health Clinic in doing this.

Back to the last question, too, a little further information. What we want to get or achieve with our Women's Health program, like so many of our other programs, is that we want to look at whether we are getting results that justify the work and effort and larger and larger amounts of money that we are spending on our health system. We want to get some results, and those results are: improved service co-ordination; we want to identify groups at high risk; we want to provide appropriate services; and we want to encourage consumer empowerment.

The plan for Women's Health has three phases. In the first phase, we want to have a single obstetrics and gynecology program. Postpartum discharge guidelines in Winnipeg have reduced hospital stays by 1,200 patient days and postdischarge services are matched with need. This goes back to the questions I think the honourable member was asking in Question Period today when he and his colleagues made quite a point about removing from hospitals budgets over the years, dollars that are being spent there. We

reduced hospital stays by 1,200 patient days, for example, in this particular area. I do not know, maybe the honourable member and his colleagues are suggesting to leave people in hospitals and maybe make them into hotels. That is not what we are doing in Manitoba.

The antenatal home care services targeted 204 high-risk women and provided a safe alternative to hospitalization saving another 3,101 patient days. That is significant. That is very significant.

**An Honourable Member:** Can you move those dollars to the community?

**Mr. McCrae:** Oh, yes, the dollars are just being pumped into the community. The honourable member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray) asks if we are moving the dollars into the community which brings me back to—and here I am just trying to respond to the member for Crescentwood who has asked about it.

I had left off at the Seniors for Seniors in Brandon where its offices are located in the riding of the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans). That is an NDP riding. I will come back to that. I do not think the honourable member for Crescentwood intended for me to get off the track with her comments.

But, she is asking a very, very important question. When I say we have provided a safe alternative to hospitalization through our antenatal home care services targeting 204 high-risk women, we have done all of that and we are doing it safely. We are not just doing this so we can say that you cannot go to the hospital. That is not what it is about. But we have, on average, reduced the stay in hospital by 15.2 days for each woman and her family under this program.

\* (1600)

Now, I am not a woman and I would not dare speak for women, but as a human being I would rather be at home than in a hospital. Most people I know feel exactly the same way. [interjection] 15.2 days stay per woman, and we are talking about high-risk antenatal care here. These numbers are real. They are significant. They are happening, and if people are not in hospital because they are safely being cared for at home through alternative

antenatal home care services, then why are we continuing to fund hospital beds when nobody is in them?

This is something New Democrats promote daily in the House. I think that is reprehensible considering that we only have so many dollars and our commitment is very clear in Manitoba, that the number of dollars as a percentage of total spending by this government, the percentage, has increased so that our commitment to health care in our budgeting is greater than the commitment of any previous government in the history of this province.

If I follow the advice of the New Democrats, I would continue to have nurses—I do not know what they would be doing, but nurses, cleaners and dieticians making meals for people and sending them up to the room—no patient there, but let us do all that. I mean, that is what the NDP health care program and policy is all about. Meanwhile, Ms. Jones is at home with her family because we can provide antenatal home care services there.

As I said, as part of phase 1 of our Women's Health program, we have now released the midwifery report and made our intentions known as to which direction we are going. The breast cancer monitoring group is established as part of our breast screening program. There is also a cervical cancer screening program that goes with it. That is phase 1.

Then, comes phase 2. I think rather than spend a whole lot of time on phases 2 and 3 because we are just getting there—in phase 2, we have to address the obstetrical locations issue raised in the Manning report. As honourable members know, even though that report was not released, a lot of people know what is in it. It talks about the various alternatives suggested by Dr. Manning, all the way from his suggested favourite to other options that could be considered as well, and we are looking at those options.

We are co-ordinating a postpartum program in Brandon and Thompson, and I remind honourable members that we have a residency program in obstetrics in Thompson. I was pleased to go to Thompson and announce that because I think

women in that region—well, I know women in that region will benefit from that, and so will the medical profession benefit from that, but so will the Thompson General Hospital because, again, it will offer a better and greater variety of specialist services in that area.

In phase 2, of course, we are going to target services to high-risk aboriginal women. As part of phase 2, we will be bringing forward our midwifery legislation to make midwifery happen in a regulated way in Manitoba, and there will be other strategic initiatives; for example, in the area of violence.

After phase 2, we get to phase 3. Part of phase 3 will be the consolidation of rural obstetrical locations, and that will work in concert with all of the other things going on in a regionalized health system in rural Manitoba.

There will be the implementation of postpartum discharge guidelines in rural locations and community supports established to make that happen. Of course, you have to have the community support in order to make that happen. That is precisely what we have been developing and can look back and show honourable members that we have done exactly that.

We are going to expand antenatal home care to Brandon and Thompson. As I said, we are going to implement midwifery in phase 3, and in phase 3 the breast cancer screening will begin with sites in Winnipeg, Brandon and Thompson. The cervical cancer screening program which offers prevention, education and tracking and follow-up of high-risk women will all be done as part of phase 3.

The Women's Health Branch is preparing a women's health strategy paper. An initial draft will be circulated within the Healthy Public Policy Programs Division for input prior to the paper being released outside the division. It is anticipated that the first draft will be circulated in February 1994, and the final policy document ready later in 1994.

So there are a lot of, in my view, exciting things happening in the area of women's health, and we look forward to continuing to work towards the goals that I have just set out. Some of them are

already achieved; some of them are well on the way to being achieved. I think implicit in some of these things is the fact that there be further choices available to women in Manitoba with respect to their health care requirements which is something that people want to see.

All of this happens with the input of many, many Manitobans. We do not just make all the decisions at the top, as we have seen done in some places and as we have seen in the past here in Manitoba. But those days are over. We are into the kind of planning and implementation that brings everybody into that forum, that room that I referred to awhile ago, and I am very pleased to welcome all of the people who do take part in planning for the future of our health care system.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Chairperson, that is why the administrators from MHO said, and I quote: arbitrary government decisions that are without any apparent understanding of the service implications.

This consultation, even MHO recognizes it does not exist. My question to the minister is: Can he give us the stats on teen pregnancy in Manitoba, whether they are increasing or decreasing?

**Mr. McCrae:** The honourable member mentioned something about the MHO and the arbitrariness of government and so on, and if it were true I would certainly agree with the MHO. We have gone to some lengths to make clear to the MHO and all of its members that we are not being arbitrary with Bill 22 in medical facilities. We are asking for proposals. We are not telling them they have to use Bill 22. We are saying to them that it is there for them.

Indeed the Health Sciences Centre, Grace Hospital, and now I understand St. Boniface Hospital feel that they can use that at their facilities. It may be that other facilities will not be able to use Bill 22, but I know that they will bend every possible effort to assist the government in working within the dollars that are available.

I am not sure what the honourable member wants the government to do. We spend 34 percent of our budget on health care, more than any previous government in the history of this

province. I guess he wants us to spend 35 or 38 or maybe 62 percent of our budget. I know what that means. It means massive gouging of the taxpayer. We have seen that in Manitoba but not with this government. We saw that with the New Democrats during the '80s. The people spoke fairly loudly about that. Jim Walding spoke loudly about that. Jim Walding was a member of the New Democratic Party himself, and he voted against a budget that continued to gouge the people of Manitoba.

When it comes to the suggestion by the honourable member that governments are acting arbitrarily, that is not what is happening. The honourable member holds up a piece of paper. I have one in my hand too, and it talks about Support Services to Seniors. We can get back into that if the honourable member wants.

\* (1610)

The honourable member refers to arbitrary decisions by government and holds up a piece of paper like this, Madam Chairperson. Whoever wrote that must have written it before they had a clear understanding of where the government was coming from. Even though, outside medical facilities, Bill 22 has saved hundreds and hundreds of jobs, the NDP is of course against Bill 22. They are against saving jobs. They are against saving health care. They are against building industries in various regions of Manitoba. They are against the work done by organizations like Ayerst Organics, whose job it is to produce medications for people who want to use those medications to deal with menopausal problems.

They talk about arbitrary. I say to you, I was quite offended by the arbitrary approach of the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) and all of his colleagues in the cabinet of 1987 when unilaterally and arbitrarily, without any warning, with no planning, with no supports in the communities, they closed 42 beds at Brandon General Hospital. I remember it very well, because I was a member of the Legislature at that time.

This move was ordered by the NDP government of the day, and the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) worked for that

government, I understand, at the highest levels. What happened to that member for Brandon East who was then a minister in that government who sat around the cabinet table and made that decision? He went and hid from his own constituents. He could not take the heat. [interjection]

The honourable member for Kildonan raises the issue of Ray West in Brandon. Madam Chair, it bears repeating that the honourable member for Brandon East and, by extension, all of his colleagues, including the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli), the member for Kildonan, have this contempt for Ray West.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Chomiak:** Point of order, Madam Chairperson, it is a question of relevance. What relevance does the former chairman of McKenzie Seeds have to do with the question of teen pregnancy in Manitoba? That was the question. The minister is talking about the chairman of McKenzie Seeds. If the minister can show the relevance, that is one issue, but I doubt very much the minister could even come close on an issue of relevance on that issue.

**Mr. McCrae:** On the same point of order, I have to tell you, I have to confess I do not know what the relevance is either, but the honourable member for Kildonan is the one who brought Ray West up. He raised the issue of Michael Decter and Michael Decter's moving expenses and the salary of Marc Eliesen in B.C. He is the one who brought it up. I do not know what the relevance is, but he brought it up and so I thought I would refer to it. If it is not relevant, then I am happy to bow to your ruling on the issue. It was the honourable member for Kildonan who brought it up. Here we are in Health Estimates, and he wants to talk about Ray West. I do not know the relevance either.

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader):** On the same point of order, Madam Chairperson. I just happened to walk in the Chamber. I was wondering if you could advise me as to whether we are actually still in the Department of Health Estimates or if perhaps the minister has been given leave to talk about whatever comes across his

mind. Perhaps, if you could also remind someone like myself just walking into the Chamber what specific line item the minister was referring to when he was making his various comments.

**Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Government Services):** On the same point of order. I would suggest the member for Thompson spend some time in the Chamber. He would know we are still on Health.

**Madam Chairperson:** Order, please. I thank all honourable members for their advice. I would remind all honourable members that we are discussing the Estimates for the Department of Health. We are on item 2.(c) Women's Health (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits.

I would request the support of all honourable members in ensuring that their questions, as well as their responses, are relevant.

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**Mr. McCrae:** Madam Chairperson, I was responding to a question put by the honourable member about teen pregnancy in Manitoba. The member for Thompson wanted to get into the act, and I am glad he did, because it reminds me that the honourable member for Thompson very, very kindly helped organize a town hall meeting in Thompson at which I attended. We listened to the comments and concerns of the various residents there. It was a very, very well-run meeting. I congratulate the member for doing that.

**Mr. Ashton:** Thank you for coming, too.

**Mr. McCrae:** He thanks me for coming, and I say, you are welcome. It was a pleasure, because I was treated so well and no untoward comments were made by anybody such as the kind we get from the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) all the time in this House.

**Mr. Ashton:** I knew there was a backhand to this compliment.

**Mr. McCrae:** No, no. I am not finished. In Thompson, on another subsequent occasion, I was able to go there and announce this enhanced obstetrics program at the hospital. I was also able to announce the mental health program improvements in Thompson.

The people of Thompson and the region it serves are going to be served with a complete range of mental health services, the like of which they have never had before because in the past our focus has been on these institutions like Brandon Mental Health Centre, Selkirk Mental Health Centre, Health Sciences Centre and no concern—well, no apparent concern, I should say—for the people and what the people need.

The people of Thompson are going to have at their disposal 10 acute-care psychiatric beds in their hospital in addition to the obstetrics beds. They are going to have a psychiatrist. They are going to have services in their community: crisis stabilization services, mobile crisis stabilization services, and counselling and referral services. All of those things are going to happen in Thompson. That is why I am glad the honourable member for Thompson came in and took a little part in the debate. Then he crowned it all by raising a point of order which I think is something that he contributes well in this House with respect to raising points of order. He does it quite frequently, especially when his colleagues are getting into trouble.

The honourable member for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans) joins us this afternoon. I was going over the list of Support Services to Seniors, and I do not know of a riding that has more Support Services to Seniors than the riding of the honourable member for Interlake.

\* (1620)

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Ashton:** Madam Chairperson, as much as I was enjoying the comments of the minister, I would ask that perhaps the minister abide by the ruling which was that we are dealing with a section here in terms of women's health, a very important issue in terms of teen pregnancy. If the minister has completed his comments on this particular section, the answers to the questions he has received, it might be wise perhaps to move on to other questions.

I know the minister may wish to discuss other health care issues, and certainly I look forward to discussing some of the issues in Thompson on the

appropriate line items. I think perhaps, Madam Chairperson, it would be advisable if the minister could follow your ruling and make his comments relevant to this particular section.

**Madam Chairperson:** The honourable Minister of Health, on the same point of order.

**Mr. McCrae:** Madam Chairperson, I just want to answer the member for Kildonan's question.

**Madam Chairperson:** Okay. I thank the honourable member for Thompson for that advice.

The honourable Minister of Health, to supply the response to the question for the honourable member for Kildonan.

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**Mr. McCrae:** You see, Madam Chair, the problem is, as well intentioned as the member for Thompson is, he is like other New Democrats, he distracts me. I am so focused and trying so hard to answer the questions put by the member for Kildonan, and then these other members get in here and they raise points of order and make it a very difficult time.

In any event, the question was about teen pregnancies. This is for the age group between 15 and 19. In 1991, the average pregnancies per week was 44.5. In 1992, the average number of pregnancies per week was 43.2. In 1993, the average pregnancies per week was 46.1. There is fluctuation over the years, but it remains at levels that are still somewhat alarming.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Chairperson, does the minister have any information about the amount of money and/or the number of programs with respect to education for young people on the matter of safe sex?

**Mr. McCrae:** Madam Chairperson, you do not measure the value of things by how many dollars you spend on it. That is the thinking that some people continue to cling to, not when they are in office but when they are in opposition. That is not a question that I can appropriately answer.

I recall earlier today talking about the work of community health centres and the valuable work they do in these areas, the work of our public health nurses and the focus they put on the work

they do. They know the areas where they need to be focusing their attention, and it is in those areas where they provide services.

Through Planned Parenthood, though, we provide funding for them to run the Facts of Life Line. In 1991-92 that Facts of Life Line dealt with 8,291 calls, and in '92-93 that line dealt with 12,653 calls. So you can see that the awareness about that service is there, because the subscribership is growing.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Chairperson, does the minister have stats on the waiting list for women for treatment of alcohol and drug abuse?

**Mr. McCrae:** I do not have that information in front of me, Madam Chair, but I will undertake to get it for the honourable member.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Chairperson, can the minister table the list of grants to external agencies under this appropriation?

**Mr. McCrae:** The honourable member asked for a grants listing with respect to Women's Health, I believe. It is included in the document that we provided. I think it needs to be said that there is an aspect of health delivery that is of interest to women reflected in many, many of the grants that go well beyond the Women's Health Branch itself.

**Ms. Gray:** Does the Department of Health fund the Women's Post-Treatment Centre?

**Mr. McCrae:** Indirectly, Madam Chair, through the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba.

**Ms. Gray:** Will the minister be able to table for us the strategic plan for this section that is identified under the activity?

**Mr. McCrae:** I am going to ask staff to remind me about this midsummer when we hope to have that in a condition that we can release it to the honourable member. The work is not completed.

**Ms. Gray:** I am assuming there has been some restructuring of this section since there used to be a manager and there used to be six SYs in the professional/technical, managerial and now there are four. Could the minister perhaps explain those changes?

**Mr. McCrae:** Madam Chairperson, there have been three positions affected by the reorganization

of our department at the senior levels, at the administrative levels. Remember a while ago we talked about the epidemiology unit. One of the people from this area, a data entry clerk, that position has been consolidated into epidemiology. An administrative function has been eliminated. A position in that function has been eliminated and the director position has also been eliminated although the incumbent remains working with the department.

**Ms. Gray:** Do the professional/technical staff then report directly to the ADM?

**Mr. McCrae:** That position under the new structure will report to the director of Programs Development and Monitoring.

\* (1630)

**Ms. Gray:** Madam Chairperson, one of the areas that seems to be of a large concern in women's health are really issues that are not reflected in this section and that is the area of women and mental health and, again, this is related, adult survivors of sexual abuse. It sounds like some of that seems to be lumped under the Addictions Foundation and obviously some of the mental health services are with the Mental Health Division.

Can the minister tell us, would it not be appropriate to have some of the services for women, particularly in the area of mental health and sexual abuse survivors, under this section of the Women's Health Branch as opposed to having them in the other section?

**Mr. McCrae:** Madam Chairperson, the honourable member is right. We believe that the issue she refers to should be brought into the newly organized functions of this new branch or directorship, so we are moving in the direction the honourable member is suggesting.

**Ms. Gray:** Madam Chairperson, what types of services does the government either provide, or fund other agencies to provide, that specifically deals with adult survivors of sexual abuse?

Now I know that, obviously, those survivors are limited to women, but oftentimes at this point we see the majority of people who are adult survivors as women. I am wondering what kinds of services

are available that either the government provides or where they fund agencies to provide that service.

**Mr. McCrae:** Well, we do not fund programs directly out of this particular appropriation. People who suffer symptoms as a result of being mistreated in youth find support, I believe, in our newly revamped mental health delivery system. It does not report directly to this branch, but when we have all of the outreach that is going on in the community programs being made available, very often that kind of abuse the honourable member refers to ends up with people showing signs and having problems with some of the conditions that are assisted by organizations like the schizophrenia people, or the anxiety disorder people or the depression and manic depression people who are being funded. The Canadian Mental Health Association people, as well.

I think, in terms of focus and in terms of who actually runs these programs, we do not run these programs out of this appropriation.

**Ms. Gray:** Madam Chairperson, can the minister tell us, though, where funds are given to provide services to adult survivors? One example I know of is the Women's Post-Treatment Centre, through the Addictions Foundation. Are there other agencies, particularly in rural Manitoba? I would ask again in regard to the mental health services, although some people may have a mental health diagnosis such as schizophrenia, which the minister mentioned, I would suggest the majority of sexual abuse survivors do not necessarily have that.

**Mr. McCrae:** I am not sure all of the diagnosis that might result from abuse as a young person, and I do not name schizophrenia as a condition. I name it as a group of people out there that are out there to try to provide help. However, I will do a little more work with staff here to see if I can be more specific.

It is a very difficult question to answer in the way it is put. The reason is that we do not have a program that is specifically for people who are adult survivors of abuse as a child. We have a variety of programs, delivered in a variety of ways,

either through Mental Health Services, counselling services, provided through the counselling and referral services available through all of the mental health programs I mentioned. The AFM, when we get to AFM lines in the budget, I think we can maybe link this up a little better for the honourable member.

**Madam Chairperson:** Item 2.(c)(1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$292,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$531,200—pass; (3) External Agencies \$416,000—pass.

2.(d) Healthy Child Development (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits.

**Ms. Gray:** Madam Chairperson, I know the former Minister of Health went on at great length to talk about Healthy Child Development and the wonderful innovations that were being made in this area. That would have been last, probably about 10 or 11 or 12 months ago. I am wondering if those innovations and new strategy in the area of Healthy Child Development have come to pass or have been implemented.

\* (1640)

**Mr. McCrae:** I think my predecessor talked about this as long as he did because this is a huge area of concern, and we have very, very huge plans for dealing with it. In doing so, we have set up quite a huge committee as well, headed by Dr. Brian Postl and Marian Boulanger, the committee to deal with adolescent health issues. That committee will give an interim report expected in June and a final report expected in September. In the meantime, I should remind the honourable member that we are setting up a new child and adolescent mental health clinic in Winnipeg as well, which is one part of the spectrum of services. That has already been announced, and we are pleased with that one. We also look forward to the interim and final reports of the committee to which I have referred. I will spare the honourable member the message that must have been delivered last year by my predecessor, but I am sure that the reason he was so excited about it was that indeed we hope that the report that comes forward will lead to improved services for adolescents in Manitoba.

**Ms. Gray:** Madam Chairperson, I do have the terms of reference in front of me of the Child Health Strategy Committee, which the minister had provided for us last week. Can the minister tell us, when was this committee established, when was it set up?

**Mr. McCrae:** Last June, Madam Chairperson.

**Ms. Gray:** Is this Child Health Strategy Committee also going to be dealing with what I would call child and adolescent services that might have been dealt with in the mental health committee that looked at child and adolescent services? Are they going to be focusing on the whole range of services for children, including mental health services, or for children who have behavioral disorders but do not necessarily have diagnoses that are mental health?

**Mr. McCrae:** The people involved with delivery of mental health services are involved with this process, although we have, as I mentioned, a mental health dimension to this. It is only one dimension, and, of course, there is much more. There is a link here; the mental health people are involved with this committee as well.

**Ms. Gray:** I also see on this committee that people who are involved in the Family Services system are involved in this committee, which is good. Are there people who are involved specifically with the foster parents, that sort of group of people? I ask that because oftentimes they seem to be individuals who are very knowledgeable about a lot of the issues of children because they have a lot of children in care who may have fetal alcohol syndrome or who have birth defects, who are high-needs kids, et cetera.

**Mr. McCrae:** I am advised that we do not believe we have an actual representative on the committee from the foster family community, but what the honourable member says has a lot of merit. I am going to pass on what she said to ensure that if we do not have membership from that particular persuasion or that particular discipline that we at least learn about it before we make any preliminary or final reports, so I am going to pass that on to the committee.

**Ms. Gray:** I thank the minister. Just as I was reading through the committee names, it struck me, because when I meet with foster parents they always seem to have a wealth of information about children with special needs in particular.

Just in regard to the dental health services that were cut or eliminated by this government, was the ministry doing an ongoing evaluation or monitoring as to the impact of the cut of these kinds of services?

**Mr. McCrae:** Since the government got out of that program, we have invited communities to set up programs of their own and made the offer of any equipment that was there from the program, made the offer that that equipment would be available to them. I am just asking staff to let me know how many communities we are working with, but we encourage that to happen. No formal evaluation is being conducted here, but we do continue to have the fluoride program in place, which has proved its worth over the years, and I will just pause for a moment—I am getting some information about this. I am told that a number of communities are availing themselves of the use of the equipment. I do not have numbers of communities for the member, but I would like to provide that to her, so as soon as I can get that I will make it available.

Daily tooth brushing in schools is promoted by Manitoba Health. The fluoride rinse program has been offered to all rural school divisions. Dental health education is mandated as a component of the Manitoba schools health curriculum. Consultation and resources are available from Manitoba Health. Community water systems fluoridation is promoted, funded and monitored by Manitoba Health. Grants are made available to agencies and communities to conduct prevention projects. Monitoring is provided by Manitoba Health.

With respect to the weekly fluoride rinse program, 454 schools have been approached by Manitoba Health and 175 are participating. In terms of number of children eligible for that program, 55,346, and the number of children enrolled, 22,500. There are 60 water treatment

plants in Manitoba with fluoridation systems. There are 80 communities with access to fluoridated water, and the number of regular consumers of fluoridated water in Manitoba is 777,000. It is a lot of Manitobans, but there are some that still are not and that is a concern.

I have to tell the honourable member I was quite taken by a piece of information I learned when I was talking to a nurse from Health Sciences Centre. Nurses are extremely valuable resources in our system. They told me that a lot of admissions to Health Sciences Centre were of young children from remote aboriginal communities who came to Winnipeg to have all their teeth out. I was shocked when I heard that. I do not remember the numbers, but she gave me the numbers, and the numbers are shocking. Why is it that children are coming to Health Sciences Centre to have all their teeth out? Well, the reason is preventable, and it goes back to some of the questions the member for Crescentwood asks—very, very important questions which makes dialogue about this, I believe, very important.

\* (1650)

I feel that something further needs to be done in those First Nations communities and elsewhere, but certainly those First Nations communities too because I am told by the nurse at Health Sciences Centre that virtually all of these children who come in here to Health Sciences Centre to have all their teeth out are aboriginal children from remote communities.

I again address the challenge to the leadership of the First Nations in Manitoba. What are they doing about this? It is absolutely, I am told, preventable, and something needs to be done about it. That is one of the things I want to pursue because it is very disturbing, and if that is wrong with young children, there must be a lot of other things that go wrong with their lives for the rest of their lives too.

I find that very, very disturbing, and I challenge the First Nations leadership along with the new Minister of Indian Affairs from Ottawa whom I commend and support in his efforts to work out a better deal for the aboriginal people of Manitoba. I ask them to keep issues like that in mind as they

are addressing issues in First Nations communities, because I was totally shocked when I heard that. If that happens, a whole lot of other things are happening too. They are not being properly addressed, and I am not happy about it at all.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Chairperson, I guess that is one of the real difficulties that we had in this House when the government cut a preventative community-based program that delivered dental services in the community of a preventative nature to children.

My first question to the minister is: What happened to the \$3 million from this program? What happened to the \$3 million that was allocated to this program, to a preventative dental health program, to a community-based program? What happened to the \$3 million that the government cut out of the budget last year and has not included in this budget? What happened to that \$3 million of a preventative community-based program?

**Mr. McCrae:** Madam Chair, I do not need to be lectured very long by the honourable member or the NDP on this particular issue. I was around long enough to know a little bit about the history of it. The honourable member forgets altogether. He calls this prevention. The prevention part of this program was retained. The member knows that. It is the treatment part of the program that was cut. I think I have a fairly good recollection of the history of this.

Here again, the kids in Brandon and the kids in Winnipeg did not get to benefit from that program. I remember when Larry Desjardins wanted to set the program up and because some school trustees in Brandon kicked up a bit of a fuss about it, Larry said, well, all right, I will just take the program, forget it. You cannot have it.

That is how it started, but as a member of the Legislature for Brandon, some of the people who delivered that service, in fact, people very close to my family who delivered that service, were concerned, and I have been concerned all along about this and other things.

As a failed candidate for nomination in the federal election, I can tell you that last year about

this time I spent a lot of time talking with people in rural Manitoba, many of whom were served by the program. Many of them said, well, you know, too bad you had to discontinue that but we understand why. We know it was not fair in the sense that city kids did not get the benefit of that program. We also know that you have to spend your health care dollars as best you can. We appreciate the commitment of your government, though, because we can see how you are spending so much money on health care and more and more money every year. Somehow something has got to be done about it. We regret it just like you do, Mr. McCrae, that this had to be done.

I was not happy about that, and I did not mind saying so then. I do not mind saying so now. The point is, the honourable member leads you to believe that this preventive program has been cut down. The prevention part of the program is the part that was not cut. We cut the treatment part of the program, and the honourable member does not distinguish that.

The honourable member—I should not say what I was about to say so I will just change the subject. What I was about to say was not parliamentary, Madam Chairperson, and I stopped myself—[interjection] Oh, yes, here I go again—in my tracks because I was going to say something unkind, and my mother told me that if you cannot say something nice about a person, do not say anything at all.

That is why I say so little about the honourable member for Kildonan. [interjection] The honourable member for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans) wants to get into the act here, and I was going through, a little while ago, a list of support that our government provides in communities all across Manitoba. The honourable member for Interlake, that constituency for Interlake just comes up over and over again, with all the support we are pouring into that community.

I think the honourable member for Interlake is aware of all of these things, unlike the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) whose appearance has changed somewhat this afternoon. The member for Transcona did not even know that the government

was supporting Support Services to Seniors operations in his own riding. He did not even know it, so I had to bring it to his attention. He does not know what is going on in his constituency.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Chairperson, I believe twice now during this session you have admonished the minister to try to stay on line and try to deal with the question, the relevance of the question.

The question was the Children's Dental Program, and I admit that the government, the minister has some trouble responding, but if at least he would contain himself and deal with the question at hand so we could continue to try to get some answers out of the minister in this committee. I know you have asked the minister twice to stick to the relevant points, and I would ask you to rule again or at least indicate to the minister that he should stick to the relevant points of the question.

**Madam Chairperson:** I thank the honourable member for Kildonan for that advice. The honourable Minister of Health to finish your response to the question.

\* \* \*

**Mr. McCrae:** I just want to say to the honourable member with respect to the staff of the program we are discussing that last fiscal year, '93-94, eight of those dental professionals were enrolled in the Wascana School in Regina training to be dental hygienists; in '94-95, nine more, and this was all assisted through labour adjustment on the part of the government of Manitoba. Of all of the ones who were laid off as a result of that policy change, there were a large number of them re-employed, 26 of them re-employed in one way or another with the government of Manitoba.

**Madam Chairperson:** Order, please. The hour being 5 p.m., time for private members' hour. Committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

\* (1700)

**IN SESSION****Committee Report**

**Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Chairperson of Committees):** Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has considered certain resolutions, directs me to report progress and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson), that the report of the committee be received.

**Motion agreed to.**

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

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

**PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS****Res. 6—Seasonal Jobs Strategy for Post-Secondary Students**

**Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), that:

WHEREAS the cost of a post-secondary education in Canada is currently prohibiting many Manitobans from receiving the education they need; and

WHEREAS students need consistent useful employment during the summer to help pay for the mounting costs associated with a post-secondary education and gain valuable work experience; and

WHEREAS youth unemployment rates are higher than the population as a whole, while financial assistance to students is not keeping pace with costs; and

WHEREAS many youth employment programs such as CareerStart, the Northern Youth Jobs Corps and STEP have been cut back or eliminated; and

WHEREAS a seasonal jobs strategy would benefit students from rural and northern Manitoba who face increased post-secondary education costs; and

WHEREAS students must increasingly choose part-time studies so that they may take employment to finance their education, increasing

their time in colleges and universities and putting great stress on their studies; and

WHEREAS the provincial government has failed to realize the important link between post-secondary education and training and a revitalized economy.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to consider developing a more proactive seasonal job strategy so that post-secondary students can find meaningful employment to enable them to meet the increasing costs of post-secondary education and so that students can gain practical experience to assist them in finding work after graduation.

**Motion presented.**

**Ms. Friesen:** I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak about education in this House. This is a resolution which I have presented before in earlier years, but the situation has not changed. In fact, there has been no response from the government for the work opportunities for post-secondary students. The situation for those students is becoming increasingly difficult. Many families of those students, in fact, are in a crisis as a result of the high unemployment rates not only in Winnipeg but throughout the North and in parts of rural Manitoba.

The composition of our university and college population is changing, and I think over the next four to five years, if there is no alteration in the economic position and no changes in the government's harsh and restrictive measures on post-secondary education, we will in fact be seeing quite a dramatic shift in the kinds of students, the range of students who are able to have access to post-secondary education in this province.

We will, I predict, be returning to a situation of the 1940s or the 1920s when only those students who came from wealthy families, only those students who came from predominately urban areas would have the opportunity to have access to post-secondary education. The tragedy of this is that it will come at a time when post-secondary education of all kinds is becoming absolutely vital in the kind of world to which the Tories, both

federally and provincially, have subjected us in this country.

Yet over many years now in this House, there have been no responses on the opportunities that could present themselves to students for jobs, for summer jobs or for part-time jobs on campus related to their professional careers or for students at our universities. It is not a difficult task for a government to create those kinds of opportunities. Other governments in other provinces and other countries have done so relatively easily.

They are not the only answer to the problems facing post-secondary students across the country, but they are one of the answers, and it is not a difficult policy to put into effect, but it is one policy which ideologically this government could not commit itself to because ideologically this government has always said we will stand aside, we will let the invisible hand of the marketplace in fact determine who in our province will benefit from the what were formerly public institutions, publicly accessible institutions of colleges and universities. I think that situation is changing and will continue to change to the detriment of, I think, the Manitoba society as a whole, if there is no change in government or no change in government policy.

As we speak, Mr. Speaker, the youth unemployment centre in Winnipeg has registered 1,085 students and youth as of the most recent date of May 10. During the first week that they were open, they registered almost 1,000 students and certainly a higher proportion, a higher number of students than registered last year at the same time. In spite of the fact, as the Employment Centre itself said, many students have been trying certainly since at least Christmas, trying from an earlier period of time to find jobs and to find jobs in alternate ways.

As of May 10, the Canada Employment Centre has placed 77 students in jobs out of the nearly 1,000 students who applied to them.

There is no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that students in Manitoba want jobs. They want to work. You have only to talk to their families and to the students themselves to know how desperate their need is for

any kind of job. We are not talking now about jobs that relate to their technical expertise. We are not necessarily talking about jobs which will help them to find final work after graduation. We are talking about any job, any minimum wage job, any job possible for students.

\* (1710)

Yet in the first two weeks, as they were reading themselves for this influx of students, only 77 students have found jobs. We are happy for those students who have been able to find jobs, but we look at the line-up of 800 or 900 students who have not found work, and we know that as we move into June that those numbers will increase as the high school students out of Grade 11 and 12 will be registering at that centre, and as the community college students whose courses also finish in June will begin to register at those centres.

So I am not talking about a small problem for Manitoba. I am talking about an issue which affects the majority of Manitoba families, of students who cannot find work. And if they cannot find work, they will increasingly face serious difficulties and restrictions in the kind of opportunities which will be open to them for their future. Manitoba as a whole, the province as a whole, I think, will suffer under those circumstances. So the first point, Mr. Speaker, I would make is that students want work and that the work is not there.

I want to say, secondly, that we should recognize, and I think probably all members of this House do, that students have changed. We are not now just looking at students who are sequential students from high school. We are looking increasingly at a student population which is more reflective of our general population, people who are independent and living on their own, who increasingly have families, who are older displaced workers who have perhaps been employed in some of the large companies, corporations or public sector areas of employment in Manitoba and have in the last five years seen their jobs eliminated, seen themselves cast on a scrap heap of Manitoba society as they find themselves without work often after having spent

10, 20 or more years in the service of one company or corporation.

Those students are returning to university because they have no alternative. They are doing what they can on an individual basis and putting together the money that they can find to pay the increasing cost of tuition to at least find some alternative to the unemployment lines and eventually to the welfare lines that some of them by now, in fact, have found themselves facing.

So students have changed. It is a much broader cross section of the population. It is not just the 17- and 18-year-olds who can live at home in the city and attend university in that way that we are looking at.

We are also looking at a situation where over the last four or five years there have been dramatic increases in student tuition and in the cost of books, and both of those, of course, are primary components of the costs for students. They are not the only ones. Certainly for rural students there is a much higher cost involved in both transportation and in living accommodation while they attend school. But for all students, the increasing cost of tuition has had, I think, a remarkable effect upon the kinds of students we are seeing in post-secondary education and also upon the prospects of those who are now looking at their graduation from Grade 12 and trying to look at what opportunities are available to them.

Increasingly, students have "chosen" to deal with this—chosen I say in quotation marks—because really they have had no choice to becoming part-time students, and so they are spending much longer in their first or second degree than they need to, than they have done in the past. The cost to the public, because the public pays 80 percent of the costs of a university degree, is in that way extended. It is not good economic sense to prolong the passage of students through university; nor is it good educational or pedagogical sense to increasingly force students into part-time or full-time work. I think every teacher, whether in university or in community colleges, could tell you about the number of students who drop out from courses because their

schedules have changed. They have been in part-time work and their schedules have been changed. That has to come first; otherwise, there is no food on the table.

For a number of the part-time and even full-time workers who are trying to attend university and believe that they can accommodate both, the kind of studying that they are able to do, the kind of reading, the kind of preparation, the kind of discussion, the kind of time which they can devote to their studies has become less and less. Many of those students do not have the opportunity, I think, that my generation had or the generation older than I had in being first and foremost a student. There are very few students for whom that, in fact, is an option at the moment.

Students constantly worry, particularly the mature students, about every penny. If you talk to some teachers in some courses, particularly those who are teaching students from disadvantaged areas, the actual cost of a bus fare becomes crucial as to whether a student can make that particular class or that field placement that week. The dollars and the cents and the pennies are counted very carefully for most students because those students who have, as a result of the direct policies of this government, been forced from a bursary situation into a Manitoba Student Loan situation are effectively existing at a level much lower than the poverty level either for single parents or for single people or for people who might have a family.

The low income cutoff in Manitoba in 1990 for a single person was \$12,700. When we look at the amount of money that is available through Canada Student Loan, even with the increased amounts that the federal government has just offered and the Manitoba Student Loan, we are looking at about half that amount that students are existing on. So, over a period of time, in a four-year degree, a student has "every opportunity," again in quotes, to have a debt, to graduate with a debt of \$30,000 to \$40,000, particularly if we average out those students who are coming from rural and northern areas.

That debt is the first claim upon their income, should they have any income. Increasingly, as we

know, in a community such as Manitoba where a month ago we saw that the unemployment rates for young people were in the region of 25 percent—they have dropped a little this month, but last year it was an astounding, astonishing and shocking 25 percent for young males—the first charge on their income, should they ever have one, is that student loan.

It does not matter whether they never get a job, because the interest keeps mounting. Students whom I have spoken to, in fact, are finding themselves on that treadmill of having the interest mount up, having no job, having no prospect of a job, and yet having completed three or four years of university or community college.

So those students coming out of high school know that is what is facing their brothers and sisters. The likelihood—in fact, is it a rational choice for any student to take on that burden of loan, that \$30,000 to \$40,000 required to graduate even with a first degree with no prospect or very little prospect of employment at the end? Some students are finding themselves on a treadmill at the end of being able to pay only the interest.

Those students who are on that treadmill of student loan, who find that burden at the end, are not going to be buying the cars that kick-start whatever recovery we might expect in Manitoba or Canada. They are not going to be buying the new houses. Only those middle-class and upper middle-class students who will be able to have some income from their parents will be able to have access to any kind of living standard comparable to that which the previous generation has enjoyed.

So I emphasize, Mr. Speaker, that universities across the country are facing similar challenges, some of them, whether it is McGill or, in a small way, the University of Winnipeg, have instituted with their own funds some portion of work-study programs that enable students to work at some jobs on campus during the year. Some provinces, British Columbia and Ontario, particularly, have established quite large funds for the creation of jobs for post-secondary students particularly and

for work-study programs on campus. Those, I think, are imaginative.

They are clearly directed at a crisis that I think most people recognize, and it is one that I draw to the attention of this government, as I have in previous years. I do not expect anything from them because ideologically they are opposed to any kind of job creation of this kind. It is the invisible hand of the market.

Effectively, what their policies are doing—whether it is the cuts to ACCESS; whether it is the cuts to northern job programs; whether it is the cuts that they have taken to colleges and universities overall, decreasing the number of courses at colleges and increasing the size of classes in all areas of post-secondary education; whether it is cutting the bursary programs or cutting the student social allowance program—I think what this government has demonstrated is that it is committed to a much narrower version of education, that it is committed to narrower accessibility, and that it is committed, in the end, I think, to a very different kind of society for Manitoba.

\* (1720)

**Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Urban Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to rise and put a few comments on the record about this resolution. I would also like to make an amendment to the resolution because I am afraid I cannot agree with the basic premise that is outlined in it. But I appreciate the sincerity of the member opposite.

I am concerned about her shortsightedness in terms of what is ultimately for the betterment of our society. This government has recognized and does and will recognize the strategic link between post-secondary education and training and a revitalized economy as well as the importance of assisting students and unemployed youths to make a successful transition to the workforce upon the completion of their studies.

We have a focus on skills training and upgrading as an essential element in enhancing our economic strengthening of Manitoba. We encourage assistance and involvement of industry to help us

compete in a new world economy. I believe we have many programs and initiatives in place that will enable us to accomplish our goals in this regard far more effectively than simply having a few short-term grass-cutting jobs available or to extend credit to people who might have an ability to pay back upon graduation and not require that indeed they do that.

We have programs that are working very well, such as Winnipeg 2000, and we have seen many, many students gaining successful experience and training under that particular program. The Youth Programs branch was established as well to provide executive co-ordination, support, leadership to a variety of important skills training activities.

Programs like these where industry itself becomes involved in identifying needs that it has, the kind of skills that it requires and preparing young people or not-so-young people to acquire those skills, so that they then do have a place in which they can fit when they graduate, I think, are very important.

It takes us back to the beginnings of the Co-operative Vocational Educational program. I remember being involved in that when it began, and I think the member opposite may have some knowledge of it as well.

That has been very useful in terms of preparing students for real jobs that are wanting in society, places for them to go wherein they can earn a living and be self-sufficient and independent.

We have a Youth Career Development Program, Mr. Speaker, which incorporates a number of skills training programs which are specifically targeted to students and to youth. Again, that partnership between private and public employers to provide career related work is very good in promoting a successful transition to the workforce.

The Youth Career Development Program offers a variety of programs and services to assist young Manitobans in terms of gaining experience, gaining financial means to continue their studies and preparing them for a job that is a real job that will exist in the marketplace which has been identified.

We have a number of programs that students avail themselves of and are very grateful for and that we get excellent feedback from: STEP services, the Volunteers in Public Service, the Manitoba Youth Job Centres, CareerStart, Partners with Youth. I mentioned before Workforce 2000. We have a number of programs in place. To say that we do not is to be inaccurate. Those kinds of programs and initiatives that we have put in place and that we continue to promote do provide the work experience, the skill development and employment opportunities that lead to acquiring financial means to continue with studies and programs of studies, vocational training and programs to prepare people for the workforce.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that it is very naive to think that you can prepare people for a good match between the workforce's desires and the people who are coming out of training. It is naive to assume that you can train people and not prepare them for a job opportunity that has some continuance in the workforce. That is the way in which unemployment is minimized, and that is what some of the work experience programs do.

The trades and technology focus, which is a new component of CareerStart, does that type of thing. This was started for the first time this year in 1994, and it encourages young people to explore options in trades and technologies that they were not exploring traditionally and in areas where we expect career opportunities to continue to grow. We have tremendous new technologies coming on stream. Those are the technologies of the future. Those are the vocational trades of the future. Those are where opportunities for employment will exist.

This program, trades and technology focus, under the CareerStart, is designed to assist as well in the revitalization of apprenticeship training by raising the awareness of career opportunities in those kinds of fields, the new technologies, the new vocations.

We also have a framework for economic growth, which stresses the encouragement of entrepreneurship. Now, that obviously is not something that would appeal to the members opposite because they do not have a fundamental

ideological belief in self-employment, preferring always to see people working preferably for the public sector, government, or some other arm of government.

But we believe that it is a good thing to encourage people to start their own businesses to become self-employed, to become self-sufficient, to become truly independent, to become their own employer, and we do not apologize for that. I know it does not fit with the philosophy opposite, but it does fit with ours, so we have entrepreneurship encouragement. We have a program called the Young Entrepreneurs, a component of Partners with Youth. We will provide matching grants to unemployed youth who submit proposals for starting their own full-time business.

I am really concerned that the member opposite criticizes that kind of proposal, because I think it is just that kind of self-start and that kind of initiative that is appropriate for today's economy and is also very good for the individuals who embark upon such self-starting initiatives. The chance to build a career of their own in a business of their own, I think, is a wonderful thing for young people and, indeed, for people who are not so young anymore.

So I am sorry they do not appreciate or approve of that; I do recognize it does not fit with their philosophy. Breeding independent people is not something that the NDP is noted for, although our friends the Liberals may have more ability to understand that concept.

Mr. Speaker, we have those initiatives that I have identified. We have, just as a matter of interest, contrary to the premise of the person who put the motion forward, in this year, 1993-1994, in the Youth Career Development Program provided employment opportunities to over 14,000 Manitoba students and youth. I think those 14,000 students are really quite pleased that they had those opportunities provided for them, and I am pleased that we could provide them as well. We are expecting in '94-95 that the Youth Career Development Program will assist about 15,000 Manitoban students and youth in finding employment.

So, Mr. Speaker, I have been identifying just a few of those things that we have done, outlining our basic premise, our support for students, our support for working with the private and public sector in partnership, our support for the entrepreneurial initiative, and the availability that we have with things like the Green Team, which everybody knows about or should know about if they do not, which goes to assist our rural members, our rural members of society, the students who are—[interjection] The rural member said, I was meeting members of society. Good, yes, that is cute.

We have rural members on both sides of the House, so I hope that their members of society and members of the student body will be able to participate in some of the Green Team initiatives, the Partners with Youth, the trades and technologies focus, CareerStart, and all of those things that we have in place for them.

But, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move an amendment to this motion, simply because I feel we have STEP and all of those things that we have provided for 14,000 students last summer and 15,000 students this coming summer.

\* (1730)

I move, seconded by the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Pallister):

THAT Resolution 6 be amended by deleting all of the words following the first WHEREAS and replacing them with the following words:

WHEREAS the government of Manitoba recognizes the strategic link between post-secondary education and training and a revitalized economy;

WHEREAS the government of Manitoba recognizes the importance of assisting students and unemployed youth to make a successful transition to the workforce;

WHEREAS one of the cornerstones of the government of Manitoba's 10-point policy framework for economic renewal is a focus on skills training and upgrading as an essential element in enhancing the capacity of Manitoba

business and industry to compete in the new world economy;

WHEREAS the government of Manitoba is committed to revitalizing the Apprenticeship Program;

WHEREAS the government of Manitoba is committed to continue with successful youth programs such as CareerStart, Partners with Youth and STEP; and

WHEREAS CareerFocus, a component of Manitoba CareerStart, is specifically designed to provide support to educational institutions in helping students make a successful transition from school to work by providing full-time high school and post-secondary students with opportunities to receive career-related work experience.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba continue to support the government's actions and initiatives designed to support youth employment and job opportunities.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That concludes my remarks.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The amendment moved by the honourable Minister of Urban Affairs (Mrs. McIntosh) comes extremely close to anticipating a debate scheduled on the Order Paper, Resolution 10, the resolution of the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau). It comes extremely close, but I will give the benefit of the doubt to the honourable minister, and I will rule this amendment in order.

**Motion presented.**

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak on the original resolution. Unfortunately, it has now been amended and I think it has nullified some of the strength of the resolution, but it will not restrict what I have to say to the overall resolution, because I think the issue is one of great concern to not only young people but their families in the province of Manitoba.

But before I begin my remarks today, Mr. Speaker, I would like to suggest to members of this Chamber that if private members' hour is going to

proceed with any speed that when amendments are made, no matter what party makes those amendments, that we bring in copies so that we can get to the decision on whether the amendment is going to be accepted or not accepted as quickly as possible and therefore afford every member of this Chamber an opportunity to debate.

In the original resolution proposed by the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen), she talks about the high cost of post-secondary education in this country, and particularly in the province of Manitoba, and, of course, what she has noted is factually very correct.

The cost of post-secondary education in every province in this country has escalated dramatically in the last five or six years. In this province, when one looks at the cumulative increases, we are looking at increases of 100 percent of the costs of a young person in one of our major academic institutions in the province of Manitoba.

I think that lends itself to some debate and discussion as to why we charge at all for post-secondary education. You know, at one point we only had free education up to the end of Grade 8. If you wanted to go onto high school you paid for that high school education; as a result, it was elitist. It was elitist in the sense that only those individuals whose parents had either substantial sums of money or they had a deep and abiding love of education and, therefore, were willing to make extraordinary sacrifices, those individuals went on to finish their high school. [interjection] The Minister for Agriculture (Mr. Enns) said that, of course, decisions were made within families, and—

\* (1740)

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** I really apologize for interrupting my friend from River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs), but I am looking at the amendment.

**Mr. Speaker:** Right.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I just had the opportunity to read it.

**Mr. Speaker:** You just got it.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** But it seems to totally substitute for the existing resolution, and I do not see how that is an amendment when you totally change the original resolution. I mean even if there was one clause that was the same, but the whole entire thing is different, so I do not know how you can consider this an amendment. [interjection]

Well, I have just had the opportunity to read it. I am simply asking the Speaker—

**Mr. Speaker:** No problem, just for clarification. The honourable government House leader on the same point of order.

**Hon. James Ernst (Government House Leader):** On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the fact that the member has just taken the time to read the amendment, the fact is that you have ruled on the matter, and I am sure my honourable friend from Brandon East would not be reflecting on the Chair in this regard.

**Mr. Speaker:** No, he is not. The honourable member for Brandon East is just simply asking for a clarification, and as soon as I get this number here, I will show it to him.

For the honourable member from Brandon East, and indeed for all the House, the amendment was accepted because of Beauchesne's 567: "The object of an amendment may be either to modify a question in such a way as to increase its acceptability or to present to the House a different proposition as an alternative to the original question."

That clarifies that matter. Now, the honourable member for River Heights still has 12 and a half minutes remaining.

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**Mrs. Carstairs:** Mr. Speaker, as the Minister for Agriculture (Mr. Enns) said from his seat, so often that meant that there were choices made in large families, that perhaps one or two or three children would be the ones who would go on to complete their high school education. All too often, unfortunately and regrettably, that decision was made that it had to be the boys of the family who would continue on with their education and not the

girls of the family who would be afforded that opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, we passed that hurdle. We came to the conclusion in Canada that in order for our population to be sufficiently well educated to meet the demands of the society in which they were living, they needed to have at least a high school education. So, gradually, Grade 10 became free, then Grade 11 became free, and Grade 12 became free. In the province of Ontario it was not, in fact, until very recently that Grade 13 became free, and then they did away, in essence, with Grade 13 and had a program whereby you could graduate from high school in four or five years.

Now we have a new dynamic that is facing Canadian society. We have a situation in which it is not just necessary to have a Grade 12 education; it is becoming increasingly necessary in the society in which we live to have post-secondary education. And yet, the strange thing that has happened is that post-secondary education, instead of getting less costly and therefore more accessible, is becoming more costly and less accessible.

It is less accessible through two factors: one, the high cost of increasing education in terms of the tuition fees; and the other, of course, is the inability of many of our young people to obtain summer jobs that would pay them adequately to meet those needs. Those members who come from rural Manitoba certainly know full well of the high costs of the educational experience for a family when they have to send their child to Winnipeg, or to Brandon, or to a community college in The Pas, or in Thompson, or in Brandon, or in Winnipeg in order to see that they achieve that post-secondary level of education.

So it becomes incumbent, I think, upon us as a society to examine two things: what is it we are going to do about tuition fees at our university, and what are we going to do about ensuring that our young people can obtain gainful employment so that they can do their part in helping to fund their educational experience. Nowhere is there, I would suggest to you, more luck involved than in education. If you are born into a family that has access to dollars, the chances are that you will go

on to a post-secondary educational institution. The demographics verify that, that if you take a look at the income level of the students and the income level of their parents, you will see there is a high correlation between those who come from upper-income levels, middle-income levels and those who come from lower-income levels.

Like many of you in this Chamber who have helped to put your students, i.e. your children who are students, through university, you have, I think, regarded it as—I regarded it as the best gift I could give them. If I could provide them with the educational opportunity and I could ensure that when they finish that educational institution they were not carrying a heavy burden of debt, then that was far better than leaving it to them someday in a will when they were hopefully old and gray, because I do not intend to pass on until they are old and gray.

The reality, though, is that for many, many young people that is not an option. Their parents do not have the ability to help them access a post-secondary educational experience, so they have not lived, perhaps, in a family that has encouraged them from infancy through childhood through Grade 1 through Grade 12 to go on to post-secondary education. I know that those of you who in this Chamber have been teachers know that is an important factor in the success of any student in their entire educational path, the message they continually get at home about the importance of their educational experience. But then they are hit with the problems of funding that educational experience.

I believe that the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) put it very well when she said that students need consistent, useful employment. They have to know that employment opportunity is going to be there for them, that it is going to pay an adequate sum of money. I am amazed at the number of students who told me this year they were going out of province to find summer jobs, the students that I was teaching at the university, because they could not access jobs here in the province of Manitoba. The jobs were simply not there. One individual in particular indicated that he was, and well known to the minister who just

spoke, going to go and plant trees in the province of British Columbia. Well, I wished him luck, and I told him that I knew the job was very tough but that he would earn good money. But it seemed sad somehow that he could not be engaged in the same kind of activity here in the province of Manitoba, to be providing a useful adjunct to our natural resource industry.

We know also, Mr. Speaker, that youth unemployment rates are among the highest of all unemployment rates, and they are high in this province, often into the 20 percent figure. They have dipped in the last labour stats, but unfortunately, one expects that they will in the norm, of course, of things go up again in this labour stats because there have been so many released into the job market.

We know also that this government has cut a number of youth employment programs, CareerStart, the Northern Youth Corps Job Program and STEP, all of which were addressed in this resolution, all of which had a particular emphasis on those very rural students who we know pay much more for their education than those of us who live in the city of Winnipeg and can choose, if we so desire, to send our children to educational institutions in the city of Winnipeg.

\* (1750)

The WHEREAS that member addressed with respect to the lack of this government understanding the important link between post-secondary education and training and a revitalized economy changed, I would suggest to you, an amendment to say that they do, thereby completely changing the spirit of the resolution, as the member for Brandon East (Leonard Evans) indicated. It is quite clear, it seems to me, that this government has no comprehension whatsoever of the link between training and education and a revitalized economy.

If they had any such understanding, they would understand that the University of Manitoba, of all of the universities surveyed in Maclean's survey last year, and whether you agree with all of the criteria by which that survey was designed, one thing stood out like none other. That was the

percentage of part-time students that we have at the University of Manitoba in comparison with every other senior university in the country. Sixty-seven percent of our students only, at the University of Manitoba, are full time. The closest one to us is McGill at 77 percent. You look at the University of Toronto, it is 81 percent. You look at Queens, it is 90 percent.

Now why are there so many young people in the province of Manitoba choosing to go to university only part time? Well, I would suggest to you that in a great many cases it is a financial one. They simply do not have the money to be able to go to university full time, and they do not have the money to go to university full time because they have not been able to access a reasonable job in the summertime that pays them enough money to put together their financial package.

You know, I am very saddened when I look back on my own educational experience and I compare it with the educational experience that young people are getting today. I went to university full time. I suspect that most of the individuals here who graduated from university, at least in their undergraduate years, went full time. That is no longer the status quo. Many of these young people are taking a course, rushing off the campus to go work for a couple of hours, rushing back on the campus to take another course, rushing off the campus again to get in a couple of hours of work. How do you have an enriched, quality educational opportunity when that kind of pressure is placed on you in order to get those letters, which are supposed to be magical that are not so magical anymore, after your name?

And that is what I resent the most about the amendment to this resolution, that this government would seek to pat itself on the back yet once again, as they tend to do on resolutions, and say that they do recognize the strategic link between post-secondary education and training and a revitalized economy. Well, if they do, then why have they cut funding to our universities? The president of the University of Manitoba says that in real terms the cut to his institution is 7.6 percent, 7.6 percent in real terms.

If we look at the cuts that have been made over the years to the community colleges—you know, the government talks about the fact that it has increased monies to the community college this year. Unfortunately, if you go year by year, you are back to what they used to give in 1990. It is not an increase; it is less of a decrease than other years were. But the cumulative effect, if one looks at the cost of living, is that our community colleges are trying to make do with less money today than they had four years ago.

There are fewer students enrolled in those institutions, particularly KCC and ACC, and so the drive to force students to leave rural Manitoba and to come into the cities has been stepped up by this government, rather than diminished by this government.

So there is not, I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, a recognition of the link between post-secondary education and training and a revitalized economy in the province of Manitoba. Because if there was, they would be directing the resources of this government to the recognized quality post-secondary educational institutions that we have, instead of directing that money to outside trainers with no accountability, with no qualified curriculums, which is what we are doing with so much of the training dollars paid for by this government at the present time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I listened with great interest to the member for River Heights, and I agree with her remarks about the problem facing young students in Manitoba today and attempting to get sufficient financial assistance so they can be full-time students. She put her finger right on it. It is just not adequate to try and get a university education, a post-secondary education on a part-time basis.

My experience is, the students have a much more difficult time if they are working and studying at the same time. They are far better off to be provided with sufficient funds so they can work on a full-time basis. It is regrettable, at a time when unemployment has risen among our youth in this province, that this government has seen fit to cut

back on programs. While the amendment makes reference to CareerStart and STEP and other programs that still exist, the fact is that they have been scaled back substantially.

CareerStart is easily reduced in half from what it used to be under the former government, and at the same time, the unemployment is far higher today than it was then, six, seven, eight years ago. I look at the last report that we got from Statistics Canada, and it shows, using the first four months of this year—because you are using a group of months, it gives you a far more reliable figure than any one month. If you take the first four months of this year, you will see that youth unemployment in Manitoba is 19.2 percent. That is just about double the rate of unemployment for the total population. The average for the whole population is 10.0 percent. Youth unemployment is 19.2, almost double.

The other shocking thing about these figures is that we now, at least for this period of time, are above the Canadian average in unemployment for our youth in this first four-month period. Normally, we are below the Canadian average, but for whatever reason, at this period of time, we have worsened our situation. Of course, if you look at the breakdown of the youth between males and females, you will find the same pattern, where the unemployment rate for the youth is much higher than for the adults. The male youths are running at 22.2 percent in the first four months of this year, that is compared to 9.6 for those 25 years and over, considerably higher, more than double what the adult population has, and same thing for female youth. Their rate is double that of females in general.

Mr. Speaker, we are facing a serious unemployment situation. We should be doing far more than this government is doing at the present time. I can think of many, many good programs that we had in the years gone by, not only in the

Pawley government but also in the Schreyer years, when we did have some very meaningful programs for our young people.

What is happening today, Mr. Speaker, not only is it more difficult for students to manage to go to university and other post-secondary education institutions because of increasing tuition fees, increasing costs of books, just the increasing cost of living, not only that, but the families of these young people are having a difficult time.

Many families have suffered a loss of income or are in danger of losing jobs, one or the other, the breadwinners. As a result, because the families are poorer, they are less able to help the young people go through university or through community college. So rather than cutting back, we should be stepping up all of these programs that we have had in the past.

CareerStart should be easily doubled. The STEP program was an excellent program to provide work opportunity, work experience in government, excellent experience. The Northern Youth Corps, where we have our highest amount of unemployment in northern Manitoba has been totally eliminated.

We used to have a direct employment program with departments themselves. Of course, this seems to have disappeared as well, so it is regrettable that this government is not taking the type of action required to provide job opportunities for our young people so that they can get an adequate post-secondary education. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) will have 10 minutes remaining.

The hour being 6 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Thursday).

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, May 11, 1994

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